

Matching Strategy with ICT Tools

for Election Observation and Advocacy

WAEON Academy: Monrovia, Liberia

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Overview

- Strategy Informs ICT Tools
- Mobile Technology
- Database Software
- Data Visualization
- Crowdsourcing for Elections
- Think Beyond Mapping
- Think Beyond Elections

Strategy before Tactics

- Know your goal!
 - New tools and methods should only be used if they help achieve the election monitoring or advocacy goals
- What is your top priority goal?
 - Provide a credible overall assessment of the conduct of elections?
 - Deter manipulation and fraud?
 - Mobilize citizens?



Mobile Technology

- Why mobile?
 - You can reach EVERYONE if nationwide coverage
- How to use as part of a campaign?
 - Must have a strong need for gathering and/or disseminating information

SMS Reporting for Elections

Benefits

- Fast, constant communication with observers
- Reliable, ease/familiarity of use, inexpensive
- Automatically inputs data into database

Disadvantages

- Cellular coverage should be nationwide and reliable
- Limited in information that can be texted
- Requires a mobile phone

Other uses of SMS

- SMS missing observers
- Remind observers of call times or last minute instructions
- Update on key electoral or security developments
- Thank observers and obtain feedback

Database Software

- Software or google form for data entry
- Integrated data entry and analysis system
- Database should have two functions:
 - Process information for analysis and reports
 - Help manage the observation effort

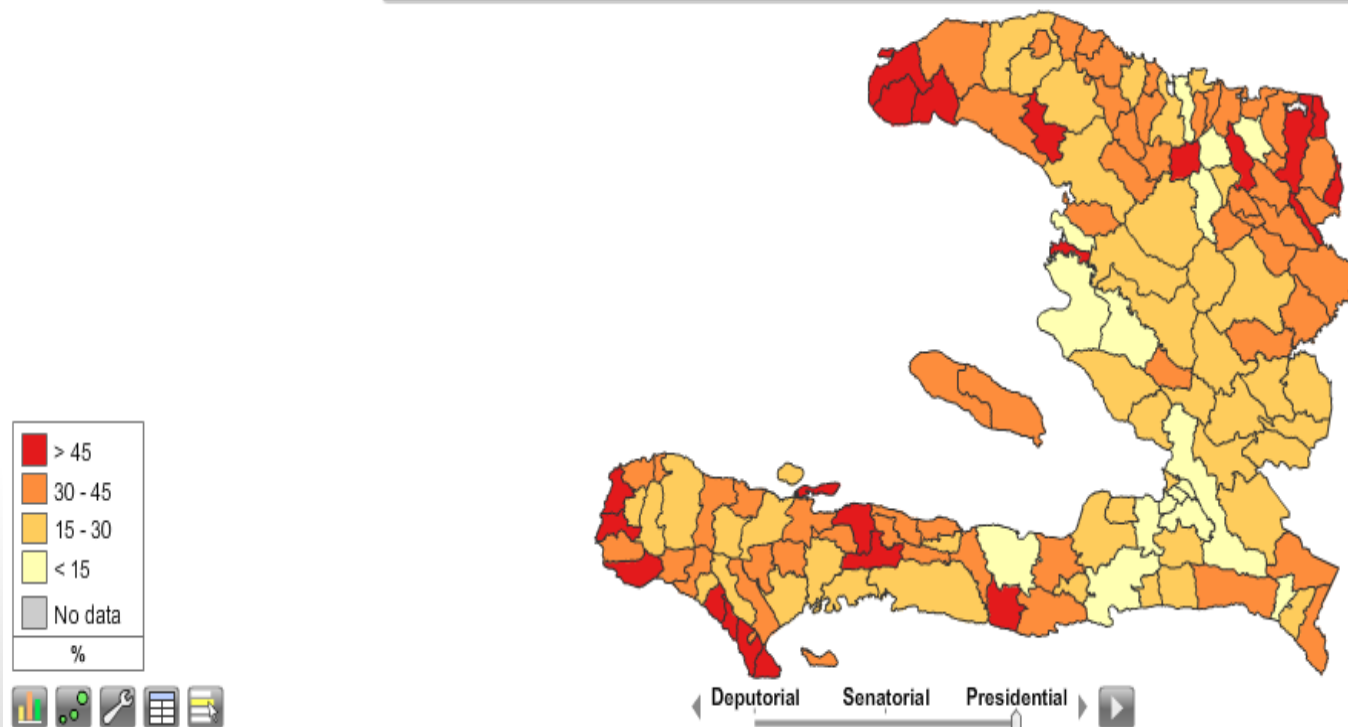
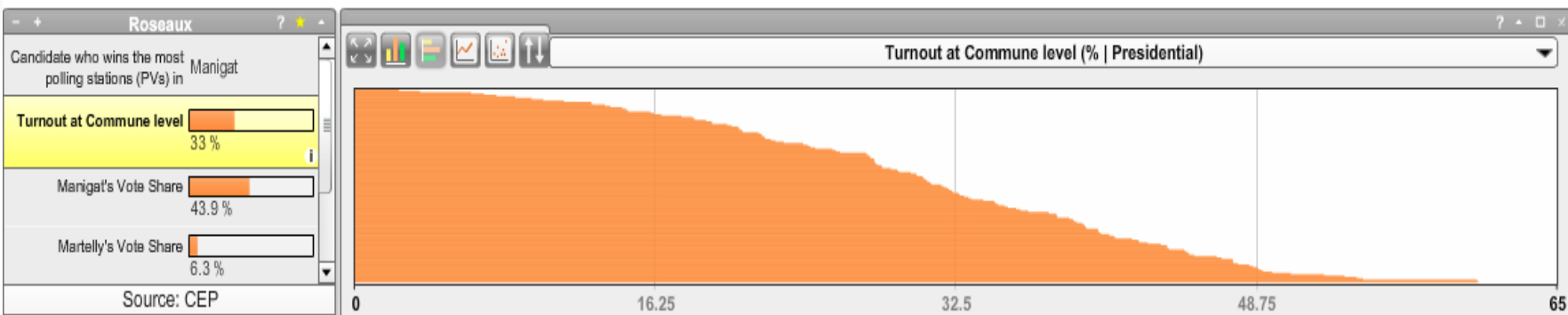
Data Visualization & Open Data

