



# Draft Final Report

## Project Evaluation

**Preventing electoral violence in the SADC region,  
a project in support of the  
SADC-ESN network**

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

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ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific
AU	African Union
BRIDGE	Building Resources for Democracy and Elections
CAM	Capacity Assessment Mission
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CPMR	Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	European Commission
ECES	European Centre for Electoral Support
ECF	Electoral Commissions Forum
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEM	Election Experts Missions
EISA	Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa
EMB	Electoral Management Body
EOM	Election Observation Mission
ERV	Election Related Violence
ESN	Electoral Support Network
EU	European Union
JAP	Joint Action Plan
LEAD	Leadership and Conflict Management for Electoral Stakeholders
NAM	Needs Assessment Mission
NAO	National Authorizing Officer
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRP	National Research Papers
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEV	Preventing Electoral Violence
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TTF	Training to Facilitators
UN	United Nations

## Executive Summary

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The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the design, management, implementation and impact of the EU-funded “Preventing election related conflict and violence in the SADC region: a project in support of the SADC Electoral Support Network (SADC ESN)” (PEV SADC) Project with a total envelope amounting to 3.2 million euros. The Project has been funded at 75 percent by the EU and 25 percent by ECES, as the main implementing organization. The initial timeframe of the Project was 24 months but was extended up to 54 months, from February 2013 until August 2017.

The intervention aimed 1) to strengthen the capacity of network member CSOs and stakeholders in elections-related violence and prevention and 2) to support the establishment of an Observatory of electoral violence and carry out research and sensitization to prevent and mitigate electoral violence and advocate for legislative enforcement for electoral dispute resolution.

The findings of the evaluation are based on Project documentation and interviews with Project staff, partners, EU officials and beneficiaries. This process was facilitated through the participation at the closing activity of the project and official launch of the regional handbook on Election Related Violence: “Preventing and Mitigating Electoral Conflict and Violence – Lessons from the Southern Africa” at the European Parliament in Brussels and field mission to the SADC region.

The particularity of the Project is its regional scope, which also constitutes its complexity as the Project collaborated closely with the 16-member organizations of the Electoral Support Network of Southern Africa (ESN SA), former SADC ESN, representing 14 SADC countries. Although equal importance has been given to all countries and member organizations, some contexts, due to higher level of challenges linked to assuring peaceful electoral processes, needed more attention and direct support. The implementing organizations had to adapt to the shifting political contexts and be flexible in their management strategy in order to be able to be at the right place at the right moment.

As has been stated in the context of the Project intervention, CSOs are conventionally excluded from the political arena in many countries and often their potential positive role in peacebuilding initiatives is not fully exploited, partly because of a lack of capacities of CSOs in the area of conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution. The PEV SADC Project provided a response to this situation by supporting the regional umbrella organization, ESN SA, and its member CSOs, to play a key role in promoting peaceful electoral processes and to underscore the value of CSOs in peacebuilding initiatives in general.

Given the achievements of the Project and the challenges of the wider context, it is recommended to the donor community, and especially the EU, to continue support to the existing initiatives and dynamics created by the Project, both at regional and national level by global or national available funds. From a regional point of view, it is recommended that the Observatory continue to conduct research and monitor further developments in the region. This would allow it to function as an early warning mechanism and raise the awareness of key players on potential risks and provide recommendations for strategic action to prevent, mitigate and resolve election-related conflict and potential violence. It should also be noted that collaboration and continued relationships with the regional bodies of the SADC is crucial in further coordinating and harmonizing efforts to prevent, mitigate and manage election-related conflict and violence. Apart from an observatory role, there should also be support for the establishment of a regional mediation body that coordinates national initiatives targeting track 2 and 3 mediation at the regional and national level as a valuable complement to the regional bodies' efforts.

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In terms of capacity building and effective intervention of CSO's in preventing, mitigating or managing election related conflict, further support seems required, especially in countries facing direct challenges: not only Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, DRC but also countries such as Zambia and Tanzania (Zanzibar) given the last electoral contexts. As has been encouraged through the PEV SADC project, it seems crucial to include all key actors such as the CSO, EMBs, political parties, media, administration (national and local authorities), security forces, traditional and regional leaders in dialogue initiatives. With the involvement and participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders in elections, it is possible to establish mechanisms that can prevent electoral conflict and assist in diffusing conflict before it spreads.

In general, a positive aspect of the project has been its flexibility and ability to adapt to the specific needs and contexts of countries. Moreover, apart from the more traditional capacity-building approach through trainings, the advisory support, adapted to specific needs and contexts, has proved to be very much appreciated and effective in improving performances and institutional capacity. It is recommended to continue this demand-driven and adapted advisory-support approach so as to ensure ownership and sustainability.

## 1. Introduction

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### **Context and objectives of the evaluation**

The European Union (EU) has evolved into one of the most important global players engaged the promotion of credible and transparent elections, often within the framework of a broader governance enhancement strategy that complements other institution-building endeavours and actions to support civil society. The EU has become the leading global actor in financing and providing electoral assistance, as a complement to election observation. To date, more than two hundred electoral assistance projects have been implemented with EU funding, contributing to electoral processes in over one hundred countries worldwide.

Since 2004, the EU has allocated between €80 and €140 million a year for electoral assistance. The financial instruments that the EU is currently using to fund electoral (and democracy) assistance are: the European Development Funds (EDF), European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI), the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), the Civil Society Organizations and Local Authorities program (CSO-LA), the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) and EU Trust Funds.

The relations between the EU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are conducted within the framework of the Cotonou Agreement. The specific identity of the SADC region is tied to the heterogeneous member countries and their varied performance in democratic consolidation. It is noteworthy that governments have invested a considerable amount of resources in fostering an environment of peace, security and stability since the transformation of the Southern African Coordination Conference (SADCC), created in 1980, into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 1992. Indeed, the main objectives of SADC are to achieve development, peace and security, and economic growth, to alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the peoples of Southern Africa, and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration, built on democratic principles and equitable and sustainable development. The EU is committed to working together with the region to eradicate poverty through various support



instruments. The Cotonou Agreement set up the framework of the Partnership between the EU and SADC and is based on three pillars:

- Political dialogue (known as the "Berlin Initiative with SADC")
- Trade for Development
- Development Co-operation

It is worth noting that election-related violence as a specific threat to regional peace and stability was placed in sharper relief in 2004, with the endorsement by the SADC Heads of State Summit of the first set of SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections<sup>1</sup>. This instrument formally allowed the observation of all electoral processes in the region as a means of sharing best practices and forestalling undemocratic outcomes that tend toward political violence and instability.

In this context, the EU<sup>2</sup> funded the "Preventing election related conflict and violence in the SADC region: a project in support of the SADC Electoral Support Network (SADC ESN)" (PEV SADC) Project with a total envelope amounting to 3.2 million euros. The project was a result of a winning call from ECES (call EuropAid/131140/C/ACT/multi) with contract number DCINSAPVD/2012/286-438, which was found to be congruent the global objective of the call, namely "strengthening regional continental and global civil society representative networks active in development cooperation in partner countries". The project has been funded at 75 percent by the EU and 25 percent by ECES, as main implementing organization. The original implementing partners are the Electoral Support Network of the SADC (ESN SA), former SADC ESN and South Africa-based EISA. The initial timeframe of the Project was 24 months but was extended up to 54 months, from February 2013 until August 2017.

The particularity of the Project is its regional scope, which also constitutes its complexity as the Project collaborated closely with the 16-member organizations<sup>3</sup> of the ESN SA, representing 14 SADC countries<sup>4</sup>. Although equal importance has been given to all countries and member organizations, some contexts, due to higher level of challenges linked to assuring peaceful electoral processes, needed more attention and direct support. The implementing organizations had to adapt to the shifting political contexts and be flexible in their management strategy, so as to be at the right place at the right moment.

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<sup>1</sup> The SADC reviewed the text in 2015, after 10 years of varied experiences with successful and, sometimes, disputed electoral processes in the region. A more comprehensive set of Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections was developed, incorporating civil society inputs for the first time. These were informed by the changing technological, security and legal environment surrounding democratic elections in the continent and globally.

<sup>2</sup> Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development (Development Cooperation Instrument) and Neighborhood Civil Society Facility (European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument).

<sup>3</sup> The 16 CSOs from the network are: in Botswana, Emang Basadi, in Democratic Republic of Congo, RENOSEC, in Lesotho, the Lesotho Congress of NGOs, in Madagascar, KMF/CNOE, in Malawi, the Malawi Electoral Support Network, in Mauritius, the Mauritius Association of Social Services, in Mozambique, FECIV and the Mozambique Electoral Observatory, in Namibia, NANGOF TRUST, in South Africa, the South African Catholic Bishops Conference, in Swaziland, CANGO, in Tanzania, the Ecumenical Dialogue Group, in Zambia, the Foundation for Democratic Process and the Zambia National Women's Lobby, and in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Election Support Network. In addition, the Association of NGOs in Zanzibar is also part of the network and of the project.

<sup>4</sup> The geographical scope of the project covered fourteen SADC countries namely: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania (URT), Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The evaluation of the project was conducted by an independent external expert and covered the five OECD/DAC evaluation criteria<sup>5</sup>. The final evaluation of the project was foreseen to take place within a maximum of 30 working days including the field missions and interaction with Project staff in Brussels.

According with the Terms of Reference for Project final evaluation (Annex A) “*The objective of this evaluation is to analyse the performance and results of PEV SADC project, taking into account both its goals and the relevance of its activities with the context of implementation. It is also about whether the project was implemented in an effective and efficient manner. Thus, the assessment is to verify that the various components of the project were executed in accordance with stipulated conditions and if the expected results were achieved. Incidentally, the evaluators will meet all relevant stakeholders, beneficiaries of the project, implementing partners and the donor, to the collection of information necessary for the implementation of the external evaluation. The evaluators shall evaluate the achieved results, implementation strategies and progress and is being conducted to meet the contracting requirements of the European Commission, as well as to provide accountability and contribute to future work programme for all partners.*”

The documentation phase of the evaluation consisted of:

- 1) systematic collection and analysis of the relevant documentation assessed, in consultation with the Project Coordinator and ECES personnel involved in the implementation of the project;
- 2) selection and use of adequate methodology and evaluations tools;
- 3) identification of verifiable facts (findings), formulation of evaluation questions and provision of the draft and tentative responses to the questions; and,
- 4) proposal of a detailed working plan for the field mission, with an extensive contribution of the Partners and Stakeholders.

The interaction and feedback from the main beneficiaries and EU services has been rendered possible both through the field missions in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa, but also by through the organisation of ancillary events in Brussels. These included the final Observatory meeting and the official launch of the Handbook on election related violence at the European Parliament, which brought together all researchers and representatives of key partners, not least the host Director of the ESN SA secretariat and representatives from the Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC countries (ECF-SADC). Moreover, phone interviews allowed for the enlargement of the pool of people able to provide feedback on the Project. A complete list of interviewees can be found in Annex N.

