

Electoral system assessment tool for Inclusive, Honest, Orderly, and Peaceful Elections (IHOPE)

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Over the past three years, Thailand’s King Prajadhipok’s Institute (KPI) has partnered with the Development Studies Program of the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines and the Universities and Research Councils Network on Innovation for Inclusive Development in Southeast Asia (UNIID-SEA Inc.) to jointly develop a performance framework for independent electoral commissions or IECs in the ASEAN Region, based initially on the experiences of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) of the Philippines and the Electoral Commission of Thailand (ECT).

The output of the study, completed in 2017, was a prototype of a **blended performance indicator framework for Inclusive, Honest, Orderly, and Peaceful Elections (IHOPE)**.

This prototype Framework has 10 pillars corresponding to key elements of the a) Core Electoral Process, b) Engagement of Mass Media, Academe and Think Tanks, and c) Engagement of Political Parties and Candidates.

PILLARS OF INCLUSIVE, HONEST, ORDERLY, and PEACEFUL ELECTIONS (IHOPE)	
A. CORE ELECTORAL PROCESS	
1. ELECTORAL CLIMATE: MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY FACILITATING FACTORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom to engage in political activity assured • Elections are certain to be held across the nation • Voters are free to cast votes • Local election commission and deputies 	Q1. Did the results in election precincts, districts, and constituencies in the country genuinely reflect the popular vote in the elections? Q2. Was the electoral process sufficiently managed and resourced to give every qualified voter a chance to register and freely vote, as well as identify with and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can move freely • Voter rolls are assembled • Conflict flashpoints are identified and managed • Competition among parties representing same ethnic population moderated • Armed group attacks to discredit government anticipated and neutralized 	support candidates and political parties in the elections? Q3. Was the overall political campaign to disseminate information on programs of government and political issues well-distributed and given enough time and resources to complement the preparation and management of the electoral process in all the electoral precincts and regions of the country? Q4. Did the use of campaign resources provide enough information on programs of government and political issues rather than the personal qualities of candidates or gimmicks, guns, goons, gold, and glitter? Q5. Did political parties and candidates carry out their electoral campaigns without resort to practices and schemes to obtain undue advantages over competing parties and candidates through coercion and intimidation, vote-buying, bribing officials and media, vote-padding, and similar actions. Q6. Did the electoral commission engage political parties and candidates in sufficient consultations and dialogs to explain the rules and guidelines and understand their concerns about the elections and respond to these in a manner that builds confidence in the election process?
2. ELECTORAL PROCESS MANAGEMENT – LOGISTICS IN PLACE ON TIME FACILITATING FACTORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of election commission • Track record in holding credible elections • High level of training and competencies • Adequate resources for effective electoral management • Even distribution of resources across nation • Impartiality in dealing with political parties and candidates 	
3. FAIR OFFICIATING – FACILITATING AND REGULATING FACILITATING FACTORS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent electoral commission • Balanced composition • Good track record • Clear and fair election laws and guidelines • Clear mandate and strategic vision 	

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<p>4. VOTERS AND VOTING – REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION</p> <p>FACILITATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardized definition of constituencies Even distribution of voters Clear rules and guidelines for reserved seats and additional ethnic minority seats Systematic and facilitative registration of voters Adequate and on-time provision of identity cards and voting paraphernalia Sufficient voter education 	<p>Q7. Did the electoral commission officiating and regulating the conduct of the elections anticipate and manage all the critical and plausible risks of violence, disorderly processes, and irregularities in the elections and taken the time to manage these risks?</p>
<p>5. ELECTORAL RESULTS – TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND CREDIBILITY</p> <p>FACILITATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive voting process Systematic and transparent canvassing of votes Credibility and quality of the election results Consistency of leadership outcomes with election results Identity, organization, and quality of government after elections 	<p>Q8. Did the monitoring and evaluation bodies freely and completely observe the overall electoral climate and the conditions of public order and safety before, during, and after the elections?</p> <p>Q9. Did the monitoring and evaluation bodies completely freely observe the manner in which the media, information, and data facilitated or obstructed the flow of relevant information to the voters, citizens, political parties, candidates, and other stakeholders?</p> <p>Q10. Did the monitoring and evaluation bodies completely and freely observe the preparation, logistics, and implementation of the election?</p> <p>Q11. Did the monitoring and evaluation bodies completely and freely observe the registration and participation of the voters in the election?</p>
<p>6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION – INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MECHANISMS</p> <p>FACILITATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement and freedom of movement and observation of international observers 	<p>Q12. Do the internal and international monitoring and evaluation bodies attest to the transparency, accountability, and credibility of the elections?</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilization and harnessing of NGOs Encouragement and effective use of citizen contributions to electoral effort (e.g. incident reporting via social media) 	
<p>B. MASS MEDIA, ACADEME AND THINK TANKS</p>	
<p>7. THE MASS MEDIA, ACADEME, THINK TANKS – INFORMATION FOR DECISION-MAKING</p> <p>FACILITATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media freedom Media training on election ethics Media reporting on election issues, process, and results Education content on election system and roles Conduct of election surveys and comparative candidate and party evaluation 	<p>Q13. Did the electoral climate and conditions of public order and safety enable the mass media and think tanks to completely, freely, and fairly cover the elections?</p> <p>Q14. Did the mass media and think tanks give equal access to candidates and political parties in bringing their programs of government and issues to the voters and the people?</p> <p>Q15. Did the mass media and think tanks provide voters and the people easily understandable articles and stories about the comparative programs of government and related issues advocated by the political parties and candidates in the elections?</p> <p>Q16. Did the mass media and think tanks generate and disseminate comprehensive, accurate, balanced, and responsive data and information to enable the voters to make intelligent electoral choices?</p>
<p>C. POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES</p>	
<p>8. POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES – INCLUSIVENESS AND ENGAGEMENT</p>	<p>Q17. Did political parties and candidates contribute to an electoral climate conducive</p>