- Sharing data and analysis online
- Engine for empowering civil society and media; attracting attention
 - Allows the public, media or internal staff to develop analysis that tells the story they want to tell
- Purposes
 - GIS mapping of official CEC data
 - Mapping trained observer data

Haiti: <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/2913608/Haiti/index.html>

Haiti 2010 Election Results at Commune Level

Last updated: January 4, 2011 10:00am



Data Visualization: Trained Observer Data

Top Priority Goal	Type of Visualization
Provide a credible overall assessment of the conduct of elections	Color gradients and shading by region
Highlight and deter manipulation and fraud	Pinpoints and symbols

Collectif des Organisations de la Société Civile pour les Elections (COSCE)

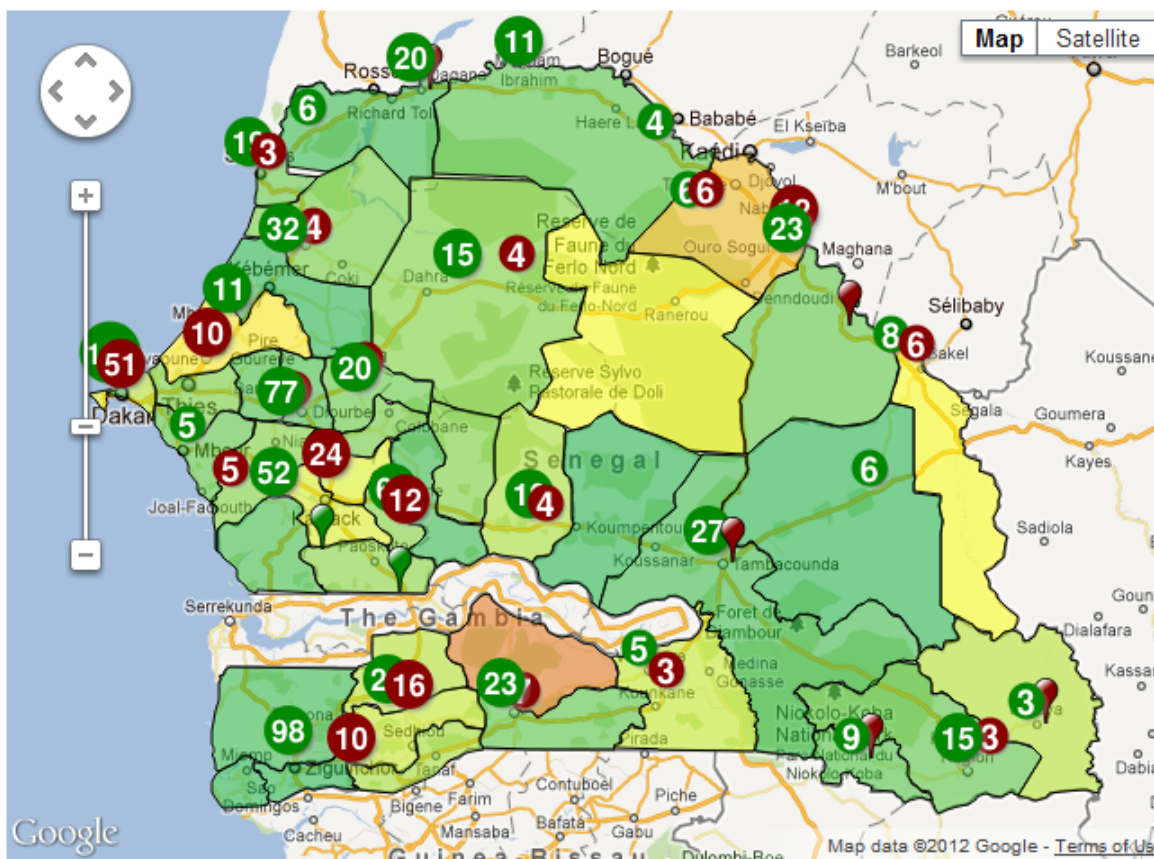
resocit.org

CHOISIR UN BUREAU DE VOTE OU RECHERCHER SUR LA CARTE CI-DESSOUS

1 Région 2 Département 3 Bureau de vote

MISES À JOUR: 08:24 GMT, 27 Mars 2012

LES DONNÉES DE: 1096 (de 11904) bureaux de vote



↓ FILTRE DE CATEGORIE

- Heure d'ouverture
- L'ouverture du bureau de vote
- Operations de vote
- Taux de participation à midi
- Heure de clôture du bureau
- Taux de participation
- Le dépouillement
- Rapports d'incidents graves
 - Violence
 - Achat de conscience
 - Arrête de vote
 - Intimidation
- Autres incidents importants
- Opinion globale sur la consultation

INDICATEUR (COMMENT ÇA MARCHE?)



Les points rouge indiquent que les observateurs ont envoyé au moins un rapport défavorable de ce bureau de vote pour cette categorie.

Les points verts indiquent que, jusqu'au present, les observateurs n'ont envoyé que des rapports favorables de ce bureau de vote pour cette categorie.

Ce service web est encore en version BETA. Envoyer votre feedback ou questions à jeffrey.allen@oneworld.net.

Crowdsourcing

Definition

- Giving tasks to a large, undefined group of people through an open call to participate

Benefits

- Use crowds to work for you – collect information from citizens and journalists
- Mobilize people from outside your network to join movement
- Useful for highlighting fraud when elections are fully expected to be fraudulent

Crowdsourcing and Elections

Crowdsourcing $\neq$ Election Monitoring

- Only systematic observation with trained observers provides a complete and accurate picture of the electoral process
- But it can be a good complement to systematic election monitoring

Crowdsourcing Limitations

- Reports are “raw” and anecdotal
- Information can at times be misleading or confusing
- Can be manipulated by parties and/or governments, unless you verify reports
- Coverage is limited and disproportionate: Usually much higher in urban areas
- Negative bias: Generally, citizens only report when they see a problem or violation



Crowdsourcing Issues

Easiest Aspects

- Developing the web-based platform
- Informing citizens about the platform
- Collecting citizen reports

