

# **Political Party Capacity Building Programme**

## **Manual**

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## Overview

Political parties are crucial to democracy. They serve to bring like-minded people together within a society to strive for a common goal. They provide policy ideas about how a society should be governed. They identify and train political leaders. They also act as a link between citizens and their government.

Too often little attention is given to the development of strong political parties. More concern is often paid to the establishment of governmental bodies and civic organisations. Both of these institutions are important. However, without strong and dynamic political parties democracy cannot survive in the long run.

Politics, politicians and political parties are also sometimes viewed negatively by the public. Some think that politics is a dirty business and that politicians and political parties are corrupt. However, politics is a noble pursuit. It is ultimately about serving the public and improving the lives of citizens. You should be proud to be involved in politics and to be a member of your political party. Further, there is a political dimension to every aspect of life and politics, therefore, is unavoidable.

Political parties are not only made up of their leaders. Without networks of activists/members no party could function or be successful. It is critical that not only leaders, but all party structures understand the importance of political parties and how they function.

In the 14 years since Independence, political parties in Namibia have developed considerably. However, political parties, just as any other institution, should continuously seek to enhance their capacity in response to changing circumstances. Political parties, like all organisations, will decline over time if they do not make conscious efforts to strengthen themselves.

This manual was developed on the premise that political parties are important and that politics is fundamentally a noble pursuit. It also recognises that parties in Namibia already have significant capacity. The manual is intended to provide information on why parties exist and how they function.

It is hoped that information contained in this will help political parties in Namibia to continue to be vibrant organisations that are able to respond to the changing needs of the Namibian people and develop into professional organisations.

# OVERVIEW

The content of this manual have been adapted primarily from material in NDI's "Political Parties and the Transition to Democracy: A Primer in Democratic Party-Building for Leaders, Organisers and Activists."

## **Small Group Discussion #1 – Characteristics of Effective Political Parties**

As a small group, discuss the following questions. From among your group you should select a facilitator to guide the conversation and a rapportuer to take notes and to report back to the plenary. Each time you break into small groups, you should chose a new facilitator and rapportuer.

1. What do political parties do?
2. Why are political parties important?
3. What makes political parties effective?

## **What are the Functions of Political Parties?**

Political parties serve a number of functions in any democratic system. Among other reasons, political parties exist to:

- ▶ contest and win elections to gain control of government institutions in order to implement their policies;
- ▶ bring together different people and groups with common values and ideas;
- ▶ provide policy alternatives;
- ▶ identify and train political leaders; and
- ▶ serve as a link between citizens and government.

Political parties are an important part of democracy. The Constitution of Namibia gives its citizens the right to freely come together to form and support political parties of their choice.

“All citizens shall have the right to participate in peaceful political activity intended to influence the composition and policies of the Government. All citizens shall have the right to form and join political parties and; subject to such qualifications prescribed by law as are necessary in a democratic society to participate in the conduct of public affairs, whether directly or through freely chosen representatives.” *Namibian Constitution Article 17(1)*

## **Concerns about Political Parties**

While political parties serve important functions in a democracy, some people view political parties negatively.

Political competition is at times seen as destabilising. Particularly in new democracies, there is often a desire for peace and stability. Competition between political parties can be viewed as a threat to that stability. To counter this, political parties should find a way to compete within politically acceptable bounds that do not undermine the stability of the country. Opposition parties should acknowledge the right of ruling parties to govern and ruling parties should accept the right of opposition parties to criticise. Further, all political parties, government and opposition, have an obligation to represent the interests of those citizens who voted for them.

However, competition between political parties is not all bad. Competition also serves to make parties more responsive to voters, motivates parties to develop new ideas and to reach out to new groups of citizens. Winners should be magnanimous and realise that tomorrow they could lose. Losers should realise that there is always another election (at a different level of government or another time in the future) and the outcome could be different.

Some people also view politics and political parties as corrupt and having a corrupting influence on society. Politics, however, is a noble pursuit. It is ultimately about public service and improving the lives of citizens. Political parties exist to help people solve the problems they face in their daily lives. Political parties can counter negative perceptions by being open in their conduct and accountable in their actions.

## **What makes Political Parties Democratic?**

A vibrant multi-party democracy requires parties that are themselves internally democratic. Political parties that are not internally committed to democratic principles will likely fail to adhere to democratic values in their actions. Importantly, parties that are internally democratic are more likely to be successful over time and to be able to adapt to new challenges and changing political realities.

Political parties which are internally democratic:

- ▶ Allow members to express their views freely;
- ▶ Encourage participation of all members;
- ▶ Promote the membership of women (and other politically marginalised groups);
- ▶ Tolerate differing ideas;
- ▶ Abide by agreed upon rules and procedures for decision-making; and
- ▶ Hold leaders accountable to members and supporters.

Political parties that lack internal democracy are characterised by:

- ▶ Isolated and unchanging leadership;
- ▶ Marginalised party members; and
- ▶ Poor internal communication.



## **Party Unity**

For political parties to be effective, their members need to adhere to a common vision and follow rules of the party. A political party should be cohesive. Party's cannot tolerate members who:

- ▶ fundamentally disagree with the leadership and ideas of the party;
- ▶ are loyal to other parties; or
- ▶ refuse to work within the party structure.

