IFES Believes...

Vision
Our vision is a world in which strong democratic institutions empower citizens to have a voice in the way they are governed.

Mission
The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (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.

Values
Integrity. We are accountable for holding ourselves to the highest standard of behavior in all we do. This honesty is the commitment IFES makes to its employees and the democracies we serve around the world.

Trust. IFES believes in creating and maintaining lasting partnerships and upholding a high level of transparency both within our organization, and between us and our partners. Through this openness, IFES strives to develop trust in every aspect of our work.

Professionalism. IFES takes responsibility to do right by its employees and the democracies it is serving worldwide. This includes maintaining the highest degree of professionalism at all times, in every project we undertake.

Respect. IFES values the contribution and efforts of its employees and those we serve across the globe. With this, we treat all with mutual respect and sensitivity.

Diversity. We are a global organization. A diverse team in which everyone contributes their unique viewpoints, experiences and abilities is key to fulfilling our mission of promoting sustainable democracies. We strive to understand differences and maintain cultural sensitivity as we work in different regions of the world.

Accountability. IFES takes full responsibility for our actions, approaching each decision with over 25 years of experience and good judgment.

Passion. We appreciate and celebrate a commitment to democracy promotion and the difference free and fair elections can make in one’s life.

Discipline. IFES is focused on organizing our people and resources to maximize effectiveness.

Excellence. In striving to be the best and highest in quality in all we do, IFES is motivated by our successes and empowered by the talented people who work to support sustainable democracy.
Innovative Democracy

Innovation is key to achieving IFES’ vision of a world where each citizen has a voice in the way they are governed. To ensure we continue focusing on serving the world’s citizens more effectively, IFES put a new emphasis on development and innovation.

In 2013, IFES found inspiration in apps that connected voters with their government in Albania and Zimbabwe. IFES turned to SMS technology for voter registration information verification in Kenya and launched a groundbreaking integrity assessment in Afghanistan.

We understand that scalable, cost-effective and high impact innovation can be risky. The best way to manage these risks is to build on efforts and lessons learned from past programs. IFES continuously reviews its own work and the work of other implementers. We stay tuned to new developments in various sectors, including health, agriculture, banking and democracy and governance.

We also look to information and communications technology labs and incubators in the developing world, such as Nairobi, Dhaka, Karachi and Jakarta for inspiration and ideas to gain a better understanding of our working environment and its challenges.

IFES believes locally-developed solutions are significantly more sustainable; can address obstacles more timely; and give results that are often more cost-effective.

We look forward to working with international and local partners on innovative and local solutions to create sustainable democracies.
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About IFES

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) supports citizens’ right to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to deliver sustainable solutions.

As the global leader in democracy promotion, we advance good governance and democratic rights by:

- Providing technical assistance to election officials
- Empowering the underrepresented to participate in the political process
- Applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle

Since 1987, IFES has worked in over 135 countries — from developing democracies, to mature democracies.

For more information, visit www.IFES.org.

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Executive Message

Dear Friends of IFES:

Two years ago our tagline was born, succinctly describing our vision and how we contribute to democratic development around the world: Global Expertise. Local Solutions. Sustainable Democracy.

A sustainable democracy is the first step. It allows for investment in accountable institutions, transparent processes and inclusive practices. It enables young nations and nations in transition to build on this investment and thrive – socially, economically, politically.

Last year countries around the world took that first step. With your support, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) was able to provide expertise, guidance and targeted assistance in more than 30 countries. In this 2013 Annual Report, we present you our 2013 highlights.

Global Expertise.

Our depth and breadth of experience allows us to continue offering customized assistance to the commissions and citizens we serve. For example, our experts created local networks for Ivorian women who wanted to effect political change and helped Libyan women develop leadership skills for government positions.

We unveiled a unique tool in 2013 – a groundbreaking methodology that assessed the integrity of Afghanistan and Pakistan’s electoral systems. Based on assessment findings, IFES gave action-oriented recommendations to the election commissions to improve the integrity of their electoral processes. Commissions in both countries are starting to implement recommendations to increase compliance, participation, acceptance of results and public trust.