This final report is the result of the review and analysis of all relevant Project documents, assessed by the expert, and of the meetings and interviews undertaken during the field mission or based in phone or Skype conference calls.

## **The PEV SADC Project: Context of the Intervention**

As stipulated in the Project document, the Project focuses on the vital role CSOs can play through their national and regional networks in creating a climate conducive to an electoral process in which conflict is managed and resolved peacefully. An election outcome that is perceived as credible and accepted by citizens is an important step towards democratic consolidation. Despite this potentially positive role, civil society organizations in the Southern Africa region – the region in which the project

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<sup>5</sup> Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Sustainability and Impact



was implemented – have played rather a limited role in preventing or resolving election related conflict. In addition, no systematic collection and analysis of data relating to the causes of election-related violence has been carried out.

To respond to this situation, the Action identified the 14-member state regional network, SADC-Election Support Network (SADC-ESN)<sup>6</sup>, as the key partner and beneficiary. The SADC-ESN, established in 1998, is a network of organizations at both country and regional levels, working in the field of democracy and elections. In its early formation, the SADC-ESN focused mainly on domestic election observation and subsequently on regional election observation. Subsequently, the Network has expanded its focus areas to include developing capacity of member organizations in terms of enabling them to design and develop voter and civic curriculum, and to a limited extent, internal capacity building. The Network provides opportunities for sharing lessons learned, peer exchange and encourages the exchange of best practices at the regional level. This network is also described as one of the most diverse in Africa. Its member-states include advanced democracies with a history of peaceful elections, such as South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Mauritius, formerly war-torn nations with continuing governance issues, such as Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and two countries, at the time of the Project conception (2012), in a state of enduring political deadlock and international sanctions, Zimbabwe and Madagascar. Despite the different nature of political contexts, elections across the region tend to share some common characteristics. A general climate of mistrust by broad sections of the public towards electoral management bodies is fueled by a sense of insufficient independence of the electoral management, challenged voter registers, state involvement in campaign funding and impediments to external observation.

Within this context, it has been stated that while progress has been achieved in the area of election observation and to a lesser extent voter education, the processes of internal capacity development at the individual and network level have been lagging behind. Moreover, gaps have been identified with regard to specific expertise needed for effective participation in and contribution to strengthening the ability of democracy and governance institutions to prevent, mitigate and resolve election-related conflict and potential violence.

## **Objectives of the Project**

In view of the aforementioned deficiencies, the Action identified its overall objective as contributing to the prevention of electoral violence in Southern African Countries by supporting the SADC-ESN. In order to achieve this overarching objective, the following specific objectives were identified: 1) to strengthen the capacity of network-member CSOs and stakeholders in elections-related violence and prevention; 2) to support the establishment of an Observatory of electoral violence and to carry out research and sensitization to prevent and mitigate electoral violence and advocate for legislative enforcement for electoral dispute resolution.

To achieve these objectives, the Action started with the conduct of **Needs Assessment Missions (NAMs)** in each of the member countries, with the aim to map the specific needs of CSOs in each of the very diverse components of the sub-region. This action served to provide the necessary tools to adapt the training programs and advisory support to the identified needs and specific requests.

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<sup>6</sup> In order to distinguish the network from intergovernmental bodies and to confirm its identity as the only non-partisan, non-governmental network of national observer groups, the network changed its name in January 2015 and became the Electoral Support Network of Southern Africa. (ESN SA).

Capacity building activities were mainly organized in the framework of extensive BRIDGE and LEAD training programs. The **Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE)**<sup>7</sup> is a comprehensive professional development tool encompassing a wide range of modular workshops and targeting a variety of stakeholders working in the field of electoral and democratic processes. The innovative **Leadership and Conflict Management skills for Electoral Administrators (LEAD)**<sup>8</sup> training comes from the solid partnership established between ECES and Leadership Beyond Boundaries, a global initiative from the Centre for Creative Leadership, to democratize leadership development and unlock human potential. The training promotes skills at the crossroads between leadership, elections-related violence and conflict prevention. Both training programs were tailored to the specific context and needs of the organization and included a training of trainers component so as to guarantee the transfer of capacity and ownership.

As to the second specific objective, the Action promoted and supported the establishment of a **regional observatory for the prevention of electoral violence**. This “human observatory” is meant to complement and enhance similar existing regional initiatives and is composed of fourteen researchers from SADC region, SADC-ESN member organizations and representatives of the Project team.

Parallel to the above-mentioned activities, the Action provided **advisory support** both to the secretariat of the SADC-ESN and to the member organizations, based on specific requests and capacity need assessments. The main aim of this assistance was to strengthen organizational, technical and network capacity of the SADC-ESN secretariat, advise on project development and the mobilization of resources by promoting south-to-south collaboration and coordination.

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<sup>7</sup> **BRIDGE** represents a unique initiative where five organizations in the democracy and governance field have jointly committed to developing, implementing and maintaining the most comprehensive curriculum and workshop package available, comprising 24 modules, designed to be used as a tool within a broader capacity development framework. The five BRIDGE partners are the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), International IDEA, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD). <http://www.bridge-project.org/en/>

<sup>8</sup> The **Leadership and Conflict Management skills for Electoral Administrators (LEAD)** is an ECES-developed methodology, which entails both a training of facilitator and a cascade component, will promote skills in the crossroads between leadership, election-related violence and conflict prevention. Three crucial leadership skills can be disentangled: vision (ability to set direction, diagnosing and analyzing problems and grasping essential aspects of the developments), competence (ability to make decisions, create alignment and motivate their staff and collaborators) and integrity (capacity to maintain commitments, keep promises and ensure consistency between values, actions, expectations and outcomes).

## 2. Relevance and quality of the design – Problems and needs

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The “relevance” criterion examines the extent to which the objectives of the project are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global and partners' priorities and EU's policies. Relevance refers to the appropriateness of the actions and capacity building (including the input of the technical assistance) for the beneficiaries.

### 2.1 Objectives and intervention strategy

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- Findings
  - During project implementation period of 54 months, between 06 February 2013 and 05 August 2017, no less than fourteen general and local elections took place in the SADC region. During the lifespan of the Project, four countries received EU Electoral Observation Missions (EOM) and in two other countries EU Electoral Experts Mission (EEM) were conducted. The Project provides a detailed election calendar giving an overview of all elections that took place during the lifetime of the project by linking the project activities to the electoral events (Annex O). This calendar shows clearly that activities have been planned in phase with the electoral events and were adapted to the specificities of each country.
  - The overall objective is consistent with and supportive of the Strategic objectives of the EU, as defined and identified in the following initiatives and documents:
    - ✓ Literature review focussed on the examination and analysis of Treaty standards and non-Treaty standards at the level of the UN, AU and SADC;
    - ✓ South-to-south cooperation principle, established by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005, and the Accra Agenda for Action of 2008, as the project is structured along with the membership organizations of the ESN SA network as essential stakeholders;
    - ✓ EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019);
    - ✓ EU-supported initiatives such as the Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution Programme in the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) Region.
  - The PEV SADC project was designed and implemented in the spirit of the Gaborone Declaration<sup>9</sup> of the Fifth Global Electoral Organization (GEO) meeting, held in March 2011 in the capital of Botswana.
  - In general, risks concerning changing political contexts in the countries of intervention and thus delays in elections during the lifetime of the program were identified as potentially having an impact on the implementation of the Action. It has been stated that the electoral cycle of some beneficiary countries has changed. This is referred to in the project document as a consequence of the dynamic and unpredictable context, where actions must not only be rich in content, but also implemented in a suitable timeframe to impact and support key players that must perform under pressure and instability in their respective electoral processes. This situation did indeed present itself, and the chosen mitigating strategy has been to adapt not only the content of the programme

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<sup>9</sup> International IDEA, 2011, Fifth Global Electoral Organization Conference Credible Elections Democracy, <http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/fifth-global-electoral-organization-conference-credible-elections-democracy>

so as to ensure it corresponds to the expressed needs, but also to the duration of the Action in itself. In this perspective, the requests for extension have been accompanied by an analysis of the political context and challenges and an overview of the way in which the Project counts on dealing with these issues. In addition, these requests were supported by an aptly motivated demand from the ESN SA to extend the Action so as to be able to effectively respond to the challenges and multiply the positive impact of the project.<sup>10</sup>

For example, in mid-2014, 6 months before the initially foreseen termination of the project, it was observed that some countries were experiencing challenges in terms of election related conflicts and violence due to the high stakes of national politics in local elections, most notably Lesotho, Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zanzibar but also Madagascar. The extension was deemed necessary to support these countries in the different phases of their electoral cycle. As illustrated in the table in Annex O, specific capacity building activities were implemented in these contexts to respond to the needs of the stakeholders and of the specific phase within the respective electoral cycle. Some examples that were collected from the interviews and activity reports:

- ***In Zambia, Local Government By-Elections took place on 25 February 2014, Presidential By-election took place on 20 January 2015 after the sudden death of president Michael Sata on 28 October 2014, general elections took place on 16 August 2016 (National Assembly and President)***

Two of PEV-SADC Project's staff members carried out a mid-term needs assessment from 19 – 22 July 2014. The background to this mission was extensive exchanges with the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and the Zambian members of ESN SA, namely FODEP and Zambia National Women's lobby, and the context of violence surrounding the by-election that changed the peaceful pre-election climate in the country. It was deemed necessary to reassess the activities and their timing in view of these events and the PEV team met with these key players to make sure forthcoming activities accommodated their needs in terms of capacity building and subsequent research activities.

The ECZ requested a LEAD training program as the electoral and political climate was more tense than before and the body had experienced turnover of staff. It was seen as essential to have police participate in the training. The timing of the training was decided with the ECZ and needed to take place after the delimitation process, which ended in September 2014. PEV SADC organized the LEAD training from 22 to 26 September 2014 with the participation of ECZ, Police and Anti-Corruption Bureau. The training took place from 22 to 26 September 2014.

Another LEAD training was deemed necessary in the period between the by-election commencing in 2015 and the general elections in 2016. This training took place from 5 to 9 October 2015 with the aim to create the necessary awareness, tools and capacity among civil society organizations to actively participate as potential agents of conflict management, of voter education and as domestic observers.

- ***In Mozambique, Presidential and Legislative elections were organized on 15 October 2014.***

Before the elections took place, and on the specific request of the ESN SA member organisation Osservatorio Eleitoral, PEV SADC organized a specific LEAD training for confidence building among political parties, media and civil society organizations with a

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<sup>10</sup> As an example, ECES' Request for no cost extension dating from 4 December 2015 and the letter from SADC ESN (that became ESN SA) from 15 September 2015.

specific focus on election observation. The training took place from 5 to 19 September 2014, 1 month before the elections.

The elections were judged by national and international observers as "partly free and fair, and not very transparent", because of politicization and a lack of transparency of the electoral bodies. Acts of violence and intolerance during the electoral campaign underlined the necessity of significant improvements for the future electoral processes.