Parties that are unable to maintain discipline will likely cease to be coherent organisations.

At the same time, political parties that don't permit a divergence of views and who don't tolerate any individual initiative on the part of their members are likely to become stagnant over time.

Political parties should strive to balance the need for ideological consistency and organisational coherence with the need for new ideas and innovations.

## **Attributes and Strategies of Political Parties**

Political parties need a variety of resources to be successful.

Political parties at a minimum need to have:

- ▶ Ideas for improving the country;
- ▶ Rules and structures (Constitution);
- ▶ Leaders;
- ▶ Members; and
- ▶ Resources (financial and in-kind).

Beyond these attributes a successful party also needs to have strategies to:

- ▶ Develop the party;
- ▶ Internal party communications;
- ▶ Membership recruitment;
- ▶ Explain its ideas to the public (and the media);
- ▶ Raise resources (and expending funds);
- ▶ Contest elections;
- ▶ Recruit candidates;
- ▶ Campaign; and
- ▶ Monitor the election process.

## **Party Organisation**

A party with good ideas, committed leaders and a large number of members can still fail to achieve its goals. Too often political parties make the mistake of devoting all of their resources and energy to short-term election campaigns, rather than to building and maintaining a solid democratic party organisation. Party organisation should be a priority for party leaders before issues of campaign organisation are addressed.

Political parties should be organised and managed no differently than other successful organisations. At the most basic level, this means that a successful party will have a clear internal structure that is well known and understood by its members. It is critical that people know:

- ▶ where they fall within a party's structure;
- ▶ what their roles and responsibilities are based on their position within the structure; and
- ▶ the roles and responsibilities of other positions within the structure.

New political parties are often so busy that they don't spend the time necessary to develop an efficient structure. Longer established parties in many cases take the party structure for granted and don't realise the importance of reviewing the structure to adapt to emerging trends and priorities.

In addition, time and energy should be spent instructing new members and refreshing old members on the importance and nature of the party's structure. As political parties are always expanding their membership this is an ongoing activity.

Finally, a party's structure does not need to be fixed. Rather it may change over time. As conditions change a party may change its structure to adapt to new political realities.

## **Exercise #1 – Party Message Development**

What are three attributes of a good political party message?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# **EXERCISE #1**

## Party Message Development

Party messages are used to inform the public about what a party stands for and to convince people to support the party. A party uses messages to demonstrate to people that it has a vision and a plan by developing persuasive messages. A party that cannot effectively communicate its vision and plan to voters will not be successful. In its simplest form a party message is a statement of why someone should become a party member (or vote for a party or its candidate on election day).

The test of a good message comes when a party member can give a concise, persuasive reply to the question “why should I support your party or candidate?” The member’s answer to that question should be the party’s message.

Party messages should be backed up with a policy of how the party is going to achieve what it stands for or how it is going to prevent what it is against. For example if your party is for job creation, how does your party intend to create more jobs.

Party Messages should be:

- ▶ *Formulated in advanced and used by the whole party* – Good messages cannot be created spontaneously and need to be used by all party members.
- ▶ *Brief* – The best messages can be communicated in one or two sentences.
- ▶ *Easy to understand* – The words that are used should be understandable to the audience.
- ▶ *Unique* – A party’s message will be ineffective if citizens do not associate it solely with the party.
- ▶ *True* – It is very easy to get a reputation as a party that says things that are not true. People will lose faith with a party that does not tell the truth.

- ▶ Positive – Effective messages should give people hope that, if the party comes to power (or remains in power) that their life will improve.

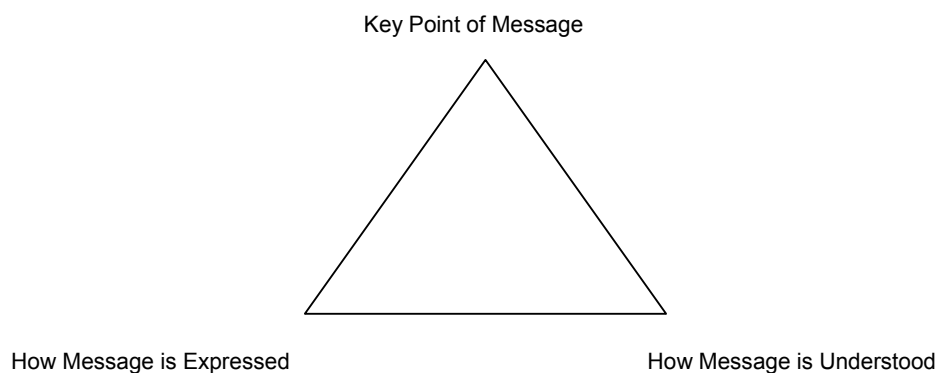
If a message is going to help a party, it should be used often and effectively. All party members should be educated about the message at meetings and through newsletters. Party leaders should make sure their words and actions support the message. It is critical to stay “on message.” By promoting the party message consistently people will eventually identify the message solely with the party.

### Message Triangle

A message triangle is a tool for analysing the effectiveness of party messages when delivered to the public. A message triangle involves three interrelated questions.