We find that election commissions often struggle with compliance, technology and communication. IFES experts updated the Political Finance Oversight handbook that consolidates the experiences and best practices in financial compliance. We released our newest guide on Electronic Voting & Counting Technologies that helps election commissions gain insight on if, what and when e-technologies should be adopted. And, our how-to manual on Building an Election Media Center enables election commissions to enhance transparency and communicate effectively to citizens.

Local Solutions.

For the last quarter century, you helped us provide local solutions to local problems. From Myanmar to Kenya, Pakistan to Honduras, we were able to offer options that met local expectations and accounted for local dynamics and context.

In Myanmar, IFES worked with the Union Election Commission (UEC) to include women and persons with disabilities to increase their participation. IFES supported the country’s citizens by holding a workshop for men and women to identify specific areas of improvement in each step of the electoral cycle. The UEC was able to include these recommendations in their 2014 strategic plan.

Kenya’s national and by-elections marked a more peaceful poll than in years past. IFES worked with the Independent and Electoral Boundaries Commission to improve voter registration and the results transmission system – making it a “straightforward process that was less cumbersome,” as one voter stated.

In Pakistan – through information campaigns, workshops and trainings – voters, election officials and more than 250,000 poll workers were educated on their roles for Election Day. IFES and the Election Commission of Pakistan developed political finance regulations and hosted over 120 events for National Voter’s Day before Election Day. On June 5, 2013, the country saw its first peaceful transfer of power between two democratically elected civilian governments after completion of a full term.
Our team in Honduras worked with the Tribunal Supremo Electoral (TSE), by assessing the country’s electoral law. IFES then introduced a pilot program that identified hotspots for electoral violence; provided recommendations for reform; and created a roadmap for the conduct of the November 2013 elections. Using this roadmap, the TSE was able to effectively organize elections, transmit results, resolve disputes and include underrepresented voters. This partnership led to successful, transparent and credible elections.

**Sustainable Democracy.**

When armed with the knowledge of roles and responsibilities, election officials, poll workers, civil society, voters and students are able to create systems and institutions that positively impact the democratic development of their nation and outlast international assistance.

IFES helped local Nepalese partners improve voter registration, which resulted in 1,007 persons with disabilities registering to vote. Padam Bahadur Pariyar, an advocate and a person with a disability, says it best: “You must believe that the simple efforts you engage in can bring huge change in the lives of persons with disabilities.”

In Georgia, IFES launched the *Democracy and Citizenship Student Handbook* in 22 universities across the country. The handbook focuses on one of the most important aspects of effective civic education: learning by doing. Coupled with the civics course launched in 2011, IFES is equipping Georgia’s youth to take on leadership roles and become active citizens within their communities.

Finally, in several African countries – the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea and Mali – we helped local organizations create civic and voter education messages using only pictures. These illustrations teach citizens – even the most illiterate – how to vote and educate them on various electoral issues. The effectiveness of this teaching tool has been a success and we look to replicate it soon in Burundi.

As you read through our 2013 Annual Report, we hope you see the impact of your support to our mission. The development of strong, democratic institutions and processes pave the way for transitioning countries to make greater strides in becoming global leaders and international partners. We invite you to explore more of our work from 2013 at www.IFES.org.

Each of our successes happens with local partnerships, international assistance and you.
Since 2009, IFES has sponsored an annual international photo contest in which contestants submit entries to highlight the importance of democracy worldwide. IFES’ 2013 Photo Contest was no exception, capturing images from around the globe that called attention to the electoral and political process.

This year, IFES introduced four new categories, reflecting our thematic work on election management; electoral integrity and transparency; citizen participation; and inclusion and empowerment. Photographs in each category were evaluated and judged on relevance to the theme and photographic quality by a panel of photography and subject matter experts.

After hundreds of photos were submitted and evaluated, winners were chosen for each theme, as well as a grand prize winner. One photo was selected as IFES’ Choice – voted on by IFES staff.

