



STRATEGIC PLAN



2024-2028





TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview.....	1
1.2 VISION and MISSION.....	2
1.2.1 Vision Statement.....	2
1.2.2 Mission Statement.....	2
1.2.3 E- HORN Values	2
CHAPTER 2 – Learning from Past Implementation	3
2.1 Elections Watch Conference, Kenya.....	3
2.2 International Engagements.....	4
2.3 Empowered Exchange Program.....	6
CHAPTER 3 – THEORY OF CHANGE	7
CHAPTER 4 – THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE NEW STRATEGY	8
4.1 The Global Context.....	8
4.2 The Regional Context.....	11
4.3 Organizational Context.....	17
CHAPTER 5 – THE STRATEGY	24
CHAPTER 6 – STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	25
CHAPTER 7 – TARGET GROUPS	26
CHAPTER 8 – MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY	27
CHAPTER 9 – MONITORING EVALUATION RESEARCH AND LEARNING (MERL)FRAMEWORK	29
CHAPTER 10 – RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES	30

Chapter 1

Introduction



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The East and Horn of Africa Election Observation Network (E-HORN) is a regional network of citizen election observer groups in the East and Horn of Africa. The E-HORN network's founding members are drawn from 5 countries in the East and Horn of Africa region: Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda – CCEDU (Uganda); South Sudanese Network for Democracy and Elections – SSuNDE (South Sudan); Sudanese Group for Democracy and Elections – SuGDE (Sudan); Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee – TEMCO (Tanzania); Kenya Human Rights Commission – KHRC; and Elections Observation Group – ELOG (both located in Kenya).

E-HORN was established and inaugurated in 2013 during a meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya, attended by representatives from seven countries in the East and Horn of Africa: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya. Participants, consisting of Citizen Election Observation Groups from these nations, came together with a shared vision of creating a regional network for solidarity and experience sharing. Their collaboration was centered around the following key objectives:

1. To enhance solidarity and partnership amongst network members to support the conduct of democratic elections in the East and Horn of Africa.
2. To strengthen the capacity of member organizations to observe and monitor elections in their respective countries and;
3. To research and advocate for electoral standards and practices in the region based on international and regional standards;

E-HORN was initially conceptualized as a loosely arranged platform for members in Eastern Africa but this idea gained traction and, with time, consistency and consolidation of E-HORN in the region became imperative. The focus region was also clarified and narrowed down to East and the Horn of Africa in order to avoid geo-political challenges of the broader Eastern Africa region. EHORN's creation was inspired by the call to establish regional and national members of GNDEM following the establishment of GNDEM and inauguration of Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations in New York in 2012. Inspiration for E-HORN's creation also came from the existence of regional election observation and monitoring groups such as WAEON and ZESN.

Since then, E-HORN has provided a sustainable platform for networking and coordination among election observer groups in the East and Horn of Africa since its inception.

Notwithstanding the above institutional journey, this marks the organization's inaugural strategic planning exercise, aimed to redefine its vision, mission, and strategic direction to adapt to evolving political and electoral dynamics in the East and Horn of Africa region.

E-HORN, founded in **2013**, is a regional membership network and a member of the **Global Network of Domestic Elections Observers (GNDEM)**. E-HORN's elections observation and monitoring work is guided by the Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations. Since its inauguration, E-HORN has been operating as a membership organization under the tutelage of ELOG as the Secretariat. E-HORN's legal status and operations have now been fully anchored in the Kenyan law through its legal registration in 2024 as an NGO under the Kenya NGO Coordination Act, with ELOG as its permanent Secretariat. This now gives E-HORN a full legal standing and capacity to operate and conduct its affairs as a legal entity in Kenya.

1.2 VISION AND MISSION

1.2.1 Vision Statement



E-HORN envisions democratic electoral processes and practices in the East and Horn of Africa Region.

1.2.2 Mission Statement



To promote democratic and peaceful electoral processes through strengthening non-partisan citizen observation and monitoring groups in the East and Horn of Africa Region.

1.2.3 E-HORN Values



Integrity



Inclusion



Non-partisanship



Objectivity



Solidarity



Accountability

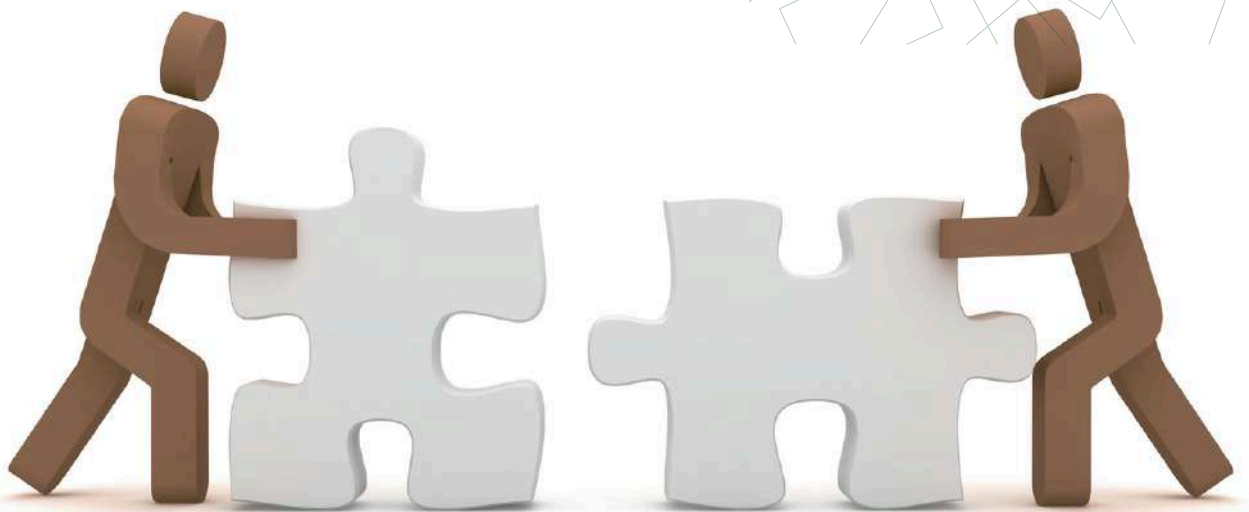


Transparency

CHAPTER

2

Learning from Past Implementation



2. Learning from Past Implementation

Since its inception, E-HORN has remained committed towards the realization of transparent, inclusive, and accountable electoral processes in the East and Horn of Africa region. This commitment has resulted into significant achievements that have been made possible through collaborative efforts of and synergy harvesting by E-HORN members. E-HORN continues to consolidate these and explore additional achievements through enhanced synergy building and leveraging the respective strengths of its members, partners and networks in order to advance transparent and democratic electoral processes in the region, the continent, and the world. The accomplishments over the years include the following:

2.1. Elections Watch Conference (Kenya)

This initiative was hosted by ELOG in Nairobi on 7th and 8th May 2022. It brought together over 100 participants, from both local and international organisations, and provided an opportunity for the E-HORN Council to convene and transact. During the Conference and E-HORN Council Meeting, several key goals were achieved. These outcomes include:

a. ELOG's Election as Permanent Secretariat:

ELOG was elected as the permanent secretariat of E-HORN. This decision underscored the trust and confidence placed in ELOG to serve as the central coordinating body for E-HORN activities, ensuring continuity and effectiveness.



b. Permanent Headquarters in Nairobi:

The E-HORN Council approved the permanent sitting of E-HORN's headquarters in Nairobi. This decision not only acknowledges Nairobi's central location but also emphasizes the network's commitment to establishing a stable and accessible operational base.



c. Constitutional Amendment:

To align with the decision to have the permanent headquarters in Nairobi, the E-HORN Council approved the necessary constitutional amendments.



d. Election of New Executive Council:



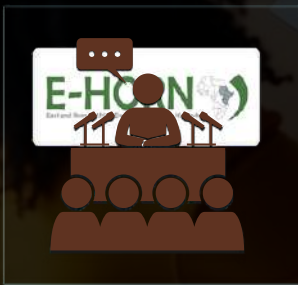
A new Executive Council was elected during the E-HORN Council Meeting. Dr. Sarah Bireete, representing the Center for Constitutional Governance-CCG, emerged as the chairperson. This election marks a pivotal moment in E-HORN's leadership and sets the direction for the network's future activities.

e. Strategic Alignment and Networking:

The conference provided a platform for strategic alignment and extensive networking among the diverse participants. This facilitated collaborative efforts and strengthened the regional network ties.



f. Solidarity Statement and Press Conference on Kenya's Elections:



A Solidarity Statement was issued, affirming E-HORN's commitment to promoting free, fair, and transparent elections in Kenya. Additionally, a Press Conference with over 5 media houses was convened to address and express E-HORN's stance on the upcoming 2022 Elections in Kenya.