As a response to the conflictual post-electoral phase where electoral reforms were at the heart of political discussions and tensions, PEV SADC organized a series of capacity building trainings aimed to involve all relevant stakeholders in the discussion on electoral reforms:

- A BRIDGE Module on « Legal Framework » with participants of the electoral administration, civil society, police and political parties was organized from 27 to 29 October 2015.
  - A BRIDGE Module on « Introduction to Electoral Administration » was organized from 11 to 13 November 2015 and another BRIDGE Module on « Electoral Dispute Resolution and Electoral Security » was organized from 16 to 19 November 2015 with participants of political parties, electoral commission, civil society and independent law practitioners. The training included principals of conflict management, electoral conflict, prevention mechanisms, electoral security of both materials and polling staff, security of information, among other subjects that enabled participants to open productive discussions on the state of play of dispute resolution mechanisms and the electoral reform process.
- ***In Madagascar local elections were organized on 30 July 2015.*** These elections were the first post-transition elections to be organized and thus a necessary step to end the political crisis and return to constitutional order and political and democratic normalization. In the pre-election phase, the project management team and the ESN SA member organization KMF-CNOE, identified some major challenges as to the organization of the upcoming local elections, especially because of the nomination of the president of the Electoral Management Body as minister of foreign affairs, affecting the credibility of the EMB and internal organization of the body.

The PEV SADC response to this situation and request was the following:

Implementation of a Leadership and Conflict Management Skills for Electoral Stakeholders (LEAD) training with participants of the ESN SA member organization (KMF-CNOE) and high-level staff of the electoral management body (CENIT): the President and 21 members commissioners and 6 technical staff. The LEAD training aimed to build trust and constructive partnership not only within the electoral management body but also in collaborating with civil society. The training was also meant to capacitate the President with the necessary leadership tools to manage his team and being prepared to respond to political pressures and challenges. The training was organized 3 months before the elections: 20-23 April 2015.

This intervention strategy, and the fact that the project was thus synchronised with the electoral calendars and cycles of the SADC countries, mostly accounts for the extension of the implementation period. Another reason was the strong request from the key partner ESN SA and electoral commissions to accompany them further, not only with capacity building activities such as the trainings but also with advisory support to improve their performances and impact on the elections and governance in their respective countries and thus to extend the programme over time have been the reasons to extend the initial duration of the Action.

- The extensions were in this sense both a response to a risk and to a request. In this perspective, the decision to extend the lifetime of the Project was mostly motivated by the positive potential impact of the Action, demonstrated by the fact that the activities of the Project in support of political and electoral processes in the SADC region were timely as they coincided with rising concerns about the escalation of electoral-related violence in periods before, during and after elections as demonstrated earlier.
- Moreover, problem analyses prior to the Project formulation, as well as the integration of lessons learned from past experiences, were adequately conducted and considered, as reflected in the following documentation:
  - ✓ References to Director General for external policy study “Developing Operational Tools within the EU for a comprehensive Approach to Prevent Electoral Violence - How the EU can support post-election transitions of power: lessons from Africa (2015);
  - ✓ ECES/ESN SA– “The potential of EU funded Electoral Assistance for the Prevention of Election related Conflict and Violence: Lessons from the Southern African Region”, contribution to the discussions of the symposium organized on 16th of November 2016 at the European Parliament by the European Parliament’s Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group in cooperation with the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Washington DC-based U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), the European Institute of Peace (EIP) and the European Peace-building Liaison Office (EPLO);
  - ✓ ECES - Lessons Learned from Supporting Elections in Fragile Context: “A European Response to Electoral Cycle Support” (2016).
  - ✓ ECES and European Partnership for Democracy (EPD): “A European Response to Electoral Cycle Support” (EURECS) (<http://www.eces.eu/en/posts/eurecs>).

#### • Evaluation questions

*To which extent has the Project strategy been consistent with and supportive of EU and other donor initiatives, namely:*

- *EU Electoral Observation Missions recommendations ;<sup>11</sup>*
- *EU project “Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution Programme in the ESA Region”;*
- *Other projects similar been implemented in the Countries covered by the project:*

*“Support of the electoral cycle in Democratic Republic of Congo”; “Supporting the Electoral System in Zambia”; “Consolidation de la démocratie: Projet d'appui à la protection des libertés et droits fondamentaux (APDLF)” and “Ecole de citoyenneté”; and “Strengthening Civil Society Engagement in Education in Mozambique”.*

*To what extent has the implementation strategy and the extension in time been relevant in achieving the intended results?*

#### • Conclusions

- The project strategy has been consistent with and supportive of EU and other donor initiatives; In fact, Election observation recommendations were considered when adapting the curricula of

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<sup>11</sup> A specific paper has been developed to this extend clearly showing how the project implemented the recommendations of EU EOM. “Implementation EU EOM in PEV SADC”.



the LEAD or BRIDGE workshops, raising some of the key issues of previous EU EOMS (as per EUE OM reports and LEAD curriculums/agendas)<sup>12</sup>. To our knowledge, no parallel election conflict management program has been implemented by the EU during the same time, apart from those implemented by ECES (Projet d'Appui à la Crédibilité et à la Transparence des Elections à Madagascar" (PACTE), and "Initiative Citoyenne pour la Consolidation de la Paix, Leadership et Stabilité" (INCIPALS) both in Madagascar; Project in Support of a Peaceful and Inclusive Electoral Process in Zanzibar (PROPEL)). Moreover, the project team was in constant contact with DEVCO and the various EU Delegations, including the stakeholders in each country whereby overlapping activities would have come to the Project's attention.

- The intervention strategy, and the fact that the project was thus synchronised against the electoral calendars and cycles of the SADC countries, explains mainly the extension of the implementation period. Another reason was the strong request from the key partner ESN SA and electoral commissions to accompany them further not only with capacity building activities such as the trainings but also with advisory support to improve their performances and impact on the elections and governance in their respective countries and thus to extend the programme over time have been the reasons to extend the initial duration of the Action. The decision to extend the lifetime of the Project is motivated mostly by the potential positive impact of the Action demonstrated by the fact the activities of the Project in support of political and electoral processes in the SADC region are timely as they coincide with rising concerns about the escalation of electoral-related violence in periods before, during and after elections as demonstrated earlier.

## 2.2 Intervention logic and implementation modalities

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- Findings
  - Project objectives and results correctly reflect and address the identified problems and logical framework elements globally express the intervention logic, despite some minor formulation problems:
    - ✓ As stated in the introduction of this report, the Project clearly described the context of intervention and proposed a comprehensive and original response to the identified problems and needs within his context and considering the needs of the main targets of the Action. Within the complex context of the SADC region, it has been stated that there was specific expertise needed at the level of CSOs for effective participation in and contribution to strengthening democracy and governance institutions and to prevent, mitigate and resolve election-related conflict and potential violence. As such the Action identified its overall objective as contributing to the prevention of electoral violence in Southern African Countries, through support to the SADC-ESN and its specific objectives, 1) to strengthen the capacity of member CSOs to the network, and stakeholders, in elections-related violence and prevention and 2) to support the establishment of an Observatory of electoral violence and carry research and sensitization in order to prevent and mitigate electoral violence and advocate for legislative enforcement for electoral dispute resolution.

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<sup>12</sup> As concerning EU EOMS, it has to be specified that there were many interactions at country level, whereby the project provided briefings and exchanged with the EU EOMS. On the other hand, for the sake of keeping a clear division between observation and assistance activities, the EU at the central and Delegation level is cautious to blend the borders and in some countries, the interaction between EU EOMS and PEV SADC were limited. That said, the project always took note of the main recommendations produced as a result of the missions and trying to facilitate discussions around the key recommendations in the following workshops.



- ✓ The approach of starting the Project with comprehensive needs assessment missions and the identification of specific capacity building needs in conformity with the experience of the stakeholders and the context of the country guaranteed that the provisions were tailored in terms of content and allowed for the Project intervene at the right time, in phase with the electoral calendar of every single country and the identified challenges. As illustrated in the above section, activities were implemented to respond to fragile moments in the electoral cycle of a given country and were strategically chosen in terms of content and target as to be able to help overcome the critical phases. This is clearly illustrated by the activities mentioned in the previous section and by the overview of the Project's intervention logic, which explains why the Project implemented activities at a certain moment in a given country and for a specific target, as presented in Annex O. This flexible and adaptable implementation modality considering countries' and key stakeholders' needs at a given time was appropriate to achieve the intended results and explains why some of the countries of the SADC region that were more vulnerable and prone to election-related conflict received more attention than others experiencing a rather stable democracy.
- ✓ Training manuals, as well NAMs and Capacity Assessment Missions (CAM's) were part of Project activities and thus products of the Project itself (deliverables). Standard and normative documentation such as legal, strategic and operational documents, notes and protocols for SADC-ESN (Electoral Support Network) were identified as sources of verification. These documents were produced outside the project, depending on initiatives of other actors, and as a consequence they are not part of the Project results.
- ✓ Objective and verifiable indicators identified the 16 CSO's members of the ESN SA as focus target group; As the call is for strengthening non-state actors, the CSOs were indeed the main beneficiaries<sup>13</sup>.
- The indirect management implementation modality is, theoretically, correctly chosen and globally adequate to grant contract.
- The EU Delegations were considered key partners and each intervention was made in collaboration with the EU Delegations, including opening of workshops under the presence of EU Ambassadors. The Project was, however, not managed by the Delegations. It is also clear that, depending on country, the role of Delegations has not been limited only to visibility, but rather they aptly were consulted concerning the particular context of the country and priorities for key stakeholders. Of course, as a regional project, the Project was not managed by the delegations and it was not always evident to have Delegations as involved as is the case with national projects.
- Evaluation questions:

*To what extent was the intervention logic and implementation modalities adapted to address the identified problems and Electoral Management Body (EMBs) considered a target group. To what extent were EU Delegations and EDF NAO's considered key partners in the implementation of the project.*

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<sup>13</sup> Referring to page 6. of the full proposal "final target groups", EMBs are mentioned. Page 16, Activity description 1.1, NAMS EMBs are mentioned as target group. Page 18, result area 2. Capacity building, EMBs are mentioned as target group. Page 26, result 4. mentions EMBs as main target group for regional conferences. Page 32 under methodology, EMBs are mentioned as target group to ensure multi-stakeholder forums. Page 40 under dissemination and multiplying effect, EMBs are mentioned as key partners/beneficiaries

### ▪ **Conclusions**

- The flexible and adaptable implementation modality adopted by the Project, taking into account countries' and key stakeholders' needs at a given time, is appropriate to achieve the targeted results and explains why some of the countries of the SADC region, more vulnerable and prone to election-related conflict received more attention as to the others experiencing a rather stable democracy.
- With regards to the target groups, they have been rightly identified as being not only CSO's but also EMBs. In fact, in the activity description 1.1, NAMS EMBs are included in the target groups in the result area 2 and 4 for capacity building, and EMBs are mentioned as main target groups for regional conferences; in the 'methodology', EMBs are mentioned as target group to ensure multi-stakeholder forums, and under 'dissemination and multiplying effect', EMBs are mentioned as key partners/beneficiaries.
- The EU Delegations have been considered key partners and each intervention that has been made in collaboration with the EU Delegations, including opening of workshops where EU Ambassadors were present.