**Winner, Election Management**
Hugo Passarello, France, “Early Voting”

**Winner, Inclusion and Empowerment**
Sudipto Das, India, “Minorities Empowerment”

**Winner, Citizen Participation**
Nino Kakabadze, Georgia, “At the Election Night Cleric Says All Voters’ Voice Must be Protected”
Grand Prize and Electoral Integrity and Transparency

Winner: “Transparency is the Key of Democracy.” To ensure transparency, the presiding officer and his staff show empty ballot boxes before sealing them in Pakistan. Photo by Farheen Rifat Abbasi.

Honorable Mention
Carla Chianese, Kenya, “Overcoming Illiteracy in Voting”

Honorable Mention
Nikola Mihov, Turkey, “Taxim Square”

Winner, IFES Choice
Edgar Aswani, Kenya, “Future Electorate”
As Afghanistan prepares for the 2014 presidential and 2015 National Assembly elections, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) is working to ensure that these polls are credible and transparent.

To support that effort, the IEC invited IFES to assess vulnerabilities in the electoral process. In January 2013, the IFES team – Director of Program Development and Innovation Staffan Darnolf; Europe and Asia Regional Director Chad Vickery; and Deputy Director for Asia Vasu Mohan – traveled to Afghanistan to conduct an electoral integrity assessment, using a unique methodology that was created in-house to evaluate and manage vulnerabilities in the electoral process.

The IFES assessment covered 18 different categories, with in-depth analysis of the issues most relevant to Afghanistan. The expert team used a combination of desk research and in-country interviews with election stakeholders to produce both qualitative and quantitative assessments of the risks for fraud, malpractice and systemic manipulation. The final report included practical and innovative recommendations to address the vulnerabilities identified.

“Considering the security and logistical challenges in the country and drawing instrumental lessons from past elections, the IEC is strongly committed to ensure transparency and integrity of the electoral process and will work extensively with relevant stakeholders.”

– Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan
On Money and Media

Money and media play crucial roles in modern politics. Weak enforcement in political and campaign finance can lead to extreme disparities in resources among parties and candidates; enable political outcomes for those with financial resources; and erode democratic politics. Poor interaction with media decreases transparency and trust in the electoral process and in those managing Election Day.

IFES tackled the role of money in two publications this year. IFES’ updated *Training in Detection and Enforcement: Political Finance Oversight Handbook* focuses on reducing opportunities for corruption. The handbook draws on examples from over 90 countries to help enforcement agencies carry out effective supervision of political finance in their own countries.


On the topic of media, IFES developed a how-to manual, *Building an Elections Media Center*, for election administrators. An effective communications center, especially in transitional countries, increases credibility and trust in a nation’s electoral process. This manual gives election management bodies the ability to focus on eight key areas for creating an effective media center, which provides the nation’s citizens – as well as local and international media – with continuous, up-to-date information.

Preventing violations has a better impact on public confidence in the political system than having to sanction politicians who break the rules.

– *Training in Detection and Enforcement Political Finance Oversight Handbook*

Find more IFES publications online!
Making Elections Inclusive

Padam Bahadur Pariyar (pictured right) was born with a physical disability in a village of 14 Dalit households 150 kilometers (93 miles) west of Katmandu, Nepal. Not only did Pariyar witness harassment first-hand, but he was told his disability would keep him from success.

Now a member of IFES’ five-year project in Nepal, Pariyar works every day to increase access to the electoral process for persons with disabilities. After meeting people in remote villages who were unaware of their voting rights, Pariyar stepped into action. “All of this made me think that if I could get information and then disseminate it to people at the community level, then I could help improve the lives I saw in remote villages,” he said.

IFES’ project fights stigma and empowers community members to form committees within local government to address the rights of persons with disabilities. IFES encourages political participation through targeted voter education efforts.

For example, six local disabled persons’ organizations identified and selected local artists – including artists with disabilities – to develop street theater performances, which were carried out in 20 different locations. Performances covered information about Nepal’s Constituent Assembly election, the importance of voters with disabilities making it to the polls and the voting process. Over 22,000 people, including over 1,400 persons with disabilities, benefited from these performances.

IFES’ efforts in promoting voter registration through local partners in Nepal resulted in 1,007 persons with disabilities registering to vote – a true success story for democracy in Nepal.

“We should do what we can to change the environment. You must believe that the simple efforts you engage in can bring huge change in the lives of persons with disabilities.”