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<p>FACILITATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political mobility of candidates • Experience through hierarchy of political offices • Complete registration of political parties • Full participation by major political parties <p>9. PROGRAMS OF GOVERNMENT – FORMULATION AND ARTICULATION FACILITATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political parties have clear and coherent ideologies, programs of government, and electoral strategies • Ethnic identity politics moderated by issue politics • Political parties raise adequate financial resources for electoral campaigns • Political parties are able to build technical and organizational capacity • Political parties coalesce rather than splinter <p>10. CAMPAIGN RESOURCES – LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD FACILITATING FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased community-generated opportunities for educating voters, communicating political party platforms, meeting political candidates • Reduction of costs of candidacy • Public sharing of electoral campaign expenses • Free media for electoral campaign 	<p>to the maintenance of public order and safety by avoiding, preventing, and campaigning against political violence and speech and actions leading to violence, playing up of ethnic conflict, and irregularities in the elections?</p> <p>Q18. Did political parties and candidates provide the mass media and think tanks with timely and sufficient information about their programs of government and issues?</p>
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Q19. Are the Electoral results reflected in the leadership and organization of the new government?

Q20. Overall, will the new government enhance the country’s security, democracy, and development?

THE IHOPE ASSESSMENT TOOL

The IHOPE Assessment Tool is a guided questionnaire that is segmented according to the 10 IHOPE pillars. Respondents will go through a series of statements pertaining to a specific pillar, and will be asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to each statement. After each segment/ pillar, a score will be generated and interpreted. Once the respondent reaches the end of the questionnaire, a cumulative score—total of the scores generated per segment/ pillar—will be calculated and interpreted.

A set of sociodemographic information will be collected before the actual questionnaire to allow for differentiation of results according to the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents.

QUESTIONNAIRE PROPER

PILLAR 1: ELECTORAL CLIMATE: MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the electoral climate in your country?

1. People are not free to participate in political activities during the campaign and election period.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don’t Know

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2. It is not certain that elections would happen in the whole country.
- Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know
3. Voters are free to cast votes on election day.
- Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know
4. Election management officers/officials are not completely free to move around polling/voting areas or precincts.
- Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know
5. The Voters List/Database maintained and issued by the national election commission is in good order.
- Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral

- Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know
6. The management of political conflicts by the government is not so effective.
- Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know
7. The government was effective in moderating excessive competition among candidates and political parties.
- Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know
8. The government was not so effective in neutralizing armed groups during election period.
- Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

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PILLAR 2: ELECTORAL PROCESS MANAGEMENT: LOGISTICS IN PLACE ON TIME

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the management of the electoral process by the national election commission in your country?

1. The capacity of the national election commission in managing elections is considerable.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

2. The national election commission is effective in implementing a successful election process.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

3. Officials of the national election commission have adequate training in managing the entire election process.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

4. The budget of the national election commission is sufficient to carry out successful elections.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

5. The distribution and flow of funds from the national election commission to different parts of the country is even.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

6. The national election commission is biased for some candidates and political parties.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

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PILLAR 3: FAIR OFFICIATING: FACILITATING AND REGULATING

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about fair officiating by the national election commission in your country?