Most Difficult Aspects

- Ensuring that crowd-sourced information is verified, credible, and well-integrated into a broader election monitoring effort
- Verification requires a significant amount of financial and human resources and time

Collecting Citizen Reports

- Phone hotline, SMS (could be with short code), website, email
- Multiple methods should be used
 - If one method is attacked than another one can be used
 - Frequent and widespread advertising is required
- Each method has a different overall cost and the distribution of that cost varies
 - For example, the citizen pays the cost of sending a text-message whereas the domestic observer organization might bear the cost of having a “live” telephone hotline

Hybrid Approach

Hybrid Approach: Combining trained observers with verified citizen reporting

- Deploy trained LTOs and STOs to enable overall assessment of electoral integrity
- Deploy “crowdsourcing verifiers” (ideally LTOs) who verify all citizen reports
 - minimize the uncertainty and rumor
 - use the media as partners to get out accurate information

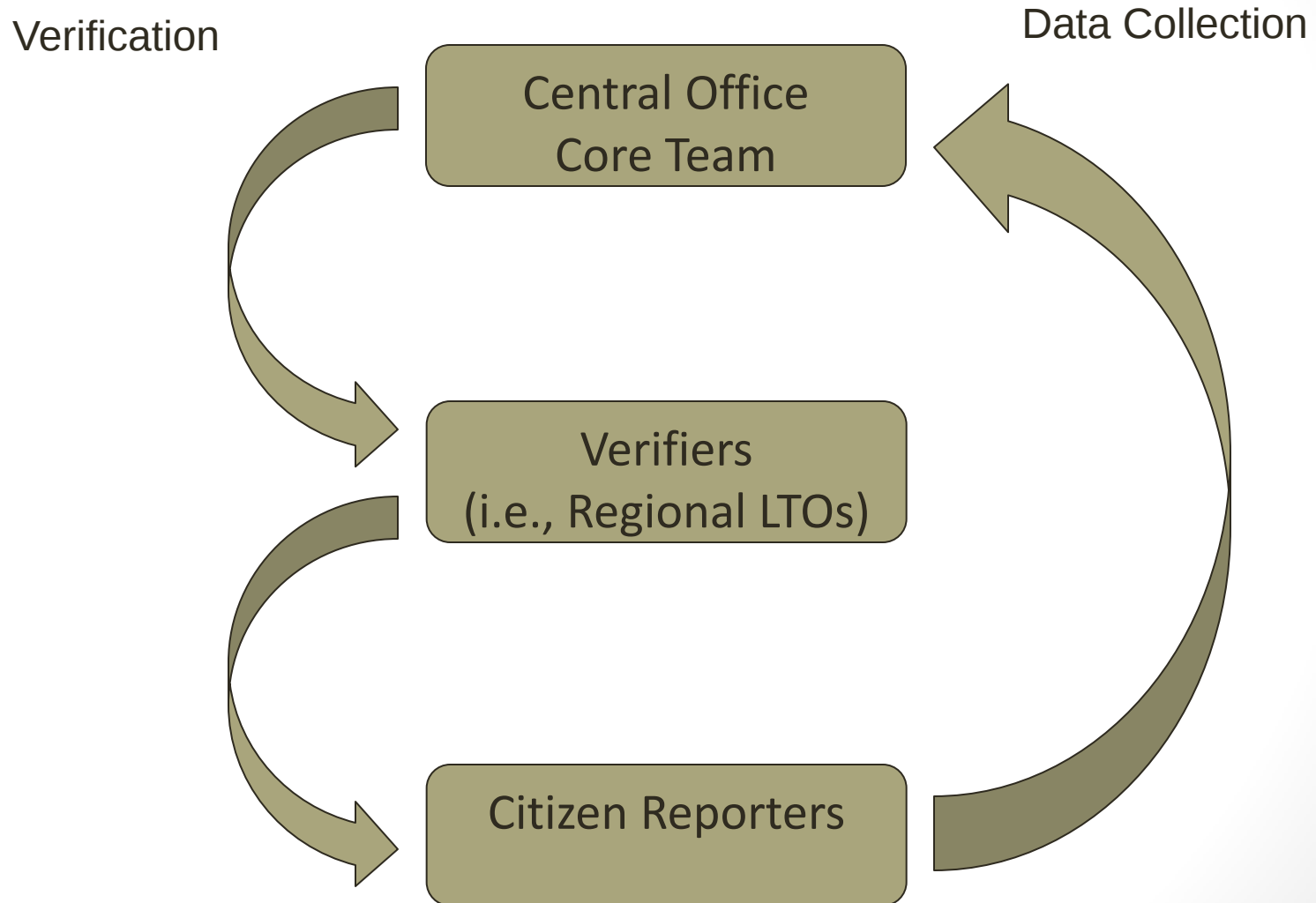
Verification Criteria

- Get the same information from at least two reliable sources
- Two or more reports about same incident from two different #’s or sources, and then verifier has spoken directly to person
- Video and photo evidence, audio recording,
- Copies of legal documentation filed
- Direct report from a trusted, knowledgeable person, such as trained observer, election official or trusted journalist
- Should you post unverified information?

Verifying Reports

- Citizen report goes directly to central office
- Central office “tagger” (tech savvy person) puts info into databank, tags it to specific area, type of fraud, whether verified or not
- Report information is sent to relevant LTO (verifier) to verify and follow-up
- Two-way interaction between central office and LTOs is important

Verification Flow Chart Example



www.ugandawatch.org



1. Participation, protests, police? What's happening where you are?
2. Send a report to 6090 by SMS or submit via the website.
3. UgandaWatch investigates it

 Like 240

Categories

General

Media and Information

Money in Politics

Process

Violence & Intimidation

Voter Registration Issues

Verified Messages

Verified Messages

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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APRIL 29, 2011

Besigye's car was broken at mulago roundabout and he was teargassed in the face directly before being dragged to court unconscious.

6:41am

Original Language: English Original Message: Besigye's car was broken at mulago roundabout and he was teargassed in the face directly before being dragged to court unconscious.

Keywords: english responsible: military affected: fdc supporter violence uganda central kampala region kampala kawempe division south mulago ii