– Padam Bahadur Pariyar,
International Foundation for Electoral Systems

Increasing Access

Youth with disabilities often exist on the margins of society and do not actively participate in the political process. IFES and local partner La Red held a series of workshops on active citizenship and leadership skills to empower these youth to lead the disability community in the Dominican Republic.

The first two-day session focused on leadership and communication skills. The second focused on collective action, participative democracy, public policy formulation and community development. The final workshop included one-on-one coaching in communication and leadership skills from IFES experts, as well as from a well-known deaf television anchor.

At the end of the seminars, these young people were ready to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities and the new national disability law by engaging with their communities and staff from the Dominican Republic’s election commission.
People gather around a street performer in Nepal. These shows convey the importance of voters with disabilities casting their ballots on Election Day.
Empowering Women

IFES experts help empower women in transitional democracies to engage in processes that lead to stable and transparent governments around the world. Through the Global Women’s Leadership Fund, in Côte d’Ivoire, IFES worked with local women’s groups to create a Women’s Network. The women of this network produced a declaration outlining gender-specific recommendations for the government, election commission and reconciliation committee. Members of the Women’s Network held a series of high-level meetings with ministers and parliamentarians to discuss these recommendations, including a strong push for a parliamentary gender quota.

Dosso Mafelina is one of the women pushing for change.

“By focusing on advocacy, IFES provided this great opportunity to reinforce our capacity so that we can help strengthen the voices of our sisters and ourselves to reject inequality in our communities,” Mafelina said.

In August 2013, IFES and the Women’s Network presented their recommendations to Ivorian institutions, media and government officials on women’s empowerment and gender equality.

“IFES is pleased that the Women’s Network is using its connections and advocacy skills to engage with representatives from Ivorian institutions,” said IFES Senior Gender Specialist Jessica Huber. “IFES encourages these women to continue with this brave work, to include new ideas from broader coalitions of women and to build alliances with women and men who have the power to make these important changes for gender equality and women’s empowerment.”
Learning through Leadership

Women have true talents and are just as capable as men – that was Noura Mohamed Al-Tabalgi’s first breakthrough revelation during IFES’ Women’s Leadership Program. She first heard about the program through Facebook.

Her second breakthrough came when she secured an internship, which then became a full-time paid position, in the office of the Prime Minister of Libya.

The training about gender, electoral systems and professional development increases women’s understanding of the political process and solidifies their professional skills so they can contribute to the advancement of democracy in Libya.

The training is then followed by a six-to-eight week internship in a Libyan institution to connect aspiring women leaders with decision makers, so they can apply their new skills in a real world setting.

“This program helped me in many ways,” Al-Tabalgi said. “It made me realize that women have great capabilities. It helped improve my communication skills, gave me knowledge about different election cycles and political systems, as well as opened my eyes to different constitutions around the world.”

“I would like to spend time advocating for women’s issues in Libya and work on improving their rights in our newfound democracy.”
– Noura Mohamed Al-Tabalgi, Office of the Prime Minister of Libya
Building Credibility

In 2013, IFES opened the doors to its newest office in Myanmar. The first order of business was to support a strategic planning process with the Union Election Commission (UEC) to strengthen its ability to deliver a credible electoral process for Myanmar’s 2015 national elections.

In strategic planning for elections, the process can often shape perceptions of the result. Planning should be inclusive and transparent, with significant buy-in from stakeholders. IFES has supported the UEC in adopting an inclusive approach, bringing together a broad range of groups to help refine the UEC’s strategic plan. This new collaboration has much to offer in terms of improved access to the electoral process for potentially marginalized voters, especially women and persons with disabilities.

Through the planning process, the UEC sought input from all 58 political parties in Myanmar and over 30 civil society organizations (CSOs). Both CSOs and political parties welcomed the opportunity to help the UEC define its vision and priorities and provide feedback on the strategic plan. This level of consultation establishes a timely and important precedent for the UEC.

The UEC’s strategic plan was launched in early 2014, and marks a critical first step toward building a credible electoral process.

“This consultation is very valuable. This has bridged the gap between us, political parties and citizens and the Union Election Commission, who have been a key player in Myanmar’s shift to democratic reform.”