- ▶ What is the key point the message is trying to communicate?
- ▶ How is the message expressed to people?
- ▶ How is the message understood by people?

Ideally, the answer to all these questions should be the same. In reality, though, this is not always the case



Good messages fall inside the message triangle.

### **Seven Steps to Building and Using an Effective Message**

1. Listen to the people and learn from their concerns.
2. Formulate ideas to address their concerns based on your party's vision.
3. Develop policies and ideas that you can be implemented if you win an election to address those concerns.
4. Draft a message that is brief, easy to understand, unique, true, and positive.
5. Test your message on small sample groups.
6. Find, and create, opportunities to use your message.
7. Stick to your message and make sure everyone in the party understands and uses the message.

## **Small Group Discussion #2 – Party Message Development**

As a small group, develop up to three sample messages for your party. Think about the following questions:

- ▶ What is the policy to back up your message (how would your party accomplish this message?)
- ▶ How will different groups interpret your message (use the message triangle to analyse)?
- ▶ Is your message brief, easy to understand, unique, true, and positive?
- ▶ What is unique about your message in comparison to competing messages?

From among your group you should select a facilitator to guide the conversation and a rapportuer to take notes and to report back to the plenary. Each time you break into a small group you should choose a new facilitator and rapportuer.

# **DISCUSSION #2**



## **Exercise #2 – Voter Contact**

What are three different ways of getting out one's message to the public? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each method?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# **EXERCISE #2**

## **Voter Contact**

There are many different ways to make contact with voters. Some of the ways available are:

- ▶ Television (paid advertisements, free advertisements, and news coverage)
- ▶ Radio (paid advertisements, free advertisements, and news coverage)
- ▶ Newspapers (paid advertisements, free advertisements, and news coverage)
- ▶ Emails and SMSs
- ▶ Telephone
- ▶ Mail
- ▶ Posters and Billboards
- ▶ Rallies
- ▶ Small meetings
- ▶ One-on-one conversations

An effective communication strategy will use all of these techniques to reach the public. However a detailed plan is needed on where, when and why to use each method.

Direct contact between party members and the public though one-on-one conversation or small meetings are often the most effective way to attract new members and support. However, these can also be the most time consuming and expensive methods.

Other techniques, such as television and radio can reach a large number of people quickly and often relatively cheaply. However, they are not as effective. They are often most

useful for reinforcing messages that have already been delivered first on a one-on-one or small group basis.

Television, radio and newspaper advertisements as well as posters, billboards and large rallies provide only one-way flows of information while one-on-one interaction or small meetings provide an opportunity for two-way communication. Thus the latter give parties a chance to learn from voters and engage in a dialogue with them.

As much as possible, political parties should try to record information about their direct contact with voters. Every time there is direct contact between a party member and a voter the date of the interaction, the nature of the interaction and the likelihood that this individual will support your party should ideally be recorded.

Thus parties should strive not only to have accurate lists of their party members, but also geographic lists of those people who are:

- ▶ very likely to vote for the party;
- ▶ might vote for the party; and
- ▶ will definitely not vote for the party.

This information can be used in the future to target campaign activities specifically to those most likely to support your party.

## **Working with the Media**

Good media coverage is not an accident. It takes hard work to develop strong relationships with journalists as well as newspapers, radio stations and television stations.

Tips for strengthening relations with the press:

- ▶ Remember that it takes time to build good media coverage;
- ▶ Develop a press contact list for all media outlets;
- ▶ Meet regularly and in person with editors and journalists from all media outlets to develop personal relationships;
- ▶ Offer suggestions to editors and journalists of possible story topics; and
- ▶ Remember that journalists are not your enemy, they are simply doing a their job.

When organising a media event, consider doing the following:

- ▶ Send out a short “press advisory” a week before via fax that quickly gives the who, where, when, and why of the event (this is different and shorter than a press statement).
- ▶ Call press the following day to make sure that they have received the “press advisory” and inquire if they intend on sending someone to the event and who that person will be.
- ▶ The day before the event send out the “press advisory” again reminding journalists of the event.
- ▶ That same day call journalists as well to confirm that they will be attending.

- ▶ At the event, hand out a press release to all journalists who attend the event. Also, send the press release to all media outlets regardless of whether they attend your event.
- ▶ At the event speak, with journalists and make sure that they have gotten all of the information that they need. Offer to provide them with additional information if necessary.
- ▶ After a story appears in the press about the event, call the journalist to thank them for the story about your event (regardless of whether it was a good story or not). If you were happy with the story, tell the journalist why it was good. If you were unhappy, in a constructive way explain to the journalist how the story could have been improved.

When talking with journalists remember:

- ▶ Don't speak off the record – If you don't want it in the media, don't say it.
- ▶ Don't say no comment – This gives control of the story to someone else and doesn't make a bad story go away.
- ▶ Don't speak off the cuff – Think before you speak.
- ▶ Don't lie – Sooner or latter the truth will catch up with you.
- ▶ Don't argue – There is nothing to be gained from fighting with a journalist.