APRIL 15, 2011

PROTESTERS HAVE VOWED 2 CONTINUE STAGING DEMO OVER HIGH FUEL AND FOOD PRICES.CS BUBULO EAST.DEMGroup

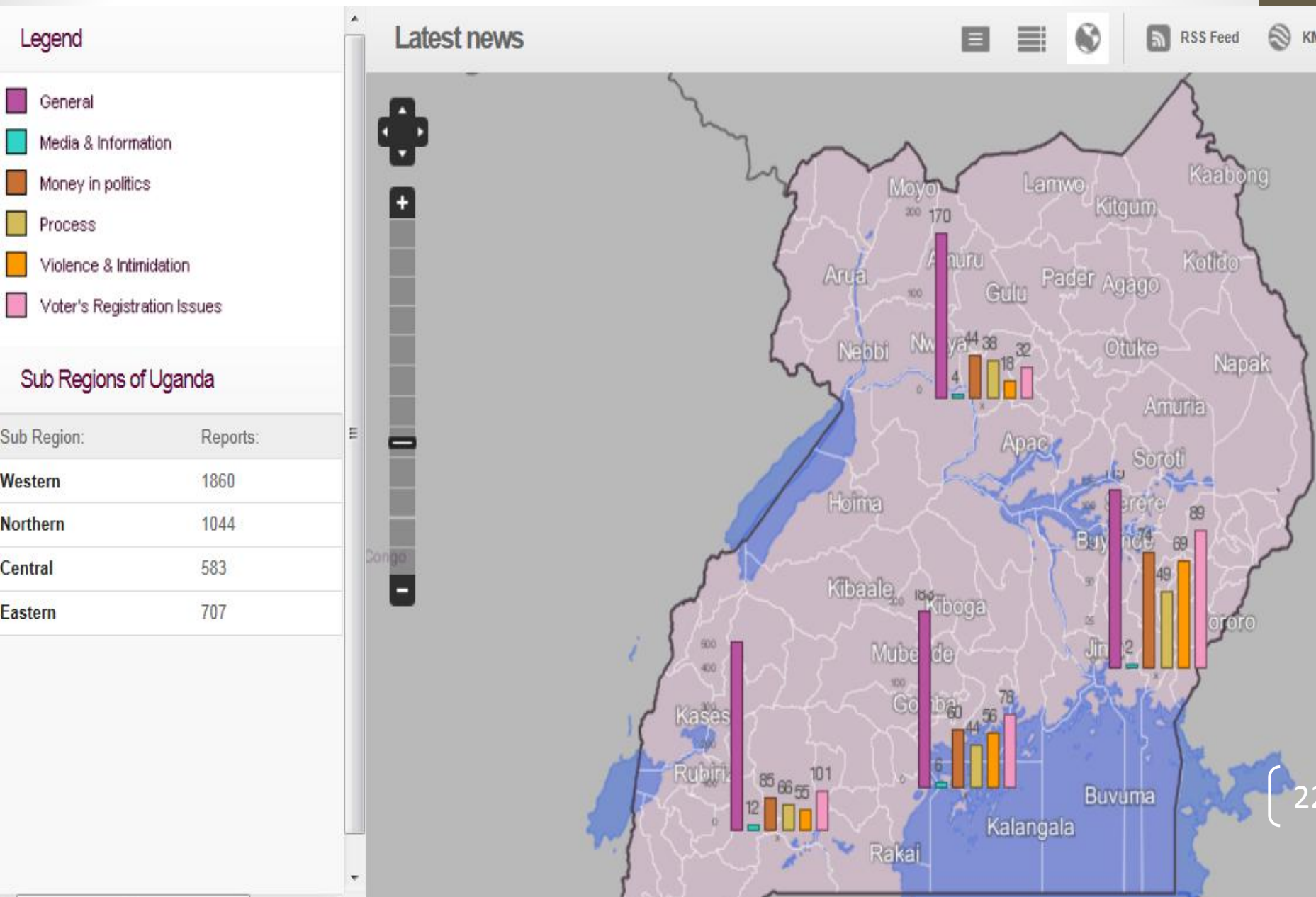
1:50pm

Original Language: English Original Message: PROTESTERS HAVE VOWED 2 CONTINUE STAGING DEMO