2.2 International Engagements

E-HORN participated in various international and regional engagements as part of its commitment to foster collaboration and create networking opportunities aimed at increasing the network's visibility and outreach. These engagements include the following:

a) Co-Hosting of the Summit for Democracy in Zambia:

Through this network, E-HORN co-hosted the Democracy Summit held in Lusaka, Zambia. During this event, E-HORN signed a Joint Communiqué, highlighting commitments to various crucial aspects, including promoting young people's participation in electoral processes, upholding media freedom, safeguarding civic and democratic space, and

addressing pertinent electoral issues.

b.) New Realities of Citizen Election Observation in the Africa Summit in Accra Ghana:

E-HORN attended the summit and signed a Communiqué on driving advancements in pre-election observation, working relationships with Electoral Management Bodies, innovations in Election Day observation, and addressing the role of technology in elections.

c) Elections Watch Symposium 2023 in South Africa:

E-HORN through the Regional Coordinator participated in a follow up Elections Watch Symposium in similar fashion to the one held in Nairobi, in South Africa addressing critical

concerns with regard to elections on the Continent, with a communiqué issued on actionable measures.

d) Participation in the GNDEM Board meeting in Washington DC/USA:

E-HORN, represented by its chair, participated in the GNDEM Board and Implementation Meetings hosted by NDI in Washington DC from March 6th to 8th, 2023. The discussions focused on safeguarding observer rights, enhancing GNDEM's strategic communications, and sharing research findings on enduring challenges for election monitoring/observation organizations. E-HORN's contributions over the years have been instrumental in shaping the collective efforts of the GNDEM community during these in-person meetings, underscoring the organization's commitment to fostering effective election monitoring practices and strategic collaboration within the global network.

e) Engagement with Forum 2000 Foundation and Democratic Solidarity for Africa-DSA-Prague-Czech Republic

E-HORN attended the 27th annual Forum 2000 Conference in Prague, held from October 15 to 17, 2023, dubbed, "For a Democratic World Order." The conference facilitated discussions on global challenges confronting democracies, with themes encompassing the reclamation of initiative, the impact of technology on democratic processes, and strategies for promoting democratic values in constrained environments. Responding to appeals from African democrats, the Forum 2000 Foundation initiated Democratic Solidarity Africa (DSA), modeled after Democratic Solidarity Latin America. E-HORN actively joined DSA, contributing to a joint solidarity statement addressing electoral transparency and security

concerns in the recently concluded 2023 DRC elections.

f) Engagement with Global Network for Securing Electoral Integrity Network- JINSEI:

E-HORN participated in various strategic inception meetings with the newly formed Global Network for Securing Electoral Integrity (GNSEI- Network). The Network convenes election stakeholders around a shared vision: to inspire and inform action to advance electoral integrity in the face of critical threats to democracy. Specifically, GNSEI brings together leading international electoral integrity actors to establish a broad-based platform to develop, advance, and promote adherence to norms, guiding principles, and codes of conduct that address emerging and long-term threats to electoral integrity. E-HORN is a GNSEI network participant along with various election monitoring/observation networks like ANFREL and GNDEM.

g) Engagement with European Platform for Democratic Elections- EPDE

E-HORN participated in the inaugural annual Follow-up on Recommendations' Implementation Conference (FURIC) convened by the European Platform for Democratic Elections (EPDE) on November 28-29, 2023, in Brussels. This significant event included both a high-level public session and closed expert sessions. The conference focused on reviewing and monitoring the implementation of recommendations derived from previous assessments and observations related to democratic elections. By bringing together experts and stakeholders, the FURIC aimed at facilitating discussions, sharing insights, and evaluating progress in enhancing democratic electoral processes.

The dual format comprising both public and expert sessions allowed for a comprehensive exploration of recommendations, fostering transparency, and providing a platform for in-depth discussions on critical issues related to democratic elections. This initiative reflects EPDE's commitment to promoting democratic values and continuous improvement in electoral practices through constructive dialogue and collaboration.

Following the Conference, E-HORN has been actively seeking strategic partnership with the European Platform for Democratic Elections-EPDE and has developed a concept outlining key areas for strategic engagement and collaboration that includes knowledge exchange training; joint research initiatives; capacity building programs; international advocacy; collaborative election missions; national and regional thematic seminars and conferences and; participation in global networks.

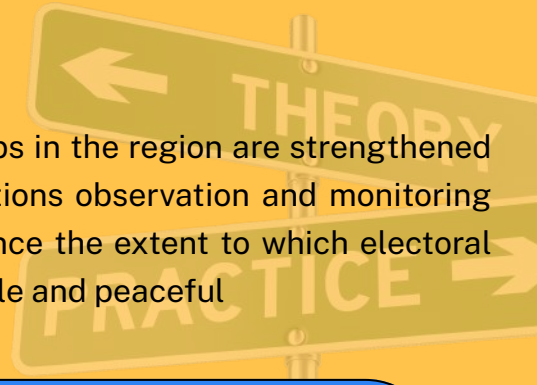
2.3 Empowered Exchange Program

The Empowered Exchange Program-EEP was implemented in April 2022 in partnership with ELOG. The program, which was supported by the International Republican Institute (IRI) and Generation Democracy, deployed the six participants, alongside ELOG Secretariat Members, to observe the political party nominations of the United Democratic Alliance Party that were held on 18th, April 2022 in Nakuru County. This practical engagement provided firsthand insights into the political party nomination process and was further complemented by a visit to the ELOG Nakuru Regional Platform, where participants gained information on the devolved nature of ELOG operations. The key outcomes of the program included: practical election observation; regional platform visit and; targeted youth engagement.

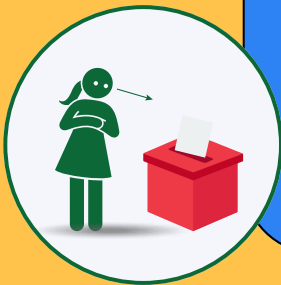


3. THEORY OF CHANGE

IF non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring groups in the region are strengthened and supported to provide effective and sustainable citizen elections observation and monitoring platforms, **THEN** we will have the capacity to inform and influence the extent to which electoral processes and practices in the region are regular, free, fair, credible and peaceful



BECAUSE the political and legal environments will be conducive and allowing for effective implementation of this plan; that election management bodies will accredit and collaborate with E-HORN in providing the required information and accreditation to support the deployment of the observation missions; that availability of adequate resources, given the high cost of deploying observation missions will be secured; that recruited citizens will be ready and willing to volunteer as observers and that secure environment for the deployment of the observation mission will be there.

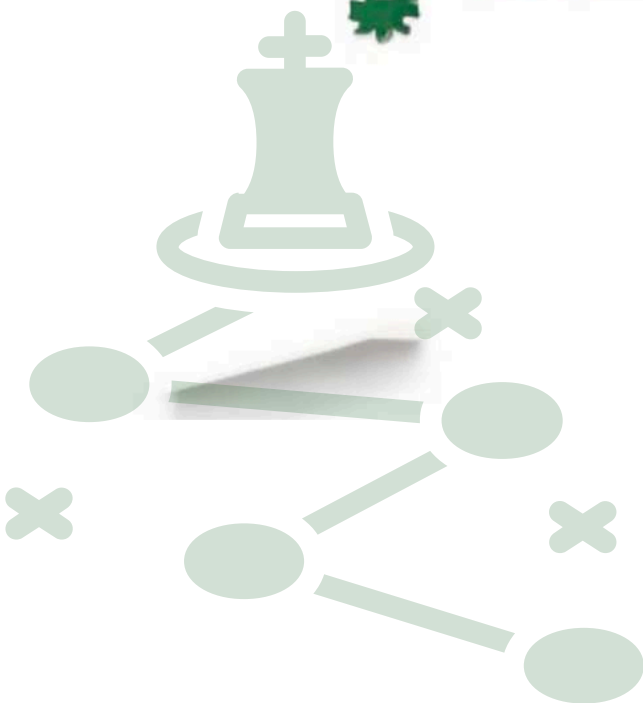


CHAPTER

4

THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE NEW

STRATEGY



4. THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE NEW STRATEGY

4.1 The Global Context

The institutionalization of E-HORN, which started with the adoption of its constitution in 2013, was given additional impetus by the recruitment of more members thereafter. E-HORN is currently represented by 18 members who are spread out in 8 countries in the Eastern and Horn of Africa region. The consolidation of E-HORN leadership and Secretariat has also played a critical role in E-HORN's institutional transformation. In addition, the partnership with the EU that resulted into the first direct funding for E-HORN in 2023 from the EU together with the formal legal registration of E-HORN in Kenya in 2024, have provided additional critical consolidating building blocks for E-HORN. The leadership has, since inauguration, transitioned from TEMCO of Tanzania to the Center for Constitutional Governance-CCG of Uganda as the chair of E-HORN.

Since its inception, E-HORN has been instrumental in advancing democratic processes and upholding electoral integrity within the region. Despite facing financial constraints, E-HORN has successfully organized regular regional conferences, attracting participants from the seven-member countries. Moreover, it has conducted observation missions in Tanzania and Uganda and actively participated in various international engagements, including membership in GNDEM

As important democratic institutions, elections play a crucial role in the global context of democracy, not only by serving as a fundamental mechanism for political participation and governance but also symbolizing the exercise of human rights and freedoms of citizens. In other words, when conducted fairly and transparently, elections

can be powerful catalysts for encouraging good governance, inclusive policies, engaged citizenry and development. However, electoral challenges must be addressed in order for elections to realize their full positive catalytic potential. These challenges include the following:

Electoral Fraud and Manipulation:

This is essentially electoral corruption and includes practices such as ballot stuffing, falsifying results, and manipulation of voter rolls. These practices manipulate and undermine public trust and confidence in the electoral process. They taint transparency and undermine the legitimacy of elections.

Ethnic and Political Tensions:

In divided and polarized societies, elections may lead social and political tensions and cracks that could lead to violence and conflict.

Limited Political Choice:

In cases where the choices of voters are limited due to lack of competition in the elections, governments may be tempted to formulate policies that do not serve public interest.

Political Corruption:

This can undermine the entire electoral process and lead to distortions in the process and outcomes.

Voter Suppression:

Voter suppression can create an environment for disproportionately disenfranchising targeted categories of voters especially the marginalized.

Challenges to Democratic Elections



◆ Misinformation and Disinformation:

This is aimed at creating a confused voting environment and is meant to manipulate public opinion and voters and to influence electoral outcomes. This happens mainly through malign and false information through new social media

◆ Authoritarian Regimes:

This is a situation where elections are held under authoritarian regimes, the competitiveness of the elections is undermined and the environment for free and fair elections suppressed.

◆ Political Violence:

This not only intimidates but also threatens the safety of voters and candidates and could deter their participation thus leading to distorted outcomes.

◆ Lack of Access to Information:

This denies voters' access to necessary information that can enable them make informed choices. It undermines the transparency of the elections.

◆ Technological Issues:

The increasing use and deployment of new technologies in elections including Artificial Intelligence could create new risks and

threats such as hacking, software malfunctions, data manipulation and challenges in verifying results.

◆ **Inequality in Campaign Financing:**

This creates a corrupting influence in the electoral process and leads to uneven playing fields in elections.

◆ **Judicial Independence and Rule of Law**

Judicial systems that lack independence and are weak may not fairly enforce electoral laws and resolve electoral disputes.