## **2.3 Beneficiaries and implementation capacity**

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### • Findings

- The way the project has been designed is with ECES being the leader of the consortium and generally responsible for the implementation of the Project, with specific roles identified for each partner<sup>14</sup>. The partnership agreement between ECES, EISA and with ESN SA (as per the Memorandum of understanding) defined the modes of collaboration, the specific role of the three organizations in project implementation and activities and in both technical and financial reporting. The role for each implementing partner is clearly defined in the MOU among the three partners for the initial duration of the Project. Concerning the extensions, and because EISA's input became rather request-based, it is clear that ECES assumed responsibility over the overall implementation of the Project and reporting to the donor (as also stated in the MoU).
- The identification of key stakeholders, target groups (CSO's), beneficiaries, as well as the stakeholders' participation in the implementation of the project, is beyond question. During the implementation of the Project, it became clear that, in order to influence the sound management of conflict and violence and put in place preventative measures, the Action must engage with all electoral stakeholders in order to facilitate structured interaction between key-players. The Project supported CSOs to create dialogue and function as a platform for exchange not only with the electoral administration but also traditional and religious leaders, former statesmen, local authorities and security forces. The scope of the target groups has as such been widened. LEAD trainings have been organized for multi-actor public and the Observatory research, publications and interaction activities included all relevant electoral stakeholders.

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<sup>14</sup> As described in the Project Document (p. 33): "Under the leadership of the ECES, who is standing as the Applicant and overall responsible for the implementation of the Project, ECES and EISA will implement the Project in a true and collaborative fashion. Through the establishment of a joint Project Team, the partners will build on each other's comparative advantages to maximizing the results and outputs."

- The number of beneficiaries and corresponding identification (function/post) is present either in the reports themselves or in the Annex attached to the report, indicating the number of people trained, their function and organisation<sup>15</sup>.
- Information about local ownership can be found in ESN SA letters that requested for extensions and in the foreword of ERV handbook. Also, training of trainers has ensured that accredited trainers can continue LEAD and BRIDGE trainings beyond the lifespan of the Project as capacities, tools and training material has been shared. As such, the Project established a pool of specialized trainers that are able to continue training and awareness raising activities within their contexts and for their peers. The Executive Director of the ZESN (Zimbabwe Election Support Network) and host Director of ESN SA, Rindai Chipfunde Vava, was one of the key trainers both for LEAD and BRIDGE over the lifetime of the project and beyond.
- Another factor enhancing local ownership, absorption and implementation capacity lies within the continuous interactions and advisory support provided to strengthen organizational development and networking of the key partners (ESN SA secretariat and its member organizations). The Action was meant to strengthen and consolidate existing or potential initiatives at national and regional level so as to make sure that all initiatives are owned by the partners as to guarantee their continuation beyond the project lifetime. A concrete example is the support to the set-up of a regional Observatory composed of very articulate researchers and analysts. As stated by Rindai Chipfunde Vava in the introduction of the Handbook, both the Observatory and the Handbook (as a product of the research and networking efforts of the Observatory) are sustainable tools that will exist beyond the lifetime of the Project to continuously accompany local implementation capacity : “ (...) *I believe in the potential of the Observatory as a way to sensitize the key-players in our electoral processes on how to consolidate our democratic processes and one way to do this is to communicate and share the results of the research and analysis carried out over the last years. This publication is an important step in making sure that more actors are informed about the initiative and its results in terms of lessons learned, in-depth insights and well-founded recommendations. However, it is a first step that should be followed by others that go in the direction of promoting peaceful electoral processes as a necessary condition to consolidate democracy in our region. As a privileged partner of ECES, ESN SA believes that our joint efforts will further enhance positive dynamics in that direction and will attract other key-stakeholders such as electoral commissions, political actors, media, security forces, traditional and religious leaders to go in the same direction*”.
- The question on ownership and implementation capacity has also been dealt with during field mission interviews and all the contacted stakeholders recognized a high level of potential ownership after the project activities.

- Evaluation question

*What mechanisms did the project put in place to ensure diversity of the beneficiaries participating in training; and what was the effective representation (quantities and quality/importance/relevance) of different beneficiaries in training (CSO's, EMB's, political parties, religious organizations, social personalities, opinion makers, media); and to what extent women representation was respected?*

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<sup>15</sup> As an example, the activity report on the LEAD training and multi-stakeholder dialogue organized in Madagascar in June 2016, apart from the detailed participant list also clearly mentions the different groups of beneficiaries and key stakeholders with their function and organization.

## ▪ **Conclusions**

- During the implementation of the Project, it became clear that, to influence the sound management of conflict and violence and put in place preventative measures, the Action must engage with all electoral stakeholders in order to facilitate structured interaction between key-players. The Project supported CSOs to create dialogue and function as a platform for exchange not only with the electoral administration but also traditional and religious leaders, former statesmen, local authorities and security forces. The scope of the target groups has as such be widened. LEAD trainings were organized for multi-actor public and the Observatory research, publications and interaction activities included all relevant electoral stakeholders and as such multi-stakeholder environments were foreseen and implemented.
- As per the participant lists from various trainings for stakeholder categories and gender representation, the Project always recommended ESN-SA partners to include several stakeholders in the various workshops and have women represented at 50% if conditions allowed for, which was always a respected feature.

## 2.4 Monitoring

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### • Findings

- The project document provides indications on the main elements to be followed-up, monitored and evaluated. It also states the publication of monitoring reports in accordance with EU recommended implementation practice:
  - Inception report (which includes the visibility plan, quality criteria, detailed activity schedule, monitoring scheme that includes detailed activity schedule
  - Interim progress reports
  - Annual reports
  - Final report
- The Project produced the inception and visibility report, 5 interim/annual reports and a final report.
- The overall Project monitoring and internal evaluations were complemented through workshop evaluations whereby participants and facilitators provided feedback on the content, usefulness, delivery and other aspects of such events. This type of evaluation is integrated in the activity reports and used to continuously adapt the content of the trainings and other interventions to the needs of the beneficiaries and the context.
- Although the Project document does not specify the specific role of a steering committee to monitor the Project, the MOU between ECES, EISA and ESN SA defines the way of implementing the Project through a joint Project Monitoring Unit and minutes of those meetings were produced;
- Project supervision by EC, Directorate General for development and Cooperation and or concertation with Country EU Delegations is not referred to in the documentation assessed.
- Although the Project document mentioned the possibility of organizing a mid-term external evaluation, as the Project produced a large quantity of analytic reports on Project activities, needs of beneficiaries and evolving national contexts to be able to adapt the project according to these needs, monitoring and evaluation has been continuous, and the management unit deemed these

reports (also produced by external trainers) sufficient as periodical evaluations. As such, an external mid-term evaluation was seen as an unnecessary cost and thus this activity has not been organized. According to the general conditions of the contract, there is indeed no contractual obligation for mid-term evaluation.

- Although the Project's internal monitoring activities are not explicitly described in the reporting, we have confirmed that all activities (training, research, etc.) were followed by reports assessing the quality and results of the activity.

- Evaluation question

*What mechanisms did the project put in place to ensure adequate monitoring systems and updated programming of project activities, adjusting to foreseen alterations in the political situation and electoral calendar?*

- Conclusions

- The Project document mentioned workshop evaluations as a key component of project monitoring. This was the backbone of the project monitoring strategy, namely careful analysis of project training evaluation reports.

### 3. Effectiveness – Achievement of the purpose

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The effectiveness criterion refers to the extent to which the expected Project results, the Project's purpose and specific objectives were attained.

The purpose of the Project is two-fold: 1) To strengthen the capacity of the SADC-ESN, its member organisations and wider CSO community to combat elections-related violence and conflict; and, 2) To support the establishment of an Observatory of electoral violence and carry out research and sensitization to prevent and mitigate electoral violence and advocate for legislative enforcement for electoral dispute resolution.

Annex P gives an overview per country of all activities organised and thus people trained and engaged under each result area.

#### 3.1 Result 1 - Specific capacity needs of CSOs in each country in the area of conflict mapping and prevention are identified

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##### • Findings

Analysing the main activities that should contribute to this result, our findings are as follows:

- Needs Assessment Missions (NAMs) were conducted timely as planned, in the early stage of the project (between May and November 2013), both by ECES and EISA (shared 50%). NAM reports show high level of quality, but subsequent autonomous Capacity Assessment Mission (CAM's) reports are missing, non-spite the fact that these are part of training reports, were we can find a section with recommendations on capacity building needs;
- The qualifications/specialization and level of rotation of training staff was assessed based in the trainers' CVs, that show the qualifications/specialization of training staff;
- Moreover, in addition to the numerous needs assessment exercises and documentation, the research done by the in-country researchers, establishing the Observatory, provides indirectly also with specific recommendations on capacity needs of CSO in the area of conflict mapping and prevention in the respective countries as well as an extensive overview of existing experiences.
- Contribution of these costs/activities to the achievement of the result and the consequences in the achievement of the purpose was relevant.

##### • Evaluation question

*To what extent did the Project clearly identify specific capacity needs of CSOs in each country in the area of conflict mapping and prevention? And to what extent did the fact that CAMs were not conducted and corresponding reports not produced, affect the adequate definition of training content and programming?*



- Conclusions
- The NAM reports provide for a detailed identification of CSO's needs in each country in the area of conflict mapping and prevention.
- The CAMs have been produced as part of training reports, where trainers identified needs for future trainings, also based on recommendations of trainees.
- According to the members of the PMU, the CAM reports would have been an extra and unjustified cost, since the project carried out activities in the SADC countries and took the opportunity to make mid-term assessments during activity implementation, instead of deploying missions for mid-term capacity assessments. Moreover, PMU considered that the workshop environment worked as a better indicator of capacities.
- Moreover, in addition to the numerous needs assessment exercises and documentation, the research done by the in-country researchers establishing the Observatory, indirectly provides specific recommendations on capacity needs of CSO in the area of conflict mapping and prevention in the respective countries as well as an extensive overview of existing experiences.

### **3.2 Result 2 - CSOs capacities in the field of elections, conflict management and leadership are enhanced**

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#### **• Findings**

Analysing the main activities that should contribute to this result, our findings are as follows:

- Concerning the capacity building to support CSOs, the Project extension enlarged the contribution to a longer term technical assistance in terms of advisory services and training provided, leading to a more opportune intervention (adjusted to electoral calendar);
- Given the extension of the Project, motivated by changing political contexts and as a response to an official request from the partner organisation, ESN SA, and as expressed in the letters accompanying the extensions, training and advisory support activities were somehow adapted relative to the initial project document, especially in terms of number of training sessions, as is documented in the updated logical framework of November 2016. As stated in the Letter to DEVCO of 18 October 2016, this is motivated by the need to conduct activities to support civil societies in the most challenging political and electoral contexts, including South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Zambia, DRC, Tanzania, Madagascar and Mozambique, bilaterally and through regional activities, by focusing mostly on multi-stakeholder LEAD trainings, responding best to the challenges of these contexts.
- From documents assessed, training needs were not covered as foreseen and expected in all countries (14) conducting electoral processes (12) during project time-frame. As stated earlier, this fact has been recognised by the Project Management Unit and explained in the correspondence with DEVCO as responding to a changing need and request from the main beneficiaries and contexts.
- ✓ Building Resources for Democracy and Elections (BRIDGE) Training to Facilitators (TTF) did not cover 6 countries and BRIDGE training Modules Workshop did not cover 11 countries. Nevertheless, the PMU considers that the ToT and TTFs were not limited, but strategically implemented in countries where the Project and ESN SA recommended investing in such



trainings. The capacity building component was contextualized per country and the PMU believed to have even exceeded the initial target.

