

2.2 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

Specific Objective 1 will address the following problems, highlighted in the 2019/2020 EEM reports:

1. Institutional challenges faced by the EMB (Órgano Electoral Plurinacional) in the following areas:

- i. **Deficiencies in planning systems and protocols**, as well as inefficient communication channels between the TSE and TEDs, and weaknesses in the protocols and specific regulations for EMB staff.
- ii. **Weak capacity of the EMB for regulation and enforcement:** Absence of a fully consistent legal/regulatory framework and difficulties in its implementation due to uncertain interpretations and ambiguities of the legal basis (e.g., criteria of qualification of candidates). There is also a lack of jurisdictional records to inform EMB decisions.
- iii. **Limitations in communication and relationship with citizens, voters, political parties, media and candidates;** as well as low capacities to prosecute cases of violence/pressure against journalists, prevent hate speech or controlling government advertising and the use of public funds.
- iv. **Deficiencies in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs):** weaknesses in ITCs, security policies, voter counting systems and regulations, or in the biometric platform for the administration of the electoral roll.
- v. **Electoral Roll:** weaknesses in electoral roll and absence of mechanisms for regular update.
- vi. **Deficiencies in facilities and equipment**, which were damaged in the framework of the 2019 electoral process and have not yet been fully replaced.
- vii. **Electoral operations** with security flaws and inconsistencies, which could only be partially corrected in 2020 due to urgency.
- viii. **Limitations in qualified human resources** and frequent rotation.

2. Perceived lack of independence of the EMB and low levels of public confidence in the EMB: which contributed to the 2019 outbreak of violence during the post-electoral conflicts. For tackling this, the support to the EMB for the 2020 and 2021 electoral processes introduced a component for supporting political dialogue processes led by the EMB but involving different electoral stakeholders, which contributed to mitigate political and electoral violence. The challenge now is to ensure that the EMB institutionalises these political dialogue mechanisms of conflict prevention.

3. Civil society and general population are not sufficiently informed and socially active on electoral processes, which reduces scrutiny on the electoral processes and on EMB Action/decisions. There is also a gender-gap in political participation and a perceived lack of representation of youth and their expectations across political forces. The support to the involvement of civil society organisations, including organisations representing women, youth and other specific groups, is intended to contribute to a more informed electorate who will play a bigger role in the consolidation of democracy and to support their role in monitoring the electoral processes, ultimately making the electoral processes more informed, participatory, inclusive and transparent.

Specific Objective 2 will address the following problems:

1. High corruption levels in the police force: this is a regular trend in Latin America and Bolivia is not the exception, even though lack of official data one of the limitations (TI 2019). Perceptions from the population suggest that Bolivian Police would be one of the most affected institutions, with 62% of respondents stating perception of corruption in the Police according to Transparency International (2017)⁶. High corruption levels among the police have significant repercussions eroding governance and the rule of law and citizen security. Significant public attention has come after the arrest of some former counter-narcotics high ranking officials, under serious allegations from foreign counter-narcotics agencies regarding their involvement in drug trafficking to United States and Europe. Several internal evidence followed these reveals, which are under official investigations.

2. Weak implementation of anticorruption legislation: Bolivia has enacted a number of laws criminalising most forms of corruption. However, legislation is not properly implemented due to insufficient prosecution capacities (including delayed justice and weak crime investigation/prosecution procedures), as well as a lack of political will, which remains a major obstacle in the fight against corruption deriving in high impunity levels (of the 1503 corruption complaints received by the police in 2021, only 31% were referred to the public prosecutor's office).

⁶ Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer (2017).