◆ **International Interference:**

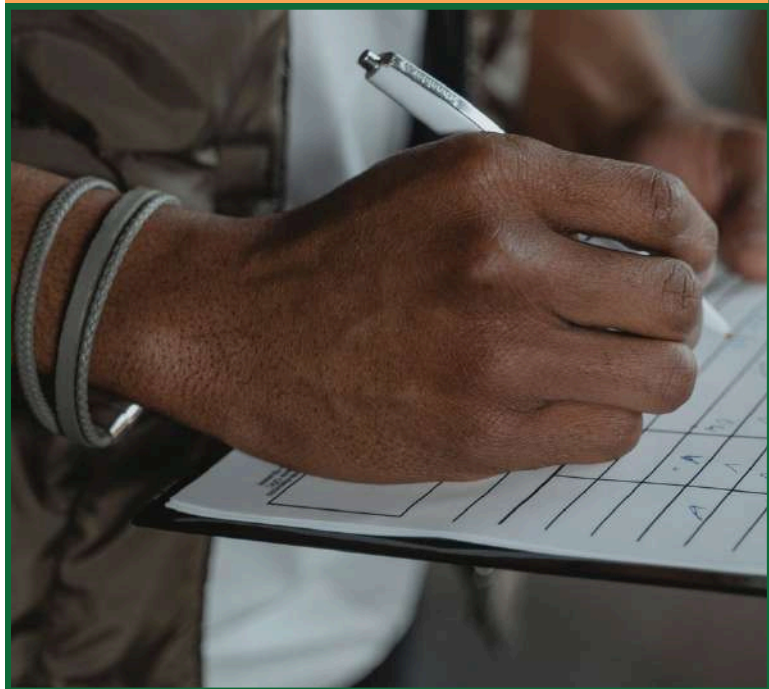
Influence from foreign governments and other external actors through cyber operations, malign information and propaganda, can compromise electoral integrity and sway outcomes.

The above challenges and their impact transcend political, social, and economic contexts across countries or regions. The challenges can only be addressed if they are detected, deterred and documented. This is the principal role and function of election observation and monitoring. Globally, these roles and functions are defined and prescribed under two basic international declarations, namely: The Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers and Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations.

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Over the last three decades, a global movement of nonpartisan citizen election monitoring and observation has collectively mobilized millions of citizens around the world to participate in their countries' democratic processes as election observers. This is driven by the desire to engage citizens in the election process; deter fraud; expose problems and irregularities; provide an accurate measure of the quality of the election; promote confidence in the process and outcomes; and provide recommendations for improving the process for the next election.



The role of citizen election observation, then, is to promote electoral integrity; enhance citizen participation; engage in policy advocacy and; foster governmental accountability.

4.2 The Regional Context

The latest Afrobarometer is indicative of a region that is steadily experiencing a recess and reversal in the democratization process. Key amongst the factors that undermine democratic consolidation in Africa include the phenomenon of shrinking democratic and governance space, which is largely attributable to authoritarian regimes in the region as well as the emerging unconstitutional and undemocratic cultures as well as the culture of political impunity. A number of countries in West Africa, for instance, have witnessed unconstitutional upheavals and changes in government that have and continue to undermine democratically elected governments. This, together with the emerging trend of state capture of institutions of democracy across the countries in the continent, has pushed the democratization process to the brink of the precipice.

Other key factors that undermine democracy and governance in Africa include the phenomenon of zero sum political infrastructure and culture that manifest through abuse of incumbency; state capture of independent institutions and offices; political patronage; divisive political and electoral processes; negative ethnicity, ethnic and social divides; unresolved and historical conflicts and colonial legacies and; lack of inclusive governance that can sustain the democratization process across the continent. There is also the emerging trend of runaway and unaffordable political and electoral processes across the continent. High, prohibitive and discriminatory costs have increasingly become the hallmark of elections and electioneering in many countries in Africa. The high costs of elections are exacerbated by the runaway political and electoral corruption and manipulation that characterize the political and electoral processes in many countries

countries across Africa.

The foregoing, among others, are the key macro-level socio-political and electoral issues and dynamics that E-HORN will require to contend with as it implements its Strategic Plan. These issues not only operate at the macro-Africa continental level but also at the macro-East and Horn of Africa level where E-HORN is located and operates. The key factors, dynamics and issues of concern to E-HORN at the macro-East and Horn of Africa region include the following.

The East and Horn of Africa region where E-HORN operates had three elections within the last three years and these are: The Tanzanian civic and general elections that were held in 2020 and 2021 respectively; the Uganda elections that were held in 2021; Ethiopia elections that were held in 2021; Kenya elections that were held in 2022 and the DRC elections that were held in 2023. These elections were followed by the Rwanda elections that were held in August 2024. While elections in Sudan and South Sudan were poised to be held in 2024, these have since been postponed due to the volatile civic and political environment in the two countries. However, following a negotiated political consensus by the political elite in South Sudan, the postponed elections will now take place in 2027. As for Sudan, the elections remained postponed indefinitely and this throws date of the next elections into uncertainty.

Other elections that are expected to be held within the next five years and within the frame of this Strategic Plan include Burundi elections in 2025 and 2029; Tanzania elections in 2026; Ethiopia elections in 2026; Kenya elections in 2027 and; DRC elections in 2028. There has been no government in Somalia since the overthrow of Siad Barre in 1991 up to 2000

when an interim government was formed. Somalia lastly held its elections in 2012, based on clan negotiations, and there is no clear indication when the next elections will be held. Somaliland held their last presidential and parliamentary elections in 2003 and since then scheduled elections have been postponed and are now expected to take place in November 2024. Parliamentary elections in Djibouti were held in February 2023 while the presidential elections were held in April 2021.

The packed elections calendar in the East and Horn of Africa region means that E-HORN's plate is already full and its work well cut out for the next five years. It is now a matter of strategic planning and working through the permanent Secretariat at ELOG, to support and strengthen the capacity of the members in the respective countries in preparation for the expected elections. Observing these elections will however, require huge investment in both financial and human resources. Therefore, apart from capacity building targeted at the human resources, E-HORN will be required to invest in massive fundraising to enable the Secretariat and members in the respective countries to mount effective observation missions for the expected elections. It is notable that there have been considerable improvements in management and conduct of elections in the East and Horn of Africa region over the past 10 years. The 2022 Kenya elections not only stands out as the beacon of improvements in the region but also a pace setter in so far as deployment and use of electoral technology is concerned.

Other elections, although fulfilling the mark of regularity and periodicity, fell below the bar judging by international standards and best practices for credible and democratic elections. The April 2021 presidential elections in Djibouti and the recent election in Rwanda in July 2024 are good examples, which though

held under a peaceful environment, stood out as mere rubber-stamps for the predetermined re-election of the incumbent President Ismail Omar Guelleh and President Paul Kagame, respectively. It is no wonder that the incumbents, who have been in power with no term limits, won those elections with 97% and 99.18% of the votes cast, respectively. Lack of electoral integrity and credibility also characterized elections and electoral processes in the DRC, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia. This analysis demonstrates that even though in most countries in the region, elections are held regularly and periodically, challenges relating to electoral integrity and credibility still abound. For E-HORN, this analysis portends that as the vanguard of credible and democratic electoral processes in the region, the midnight lamp has to be continuously burnt to ensure that electoral processes and election outcomes in the region meet the international standards and best practices for credible and democratic elections.

The emerging trend in the region shows a "reversal of democratic gains" where elections are increasingly becoming sum-zero events in which the end justifies the means. Increasingly, elections are perceived by citizens as no longer a people-driven process and therefore do not reflect the will of the people - the right leadership is not getting into power - but rather an end game for pre-determined political elites. Shambolic elections and electoral processes are becoming a sine-qua-non in the regions, which leads to the conclusion that elections have become just charades and mere ceremonial/ritualistic exercises that have to be conducted periodically, since the constitutions and the electoral laws say so. Therefore, the key towards enhancing electoral integrity and credibility in the region lies in focusing in the entire electoral cycle. This is the herculean task, which E-HORN has to invest in through

this Strategic Plan period.

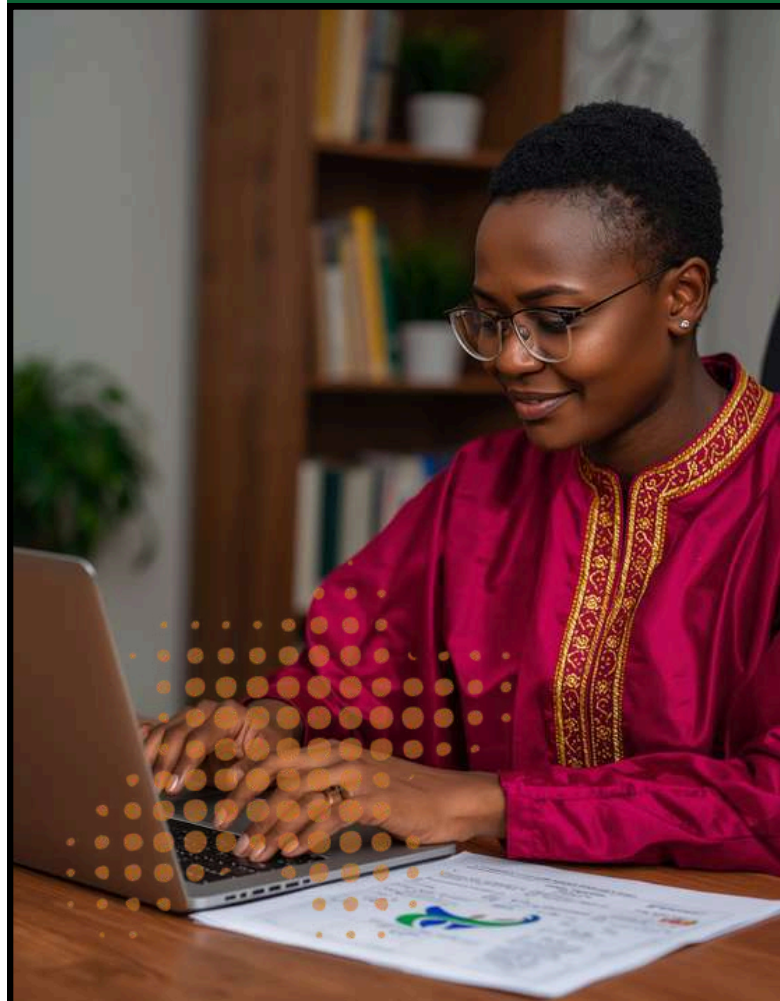
Other key dynamics that undermine electoral integrity and credibility in the region include state interference in elections and electoral processes. This normally takes the form of certain nefarious acts and omissions as was witnessed in the Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya elections. The state through incumbency or otherwise, is always a key influential stakeholder in elections with high interest in the election outcomes. Driven by state power and the largesse of state resources, the high stakes of government in elections manifest through orchestrated overt or covert intimidation, interference, harassment and capture of electoral actors, including the EMBs. These acts violate electoral integrity and credibility and affect observation of the process in the country.