OVER HIGH FUEL AND FOOD PRICES.CS BUBULO EAST.DEMGroup

Keywords: english general uganda eastern mt. elgon region manafwa bubulo county east



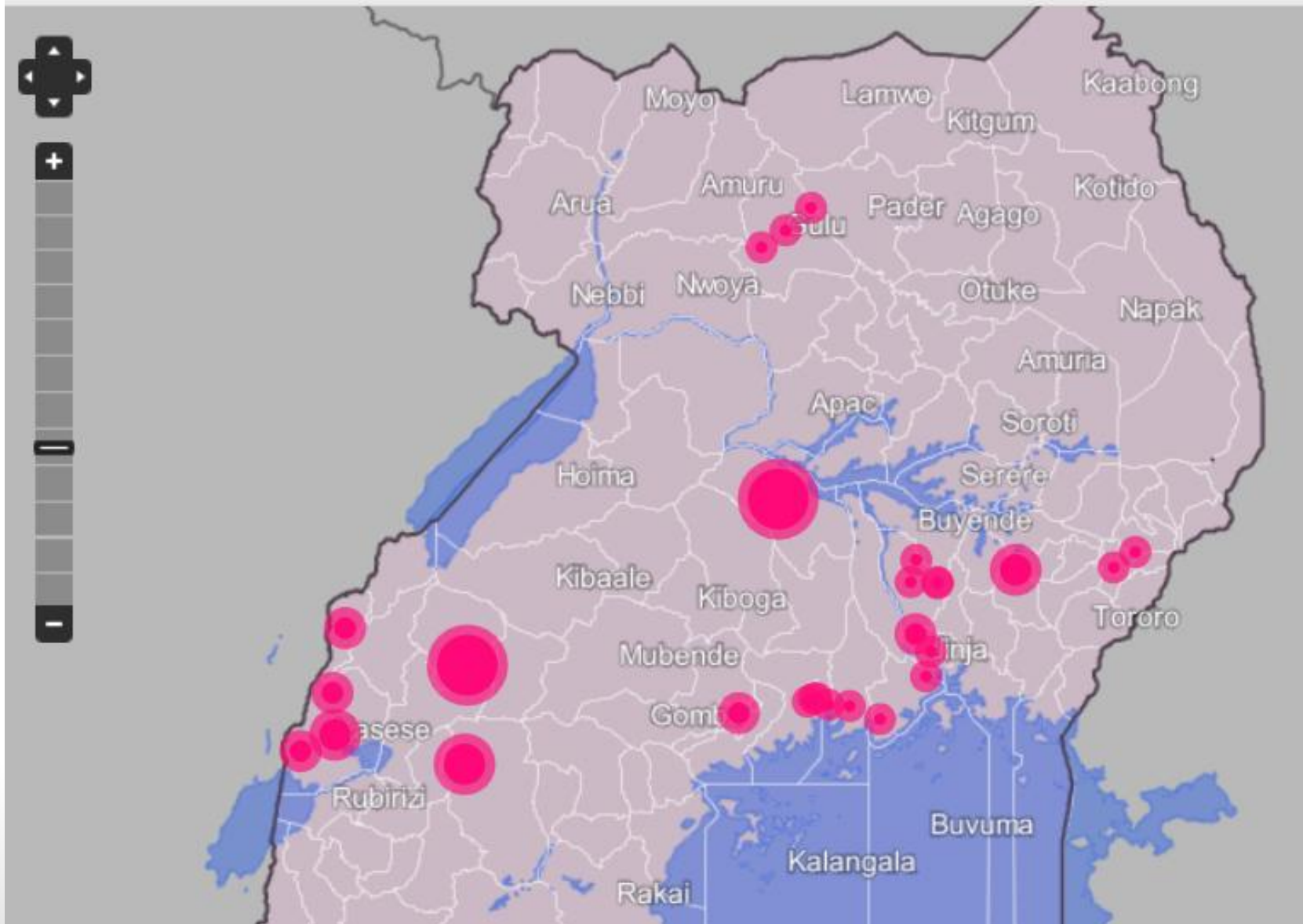
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Verified Messages