- ✓ Leadership and Conflict Management for Electoral Stakeholders (LEAD) TTF did not cover 4 countries and the LEAD workshop (cascade training) did not cover 10 countries. The same rationale as mentioned before has been advanced by the PMU;
- ✓ Democracy, Elections and Conflict Management Course, was not conducted by EISA as foreseen in the Project document. However, from the start of the project, and as indicated in the Inception report and MoU between the three organizations, the content of this training has been integrated in the LEAD Workshops.
- There is no evidence in the assessed websites of the foreseen 4 modules of e-learning courses developed, despite the fact that the e-learning courses could be consulted in ECES' premises;
- The contribution of these costs/activities to the achievement of the result and the consequences in the achievement of the purpose was substantive, relevant and of high quality, but in terms of numbers there were fewer trainings delivered than initially foreseen.

- Evaluation question

*In each of the 14 countries covered, to what extent were the planned benefits delivered, as perceived by all key stakeholders, and what was the extent to which beneficiaries actually benefit from the project?*

- Conclusions

- In accordance with the interviewed stakeholders' statements, the planned benefits have been delivered to a very high standard and beneficiaries did receive the foreseen benefits from the project.

### **3.3 Result 3 - Observatory is established and operational**

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- Findings

Analysing the main activities that should contribute to this result, our findings are as follows:

- Although the Project document stated that the ERV Observatory would be co-located with EISA in Johannesburg, South Africa, from the start of the project and in common agreement between the three implementing partners as stated in the MoU, it has been decided that the Observatory would be under the responsibility of ESN SA secretariat as part of ownership and strengthening of capacity strategy. As such, and as extensively illustrated in the ERV handbook and explained in the introduction by the secretariat of the ESN SA the observatory exists through the network of highly qualified researchers of the target countries. In fact, we could verify that the TORs of researchers, clearly explain the functioning of the Observatory.
- Concerning the record of agendas and minutes of ERV Observatory meetings, foreseen to occur four times per year at a regional level to discuss strategies and share lessons learned, we verify that the Agenda and conclusions of observatory meetings were integrated in the Final Observatory report from Botswana 2014 with a separate list of recommendations. Moreover, we have also verified that during this meeting, lessons learned were translated into concrete case studies to be integrated in the LEAD training program. Also, we note that the report from the

2017 observatory meeting held in Brussels was integrated in the ERV handbook, which includes a section on lessons learned and recommendations;

- ✓ It has to be said that numerous efforts have been made to communicate the results of the Observatory not only to relevant stakeholders in the region but also at the very high level of the European Parliament and the practitioner's community. To this extent, The ERV Handbook has been presented at the European Parliament in the presence of all researchers. Moreover, specific publications have been produced to operationalise lessons learnt and recommendations. As such, "*The Potential of EU funded Electoral Assistance for the Prevention of Election related Conflict and violence: Lessons from the Southern African Region*" has been developed as a contribution to the discussions of the symposium organized in Brussels on 16th of November 2016 at the European Parliament by the European Parliament's Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group, in cooperation with the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Washington DC-based U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), the European Institute of Peace (EIP) and the European Peace-building Liaison Office (EPLO). Other examples are the following publications: "*Implementing the regional project PEV-SADC – Preventing Electoral Violence in the Southern Africa Development Community – and supporting key national and regional players in preventing electoral violence: South Africa, Lesotho and Mozambique cases study*" and "*Supporting mediation and political dialogue during the crisis in the aftermath of the challenging election in Zanzibar in 2015*", presented at the seminar organized in Brussels on 15 and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016 under the theme "*Lessons Learned from Supporting Elections in Fragile Contexts: A European Response to Electoral Cycle Support*"
- ESN SA website with a dedicated space for the ERV Observatory was not found, but a Project website (<http://www.pevsadc.eu/>) was developed with equivalent function. The website is accessible and can be considered well designed and structured, but the content does not reflect and include all materials expected and foreseen in the Project document.
- Despite the fact that the ERV handbook includes a consistent approach of the CSO's to the Joint Action Plan and that the observatory strategy is explained in the Terms of References of the researchers being part of it, the Joint Action Plan (JAP) has not been published as an autonomous document.
- The contribution of these costs/activities to the achievement of the expected result is relevant and tangible.

#### ● Evaluation questions

*Being EISA a founding member of the ESN network and a key partner to this Project, what reason lead to EISA's lower involvement in the responsibilities of the Project? Exactly at what point did the demobilization occur and to which extent did this affect the operationalization of the ERV Observatory based in South Africa?*

#### ● Conclusions

- During the field evaluation phase, we could conclude that there was no demobilization of EISA from Project responsibilities, but a reorientation. EISA's inputs became more of a request-based modality. For example, the Project hired EISA consultants for training and research activities (Zefanias Matsimbe - LEAD trainer, Robert Gerenge - DRC researcher, Victor Shale - Lesotho Researcher) to focus on a more output-based partnership.

### 3.4 Result 4 - Research and publications contributes to country advocacy and regional debate

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#### • Findings

Analysing the main activities that sought to contribute to this result, our findings are as follows:

- Data on ERV was collected for all 14 countries in the form of National Research Papers (NRP) and available in the Project website (abstract) and in ERV Handbook in the form of Case Studies. In all cases, the authors were national experts linked to ESN SA network of CSO's. The French and Portuguese versions that were foreseen to be produced are not available.
- The seminar in Brussels on 12 and 13 July 2017, entitled "*Preventing election related violence: what role for political mediation and dialogue?*" allowed for the official launch of the "*Election Conflict Prevention Handbook on Southern Africa*", the ERV Handbook, in the presence of all researchers, key representatives of the ESN SA network and its host director, representatives of Electoral management bodies and Embassies of the SADC region and EU officials. A high-level debate was organized at the European Parliament which allowed for not only for high visibility of the handbook but also offered a platform for advocacy. Researchers took the floor to present their views on the impact of the project, needs for future action and potential role for the European Union in supporting further the democratization and peacebuilding processes in the SADC region. Hard copies were distributed to the representatives of the observatory and ESN SA secretariat and to all other participants during the Brussels meeting, but there is no evidence of having distributed 3.000 hardcopies among ESN SA members. The PMU explained that the seminar, being also an Observatory meeting, was also intended for receiving the final feedback on the comment of the handbook and that the final version would also include the feedback received during the seminar. To make large distribution possible at lower cost (the ERV handbook contains almost 500 pages), the PMU decided to share the final version of the ERV Handbook mostly electronically.
- Other two research documents on regional issues in the ERV field were produced, as foreseen, and presented in international events; however, these papers are not available in the project website but they are available on the ECES website under the section dedicated to the PEV SADC project:
  - ✓ "*The Potential of EU funded Electoral Assistance for the Prevention of Election related Conflict and violence: Lessons from the Southern African Region*", developed as a contribution to the discussions of the symposium organized in Brussels on 16th of November 2016 at the European Parliament by the European Parliament's Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group in cooperation with the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Washington DC-based U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), the European Institute of Peace (EIP) and the European Peace-building Liaison Office (EPLO).
  - ✓ "*Implementing the regional project PEV-SADC – Preventing Electoral Violence in the Southern Africa Development Community – and supporting key national and regional players in preventing electoral violence: South Africa, Lesotho and Mozambique cases study*" and "*Supporting mediation and political dialogue during the crisis in the aftermath of the challenging election in Zanzibar in 2015*", presented at the seminar organized in Brussels on 15 and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016 under the theme "*Lessons Learned from Supporting Elections in Fragile Context: A European Response to Electoral Cycle Support*".

- For the other foreseen activities as to the project document, the following information is available:
  - ✓ Advisory support to ESN-SA for strategic implementation of the Democracy Toolkit under the format of “A Political Safari: An African Adventure in Democracy Building”, an outreach campaign developed and inspired by the award-winning film “An African Election”<sup>16</sup>, produced and directed by Jarreth Merz is mentioned in 2nd interim activity 31/102014 and a strategy has been shared. The advisory support was provided by the filmmaker Jarreth Merz himself and the tools made available were the movie “An African Election” and documentaries and street interviews, developed by Jarreth Merz in collaboration with ESN SA in Zimbabwe and Mozambique<sup>17</sup>;
  - ✓ Concerning the “ERV Regional Conference” dedicated to training issues, it is clear, according with the report of the Observatory meeting of Botswana (14-18 December 2015), that this meeting has specifically treated the training issues and modules were developed based on the country research, to be integrated in the LEAD course based on lessons learned and recommendations from the observatory. As described earlier, the second Observatory meeting was held in Brussels and allowed or the official launch of the ERV Handbook
- Contribution of these costs/activities to the achievement of the result and the consequences in the achievement of the purpose was relevant

#### • Evaluation questions

*How is the sharing of the material and project outputs among target groups, beneficiaries and general public being managed at present? Who is managing the ESN SA website developed by the Project? For what reason was the produced documentation (for example ERV Handbook and research papers) not translated to other 2 languages as foreseen in the project? Were the hard copies of produced materials distributed in the quantities expected?*

#### • Conclusions

- ESN SA website was managed and paid for by ECES in the framework of the Project for the first 2 years. After a handover of the website was done, the ESN SA website was managed by the ESN-SA secretariat in Harare. The PEV SADC project website was and still is managed by the ECES Project team in Brussels.
- As also explained under the section dealing with visibility, apart from the communication and publication on the project website, material and project output sharing is also realized through active information sharing by using an exhaustive mailing list of partners and potentially

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<sup>16</sup> The movie chronicles the 2008 presidential elections in Ghana and follows the presidential candidates in the unpredictable months leading up to the final night and the announcement of the election results and depicts the “heated” electoral race between the two front runners as well as the vision and strategies used by the EMB to ensure that the electoral and democratization process remained on track. As such, the movie provides an unprecedented tool for inspiring and educating African stakeholders and electorates in how a well-implemented electoral process can bring about peaceful change of power and democratic continuity where the result could have been an open conflict.