Also, an increasing trend of securitization of electoral processes is also becoming a big issue in the region. This happens through increased police and military presence during the electioneering period and particularly on polling day(s). This has been the case with elections in Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Kenya. The sole purpose of electoral securitization is to undermine the integrity and credibility of the electoral ecosystem by creating an intimidating environment and unnecessary threat of violence and fear to either suppress the ballot or hijack the elections and electoral process.

The region has also witnessed an increase in the erosion of the independence and credibility of EMBs, a situation which has affected EMBs of all kinds, whether set up as independent or appointed by the ruling government and party. Encroachment, manipulation and interference with the independence of the EMBs have become common features of elections in the region.

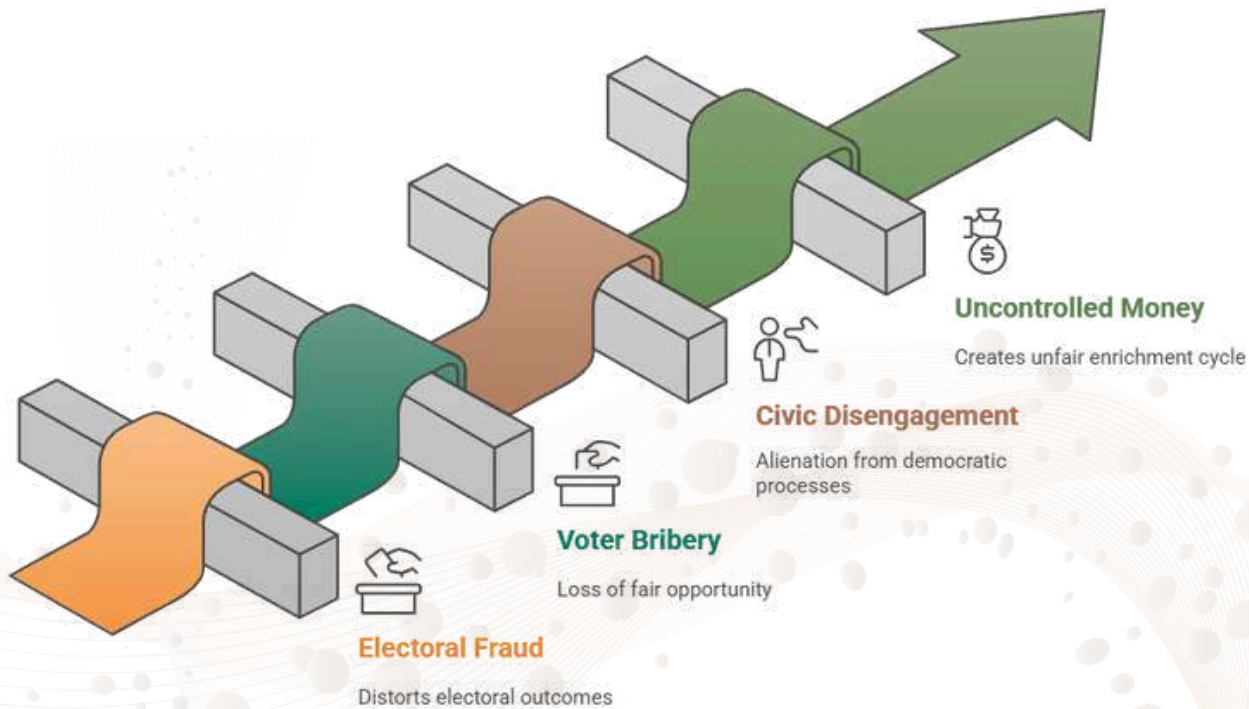
In some instances, manipulation and intimidation of EMBs occur through state capture. In these instances, electoral integrity and credibility are undermined through lack of independence and partiality of the EMBs. This calls for EMBs in the region to work in concert with other actors in the electoral process that include election observer networks such as E-HORN to assert their independence and impartiality and ensure integrity and credibility of electoral processes.

Yet another disturbing dynamic and trend in elections in the region is the heavy monetization and commercialization of politics that has increasingly impugned democratic progression. This vice stems from the fact that most countries in the region do not have robust legal frameworks to address campaign financing. Even where a robust legal framework exists like in Kenya, there is persistent lack of political good will to



implement and enforce the same. It also stems from abuse of incumbency, which in most countries, enjoys easy access to state and public resources for pilferage during electoral campaigns.

Commercialization and commoditization of politics



The consequences of commercialization and commoditization of politics and elections include electoral fraud and political corruption, which distort electoral outcomes, capture and undermine democracy; voter bribery, which results into loss of fair opportunity for all; controlled voter consent and civic alienation and disengagement from democratic processes. The phenomenon of uncontrolled money in politics also leads to a culture of run-away political corruption, which in turn creates an environment and cycle of unfair enrichment by the political elite and criminal enterprises that include money laundering. Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan are good examples of political ecosystems where uncontrolled money in politics has resulted in captured democracy and created lucrative criminal enterprises that include money laundering.

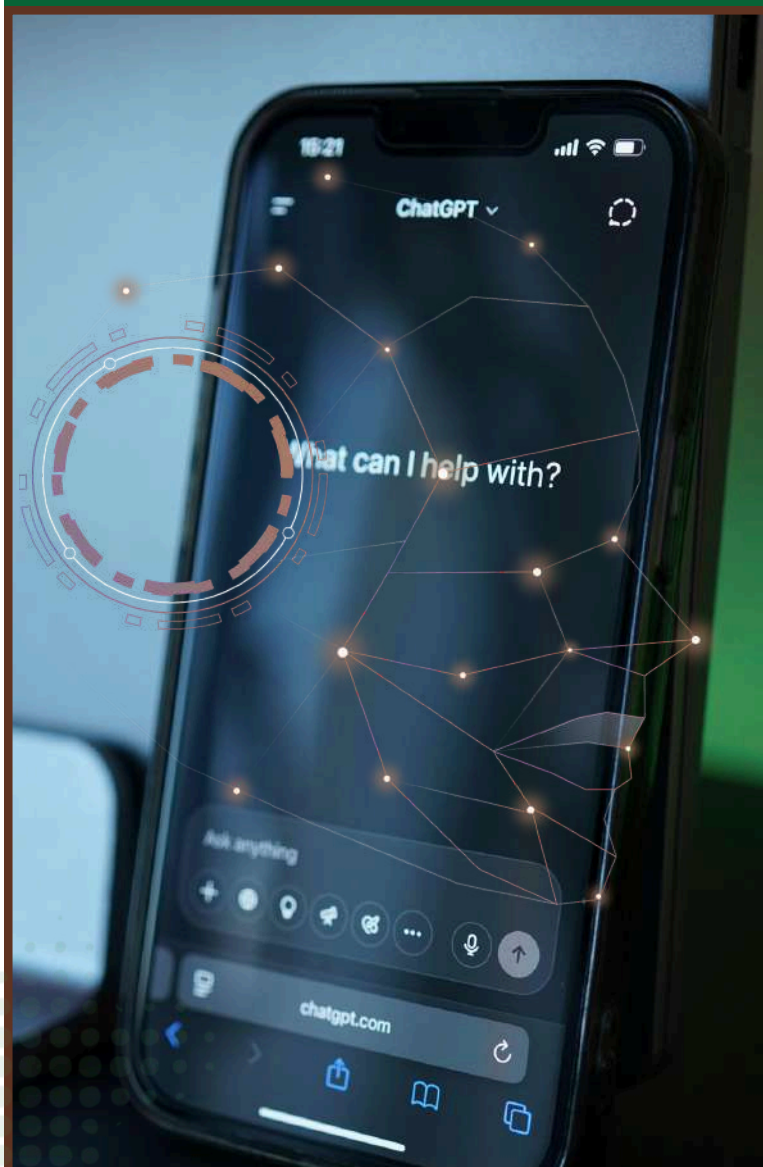
The phenomenon of electoral insecurity is also worth noting. Electoral insecurity is a persistent phenomenon in the region, occurring before, during and after the elections. The manifestations of electoral insecurity include intimidation, threats, and violence. Uganda, Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia are examples where elections are often marred by electoral insecurity. In these countries, state security agents use violence to control and quash political and civic disobedience and protests, thus creating a restricted and intimidating environment during elections. In Ethiopia, such an environment of insecurity and intimidation led to the postponement of some elections during the 2021 elections.

Electoral actors such as citizen election observation networks that include E-HORN will of necessity work in concert with other influential actors in the region to mitigate electoral insecurity by ensuring that a peaceful environment prevails during elections. The actors that engage in peace preservation and mitigation in the region that E-HORN will have to work with include the Regional Commissions, bodies and institutions such as the African Union, the East African Community, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), IGADD, EALA, etc.

A new trend of security threats to the electoral processes that is also increasingly becoming common in the region include hacking/manipulation of electronic systems and processes that are deployed for elections; malign influence through hate speech, misinformation and disinformation through social media platforms; cyber bullying and violence including Sexual and Gender Based Violence. Imposed restrictions on access to social media that have taken the form of government clamp down on social media and internet shutdowns have also been deployed by governments in the region as measures towards manipulating the electoral processes. Examples include Uganda and Ethiopia in 2021, Tanzania in 2020 and, Kenya in 2022.