*(adapted from Women's Campaign International)*

## **Party Internal Communications**

While external communication is important, the need for effective and efficient internal party communication cannot be over emphasised. A party's leadership should inform members of party positions while at the same time members should be able to share their ideas and concerns with the leadership. If a party cannot communicate effectively among its own leaders and members, it is unlikely to be successful contesting elections or governing.

A party should have good two-way internal communications. There should be mechanisms not only for members to communicate with the leadership, but also for the leadership to communicate with the members.

Good internal party communication requires:

- ▶ routine mechanisms for sharing information; and
- ▶ record keeping.

There should be routine opportunities to share information within the party and these should be known to all members. Such methods include party meetings newsletters and communication trees. It is important that meetings are held and newsletters appear on a regular and known basis and that everyone in a communication tree knows to whom to pass messages.

Two kinds of record keeping are critical to effective internal communications.

- ▶ First, a party should have an accurate list of its members that includes at least: the positions they hold (if any); where they are located, and how they can be contacted.
- ▶ Second, there should also be accurate and concise records of party communications.

## **Exercise #3 – Membership Recruitment**

What are three reasons why members are important to political parties?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# **EXERCISE #3**

## **Membership Recruitment**

Members are the lifeblood of any political party. However, some political parties give too little attention to membership recruitment. The reasons that recruitment is not made a priority include:

- ▶ membership recruitment is seen as too difficult, time consuming and costly;
- ▶ belief that the party does not need members to win elections; and
- ▶ new members are seen as a threat because they may propose new policies and leadership.

The simple truth is that any political party will be more successful in promoting its policy agenda and electing candidates, if it can increase its membership. A party's members are its greatest resources. Members bring:

- ▶ votes
- ▶ ideas
- ▶ energy
- ▶ skills
- ▶ money

The most effective means of recruiting new members is by door-to-door personal visits. In urban areas it may be possible to solicit new members via mail and telephone. However, even in urban areas direct face-to-face contact is best.

When meeting with people, members should be polite at all times; introduce themselves and their party; address the residents by name; provide them with information about the party and what it stand for (messages); and summarise the main reasons to join the party.



Records should be kept of each person with whom members met. Some people might not want to join right away, but may need more time. A second visit can be scheduled for a latter date for those people who appear interested.

The party should maintain a list of all party members. This is very important. Well-organised, updated lists can be used for a variety of purposes, including: fundraising, volunteer recruitment and campaigning.

After a recruitment drive in an area, an event should be organised to bring new members together with the party leadership and older members.

Door-to-door campaigns are only one technique for recruiting new members. Parties can organise political events or recreational or cultural activities that will attract a large number of people who can be asked if they are interested in joining the party. Also, the party can try to take advantage of other events. For example, it may be possible for the party to set up a booth at an event to provide information on the party and why people should join.

Importantly, every interaction between your party and citizens should be recorded for later use. It is vital that the party have records of all of the individuals with which contact has been made; those individuals support the party, those that might support the party; and those that will never support the party.

**Exercise #4 –  
Volunteer Mobilisation**

What are three barriers to political parties mobilising volunteers to help them?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are three ways that political parties can encourage volunteers to work for the them?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## **Volunteer Mobilisation**

Just as it is inconceivable to think of a democratic society without active citizens, it is also impossible to think of a political party without active members. Yet, all-too-often parties do not provide opportunities for members to contribute. Rather, they only call upon their members to vote for them on election day. If members at the grassroots feel that they are unimportant and have no opportunities to contribute, they probably will not remain with the party very long.

One way to engage members is to have them volunteer to perform some function for the party. Volunteers are needed to:

- ▶ recruit new members;
- ▶ campaign for the party and the party's candidates;
- ▶ conduct voter education and get out the vote; and
- ▶ observe the election process as party agents.

All of these activities need large amounts of people to accomplish. Further, each activity requires a hierarchy of people with different skills and levels of responsibility. All except the most senior positions are well suited for volunteers drawn from a party's members.

It is important to provide volunteers with training so that they have the specific skills necessary for their assigned task and so that they are aware of the party's expectations.

Volunteers need to be compensated, but this does not have to be financial. Giving certificates and mentioning the contribution of members in a party newsletter can often replace monetary rewards. Volunteers should always be thanked for their time and services. They should also be evaluated and those who perform well should be given more responsibility in the future.

## **Strategic Planning for Elections**

Strategic planning is an ongoing process that determines what an organisation will be in the future and what paths the organisation will take to get there. Thus, it involves:

- ▶ developing a vision for the future; and
- ▶ identifying the activities, skills and resources necessary to achieve that vision.

Strategic planning serves, among other things, to:

1. Clearly define the purpose of the organization and to establish realistic goals and objectives consistent with that mission in a defined time frame within the organization's capacity for implementation.
2. Communicate those goals and objectives to the organization's constituents.
3. Ensure the most effective use is made of the organization's resources by focusing the resources on the key priorities.
4. Provide a base from which progress can be measured and establish a mechanism for informed change when needed.
5. Provides clearer focus of organization, producing more efficiency and effectiveness.

Political parties should have two interrelated strategic plans. A party should have plans for:

- ▶ the overall development of the party; and
- ▶ how the party will contest an election.