<sup>17</sup> Mozambique 2013 | “Entrevistas de Ruas” <http://youtu.be/3YuzqHbS9Hs>

Zimbabwe 2013 | “Report on Zimbabwe Elections 2013”<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1PgWWIb8yE>

Zimbabwe 2013 | “SADC-ESN observes the elections in Zimbabwe 2013”:<http://youtu.be/TZCW9m7AxsM>

Zimbabwe 2013 | “Voices of the Zimbabwean people – pre election 2013”:<http://youtu.be/lazz-N8NGEs>

Zimbabwe 2013 | “Voices of the Zimbabwean people – post election 2013”:<http://youtu.be/Du4z8ejVl9c>

interested public, through ECES' Facebook page and participation at international and regional conferences both by PMU members and ESN SA representatives. The publications of the project are widely shared by privileging electronic versions rather than paper versions so as to reach a larger public. Concerning the ERV Handbook, hard copies have been distributed to the representatives of the observatory and ESN SA secretariat during the Brussels seminar. In order to make widespread distribution possible at lower cost (the ERV handbook contains almost 500 pages), the PMU decided to share the final version of the ERV Handbook mostly electronically.

## 4. Efficiency - Sound management and value for money

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The efficiency criterion concerns how well the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results (sometimes referred to as outputs), in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. A comparison will be made against what was initially planned.

### 4.1 Management

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#### • Findings

Concerning the quality of management of the project, our findings are:

- We could access the reports presented and approved by the European Commission, for which content is unquestionably good in terms of relevance and quality. Reporting was made within the EC template for annual and interim technical and financial reports. However, some of the reports did not follow EC templates, however these reports were ancillary documents not required by the contractual obligations;
- Concerning the workplan and division of tasks, the MOU among the implementing partners provides details about the workplan and responsibilities division. The basic information for an efficient day-to-day management is presented in different documents, but also archived on ECES' server with limited access for people directly involved in Project management. The database of the Project includes:
  - ✓ Stakeholders, target group and beneficiary identification and contact list, through participation lists that are all available and have been analysed;
  - ✓ Training expert's CVs and reports of trainings are available;
  - ✓ The large quantity of training material that has been produced, as well as the programme and curricula of each different training modules.
- Concerning the performance of Project staff, in particular for training sessions, the training reports include the evaluations of participants, evaluating the training capacities of the trainers. Although, this information has not been extrapolated in specific performance reports, the Project Management Unit has been following the performance of trainers not only through the feedback of participants but also from its key partner ESN SA. This allowed for consolidating a pool of well performing and appreciated trainers, apart from Project staff, that were privileged in providing the trainings of the Project.



- Evaluation question

*To what extent did successive project non-cost extensions impact on the quality of project management, and what was the reason for donor Project supervision to accept reporting outside of the framework of EC/EDF templates?*

- Conclusions

- The successive project non-cost extensions had a positive impact on the quality of Project management. Reporting was made within the template agreed with the EC. The few reports that did not follow EC templates were ancillary reports, that were not required in the contractual obligations.

## 4.2 Costs

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- Findings

- An analysis of management of the budget is present in the letters requesting non-cost extensions and budget revisions, justified on the basis of changing implementation conditions;
- Five expenditure verification reports were assessed, being that the last one is for the period 01 January 2016 to 05 November 2016 as the verification of the last phase was realized in the week of 13 November 2017 and thus outside the contract of the evaluator).
- Inputs and outputs are valued in the initial logic-framework and justified in the initial budget.
- The PEV SADC financial report provides for detailed information in terms of activity costs as specific budget lines are foreseen for all specific activities and as such cost effectiveness is verifiable and confirmed. The unit costs for the implemented are in accordance with general applicable costs.

- Evaluation questions

*What was the impact of quality of budget management and cost control of 30 months successive extensions in an initial 24 month implementing project? How was this factor reflected on increasing cost of inputs (staff salaries) and decrease cost of outputs (training, studies and documentation)?*

- Conclusions

- After each budget amendment, the ratio between activities and human resources was consistently in favor of activities (looking at the original ratio of the first budget). The PEV SADC budget has several human resources positions that are delivering activities or are seen as activities in itself. The human resources position such as CDAs and ECMAs (see description in the Project document and the PEV SADC Project website) are the resources linked to direct implementation of activities apart from short-term expertise.
- Moreover, concerning Project offices, cost effectiveness has been observed in the choice of these offices and in management of the Project. As a matter of fact, the Project established a base in Madagascar in view of the fact that this city was host to two EU funded projects running simultaneously. ECES explained to the donor in an early communication that a joint Project office would help save costs and enable to use project staff interchangeably. As such, ECES and EISA initially shared the project office in Madagascar to facilitate project coordination. The Project did not see a need for permanent project offices in more countries once it started but implement the

Project with a mobile technical team as to be flexible to the needs of the different countries. The Project was therefore financially and administratively managed from Madagascar during the lifetime of two other EU funded Projects that dealt with Madagascar only (PACTE and INCIPALS). Thereafter, the Project's administrative centre moved to Brussels (end 2016). The Project continued to collaborate with ESN-SA members in the field and used ESN-SA member offices as liaison offices during the time of Project activity implementation.

### 4.3 Technical assistance

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#### • Findings

- Value for money in the technical assistance was ensured by ECES' qualified and experienced experts and opinion sharing/discussion of relevant issues during organized workshops. For the training activities ESN SA and EISA provided highly experienced trainers. Although the effective level of capacity building is difficult to measure, feedback from interviewed stakeholders has been positive on the transfer of experience and capacity.
  - ✓ There is no explicit documentation evaluating the competences developed for the target group (ESN SA and CSOs member) and other beneficiaries through the Project's provision of technical assistance, but the interviewed stakeholders were very positive regarding the level and quality of the capacity building. Moreover, several trainers trained through the training of trainers component were integrated in the pool of trainers for the Project and demonstrated clearly how the project strengthened their capacities and provided them with the tools to continue training their peers beyond the lifetime of the project.
  - ✓ The ESN SA, through its secretariat ZESN, confirmed the relevance of the CSO's interventions during the electoral process. Observation reports of the network illustrate the role of CSOs during the electoral process and during potential incidents of electoral conflict and violence.

#### • Evaluation questions

*To what extent did the fact that Training of Trainers (ToT) were not implemented in all countries impact on the capacity building of each country member of ESN SA?*

#### • Conclusions

- In accordance with the PMU statement and the feedback from beneficiaries, especially ESN SA secretariat, the ToTs were strategically implemented in countries where the project and ESN-SA recommended to invest in such trainings. The capacity building component was adapted to each country and the Project believes to have even exceeded the initial target.

### 4.4 EU and Implementing lead partner contribution

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#### • Findings

- EU contribution and inputs, concerning timely administrative and financial support, have been provided as planned:
  - ✓ Concerning the 25% contribution, an internal agreement, documented in the MoU, has been established between ECES, EISA and ESN SA. At the end, the requested contribution has been made almost exclusively by ECES;



- ✓ After the initial 24 months implementation period, due to multiple priorities from EISAs side and agreement on co-funding arrangements whereby EISA accepted not to be on a monthly payroll as suggested by the Project to limit the spending's of the PMU and instead focus on activities, EISAs inputs became more of a request-based modality. For example, the Project-hired EISA consultants for training and research activities (Zefanias Matsimbe - LEAD trainer, Robert Gerenge - DRC researcher, Victor Shale - Lesotho Researcher) to focus on a more output-based partnership;
- ✓ As mentioned earlier, concerning the ERV Observatory, rather than being established in the EISA office in Johannesburg (RSA), with office, furniture and equipment support, it was decided since the start of the project that ESN SA would be in charge of Observatory (as documented in the MoU);
- Resources and the global cost of the Project have been adapted to the extension period and the number and nature of activities have been adapted to the specific context and requests of key partners. As a consequence, the last addendum is accompanied by the revised log-frame and a lowered level of activities and nature of expected results.

#### • Evaluation questions

*What was the impact of implementing partners' contribution to the quality of budget management and cost control during the extension period of the project? Why was a budget increase not considered/requested, proportionally to each of the 3 implementation extensions?*

#### • Conclusions

- In the contractual agreement, implementing partners (ECES as lead) were obliged to bring 25% co-financing. The quality of budget management was unchallenged by the need to co-fund since this was a known feature of the contract. The contractual conditions were such that no further budget could feed into the contract, hence no formal requests to receive increased funds were ever made.

## 5. Impact - Achievement of wider effects

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The Impact criterion concerns the extent to which the objectives of the project have been achieved as intended, in particular the planned overall objectives, and what impact the implementation of the project has brought about in terms of strengthening institutional and human resources of the stakeholders concerned.

### 5.1 Contribution to the program overall objective and institutional strengthening

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#### • Findings

- The actual contribution to the achievement of the planned overall objective, meaning the successful prevention of the electoral violence in Southern African countries, through support to SADC Electoral Support Network, is tangible through the extensive innovative training programme and transfer of experiences, competences and capacities to mainly the ESN SA member organisations but also to the key stakeholders in electoral processes such as EMBs,

political parties, security forces, media, justice sector. The Project influenced positively the interaction between these actors through the multi-actor character of its training programming, positively influencing dialogue and collaboration between them as a potential tool to prevent and/or mitigate conflict.

- As assessed through the Project activity reports and publications, each country of intervention, through the NAM reports, had a national action-plan including in-depth mapping of stakeholders and strengths and weaknesses of key actors dealing with elections. These NAM reports guided the implementation of the training programs with more than 30 capacity enhancing workshops that were run using the LEAD and BRIDGE training programs, with around 800 individuals who received capacity enhancing training, amongst whom around 250 have been trained as trainers in either of the above-mentioned curriculums.
- Moreover, through the establishment of the ERV Observatory, through the network of highly qualified in-country researchers, not only has high-quality data been produced to guide future action (ERV Handbook and other publications), but collaboration and networking beyond national borders has been encouraged and consolidated. The project as such has revived and empowered already existing conflict prevention structures and encouraged collaboration between them.
- The research gave rise to several products and outcomes. As such, the research has fed into the LEAD curriculum as practical illustrations of theoretical concepts of conflict management with recent country-based examples. A discussion paper on “Lessons Learned from Supporting Elections in Fragile Context: “A European Response to Electoral Cycle Support”” has been published and presented at the European Parliament as well as the final product, a complete regional handbook on Election Related Violence: “Preventing and Mitigating Electoral Conflict and Violence – Lessons from the Southern Africa”. As stated in the introduction, “this regional handbook provides a comprehensive, up-to-date and practical guide that near-all electoral stakeholders and development partners involved in combating election related conflict and potential violence will be able to make use of. It analyses root causes and triggers, outlines hands-on solutions for different types of violence and provides a range of case studies reflecting on the lessons learned by the ESN SA and other CSOs that have worked in this field. The handbook can serve as a solid reference tool for many electoral stakeholders and development partners that are, or are intending to become, involved in the field of promoting peaceful electoral and democratization processes in the SADC and beyond. (...) The handbook also makes recommendations on how to improve the system and process and what role development partners should play, in particular the European Union and EU Member States.” In this perspective, the Handbook has been officially launched at the European Parliament in presence of its multiple authors.
- Specific support was also provided to develop visibility material for the network, to implement a mobile cinema outreach campaign called: “A political safari: An African Adventure in Democracy Building”, developed and inspired by the film: “An African Election”, and to specific observer missions. Awareness-raising material such as videos, a short documentary and videos were also developed.
- A detailed overview of all activities implemented per country and number of beneficiaries is attached to this report (Annex P).