Like the rest of the world, the region has also experienced an exponential explosion and rapid adoption of new technologies that include Artificial Intelligence (AI). Rapid adoption and deployment of AI in the digital space has come with new challenges to electoral insecurity, some of which are yet to be fathomed. The fact that the adoption of AI in the electoral processes in Africa, including the East and Horn of Africa region, is still in its early stages, shows that AI is not at all negative.

The key challenges related to AI adoption in the electoral processes include lack of trust; Lack of regulatory legal frameworks; the potential of undermining electoral the integrity of electoral systems and outcomes; technological disparities that could limit access to AI equipment and application; risk of AI manipulation and abuse; resource constraints and the high cost of purchasing and maintaining AI tools; ethical and human rights risks associated with AI adoption that include algorithmic bias, misuse, lack of transparency, and privatization of government functions, among others. These challenges notwithstanding, there is a greater potential for increased use and adoption of AI in voter authentication, voter list maintenance, campaign finance analysis, and monitoring online discourse.



AI could also potentially be used in leveling the playing field for smaller parties, increasing voter information access, and enhancing voter engagement. From the foregoing, it is apparent that integrating AI into electoral processes in the region has the potential of creating significant opportunities for building greater efficiency, transparency and accountability. E-HORN will, therefore, need to invest in and support increased awareness and training amongst stakeholders in knowledge of AI technology and its implementation and management as well as full implications to the electoral processes; promote collaboration with governments, civil society groups, and big tech companies to help demystify the usage of AI and address doubts and anxieties among stakeholders, as well as build the expertise and the trust necessary to support the widespread adoption of AI in electoral processes.

Finally, is the question of the youth bulge in the region and how to manage the phenomenon in political, civic and electoral contexts. There is no doubt that the youth are increasingly becoming the majority of voters in the region and are increasingly asserting their presence and voice in the political, civic and democratic spaces. The recent Gen-Z protests in Kenya, which inspired similar anti-corruption protests in Uganda, provide a good example. Out of the Kenyan Gen-Z protests, it is clear that the youth's conscience, voice and stake in political, civic and democratic processes are gaining momentum and will have to be reckoned with in the next electoral cycles in the region. This will not only require political attention and engagement but will also demand involvement and participation in political and electoral processes, including election observation. E-HORN will thus have to think through ways and means of better engagement and involvement with the emerging critical youth population in the region.



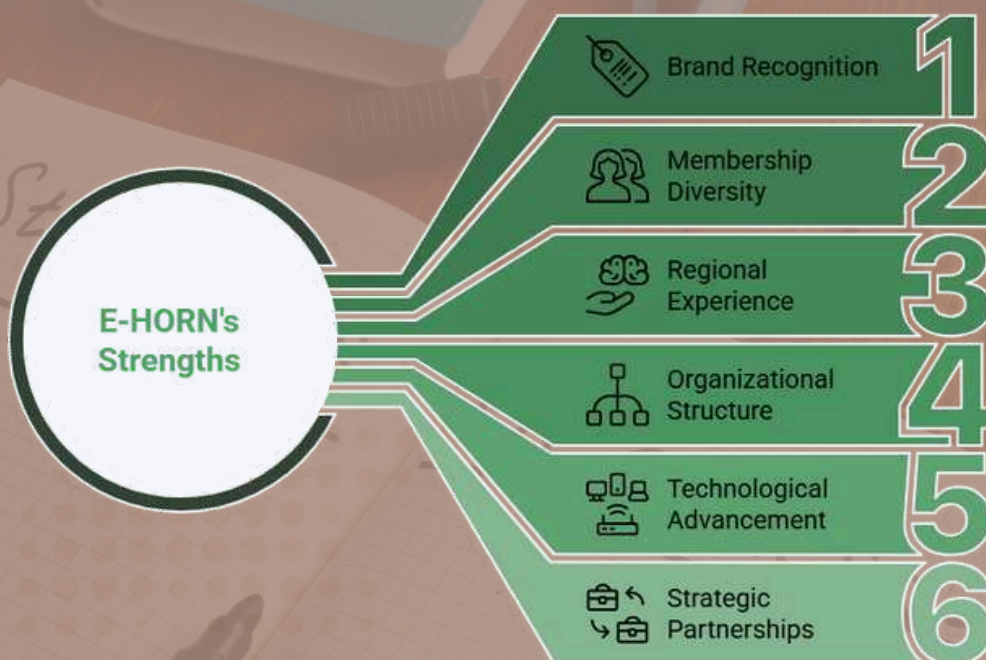
4.3 Organizational Context

4.3.1 The Internal Environment: Strengths and Weaknesses

E-HORN has a number of strengths that it can leverage on as it pursues its programming agenda through the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2024-2028. These strengths were identified through a rigorous and meticulous process of desk review of previous interventions and engagements, interviews with key stakeholders as well as critical brainstorming and reflection engagements.

The E-HORN brand, although not yet strong and reverberating in the region, is steadily emerging and connecting with the member organizations and their constituencies in the respective countries in the region. This presents a potential opportunity for growing a strong brand ambassadorship and representation across all the countries where E-HORN is represented and working in and for connecting E-HORN membership to other platforms and networks within and beyond the region. This strength and opportunity will make it possible for E-HORN to be felt in the region and to champion the cause of human rights defending through nonpartisan citizen elections observation.

There is also strength in the membership that E-HORN commands in and draws from the region. The membership is diverse and with it comes the benefits of diversity and inclusion, varied experiences and expertise, which the individual members have accumulated in the region over the years. This also creates an environment for complementarity that E-HORN has in the region. E-HORN is also able to benefit from and leverage solidarity in diversity, which enables the pulling together of real time information and standing together with a stronger voice on critical issues in the region. These strengths provide impetus for ownership and legitimacy within the regional electoral ecosystem.



They also provide an environment for growing a regional community of practice in democracy, human rights, governance and elections in the East and Horn of Africa region. Diversity and solidarity also support critical advantages in resource mobilization by enabling easy access to and mobilization of resources as a consortium, let alone the potential to tap into direct resources from members in the form of subscription fees and resource piggy-backing. This also endears and supports the building of credibility with development partners and donors as well as other stakeholders globally and in the region.

E-HORN is the only regional election observation coalition or network in the East and Horn of Africa region with 11 years of accumulated experience in the region since 2013. E-HORN members have expertise and well-established knowledge on the electoral situations in different countries. Therefore, E-HORN's presence and representation in the respective countries across the region enables broader coverage and broader outreach, and a commanding bird's eye view of political, civic and electoral dynamics and developments in the region.

E-HORN is established under a constitution, which works as its basic statute for organization, structure, systems and management. It is a constitution that lays a strong foundation for good governance and dedicated leadership. E-HORN also has well-structured and set out systems that are functional and that are backed by a dedicated and resilient human resource. There is also relative clarity and ownership of vision and mission, backed by an emerging culture of strong values. All these positive attributes are grounded on the fact that E-HORN is now fully registered in Kenya under the NGOs Act, a demarche, which E-HORN achieved in 2024.

E-HORN's strength also comes from its base at the ELOG Secretariat, which also serves as the secretariat and is a well-established election observation platform in Kenya, the region and internationally-this confers greater level of credibility and legitimacy to E-HORN. Through ELOG, E-HORN has embraced new digital technology and has advanced in the deployment and use of new technology. However, there is still notable low uptake of digital technology in E-HORN's endeavors, especially in the human resource and financial management and deployment of programmatic such as monitoring, evaluation and learning.

E-HORN is also steadily carving out a niche, the go to non-partisan citizen election observation platform in the region and reaching out to establish working partnerships and networks election with critical political and civil society sectors in the region that include EALA, etc. E-HORN is also increasingly engaging and working with sectors that have been historically marginalized in the region, which include women, youth, and persons with disabilities, to ensure inclusivity.

However, there are areas that E-HORN should carefully consider with a view to leveraging and strengthening on, for improved program outcomes. These include complete reliance on donor funding, which undermines its sustainability and that of its programmes; lack of a dedicated research and knowledge production department, which undermines knowledge production, dissemination and management. E-HORN is also the only coalition in the region, hence it has no competition, no complimentary. This has a potential to undermine the building of competitive advantage and the ability to resource mobilize. As a network of members E-HORN is afflicted with conflicting and differing interests and stakes that have to be managed very carefully to avoid membership tension, exclusion and fall out.

Equally, E-HORN enjoys a bird's eye-view knowledge of the situation within the region. This, though, does not necessarily translate into E-HORN's complete grasp and interaction with every detail of the situation. This overview only enables E-HORN to gain sufficient regional knowledge, but E-HORN still remains deficient in in-depth knowledge of the region. The need to obtain and master comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the situation in the region is paramount for the proper operations of E-HORN.

Finally, ELOG as the permanent organization hosting E-HORN secretariat could potentially introduce competition, conflict and confusion, and blurring of initiatives and efforts, given that ELOG and E-HORN's primary mandates focus on election observation. E-HORN and ELOG will be required to reflect on this potential risk and threat area to better align the work of the two organizations, separate the personnel and offices, and with clarity identify the areas of synergy and complementarity.

Too, even though E-HORN has established a network of partners and stakeholders, this is not yet diverse enough to include all potential partners and stakeholders in the region. E-HORN will have to invest more on communication and outreach to bring on board more partners, networks and stakeholders and work out principles of engagement for purposes of networking and promoting its work in the region. Internal and external communication will also require to be strengthened especially through the use and deployment of digital technology. This will require E-HORN to develop and adopt public relations and communication policies and strategies. Communication, internally and externally, will require strengthening for the purpose of promoting E-HORN's vision, mission, and activities, as well as reaching a diverse network of actors and stakeholders

involved in elections related work. Other areas that will require E-HORN's attention include inadequate human resource capacity and office facilities.

4.3.2 External Environment - Opportunities

Countries in the East and Horn of Africa region have embraced elections as one of the key pillars of their democratic governance. Save for a few countries in the region where elections have been postponed, regular and periodic elections have become a hallmark of democratic governance in the region. The elections calendar in the region presents opportunities and cuts out the work of E-HORN as the regional elections' observation platform. ELOG must take advantage of the planned elections to showcase its capacity and abilities as the go-to election observation network in the region. Engagement in the coming elections in the region has to take place from the top at the E-HORN secretariat and from the bottom at the ELOG member organizations in the respective countries in the region.