While these two types of plans are obviously related they are not the same thing. A party should have a plan for its

own development independent of one for how it will contest elections.

With respect to strategic planning to contest an election, the natural place to start is with a realistic goal for the party’s electoral performance (this would be the party’s vision for the future with respect to the election).

Performing a SWOT analysis can help a party formulate a realistic goal. SWOT analysis looks at four issues:

- ▶ Strengths;
- ▶ Weaknesses
- ▶ Opportunities; and
- ▶ Threats.

SWOT Analysis	Internal	External
Positive	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
Negative	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Threats</b>

By analysing these four perspectives of a political party, it is possible to come up with a realistic goal for a party’s performance during a given election.

However, it is not enough to simply have a goal for a party’s performance in an election, there needs to be a way of achieving that goal. What steps is a party going to take to reach its objective?

Here it is important to look at a number of different areas, including:

- ▶ Candidate selection
- ▶ Candidate nomination
- ▶ Campaigning – Electronic Media

- ▶ Campaigning – Print Media
- ▶ Campaigning – Printed Material (Posters and Billboards)
- ▶ Campaigning – Rallies
- ▶ Campaigning – Telephone and Mailings
- ▶ Campaigning – Door-to-Door Contact
- ▶ Voter Education
- ▶ Get Out the Vote
- ▶ Party Poll Watching
- ▶ Resource Mobilisation (Financial and In-Kind)
- ▶ Volunteer Mobilisation

SWOT analysis could be conducted in each area. For each area sub-goals can be identified and concrete activities defined to achieve those goals. Further, a time line for those activities should be constructed and the human and financial resources (and other materials) needed for each activity identified.

It is important to prioritise. It may not be possible to do all of these things or to do them all to the degree the party would like. Some of the main factors that limit a party's activities:

1. time;
2. human resources; and
3. financial resources.

Planning will not solve all of a party's problems and there are pitfalls to the planning process itself. Those pitfalls include:

- ▶ planning is only as good as the information on which it is based;
- ▶ planning isn't magic (you can't always get what you want);
- ▶ planning shouldn't be too rigid (a plan is only a guide and needs to be able to adapt to changing circumstances);
- ▶ time and energy must be devoted to planning for it to succeed;
- ▶ don't let planning become a substitute for action;
- ▶ don't rely on generic approaches to strategic planning; and
- ▶ a plan that isn't written down in "easy to understand" language won't be used.

*(adapted from "The Pitfalls of Planning" by Arlene Goldbard)*

<b>Sample Strategic Planning – Action Plan</b>
<b>1. Overall Goal (performance in a particular election)</b> Win 15 seats in the National Assembly
<b>1.1 Objective (for example with respect campaigning – print media)</b> To reach 50,000 voters with our messages via The New Era and Die Republikein four times before election day.
<b>1.1.1 Activity</b> Write opinion piece for the Die Republikein on the importance of the Walvis Bay port.
<b>When</b> To appear 2 months before the election.
<b>Who</b> Party Secretary for Economics
<b>Cost</b> None
<b>Other Requirements</b> Computer to write opinion piece and background articles on Walvis Bay and its port.

## **Small Group Discussion #3 – Strategic Election Planning**

As a small group, conduct a SWOT analysis of your party in general and develop goals for the regional council, national assembly and presidential elections.

Further, choose up to three of the following areas and conduct a SWOT analysis for those specific areas. Again, develop specific objectives and develop concrete activities that the party could conduct to achieve those objectives. Think about the human and financial resources needed for each activity.

From among your group you should select a facilitator to guide the conversation and a rapportuer to take notes and to report back to the plenary. Each time you break into a small group you should choose a new facilitator and rapportuer.



## Voter Targeting

A central aspect of any election strategy is understanding who is most likely to vote for your party and its candidates. Voter targeting is the concept of focusing campaign activities on those individuals who are most likely to support your party.

All individuals in a country can be divided into two categories:

- ▶ Those eligible to vote; and
- ▶ Those ineligible to vote.

During an election, there is no reason to waste any of a party's limited resources (time, money, people) trying to convince those who are ineligible to vote to support your party. However, between elections there may be reason to seek members among those who are not currently eligible to vote, but who will be eligible to vote in the future.

Among those eligible to vote, there are three types of individuals:

1. Those who will never support your party no matter what;
2. Those who might support your party, but don't currently; and
3. Those who will always support your party.

