

# Looking Forward: 2011 Elections in Chad



By Maggie Farrand

In February 2011, local and national elections took over the political scene in Chad. From February through June, the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) will conduct three nationwide elections: legislative elections on February 13, the first round of presidential elections on April 3, and local elections on June 26.

These three elections come after much debate and delays to the electoral timetable. Originally, the elections were planned for late November 2010, but CENI announced a delay in September, due to “constraints encountered throughout the (electoral) process,” according to the former CENI President, Ngarmajiel Gami. Another short postponement of the elections came in January after Mr. Gami’s dismissal from his position as the head of CENI.

Counterpart International is implementing [Promoting Elections, Accountability and Civic Engagement \(PEACE\)](#) in Chad, a two-year program funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The goal of this program is to promote broader citizen participation in democratic processes through peaceful, free and fair legislative and presidential elections. Counterpart will support and assist CENI in various areas of election process communications and administration, including media outreach, voter education, voter complaint mechanisms and post-election evaluation.

Counterpart has been working closely with CENI to enhance their capacity to effectively administer electoral processes. In November 2010, Counterpart signed an Equipment Grant Agreement with CENI that provided the Commission with twenty-five desktop computers, three laptop computers, a generator, a hard disk Multimedia Storage, an inverter, a UPS and a voltage regulator. A second delivery of computers, printers and media equipment is scheduled to be delivered to CENI in February 2010.

Counterpart has also worked alongside CENI to develop and print a polling guide, a voter education handbook and an election formulas guide, which outlines the rules and regulations related to voting operations and the counting process in Chad. The guides were distributed to each polling center in Chad. L’Express, a Chadian magazine, will publish the guides in its February monthly magazine.

Together with the Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa (EISA), Counterpart provided training to members of CENI and the Bureau Permanent des Elections (BPE) using the election

formulas guide. This training explained the legal methodology of counting seats according to election results and Chad's election laws.

Counterpart will continue its election administration assistance to CENI as it implements the upcoming presidential and local elections and as CENI begins to strengthen its capacity to oversee all electoral operations.

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