The brand that E-HORN is consolidating in the region provides opportunities that could be tapped upon by E-HORN and its diverse member organizations. It provides opportunities for institutional strengthening, engagement, partnership and networking in the region. It also promotes ownership and legitimacy of E-HORN in the region. The long experience and expertise that E-HORN has built since its creation in 2013 means that E-HORN can boast of a reservoir of knowledge on elections and citizens engagement in the region. It is the reservoir of knowledge and expertise that will make E-HORN stand out in the region and cut out a special niche for itself to become the only go-to elections observation coalition in the region.

E-HORN is not just a membership coalition but is also a member and affiliate of other well-established elections observation coalitions and networks across Africa and globally. These include **AfEONet**, **WAEON** and **ZESN**, among others in Africa, and **GNDEM** globally. Membership and affiliation to the African elections' networks and GNDEM provide opportunities for E-HORN and its members for purposes of engagement, peer learning and development, knowledge sharing, access to resources and resource mobilization and solidarity with external membership to other networks.

As the only election observation platform and network in the East and Horn of Africa, E-HORN does not have competitors in the region or rivals. E-HORN can take advantage of lack of competition to develop into a perfect regional election observation monolith whose brand and niche could be beyond challenge in the region. As a membership coalition, E-HORN provides a unique platform for diversity and inclusivity. This is an opportunity that brings on board and harnesses diverse opportunities that the members have in the region. The opportunity further lies in the potential to pull together a variety of resources, technical capacities and competencies for stronger, efficient, effective and sustainable engagement in the region.

Marginalized groups and communities in the region remain keen to gain knowledge and skills for efficient and effective engagement and participation in public affairs including elections. People with disabilities, women, youth and other marginalized communities in the East and Horn of Africa region face unique challenges but remain open and willing to embrace knowledge and skills necessary for their participation in political, civic and electoral processes. The youth in particular, who were hitherto isolated, are now beginning to get interested and to claim their space and stake in public affairs, bolstered by their domination of the population structures across the region.

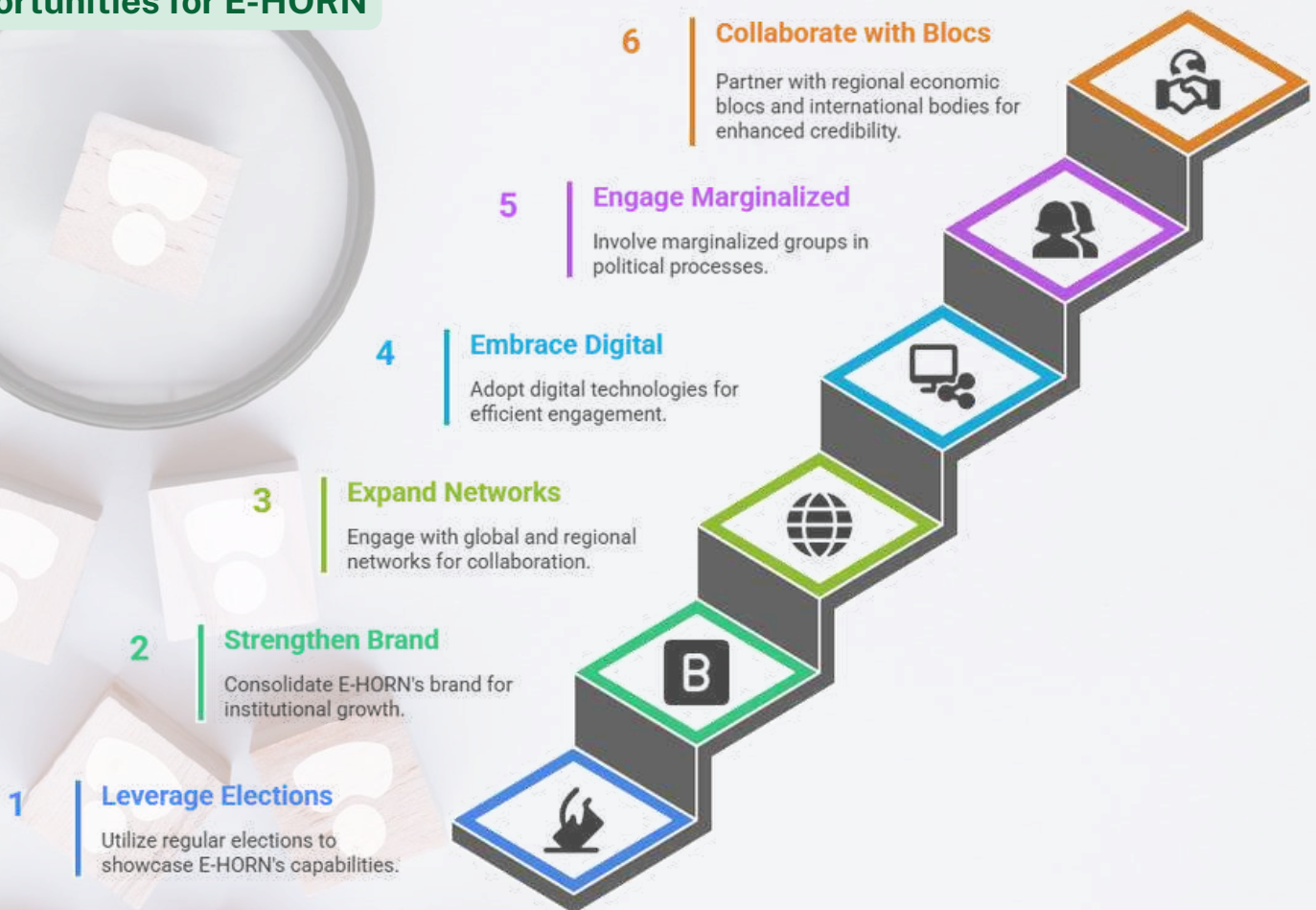
The recent Gen-Z protests in Kenya that generated similar inspiration amongst their peers in Uganda is a testimony that the demands and voices of this group will be critical in shaping and determining the political, civic and electoral destiny in the region. Therefore, E-HORN will have to develop and deploy better and effective ways and methodology for reaching out to and engaging these marginalized groups and their potential power in order to meet their emerging needs and address their realities in the context of political, civic and electoral processes in the region.

The East and Horn of Africa region is home to various regional economic blocs and international bodies, whose presence and mandate in the region offer opportunities through which EHORN could engage to enhance the integrity and credibility of the electoral process. Of particular importance is the presence of regional bodies and institutions such as the African Union, the East African Community, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), Intergovernmental Authority for Development IGAD, East Africa Legislative Assembly (EALA), East Africa Civil Society Forum (EACSOF), etc., which apart from the core political mandate they have in the region, also deploy election observation missions to countries in the region where elections are taking place. The commonality of interest, which E-HORN has with these regional bodies, that E-HORN could leverage on to provide the opportunity for engagement, alignment of mandate and complementarity, especially around election observation in the region.

There is no doubt that the digital space in the region has been revolutionized by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The use and deployment of information communication technologies (ICTs) in engagement and service

provision in both public and private sectors became the new normal. Virtual meetings through technology driven platforms are now regarded as new norms for engagement. Other advances in the digital and virtual that include new social media, greater global connectivity and the emerging use and deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in public and private spaces are realities and opportunities, which E-HORN will have to contend with in this new era and age. E-HORN will have to embrace a fast-learning lane and become adaptive and responsive to emerging global trends in the use and deployment of new technologies for efficient and effective internal and external engagement including its election observation work.

Opportunities for E-HORN



4.3.3 Challenging Context - Threats

Despite the diverse range of strengths and opportunities inherent in E-HORN, there are other dynamics that could negatively implicate E-HORN's work and delivery of this Strategic Plan. These include the fact that there has been no effort in the region to standardize the legal framework for elections, yet observers have to evaluate elections on the basis of internal standards and best practices as well as national laws. Therefore, lack of standardization makes election observation a challenge as there is no

common standard under the respective national laws upon which to evaluate elections.

Besides, observer missions across the region do not operate on the basis of any standard operating procedures but rather on the basis of different interests and stakes that are not necessarily reflective of basic international standards and best practices for evaluating elections. There are also no standard election observation tools and materials. No wonder that pronouncements by observer missions on elections sometimes vary fundamentally. **21.**

E-HORN will endeavor to be guided by its core values of **independence, objectivity and non-partisanship** and the principles laid out under the Declaration for non-partisan citizen election observers as the basis for deploying election observation missions and evaluating the elections.

The East and Horn of Africa region is also characterized by a degree of reversal in democratic gains, with a number of states still lagging behind in their democratic and governance trajectory. Instances of authoritarianism and political populism in the region pose threats to the consolidation of democratic governance. Authoritarian and repressive regimes in the region have used elections as a mere rubber-stamping mechanism for predetermined outcomes and have invested in the use and deployment of insecurity to manipulate elections.

In some instances, such as in Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan, insecurity has led to postponement of elections. This not only undermines integrity and credibility in the electoral process but also poses numerous challenges to election observers that include the emerging threat of insecurity of observers.

As part of the polity of election observers, E-HORN will have to invest in advocacy and activism to promote political and legal recognition of the legitimate work of and the need for better protection of election monitors and observers as critical human rights defenders as contemplated under the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders that was adopted by consensus through General Assembly (GA) Resolution 53/144 of 9 March 1998.

The region has also in the past decade witnessed a trend towards manipulation of Constitutions, which is driven by populism under authoritarian regimes.



This trend, which has occurred in Uganda and Rwanda for instance, to manipulate the Constitution by removing the constitutional term limit for the presidency, is a significant reversal of democratic gains and a direct threat to the integrity and credibility of elections, including the regularity and periodicity of elections. Any threat to democracy poses a threat to the work of observers and therefore, E-HORN and other like-minded advocacy and activist groups will require to work together to not only safeguard the democratic gains in the region but also call out on political leaders in the region who use populism to undermine constitutionalism.