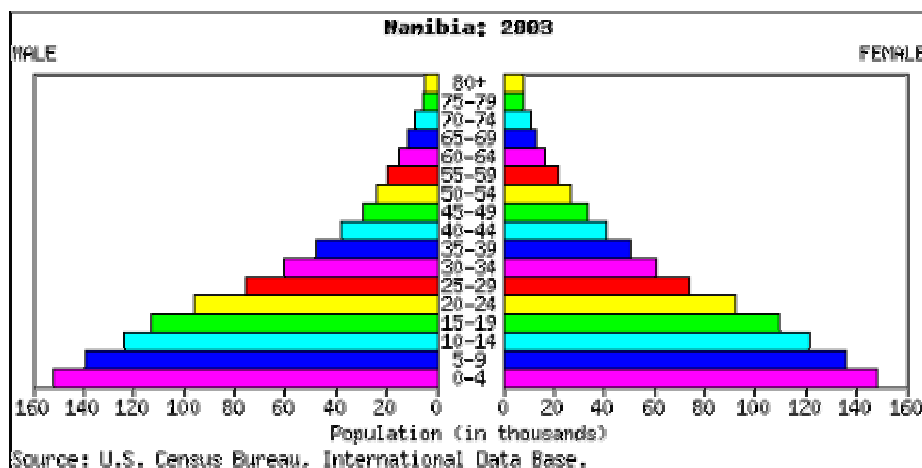
Voter targeting argues that during an election all of a party's efforts should focus on eligible voters and that most resources (time, money and people) should be expended on individuals who will always support your party followed by individuals who might support your party. Only very limited resources should be devoted to those individuals who will never support your party.

It is important for a political party to determine who fits into each of these three categories and to understand where, when and how to best reach those in the last two (those who may and those who always will support your party). Often these different categories will be differentiated by age, geography, gender, employment and so on.

Understanding who is most likely to support your party (and least likely) can help make your party activities more efficient. Voter targeting is important for conducting membership drives, carrying out voter education, campaigning; and engaging in get out the vote (GOTV) activities. In each case, parties have very limited resources (time, money and people). Voter targeting helps parties maximise their resources.

In analysing voters it is also important to look at demographics. How is the population distributed by: age, gender, geography and ethnicity and what implications do these have for elections?

For example, how the population of a country is distributed has implications for political parties. Younger voters tend to think and behave differently than older voters and different campaigning techniques are more effective with younger versus older voters. The chart below shows the population “pyramid” for Namibia in 2003.



## Exercise #5 – Voter Targeting

Complete the following table. In doing so, think about geography, ethnicity, age, gender, occupation, etc.

Voter Targeting	Groups
Always Support Your Party	
Might Support Your Party	
Never Support Your Party	

# EXERCISE #5

## **Resource Mobilisation**

A universal lament of political party organisers is, “if we only had more money, we could get our message out, recruit more members, buy more office equipment or run better campaigns.” Unfortunately, for most political parties, money is usually in short supply. While some countries provide funding for political party operations, particularly around election time, there is never enough money, even for wealthy parties, to do everything.

Resource mobilisation must be a top priority of any party and this priority should be reflected in a party’s organisational structure and staffing. At the national level, there should be a person responsible for developing an overall fundraising strategy. However, fundraising should not be limited to only the national level. There should be individuals at the sub-national level whose responsibility is to mobilise resources for the party (in coordination with the national director).

Most of the time resources are thought of in terms of money. Money is often the most useful because it can be used to purchase other things and people’s time. However, it is important to think outside the box. In mobilising resources parties should also think about gifts in kind (such as the use of a computer) or human resources (such as a graphic designer volunteering her time). Thus, parties should try to mobilise:

- ▶ Monetary contributions;
- ▶ In-kind donations or loans; and
- ▶ Skills.

It is important for parties to develop a resource mobilisation strategy. This strategy explains:

- ▶ What are the goals (how much money, in-kind donations and skills will be raised)?

- ▶ Where will the resources (money, in-kind donations, and skills) come from?
- ▶ How much will resource mobilisation activities cost in terms of human and financial resources (it costs money to make money)?
- ▶ Who will keep track of the resources?
- ▶ When can the party expect to receive the resources?

As with strategic planning, a SWOT analysis can help a party to answer these questions.

There are a variety of techniques for mobilising resources. A resource mobilisation strategy usually involves a mixture of a number of different strategies. Some mobilisation techniques are:

- ▶ Personal requests by party leaders and members;
- ▶ Use of a mobilisation committee;
- ▶ Events;
- ▶ Sale of memorabilia;
- ▶ Solicitation letters;
- ▶ Solicitation phone calls;
- ▶ Writing proposals for funding of projects; and
- ▶ Internet websites.

Personal requests are usually the most effective. Party members are most likely to respond favourably to personal requests. The amount of money that members will contribute is likely to vary. Those members who contribute larger sums or who contribute regularly should be rewarded with a letter, telephone call or visit from the party leader or a member of the party's senior leadership. Some political parties will reward those individuals who

consistently contribute to the party by inviting them to special functions where the party leadership and other dignitaries will be present.

Those requests that are specific and give a reason for needing the funds are most likely to be successful. Consider the following two attempts to solicit contributions.

### Example A

You, a party activist, knock at a door and Esau opens it.

Esau: Hello. What do you want?

Party Activist: My party is raising some money. Can you donate?

Esau: For what?

Party Activist: Well, our chairman said we have no funds so we are going around asking for donations.

Esau: For what?

Party Activist: Well, aah, so that our party can have some funds ...

Esau: For what?

Party Activist: Eh ... you see, the chairman ...

Esau: Get out of here and don't come back!

### Example B

You, a party activist, knock at a door and Esau opens it.

Esau: Hello. What do you want?

Party Activist: Good morning Esau. I am from the Farmers' Party and we are trying to improve sanitation in the local market. We need some money for that, and I am asking if you can contribute something.