1. The national election commission is not controlled by politicians.
 Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know
2. The composition of the commissioners/leadership of the national election commission is not balanced
 Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know
3. The results of past elections, as managed by the national election commission, are not credible.
 Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

4. Election laws are clear and fair.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

5. The mandate and vision of the national election commission are clear.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

PILLAR 4: VOTERS AND VOTING: REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about voters and the voting process in your country?

1. The size of representative districts (how your city, town or state is divided for government purposes) is uneven—some are too big, and some are too small.
 Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

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2. The distribution of voters across polling precincts/areas is uneven – some have too many voters, some have very few.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

3. Persons with disability are given equal opportunities to vote in elections.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

4. The registration of voters is unsystematic and takes too long.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

5. Voters are given voter identification cards (IDs).

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

6. Voters are not sufficiently informed and educated on their electoral responsibilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

PILLAR 5: ELECTORAL RESULTS: TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND CREDIBILITY

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the electoral results in your country?

1. The process of voting is easy to follow, whether one is educated or not.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

2. Cheating occurs in the counting of votes.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

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3. The results of elections are truthful and credible.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

4. The best candidates win the elections.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

5. The quality of government became worse because of previous election results.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

PILLAR 6: MONITORING AND EVALUATION: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MECHANISMS

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the monitoring and evaluation of elections in your country?

1. International election observers are not allowed to move freely in the country during election period.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

2. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) actively watch and monitor the elections.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

3. Voters voluntarily report anomalies during the conduct of elections.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

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PILLAR 7: MASS MEDIA, ACADEME, AND THINK TANKS: INFORMATION FOR DECISIONMAKING

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the engagement of media and civil society in the electoral process in your country?

1. Mass media reporters/personnel are free to cover and report on the whole election process.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

2. Mass media reporters/personnel are not given training on election ethics.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

3. Mass media is active in reporting on the election process, political parties, and candidates.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

4. The content of news reports on the election process, political parties, and candidates is shallow and lacking in information.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

5. There are surveys that provide comparative information among candidates and political parties during the election period.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

6. Academic institutions and think tanks provide sound analyses of election issues, developments, processes, and systems.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

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PILLAR 8: POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES: INCLUSIVENESS AND ENGAGEMENT

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the participation of political parties and candidates in the electoral process in your country?

1. Candidates in elections are mostly rich, and very few are poor.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

2. Candidates in elections have the necessary governance experience, having gone through various government positions in the past.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

3. Political parties and candidates have a hard time registering with and getting accreditation from the national election commission.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

4. Political parties are given equal opportunities to participate in elections.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

5. Independent candidates (those who are not affiliated with or are members of established political parties) are given equal opportunities to participate and run in elections.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

PILLAR 9: PROGRAMS OF GOVERNMENT: FORMULATION AND ARTICULATION

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the articulation/presentation of programs of government by political parties and candidates in your country?

1. Political parties and candidates do not present clear platforms of government during campaigns and the election period.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly Agree
 Don't Know

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2. For voters, a candidate's stance on key issues such as poverty alleviation is considered more important than a candidate's ethnic identity (affiliation with a regional or cultural subgroup).

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

3. Political parties have insufficient funds for elections.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

4. Political parties are not organized and have few members.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

5. Political parties often splinter/split up because of infighting, and difference in ideologies and electoral strategies among its members.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

PILLAR 10: CAMPAIGN RESOURCES: LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD

Based on past election experience, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about electoral campaigns and campaign financing in your country?

1. Community-based opportunities for voters to discuss election issues and political party/candidate platforms, and interact with candidates increase during the election period.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

2. The financial cost of running for office has gone down compared to previous elections.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

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3. Ordinary citizens are given the opportunity to contribute to the campaign resources of candidates.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

4. The national election commission is able to provide free media coverage on television, radio, newspaper, and/or social media to candidates during the campaign period.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

IHOPE PILLAR	SCORE	RATING (Very Good, Good, Poor, or Very Poor)
Pillar 1: Electoral Climate		
Pillar 2: Electoral Process Management		
Pillar 3: Fair Officiating		
Pillar 4: Voters and Voting		
Pillar 5: Electoral Results		
Pillar 6: Election Monitoring and Evaluation		
Pillar 7: Mass Media, Academe, and Think Tanks		
Pillar 8: Political Parties and Candidates		
Pillar 9: Programs of Government		
Pillar 10: Campaign Resources		
OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM		

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