- Evaluation question

*To what extent did the Project contribute to prevent conflicts and violence during the electoral cycle? What competences were built for the beneficiaries, and what set of measures were studied and proposed, in line with each situation? What mechanisms were ensured to avoid that project interventions would not constitute, themselves, factors of conflict for electoral processes?*

- **Conclusions**

- The impact of the implementation of both capacity building and advisory support activities brought about a significant strengthening of institutional and human resources capacity of the ESN SA members in the area of conflict mapping and conflict prevention. The Project reinforced collaboration among ESN SA members and influenced positively the interaction, dialogue and collaboration between key-actors of the electoral processes through the multi-actor character of its training programming. These interactions and dialogue are seen a potential tool to prevent and/or mitigate conflict.
- Through the establishment of the ERV Observatory, through the network of highly qualified in-country researchers, not only high-quality data have been produced to guide future action, but collaboration and networking beyond national borders has been encouraged and consolidated. The project as such revived and empowered already existing conflict prevention structures and encouraged collaboration between them.
- Concerning the ERV handbook, it has a high potential to positively influence conflict prevention measures as it is practical guide that near-all electoral stakeholders and development partners involvement in combating election related conflict and potential violence will be able to make use of: *“The handbook can serve as a solid reference tool for many electoral stakeholders and development partners that are, or are intending to become, involved in the field of promoting peaceful electoral and democratization processes in the SADC and beyond. (...) The handbook also makes recommendations on how to improve the system and process and what role development partners should play, in particular, the European Union and EU Member States.”*
- The specific set of measures taken in a particular context are motivated by the comprehensive needs assessment missions and the identification of specific capacity building needs taking into consideration the experience of the stakeholders and the context of the country. The constant feedback of partners and analysis of the contexts and challenges ensured the provision of support in a manner that is adapted to the targets and context, and permitted intervention at the right time, in phase with the electoral calendar of every single country and the identified challenges. As illustrated by the intervention strategy, activities were implemented so as to respond to fragile moments in the electoral cycle of a given country and were strategically chosen in terms of content and target as to be able to contribute towards overcoming the critical phases. This flexible and adaptable modality of implementation, taking into account countries’ and key stakeholders’ needs at a given time, has proved appropriate for the achievement of the desired results.
- Although the non-contestable positive impact of the Project in creating conditions to prevent election related conflict, the absence of systematic monitoring of CSOs and other beneficiaries’ interventions (during electoral processes) prevent us from having a clear evaluation of the effective contribution of those interventions to prevent conflict and violence.

## 5.2 Effects of the programme

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### • Findings

- The effects of the project have clearly been constrained by external factors, in particular the electoral calendars. Indeed, the main justification for Project extension, as explained earlier, was to adapt the project to the changing political context and to respond to the strong request from the key partner ESN SA to extend the programme over time and continue activities, adapting them to the changing political context and covering the maximum of electoral events.
- In terms of country and election events coverage:
  - ✓ The initial 24 months project (06/02/13 to 05/02/15) covered elections in 9 countries (Botswana, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe)
  - ✓ The first 12 months extension to 05/02/16 allowed the project to cover elections in 2 more countries (Lesotho and Tanzania)
  - ✓ The 9 months extension to 05/11/16, allowed the project to cover elections in 1 more country (Zambia)
  - ✓ The third 9 months extension to 05/08/17, was expected to cover the 2 remaining countries, but Angola had their election only on 23/08/2017 and DRC elections were postponed to the end of 2017.
  - ✓ The initial evaluation of the institutional strengthening of the ESN SA and ERV Observatory based on documents and reports was positively reviewed after the field mission and direct interaction with their members, who confirmed a significant institutional strengthening of both structures and confirmed the quality of the executed activities.
- The contribution to economic and social development and poverty reduction is, for the moment, an indirect impact of political stability provided by generally accepted elections, free from conflict and violence, to which the project contributed.

### • Evaluation question

*To what extent did the extension of the Project contribute significantly to prevent conflicts and violence during the electoral cycles, and what constraints of coordination and engagement with EISA and other stakeholders affected the achievement of wider impacts?*

### ▪ Conclusions

- Positive impacts were observed in electoral processes expected to be characterized by conflict and violence. This scenario did not occur, a fact that could have been influenced by the project activities and project extensions. We could conclude that the existence of some punctual management and coordination problems did not compromised the quality of the executed activities.

## 6. Sustainability - Likely continuation of achieved results

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The sustainability criterion relates to whether the positive outcomes of the project and the flow of benefits are likely to continue after the Project's end.

### 6.1 Ownership

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#### • Findings

- Ownership of the objectives, concerning stakeholders' consultation on the objectives and the design of the project, is unquestionable both for the initial 24 months as for the 30 months of extension. For the 30 months extension, as indicated earlier, one of the reason for extension was the demand of the ESN SA secretariat and members and as such they were consulted throughout the extended lifespan of the project and activities were adapted according to their requests as explained in letters send by ESN SA.
- Ownership of the achievements and implementation of activities, stakeholders' feedback and agreement with ongoing programme objectives have been expressed in the letters of request for extension (ESN SA) and the preface of ERV handbook.
- The political commitment of the ESN SA to the continuation of the established dynamics and initiatives is evident. However, funds will need to be mobilized actively to be able to further consolidate the achieved results.

#### • Evaluation question

*How far were the stakeholders consulted in terms of the Project revision needed for its successive extension, and how extensively were they involved in the implementation of activities?*

#### • Conclusions

- One of the reasons for extension was the demand of the ESN SA secretariat and its members, and as such they were consulted for the extended lifespan of the project and activities were adapted upon their request as explained in letters send by ESN SA. The implementation of all activities is based on active participation of not only the ESN SA secretariat but also the member organizations that co-organized all activities in their respective countries as the in-country focal points of the project.

### 6.2 Institutional capacity and phasing out

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#### • Findings

- The institutional capacity of ESN SA and their CSO members, as a target group and beneficiary organisation (financial and administrative retention and institutional memory building) is not evident;
- The main instrument for sustainability as institutional and organizational procedures, strategies, action plans, training manuals and structured databases were not found;

- Evaluation question

*To what extent are ESN SA and their CSO members prepared to take over, technically, financially and managerially, to continue to provide all different trainings, including cascade training to larger beneficiaries (not accomplished), and promote the adequate establishment of the ERV Observatory? Were BRIDGE, LEAD courses training manuals produced, and are there available databases of program/curricula and experts?*

- **Conclusions**

- All participants trained as trainers in both LEAD and BRIDGE has been given access to the full curriculum via USB sticks (LEAD) or access codes to an online database platform managed by the BRIDGE administrators (Electoral commission of Australia). The level of preparedness varies between the ESN-SA members but the ESN-SA secretariat is nevertheless mandated to do all fund-raising on behalf of the network. As such, and given the long-standing collaboration between ESN-SA and ECES in the framework of the project, ESN-SA is well equipped to disseminate both LEAD and BRIDGE should donors be open to such activities in the SADC. The PEV SADC project did not foresee sub-granting. As such, the project was mandated to supply the ESN-SA with tools and not the financial means for further dissemination.

## 7. Coherence and complementarity

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- Findings

- The project design is fully in line with the objective of the Cotonou Agreement to sustain economic growth through building institutional capacities of recipient governments as a means of increasing effectiveness, sustainability and impact. The policy objectives of the Cotonou Agreement are in line with international agreements aimed at increasing the effectiveness of development assistance, including Shaping the 21st Century and the related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for poverty reduction and, the 2005 Paris Declaration;
- The project design is also consistent with the EU “draft set of guidelines on the reinforcement of the of the cooperation partnership” as it focuses on capacity building, through the transfer of knowledge and development of management tools;
- There is no documented evidence of donor coordination and PEV-SADC Project involvement with EU Supported initiative “Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution Programme in the ESA Region” and Several other running projects funded by EU, supporting the electoral process in Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and Zambia. Concerning Madagascar, there is a clear coherence and complementarity, namely with PACTE and INCIPALS.

- Evaluation question

*To what extent was the Project articulated with conflict prevention programs and projects of OECD, World Bank and the services of the EU at central level (DEVCO), with EU Observation Missions and experts for elections in the covered countries? And what was the involvement in the field of the SADC regional organization and the EU Delegations in those countries supporting the Project, in particular where the project was supposed to establish bases (South Africa, DRC?/Madagascar and Mozambique)?*



- Conclusions
- This EU funded project dealing with election conflict prevention at the regional level was considered unique in its size and scope. The Project team was in constant contact with DEVCO and the various EU Delegations, including the stakeholders in each country where overlapping activities would have come to the Project's attention. Concerning EU EOMs, there were many interactions at the country level, whereby the Project provided briefings and exchanges with the EU EOMs. On the other hand, for the sake of keeping a clear division between observation and assistance activities, as the EU at the central and Delegation level is cautious to blur the boundaries in some countries, the interaction between EU EOMS and PEV SADC were limited. That said, the project always took note of the main recommendations produced as a result of the missions and tried to facilitate discussions around the key recommendations in the following workshops. As regards Project offices, the Project established a base in Madagascar for reasons of having two EU funded projects running simultaneously. ECES motivated to the donor in early communication that a joint project office would help save costs and enable to use project staff interchangeably. The project did not see a need for permanent project offices, once it started, in more countries due to the vast coverage of activities in all countries. The project was therefore managed in Madagascar during the life-time of the second EU funded project that dealt with Madagascar only (PACTE and INCIPALS). Thereafter, the projects administrative centre moved to Brussels. The project continued to collaborate with ESN-SA members in the field and used ESN-SA member offices as liaison offices during the Project's implementation.

## 8. Visibility

The project has taken many measures to make the project, its interventions and the EU support visible to a broad public. **A project website** (<http://www.pevsadc.eu/>) has been developed as well as a specific project logo respecting the EU Guidelines established in the Communication and Visibility Manual for external action.<sup>18</sup> All activities and thus the progress of the project implementation were also made visible on **ECES website** [www.eces.eu](http://www.eces.eu), and **ECES Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/eces.eu/>. Moreover, the project produced several publications to communicate about lessons learned and recommendations. These publications were actively distributed (mailing list) and through the participation at high level events such as debates at the European Parliament, presentations at ECF-SADC annual meetings, at international and local observer missions, international conferences<sup>19</sup> and in the framework of the European Development Days. At the 2017 edition, ECES presented on the topic: "The potential of EU funded electoral assistance for the prevention of election related conflict and violence" (<http://www.eces.eu/en/posts/lessons-from-sadc->) by focusing on the lessons learned from the PEV SADC Project and Southern Africa region and recommendations for all stakeholders including the European Union and its member states.