Esau: You want to build new toilets?

Party Activist: Not yet, but eventually we will. Right now, we are concerned about the rubbish that is piling up because people are throwing cola bottles and plastic bags carelessly.

Esau: But can money remove the garbage?

Party Activist: When we raise enough money, we want to buy gloves for volunteers who will do the cleaning. We also need to buy shovels, wheelbarrows, rakes and chemicals. After that, we will buy dustbins where people can drop the rubbish and those bins will be collected by a tractor, which we

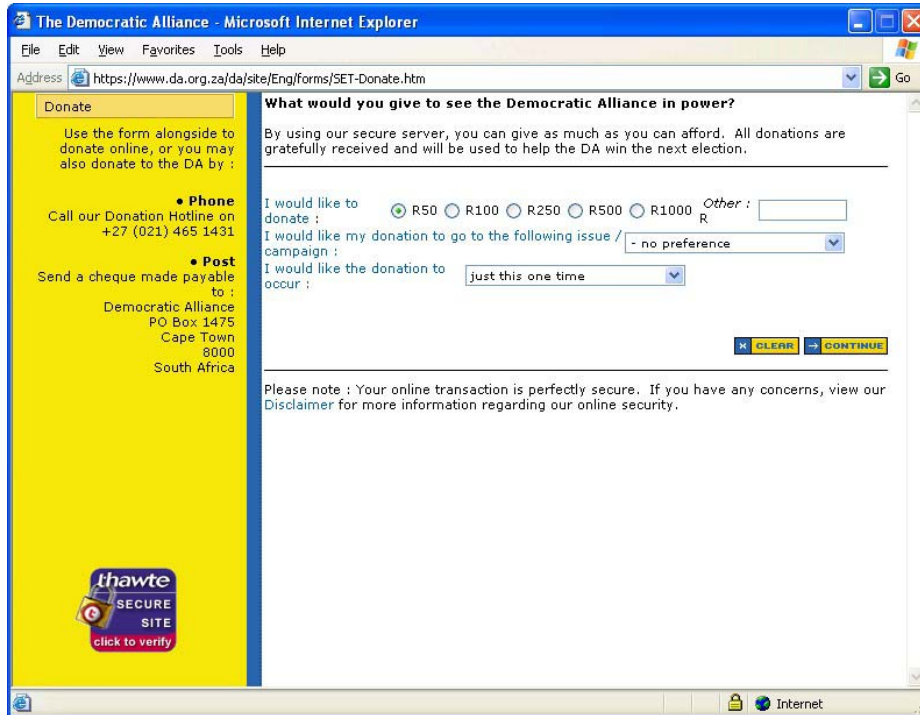
- shall hire every week. Maybe you would consider donating N\$20.
- Esau: Your plan sounds good. However, I don't have cash, but I can donate a dustbin that I am not using. Now how do I know you are not going to secretly sell the dustbin and buy beer for yourself?
- Party Activist: I will issue you a receipt for your donation and at the end of the clean-up work, we shall send you an explanation of how all the donations were used.
- Esau: Okay. Get the bin and good luck – what party did you say this was?
- Party Activist: The Farmers Party. We are located in Mandume Ndemufayo Street, Uhuru Building, Office Number 4. You are welcome to visit our office any time you feel like coming. Thank you for your donation.

Another technique is the use of a mobilisation committee. Such a committee comprises men and women who will actively help raise money by soliciting contributions from their friends, relatives, fellow workers, business associates, etc. The best people to recruit for a mobilisation committee are individuals who have a large network of contacts and are willing to ask their contact to make a contribution.

Events are often used by political parties to raise resources (as well as new members). Often political parties organise one or more annual events that become, over time, dependable sources of revenue. These events can include dinners or braais at which a prominent speaker is featured or awards are given to deserving party members and others. Auctions, picnics, and musical performances are other events that can be used to mobilise resources. Events provide a good opportunity for parties to obtain “in-kind” contributions.

Telephone and direct mail solicitation are also used by political parties to raise funds. While not everyone in Namibia is easily reachable by telephone or mail, those individuals who are most likely to be in a position to contribute to political parties are likely to have both a telephone and a post office box.

The Internet also provides an easy and cost effective way to permit party supporters to contribute to your party.



It is critical that accurate and up-to-date lists are maintained containing:

- ▶ everyone who has been contacted to make a contribution to the party;
- ▶ the means by which they were contacted;
- ▶ whether they contributed to the party; and
- ▶ how much they contributed.

Further each person who makes a contribution should be thanked by the party.



## **Small Group Discussion #4 – Resource Mobilisation**

As a small group develop a resource mobilisation plan for a single regional council, presidential election. In doing so you should think about the following questions:

How much do you want to raise?

What can you raise in cash, in-kind donations, and volunteered services?

What activities will you use to raise these resources (be creative)?

How much will it cost to conduct your resource mobilisation activities?

Also, think about different messages that you can use to raise funds through personal requests. As a small group develop messages that can be used to solicit funds.

From among your group you should select a facilitator to guide the conversation and a rapportuer to take notes and to report back to the plenary. Each time you break into small group you should chose a new facilitator and rapportuer.