SUMMARY PESTEL

<p>Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Existence of Regional Economic blocs such as AU, EAC, IGADD, EALA, and COMESA. ● Political integration in the region. ● Existence of Constitutions in the region some of which are progressive e.g. Kenya's Constitution 2010. ● Entrenched culture of political pluralism in the region. ● Fairly open and accessible political and civic spaces in the region. ● Porous borders in the region. ● Common regional passport and immigration/refugees and displacement. ● Conflict and insecurity in the region. ● Threat of terrorism (Al Shabab) in the region 	<p>Technological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increasing use and deployment of technology in elections. ● Exponential growth of Internet and mobile telephone penetration. ● Growing access to and use of smart phones. ● Techno-savvy citizenry in the region especially the youth. ● New Social media platforms. ● Regional interconnectedness through the internet. ● Access to easy mobile money. ● Increasing use and deployment of Artificial Intelligence.
<p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Economic integration in the region through the Regional blocks. ● Cross-border commerce and business. ● Levels of poverty in the region ● Corruption and illegal sources of money 	<p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increasing negative effects of climate change. ● Increasing focus on environmental conservation as a cross-cutting issue
<p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Growing citizens' political consciousness in the region. ● Growing citizens' appetite for knowledge and information. ● The youth bulge and their growing interest, claim and stake in political, civic and electoral processes. ● The Gen-Z phenomenon in Kenya and its impact in the region. ● Literacy levels in the region 	<p>Legal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Existence of Constitutions in the region. ● Existence of legal frameworks for elections in the region. ● Guaranteed regularity and periodicity of elections in the region. ● Bill of fundamental rights and liberties in the Constitutions in the region. ● Regional norms and standards for elections in the region through ACDEG ● Unnecessary restrictions of movement of people and labor in the region.

CHAPTER

5,6,7

THE STRATEGY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

TARGET GROUPS



5. THE STRATEGY

Overview

Goal and Outcomes

Overall Goal: To provide a regional platform for election observation and monitoring, and related democratic and governance engagements with the aim of promoting democracy and good governance in the East and Horn of Africa.

Indicators for the Goal



Outcome 1: Improved adherence to electoral and democratic standards and practices in the East and Horn of Africa region.

Indicators for the outcome

- Enhanced quality of elections in the region

- Increased citizen's knowledge of the electoral and democratic processes.
- Reduced instances of postponed elections in the region
- Reduced instances of constitutional manipulation of term limits
- Increased instances of acceptance of electoral outcomes

Outcome 2: Strengthened, independent and engaged member organizations with capacity to efficiently and effectively observe and monitor electoral processes in their respective countries and across the East and Horn of Africa region, the entire Africa region and the rest of the world.

Indicators for the outcome

- Consistent and sustained deployment of local domestic observation missions by members in respective countries.
- Deployment of technical support mission by E-HORN in the region
- Conduct of training and capacity building activities by E-HORN to the members.

Outcome 3: Enhanced solidarity, networking and partnership amongst like-minded stakeholders in the political, civic and electoral environment in the East and Horn of Africa region.

Indicators for the outcome

- Joint Country Forums
- Joint Observation missions
- Regional solidarity statements
- Enhanced quality of elections in the region
- Increased joint engagements, networking and partnership across the region.
- Independent and strong member organizations

Outcome 4: Entrenched and operationalized international and regional norms and standards on elections, democracy and governance in the East and Horn of Africa region.

➤ Indicators for the outcome

- Enhanced quality of elections in the region
- Increased advocacy and lobbying initiatives in the region
- Increased signing and ratification of ACDEG by member countries in the region.

Outcome 5: Strengthened institutional capacity for E-HORN as a model election observation and monitoring platform and network in the East and Horn of Africa region.

➤ Indicators for the outcome

- Increased membership in the region
- Sustained funding for E-HORN's interventions in the region
- Increased visibility and brand acknowledgement of E-HORN in the region
- Increased and sustained generation of knowledge products
- Vibrant, professional and effective secretariat

Outcome 2: Objective under the outcome: To strengthen the capacity and independence of member organizations to observe and monitor elections in their respective countries, based on the entire electoral cycle and in accordance with the highest ethical standards and practices.

What are the indicators for the objectives; what are the outputs and what are the indicators for the outputs?

Outcome 3: Objective under this outcome: To enhance solidarity, fraternity, networking and partnership amongst network members and other agencies, partners and stakeholders within the electoral ecosystem to support the conduct of democratic elections in the East and Horn of Africa.

What are the indicators for the objectives; what are the outputs and what are the indicators for the outputs?

Outcome 4: Objective under this outcome: To promote the adoption and implementation of international and regional norms and standards on elections, democracy and governance in order to improve the political, civic and electoral processes in the East and Horn of Africa region.

What are the indicators for the objectives; what are the outputs and what are the indicators for the outputs?

Outcome 5: Objective under this outcome: To strengthen the institutional capacity for E-HORN in order to transform it into a model election observation and monitoring platform and network in the East and Horn of Africa region.

What are the indicators for the objectives; what are the outputs and; what are the indicators for the outputs?

6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Outcome 1: Objective under the outcome: To research and advocate for election laws, electoral reforms and other electoral and democratic related processes and issues in order to promote electoral standards and practices in the region based on international and regional standards; What are the indicators for the objectives; what are the outputs and what are the indicators for the outputs?

7. TARGET GROUPS

EHORN's work is targeted at diverse groups of actors, stakeholders and beneficiaries within and outside the East and Horn of Africa region. They include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Citizens of the region
- b. Domestic election observer groups
- c. States and Governments in the region
- d. EMBs
- e. Regional Political and Economic Blocs (RECs) and institutions
- f. Civil Society Organizations (including Faith Based Organizations)
- g. Development and Donor Partners

E-HORN acknowledges the diversity of its target groups and beneficiaries and will therefore tailor its engagement and operational methodologies and strategies to adapt to and align with the needs of the specific target group and beneficiary. Generally, however, E-HORN will, with abundance of flexibility and adaptability, deploy the following methodologies and strategies to engage its target groups and beneficiaries.

- a. Meetings including roundtables, conferences, workshops and seminars
- b. Joint advocacy initiatives and solidarity statements
- c. Joint co-creation and programming/technical support
- d. Joint EOM & EFM
- e. Training and Capacity Development



CHAPTER

8

Management and Implementation of the Strategy



7. MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

Resource Needs and Management

The implementation and delivery of this Strategic Plan will require E-HORN to invest in substantial human and financial resources. While the projected, detailed and itemized budget is attached, it is to be remembered that it will be the responsibility of all organs of E-HORN, including the member organizations to work towards securing the resources for effective implementation and delivery of the Strategic Plan. E-HORN's financial operations shall be undertaken by the Executive Council members, which shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the secretariat on the governance of the funds. All requests for use of funds must be approved by the E-HORN Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Treasurer.

Typically, E-HORN relies on the following sources of funding, but these have to be reviewed to enable E-HORN to embrace more dynamic, diversified and sustainable resource and funding base: Grants; Annual non-refundable subscriptions; Financial donations; Sale of publications and souvenirs of E-HORN; Contributions of time by members providing support to the network, and; any other lawful resources.

E-HORN's institutional structures, organization and arrangement are anchored and provided for under its Constitution. In addition to the basic structure, organization and arrangement, the legal registration of E-HORN in Kenya together with the designation of ELOG as the permanent Secretariat, have enabled E-HORN to make structural and

operational advancement in three key areas that include:

1. Enhancement of Operational Structure:

This has the effect of strategically enhancing E-HORN's operational structure with the establishment of a permanent and expanded E-HORN Secretariat. This move signifies a commitment to enhancing organizational capabilities, ensuring effectiveness in the implementation of projects and initiatives.

2. Formation of Technical Committee:

E-HORN has established the E-HORN technical committee from its member organizations to provide essential technical and logistical support during future engagements within member countries. The committee members are set to play a crucial role, particularly in the formation of County Forums, Observation Missions and the implementation of the Election Academy.

3. Digital Presence and Communication:

E-HORN has achieved the successful creation of its website, serving as an online hub for information dissemination. This is in addition to establishing a presence on social media platforms, facilitating broader stakeholder engagement.

E-HORN's typical structural and institutional arrangement for purposes of implementation of this strategic framework is composed of the following:

i. The E-HORN Council

The Council is the supreme organ of E-HORN with overall authority and oversight over E-HORN affairs. It comprises all the member organizations that form the network. The Council meeting is in fact the Annual General Meeting of the members, which takes place every three years in order to elect members of the Executive Committee; ratify decisions; approve programs, annual and financial reports, approve budgets, donations and contributions and approve new members, among other responsibilities.

ii. The Executive Committee

This Committee, which is also known as the Coordinating Committee, reports to the Council and serves as the governing body and provides general strategic supervisions, guidance and direction to the network in relation to all activities including proposals, guidelines, budgets, among others. It is also responsible for the issuance of all policy statements of E-HORN. It is composed of the E-HORN Chair, Secretary and Treasurer with the Regional Coordinator as the ex-officio member.

iii. The Secretariat

ELOG is the permanent Secretariat of E-HORN, tasked with the responsibility of coordinating the implementation of program actions of the committees and organs of E-HORN. The Secretariat is headed by the Regional Coordinator with the support Program Management Team, which is made up of staff that is responsible for implementation of this strategic framework, which includes the day-to-day management, running and execution of E-HORN program and related affairs and activities.

iv. The Country Forums

The Country Forums are established in each member country constituting non-partisan

citizen election observation organizations and institutions that shall be members of E-HORN. The Country Forums role include: nominating two representatives per country to represent the country at the E-HORN Council and; supporting, promoting, and reporting on E-HORN activities in their countries.

v. The E-HORN Technical Committee

The E-HORN Technical Committee was established to support E-HORN's country-level activities and provide country-specific updates on emerging political developments. Its membership consists of technical officers assigned to election and political affairs desks, who are engaged in democracy and electoral processes across E-HORN member countries