Concerning the ERV Handbook, a compilation of all research, lessons learnt and recommendations produced in the frame of the project, an official launch was organized at the European Parliament as being part of high level seminar on "Preventing election related violence: what role for political

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<sup>18</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/_en)

<sup>19</sup> ECES has been present at the Pre-International political science association (IPSA) conference on "Contentious elections, conflict and regime transitions » organised by the Electoral Integrity Project and International IDEA in Poznan, Poland. Lessons learned from the PEV SADC project have been presented and in particular the research case of Madagascar" (<http://www.pevsadc.eu/posts/eces-at-ipsa-conference>)



mediation and dialogue?”. The seminar was chaired by MEP Judith Sargentini former Chief Observer to the EU election observation mission in Mozambique and Tanzania and co-chaired by Mr Alojz Peterle, MEP, former Chief Observer to the EU election observation mission in Kenya. Among the panelists was the researcher of the case-study of Lesotho, namely M. Victor Shale, and a member of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, M. Granville Abrahams. This event, combined with an exhibition of the Mozambican artist Goncalo Mabunda, entitled “Transforming weapons into arts”, provided for high level visibility.

In terms of visibility in the region of intervention, the Project also produced several videos with contextual analyses and testimonials on projects’ activities and impact. As an example, in Zimbabwe, filmmaker Jarreth Merz and Farai Mugano, freelance Zimbabwean filmmaker, produced a video on the 2013 Zimbabwe elections with the aim of documenting the opinions of the Zimbabwean people before and after the July 31st elections, as well as recording the electoral observation activities of ESN SA observers and finally providing a general documentation on the Zimbabwe elections in general (<http://www.pevsadc.eu/posts/film-zimbabwe>)<sup>20</sup>. Another example comes from Mozambique, where street interviews were organized to document the opinion of the population on the political and electoral context<sup>21</sup>.

Visibility was also assured through press releases and the invitation of local media during openings and closings of workshops and other events. Local media coverage of the activities in the respective countries has been documented in the different activity reports.

## 9. Cross cutting issues

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- The main cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, environmental sustainability, gender equality, human rights and HIV/AIDS are not directly integrated into the design of the project.
- Equal participation of women in the implementation of projects and programmes and in the provision of training opportunities under the project has been a permanent aspect of the Project’s approach, proof of which can be found in the reporting.

## 10. Conclusion

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In general, it has been observed that the Project was receptive to the constant feedback of its key partners, both ESN SA and its member organizations but also EU institutions, and that it adapted to the political contexts of the countries. Consequently, the Project has been flexible in the way it adapted its actions to the demands and the needs expressed, so as to ensure the provision of an effective response to challenges in election related conflicts and this in consultation with the donor. Therefore, not only was the Action extended three times, bringing the total period of intervention to 54 months, but some of the actions planned in the project document have been adapted or even somehow changed, as documented in the updated logical framework. Moreover, as the project evolved, actions were mostly concentrated in the countries of the SADC region, more vulnerable and

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<sup>20</sup> “Report on Zimbabwe Elections 2013”:<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1PgWWIb8yE>

“SADC-ESN observes the elections in Zimbabwe 2013”:<http://youtu.be/TZCW9m7AxsM>

“Voices of the Zimbabwean people – pre election 2013”:<http://youtu.be/lazz-N8NGEs>

<sup>21</sup> “Entrevistas de Ruas” <http://youtu.be/3YuzqHbS9Hs>

prone to election-related conflict. As a consequence, capacity building and advisory support activities have been concentrated in countries such as Mozambique, Tanzania, DRC, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Zambia and Zimbabwe whereas countries such as Angola, Mauritius, South Africa and Swaziland received less attention in terms of direct intervention through capacity building activities. However, although no training activities were implemented directly in the latter countries, ESN SA representatives of these countries were invited in regional training events as to make sure that all member organizations were benefitting from the Action. Moreover, over the lifetime of the Project, trainings became larger in terms of beneficiaries by including other relevant electoral stakeholders and regional bodies.

In general, as stated by the Project Management Unit (PMU), the activities that are being implemented are therefore based on the demand-side rather than the supply-side of the Project. These requests were always grounded in the increased challenges around the electoral cycles in the respective countries. As illustrated in this report, a wide range of capacity building and advisory services were delivered as a response to this request and to consolidate the Project as a reliable ally to support key actors in the region, supporting these actors to position themselves vis-a-vis the changing electoral and political dynamics.

This regional project allowed also for comparison across borders, sharing experiences both between different types of stakeholders at country-level but also with peers from other countries allowing for south-south collaboration and coordination. Lessons learned from one country to the other have been used to innovate national approaches and cross-country ties have been enhanced not only through consolidating the existing ESN SA structure and capacity, but also through the establishment of the “human observatory” on election related conflict providing in-depth insight in the many issues related to election related conflict and violence both in terms of causes and solutions.

As has been identified through the implementation of the Project, and thus research and activities in the SADC region, recent elections and political developments have reignited a general climate of mistrust by broad sections of the public towards electoral management bodies and state actors involved in the organization of elections, mostly because of their independence being questioned but also voter lists being challenged, state involvement in campaign funding and manipulation of the legal framework, etc. Although the SADC region is known as one of the most peaceful regions on the continent, some of the member countries are facing serious challenges in terms of continuous threat to peace and stability. There are indeed strong indications that the SADC region, and some of its member states are going through multiple challenges in terms of governance and more specifically the organization of peaceful elections and there seem to be shifting roles between the countries conventionally seen as trouble makers and those seen as anchors of peace. As such, and as indicated by the host director of the ESN SA and Executive Director of the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN), electoral events in the SADC region show that there is a need for continuous vigilance and deeper understanding of all dimensions and actors that could potentially generate conflict and/or violence related to electoral processes.

## 11. Recommendations

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As has been stated in the context of the project intervention, CSOs are conventionally excluded from the political arena in many countries and often their potential positive role in peacebuilding initiatives is not fully exploited, partly because of a lack of capacities of CSO in the area of conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution. The PEV SADC Project provided a response to this situation by supporting the regional umbrella organization, ESN SA, and its member CSOs, to play a key role in promoting peaceful electoral processes and so to value more the potential impact of CSOs in peacebuilding initiatives in general. To consolidate this role, it is recommended to further enhance the institutional capacity of the network as well as the visibility of its actions and potential impact.

Given the achievements of the Project and the challenges of the wider context, it is recommended to the donor community, and especially the EU, to continue supporting the existing initiatives and dynamics created by the Project, both at regional and national level by global or national funds available funds. From a regional point of view, it is recommended to have the Observatory continuing research and monitoring on further developments in the region as to be able to function as an early warning mechanism and raise the awareness of key-players on potential risks and provide recommendations for strategic action to prevent, mitigate and resolve election-related conflict and potential violence. It should also be noted that collaboration and continued relationships with the regional bodies of the SADC is crucial in further coordinating and harmonizing efforts to prevent, mitigate and manage election-related conflict and violence. This recommendation has also been identified through the national research case-studies themselves.

Indeed, it is worthwhile to put forward some of the recommendations that came out of the national cases and that could be transformed into future actions both at national and regional level through comprehensive support projects. In summary, and as also comes out of interaction with the Project partners and beneficiaries, it seems crucial to support the development and strengthen anti-ERV mechanisms and tools involving CSOs, EMB's and other electoral stakeholders in a coordinated and safe forum for exchange especially supporting ERV Regional Observatories made up of national experts and thus departing from local expertise and peer-learning. Apart from an observatory role, there should be also support to the establishment of a regional mediation body that coordinates national initiatives targeting track 2 and 3 mediation<sup>22</sup> at the regional and national level as a valuable complement to the regional bodies efforts. At times, regional bodies and high-level envoys are less effective in mediation due to strong ties at the national level between countries stemming back from the liberation struggle. This recommendation was also mentioned during the debate at the European Parliament on the exact topic of "Preventing election related violence: what role for political mediation and dialogue?".

In terms of capacity building and effective intervention of CSO's in preventing, mitigating or managing election related conflict, further support seems to be needed, especially in countries facing direct challenges such as Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, DRC but also countries such as Zambia and Tanzania (Zanzibar). As has been encouraged through the PEV SADC project, it seems crucial to include all key-actors such as the CSO, EMBs, political parties, media, administration (national and local authorities), security forces, traditional and regional leaders in

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<sup>22</sup> Track 1 refers to processes in which top leaderships of the conflict parties are engaged with each other, i.e. representatives of the government and the leadership of armed non-state actors. In track 2 activities, elites and decision-makers (e.g. civil society representatives, religious leaders, business leaders etc.) are involved, but not the top leadership of the conflict parties. In track 3 activities, grassroots actors are involved.

dialogue initiatives, encouraging all of them to go in the same direction to promote peaceful electoral processes. With the involvement and participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders in elections, it is possible to establish mechanisms that can prevent electoral conflict, and what more, to assist in diffusing conflict before it spreads. Indeed, as the case-studies show, eliminating electoral conflict seems close to impossible, and thus continuous support should be provided to embed election related conflict prevention mechanisms in wider democracy and electoral support programs regardless of the main objective of such program. These mechanisms are the ones developed in the PEV SADC project, seeking to enhance research and analysis, early warning and rapid response tools, dialogue, leadership skills, mediation, awareness raising on tolerance and peace, and capacitation in operational and technical aspects of actors involved in conflict prevention, mitigation and management.

Other recommendations insist on the need to continue actions that create synergies between electoral assistance and election observation, exploring the role of electoral assistance projects' potential to support the implementation of EU Election Observation Mission (EUEOM) Recommendations.

In general, a positive aspect of the project has been to be flexible and adapted to the specific needs and contexts of countries. Moreover, apart from the more classic capacity-building approach through trainings, the advisory support, adapted to specific needs and contexts, has showed to be very much appreciated and effective in improving performances and institutional capacity. It is recommended to continue this demand-driven and adapted advisory-support approach as to ensure ownership and sustainability.

In terms of cross-cutting issues and in accordance with the broad based and multi-actor approach it seems to be crucial to consider youth and women as key-actors in any further action in the area election related conflict prevention, mitigation and management. Future Projects need to ensure that young people are targeted for interventions and inclusion in all stages of a Projects life cycle as youth are often used as instruments in achieving higher political ends and may be mobilized and manipulated by political elite groups to carry out acts of electoral violence. As to women, it has been observed that violence and the threat of violence are believed to impact in particular women and as such the participation of women at all stages of Project planning and implementation, taking into account specific needs and tools is highly recommended.

In general, it is recommended that future support in the area of election related conflict prevention and mediation takes into account the lessons learned from this evaluation and building on the acquired experience. The design of the future program should take into account the complexity of the context, thematic area of intervention and interactions between all relevant stakeholders. In particular, the program should take into account and be prepared for volatile political and electoral contexts and be able to adapt to changing needs and priorities as was the case in the PEV SADC project. Any future program should have appropriate provisions to ensure effectiveness. These might include the establishment of a Steering Committee and systematic monitoring of activities, outputs and impacts. Explicit capacity building in the field of project management and organizational, technical and network capacity by promoting south-to-south collaboration and coordination is essential in future interventions.