## **Voter Education**

Too often political parties see voter education as the responsibility of only election officials and civic organisations. However, having an educated electorate is of great concern to political parties.

Voter education serves to explain to voters:

- ▶ Why it is important to vote;
- ▶ Where, when and how to register to vote; and
- ▶ Where, when and how to vote.

If those who support your party don't know why voting is important; don't know how to register to vote; and don't know how to vote then they are unlikely to go to the polls on election day and correctly mark their ballot for your party.

Therefore, it is in the interest of your party to conduct voter education exercises for your party's supporters and potential supporters.

In conducting voter education activities it is important to not only focus on the mechanics of registering to vote and voting, but also why it is important to vote. Citizens who do not view voting as an important activity unto itself are unlikely to go to the polls on election day.

## **Get out the Vote (GOTV)**

Get out the vote (GOTV) are techniques designed to increase voter turnout on election day. Political parties have a direct interest in increasing voter turnout. Citizens cannot cast votes from their homes. Not only must the supporters of your party register to vote, but they must go and vote on election day. If they don't vote they cannot help your party win an election.

GOTV activities involve making contact with those individuals who will definitely vote for your party and those who are very likely to vote for your party just prior to election day to remind them and encourage them to vote (similar exercises can be done to get people to register to vote – often referred to as voter registration drives).

In order for a GOTV exercise to be effective, a party must have as accurate and up-to-date as possible information on who supports the party.

In Namibia, all campaign activities must stop 24 hours before the opening of the polls. This limits the techniques available for GOTV. However, on the last day of the campaign, political parties can remind their supporters to vote:

- ▶ Send letters;
- ▶ Telephone (SMS);
- ▶ Place posters;
- ▶ Place advertisements (in papers and on television and radio); and,
- ▶ Go door-to-door.

## **Party Poll Watching**

Party poll watching is the effort by a political party to deploy party members to polling stations and counting centres on election day to observe the conduct of voting and counting.

Party poll watching serves to:

- ▶ deter human errors and manipulation;
- ▶ expose human errors and manipulation that may occur;
- ▶ provide political parties with detailed information on the conduct of an election;
- ▶ engage political parties in the electoral process;
- ▶ build confidence in the electoral process; and
- ▶ strengthen political parties.

There are four levels to party poll watching.

1. Presence – Political parties are able to deploy party poll watchers to polling stations and counting centres.
2. Documentation – Party poll watchers are not merely present at polling stations, but also record what they observe.
3. Reporting – Reports by party poll watchers are collected and quickly transmitted to party headquarters.
4. Analysis – Collected reports are quickly entered into a computer database for analysis of overall trends and localised patterns.

A party poll watching exercise involves the following steps:

- ▶ Recruit volunteers from party members.

- ▶ Train volunteers on the election procedures; what may go wrong; what to do when something goes wrong; and how to complete the reporting form.
- ▶ Deploy volunteers to polling stations and counting centres.
- ▶ Collect completed reporting forms from party poll watchers at polling stations and counting centres.
- ▶ Transmit reporting forms to a central location.
- ▶ Enter reporting forms into a computer database and analyse results.
- ▶ Thank poll watchers and evaluate performance of poll watchers.

Beyond poll watchers at polling stations and counting centres, a successful poll watching exercise requires a hierarchy of people to recruit and train poll watchers as well as to move the completed reporting forms from individual polling stations to a central location.

In addition, such an exercise needs people with specialised skills. It needs a logistics person to create a system for moving the completed reporting forms; a database expert to design and manage the database; data entry staff to input the forms into the database; and a statistician to analyse the data.

Election day is not the only time that political parties might want to monitor the electoral process. Parties have an interest in monitoring all the different phases of an election. Political parties often monitor the voter registration process and conduct studies of the resulting voter registry/list to determine how accurate, comprehensive and up to date it is.

## Sample Form #1 – Poll Watching Form

The following is an example of a form that can be used by party poll watchers to record the conduct of voting. It is not only critical that such forms are distributed to poll watchers and completed, but also that they are collected in a timely fashion, entered into a computer and the resulting data analysed.

Sample Party Poll Watching			
1.	Poll Watcher's Name		
2.	Poll Watcher's First Name		
3.	Poll Watcher's ID Number		
4.	Polling Station		
5.	Region		
6.	Time Arrived at Polling Station		
7.	Time Polling Station Opened		
8.	Did the Polling Station have sufficient materials?	Yes	No
9.	Did the Polling Station have sufficient staff?	Yes	No
10.	Was the polling station set up so voters could mark their ballots in secret?	Yes	No
11.	Were polling officials knowledgeable and non-partisan?	Yes	No
12.	Did security officials unnecessarily interfere with the voting process?	Yes	No
13.	Did anyone attempt to disrupt voting?	Yes	No
14.	Was anyone allowed to vote who you believe is ineligible?	Yes	No
15.	Was anyone not permitted to vote you believe is eligible?	Yes	No
16.	Did voting stop for any reason?	Yes	No
17.	What time did voting finish?		
18.	Was everyone in the queue at closing time permitted to vote?	Yes	No
19.	Signature		

**SAMPLE FORM #1**