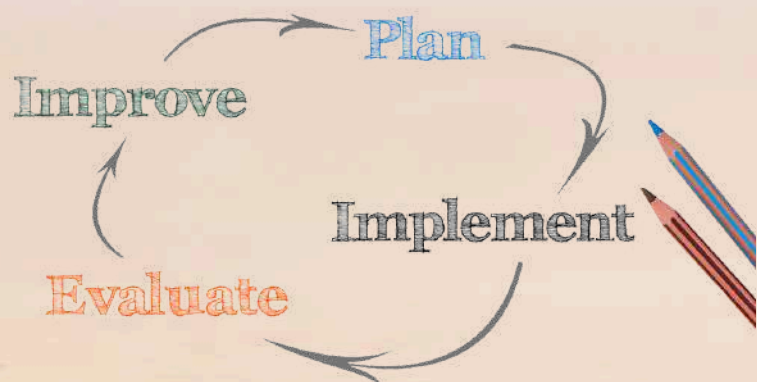
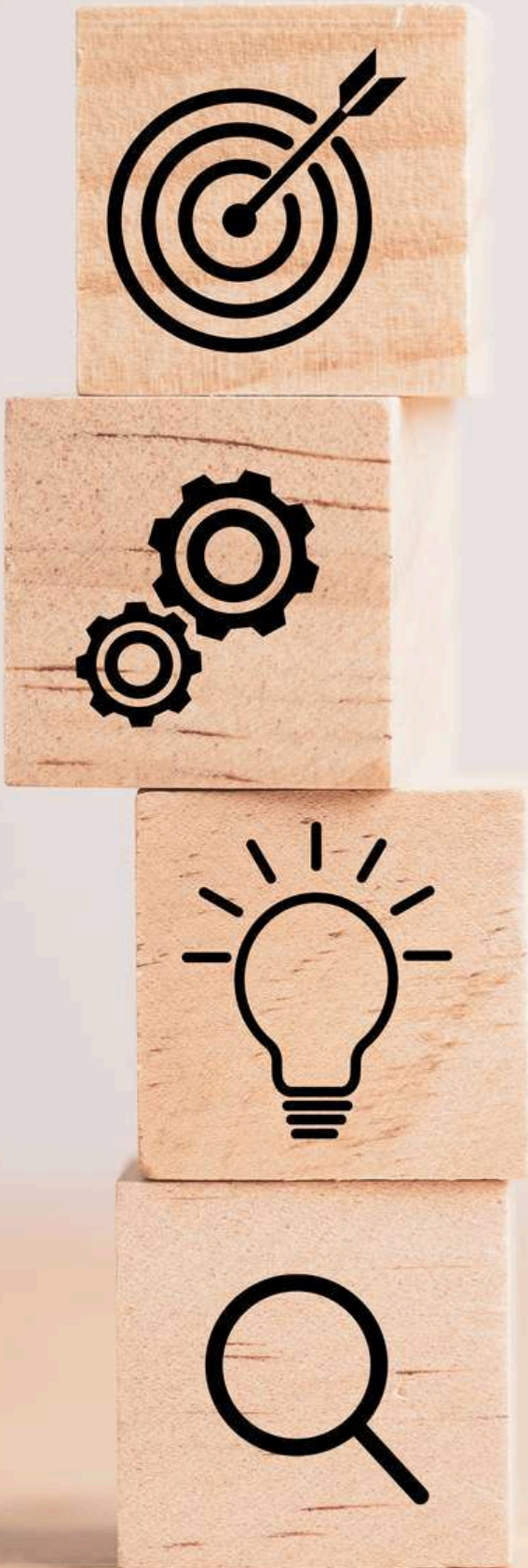
E-HORN Institutional Arrangement



CHAPTER

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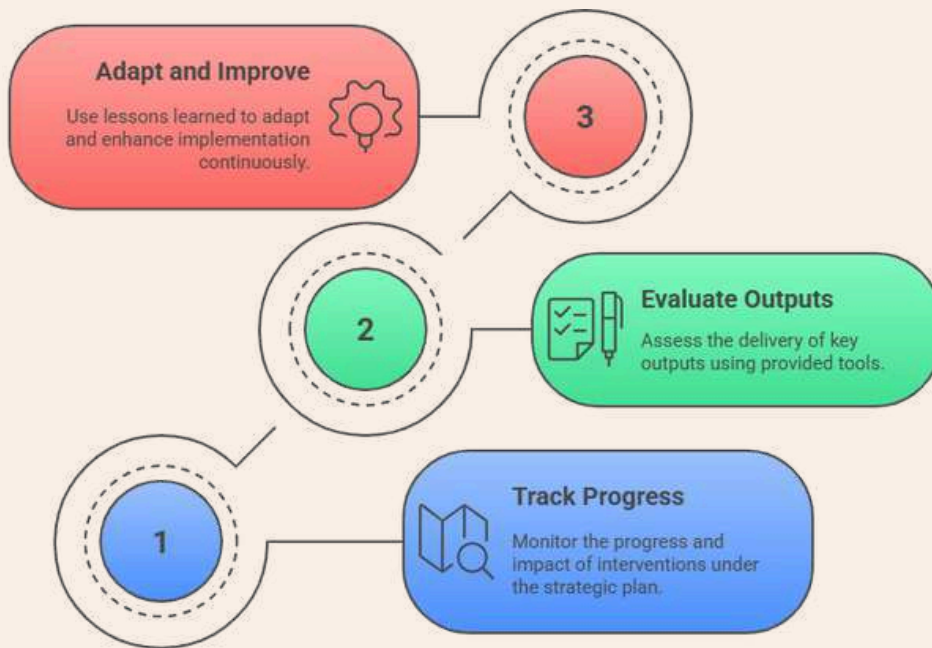
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MERL) Framework



9. MONITORING, EVALUATION, RESEARCH, AND LEARNING (MERL) FRAMEWORK

E-HORN will adopt a detailed Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning framework in order to ensure effective implementation and progress tracking for this Strategic Plan. The framework will be grounded on a participatory approach that will utilize a variety of monitoring, evaluation and learning tools such as the Logical Framework Matrices, Activity Score Cards and a results chain framework. The logical framework approach will apply to the expected results by projecting them in order to inform program decision-making and managing of risks. Further, E-HORN will utilize its expertise on Results Based Management (RBM) to ensure that immediate, mid-term and long-term results emanating from the implementation of this strategic framework are well harvested and documented.

Therefore, the deployment of the MERL framework will enable E-HORN to achieve the following key things:



1. Track the progress and impact of interventions and other activities under this Strategic plan.
2. Provide tools for evaluating the delivery of key outputs.
3. Provide key lessons for adaptation and to help improve implementation on a rolling basis.

In this sense, the MERL framework will enable documentation of lessons that will feed back into the implementation of the strategy. Tracking the progress and impact of interventions and other initiatives under this strategy will be undertaken at three levels, namely: internal organizational level, partners' level, and beneficiaries or target groups level.

Internally, E-HORN Secretariat will hold weekly program management meetings to review progress and share information for ongoing program activities. The E-HORN coordinator will provide support to internally monitor progress markers to ensure results and documentation.

At partners' level, E-HORN will adopt the outcome mapping approach that will be driven by a comprehensive mapping exercise on the basis of the perceived outcome challenges. In this regard, E-HORN will identify its boundary partners and design engagement strategies for them. Tracking of the engagement with partners will be done through the use of specific tools such as the boundary partner monitoring log, activity log sheets, activity monitoring logs, most significant change stories and, performance scorecards. These tools will be designed to capture both intended and unintended results.

At beneficiaries' level, the beneficiaries will be targeted and probed to narrate their most significant change stories. In addition, self-assessments of knowledge, skills and capacity targeting the beneficiaries will be conducted.

This strategic framework aims to develop indicators and harvest results around the broader sphere of influence, which is at the output and outcome levels. The outcomes identified in the Logical Framework will provide the parameters for monitoring based on the indicators developed. The specific tools for monitoring will include:

- Project implementation reports
- Surveys: baseline and follow-up surveys on key indicators
- Feedback from partners and program beneficiaries
- Visits to programme sites
- Financial reports and audit

Monitoring as perceived under this strategic framework will require collection of data, which will be undertaken regularly. The data collection will also feed into conventional reporting. The data will also be utilized to support learning and adaptation to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of organizational processes. The overall aim is to enhance the capacity for learning and build a responsive framework that can adapt to and address challenges as they arise.

Evaluation will be conducted as part of continuous program quality improvement and will take the following forms:

- Annual internal review targeting achievement of outputs and lessons drawn from implementation.
- A medium-term review, at around two years of the strategy implementation, to track progress in the achievement of the outcomes and identify lessons for the remainder of the plan period.

- An end-term review, at the end of the strategy period, to assess the overall impact of the implementation of this strategic framework. This will also identify challenges and draw lessons to inform the next Strategic Plan.

Evaluation Plan



10. RISKS AND RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES

As part of its corporate management responsibility, E-HORN has identified a number of key risks that operate internally and externally and could impact the implementation of this strategic framework.

The table below highlights the risks, their levels, mitigation strategies and overall responsibility or accountability for managing them.



Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Risk Domain	Risk / Scenario	Risk Level (High, Medium or Low)	Risk Mitigation
Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volatile and unstable political environment 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political propaganda 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counter propaganda with communication and information strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity and dynamics of membership 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New technology including AI 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mis/dis-information and malign influence 		
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse legal regimes in the region 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of standardized laws 		
Public Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-HORN perceived as partisan by stakeholders 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erosion of credibility 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative publicity and malign campaigns 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-fights amongst members 		
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral violence • Arrest of staff and observers • sponsored/sporadic attacks of secretariat and breach of data security 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-based advocacy • Network with like-minded groups to counter insurgency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat to observers 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postponement of scheduled elections 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compromised state security agents 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of evidence-based advocacy
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in disbursement of funds 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early submission of Strategic Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate funding 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversifying fundraising

Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delayed policy guidance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement internal policies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dichotomy between ELOG and E-HORN 		
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of funding-existential threat 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early submission of Operational Plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in disbursement of funds 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technological risks 		



REDET - LEAD AGENCY OF TEMCO



Somali WOMEN'S Leadership Initiative



Tanzanibora INITIATIVE



CENTER for STRATEGIC LITIGATION



CENTRE UBUNTU
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**Jumuia Place Lenana Road
Nairobi, Kenya
P.O Box 45009 - 00100
Nairobi, Kenya**

**<https://ehorn.org>
infor@ehorn.org**