



IFES supports citizens' right to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to promote sustainable democracy.

Africa

Overview

As the global leader in democracy promotion, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) advances good governance and democratic rights by providing technical assistance to election officials, empowering the underrepresented groups to participate in the political process, and applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle. Over the past 30 years, IFES has worked in more than 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Many of IFES' current projects in Africa are highlighted in the sections below.

Current Programs

Democratic Republic of the Congo

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, IFES works with the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) to deliver more transparent, inclusive and credible elections. Following the 2018-19 elections, IFES will support the CENI to lead electoral legal reform and build its capacity to conduct elections, especially during politically sensitive periods.

Malawi

Through the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS), IFES is supporting the 2019 tripartite elections under the "Malawi Electoral Integrity Program." Particularly, IFES' activities are focused on addressing electoral security through violence monitoring and incident reporting for more effective conflict mitigation and resolution, and by strengthening cooperation and information exchange between civil society, multiparty liaison committees and governmental electoral security actors, including the Malawi Election Commission (MEC). IFES will strengthen existing conflict mitigation and mediation platforms, support targeted interventions in areas identified as hotspots, and raise public awareness about electoral violence, conflict mitigation and mediation tools available to the public. IFES will coordinate with the United Nations Development Programme on its "Malawi Electoral Cycle Support" program to build stronger linkages among the MEC and local stakeholders involved in conflict prevention.

Nigeria

Since 1998, IFES has worked to strengthen the capacity of Nigerian election management bodies to promote credible, inclusive and transparent elections at both the national and local level. Currently, IFES is providing technical support to preparations for the 2019 elections through the "Support for Electoral Reforms Project" (2014-19) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Under this project, IFES has assisted the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the development of the 2017-21 strategic plan, which includes INEC's first-ever monitoring and evaluation plan. IFES has also partnered with state-level electoral commissions to prepare for various gubernatorial and local government area elections. Through the ongoing "Nigeria Election Violence Report" project, IFES builds the capacity of civil society to monitor, analyze and respond to incidents of election-related conflict. IFES has also trained representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs) to monitor campaign finance and the use of state resources during presidential and gubernatorial elections. Prior to the 2015 general elections, IFES supported the INEC in establishing 37 state-based Election Operation Support Centers, which assisted commissioners in monitoring election preparations and detecting challenges. IFES also developed a cascade training plan for poll workers and executed a training of trainers that led to the training of 650,000 poll workers. With IFES' support, INEC's voter education campaign reached over 67 million Nigerians.

Niger

IFES is providing technical support to the Niger Independent National Election Commission (CENI) through the CEPPS-funded “Niger Electoral Support Activity to Promote Peaceful Democratic Transitions Through Free, Transparent and Inclusive Elections.” IFES is providing assistance on biometric voter registration, a focus of recently passed electoral reforms in Niger. IFES supports training within the CENI to promote free, transparent and credible electoral processes.

Tanzania

IFES has undertaken numerous assessments to pursue a rigorous approach to developing future programming in Tanzania. In 2018 IFES deployed a team of experts to conduct an Electoral Integrity Assessment through the USAID-funded “Promoting Accountable and Inclusive Politics” program (2017-21). IFES is working with targeted CSOs to deepen their knowledge of key technical election issues and strengthen their capacity to monitor these issues and push for reform. IFES’ activities focus on enhancing the capacity of civil society in the areas of voter registration, boundary delimitation, campaign finance and election dispute resolution. Under the USAID-funded “Tanzania Peace and Election Program” (2015-16), IFES undertook a separate systematic assessment to evaluate the National Electoral Commission on its performance before, during and after the October 2015 general elections. All of these assessments produced evidence-based reports that included recommendations on ways to improve and enhance electoral processes. All findings and recommendations have been shared with relevant key electoral stakeholders and implementers.

Zimbabwe

IFES is currently working to strengthen the capacity of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) and CSOs. Under the USAID-funded “Strengthening Election Administration and Civic Participation” program (2015-19), IFES is supporting six CSOs to increase voter participation. Under the European Union-funded “Institutional Strengthening for the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission” program, IFES has delivered key technical assistance that includes upgrading the National Data Center and providing information and communication technology support, conducting national and provincial workshops and trainings and a national strategic plan review, and strengthening biometric and provisional voter registration processes through evaluations and trainings. With the support of Global Affairs Canada, IFES implemented the 2018 “Ending Impunity for Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWE) in Zimbabwe” program. This program included training local CSOs on the VAWE methodology, pursuing prosecution of VAWE crimes and offering rapid response assistance for survivors. Under the “Enhancing Local Governance in Zimbabwe” program, IFES works to stimulate grassroots civic engagement in local governance processes across Zimbabwe by providing advocacy and social-networking capacity building to community-based organizations (CBOs). With IFES support, the CBOs continue to implement public awareness-raising campaigns and mobilize concerted advocacy for improved local government service delivery and accountability. IFES also supports disabled people’s organizations to increase disability rights through conducting polling station accessibility assessments for persons with disabilities and making recommendations to the ZEC.

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