RSS Feed



Uganda Watch Lessons Learned

- Verification is difficult
- Keep citizen expectations realistic
 - People need to feel that something was done about their report, or else they won't contribute next time
- How to attract attention to the website
 - Twitter feed and Facebook connected to the website were popular – easier to follow for journalists and citizens

Lessons Learned from Other Countries

- Larger core team is needed to receive, validate, translate, upload reports, videos and photos, and to moderate the blog.
- Technology: Must have widespread mobile coverage
- Simulation exercise must be conducted in advance
- Early agreement among civil society about how and what data to share
- Always have back-up communication, data processing and reporting plans
- Accommodate slower networks by providing “low graphics” option for website

Think Beyond Maps!

- Mapping is not necessarily the most influential way to publicize findings
- Know your target audience! Where do they get their information?
- Connect with radio, printed news, journalists
- Integrate with social networks
 - Twitter feeds for verified reports
 - Video evidence of fraud on Youtube and Facebook
 - Photo evidence on photosharing sites (i.e., Flickr)

Think Beyond Elections!

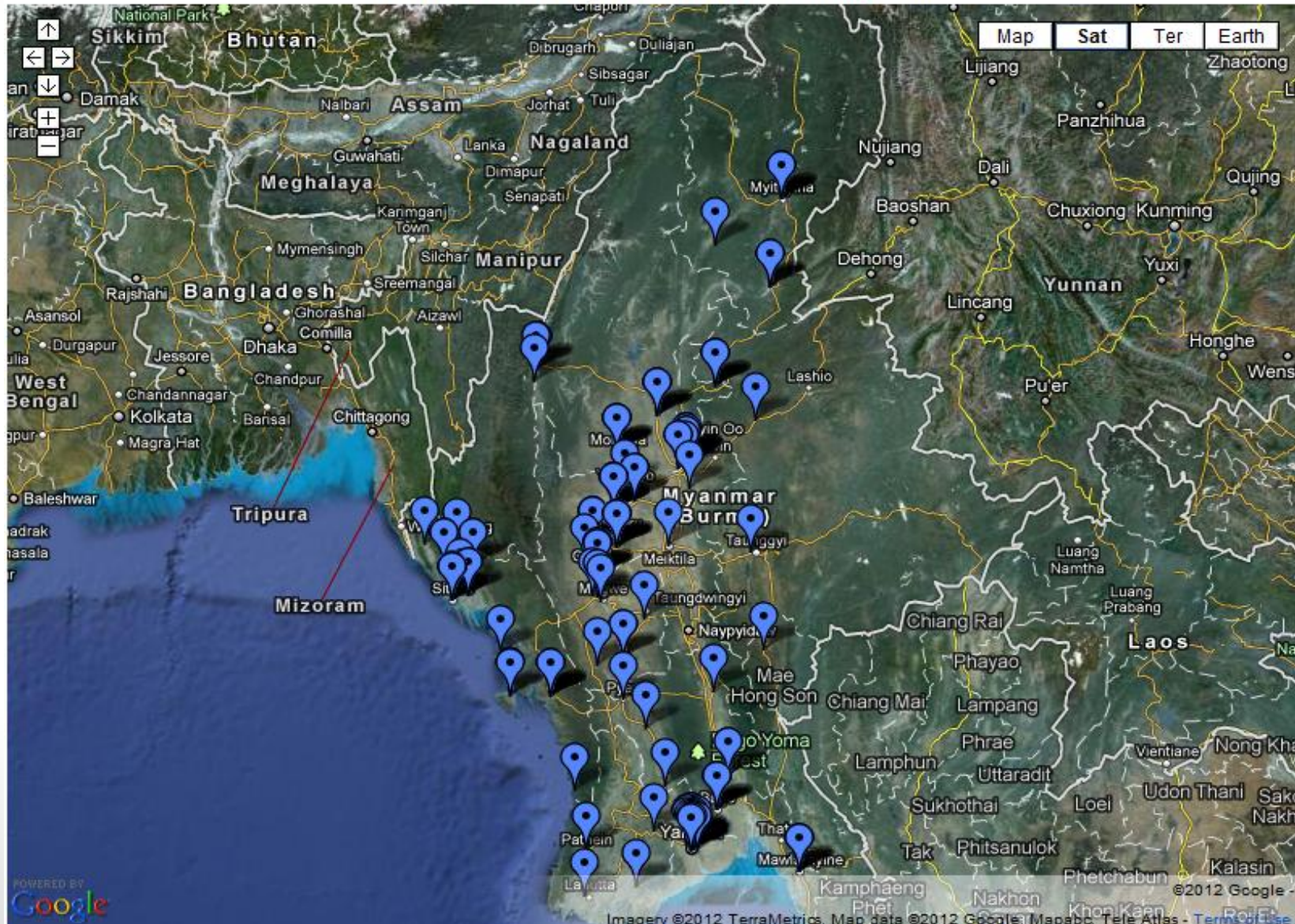
- Monitor and report human rights abuses
- Mobilize constituencies on issues important to you
- Visualize data from local government political process monitoring
- Monitor violence
- Report corruption

Burma – ALTSEAN Map of Demonstrations – 2007

<http://www.altsean.org/Photogalleries/ProtestsMap.php>

MAP OF DEMONSTRATIONS AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2007

Zoom in and click on the placemarks to see details of the protests.



Other Resources

- Article and Video: NDI's Ian Schuler about Using SMS and Crowdsourcing for citizen reporting on elections: <http://mobileactive.org/q-ian-schuler-election-monitoring-citizen-reporting-and-mobiles>
- NDI blog on using mobile technology and crowdsourcing in Guinea elections: <http://demgov.gbiportal.net/2011/09/06/how-social-media-can-bring-trust-to-guinea%E2%80%99s-2011-elections/>
- Example of NDI support for hybrid approach in Nicaragua: <http://www.demworks.org/blog/2011/11/adapt-and-evolve>
- Presentation on crowdsourcing and election monitoring in Mexico: <http://www.slideshare.net/MobileActive/ndi-presentation-ppt>
- Using Ushahidi for election monitoring: http://community.ushahidi.com/uploads/documents/c_Ushahidi-Election_Monitoring_Guide.pdf
- Visualizing data for advocacy: <http://drawingbynumbers.org/> and <http://tacticaltech.org/toolkitsandguides>



Merci!
Thank you!