– U Shien Tun, General Secretary of the Chin Development Party
On May 11, Adalid Hussein cast his ballot in Pakistan’s historic 2013 general election. It was the first time in the country’s history that one elected government completed its full term and handed power to another civilian government.

“I am Pakistani and I am casting a vote for Pakistan,” said Hussein, who has been voting since the country’s 1970 general election. Voting nearby was Rasheeda Sultana, a first-time voter. “It is necessary to bring change to the country...I am very hopeful about the elections,” she said.

Stories like these came from across the country on Election Day as record numbers of citizens turned out to vote. To ensure that internally displaced citizens were also able to participate, IFES assisted the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in developing a plan to facilitate and encourage internally displaced persons (IDPs) to vote in their home constituencies. In 2013, 81,440 IDPs voted, an incredible improvement from 2008 when the ECP established 15 polling stations, but not a single vote was cast.

The performance of election officials and polling staff was critical to the quality of the election and increasing citizens’ trust in the process. IFES partnered with the ECP to develop and distribute codes of conduct for election personnel across the country and provide training and orientation for 249,551 polling officials nationally – including 61,445 women – through two separate, large-scale training operations. The success of these initiatives enabled Pakistan to continue its democratic development.
General elections in Honduras, held on November 24, 2013, saw a high number of registered voters head to the polls. Citizens voted for a new President; deputies to the National Congress; mayors and vice mayors; municipal aldermen across 298 municipalities; and deputies and alternates to the Central American Parliament.

IFES was on the ground early helping the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) increase the credibility and transparency of the electoral process. IFES and the TSE worked on transmission of election results and vote counting; promoting participation of underrepresented populations; boosting voter education efforts; and introducing a pilot program to mitigate and better respond to electoral violence.

Judith Lobos, a professor in political science and social research, has over 20 years of experience supporting citizen and youth participation in Latin America. She collaborated with IFES in Honduras while boosting voter education efforts that engaged youth and indigenous populations for these elections.

During the 2013 general election in Honduras, there were 1.5 million voters 25 and under, making their participation key.

“We wanted to give youth the opportunity to be active in the electoral process. We incentivized them by creating spaces and new opportunities where they can participate and be part of social transformation in public, political and electoral realms,” said Lobos.
A New Outlook on Elections

In May 2012, following the establishment of the Independent Election Commission (IEC), the body was faced with the twin tasks of establishing itself as an institution and preparing for elections. However, the IEC had no staff, no office and no budget.

Upon his appointment, IEC Chairman, former diplomat and Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdelelah Al Khateeb, said the IEC would improve the credibility of Jordanian election administration by introducing new procedures that meet international standards and best practices for elections.

IFES’ ability to leverage its global expertise into local solutions became invaluable.

Just six months later – after working with IFES – they had a fully functional facility in Amman with approximately 100 employees. The IEC was also able to appoint three-member District Election Committees in each of its 45 electoral districts, supported by roughly 700 staff members seconded from government ministries. IFES supported the IEC throughout this process by procuring essential equipment and supplies, and providing election specialists who could prepare staff for their responsibilities.

On January 23, 2013, Jordanians voted in the first election since the country enacted reforms following protests during the Arab Spring. These reforms included the establishment of the IEC, a new Constitutional Court, a new Election Law and a new Political Parties Law.

Ballot boxes are prepared prior to Election Day in Jordan.
Dr. Hannatu Biniyat was appointed Chairman of the newly-established Kaduna State Independent Electoral Commission (KADSIEC) in Nigeria in 2011. Shortly thereafter, the KADSIEC fell victim to the electoral violence that shook Kaduna following national elections. Much of the commission’s office complex was burnt down in the ensuing protests.

The commission faced time and resource constraints, as local government elections were planned for the next year. They would need to reconstruct from the ground up, and quickly.

This is where IFES came in.

IFES conducted a comprehensive orientation course for new commissioners, trained poll workers and provided computers and printers ahead of the upcoming elections. This helped the KADSIEC conduct credible elections on time.

The impact of poll worker training was clear on election observation reports, which indicated officials had the necessary capacity to carry out their duties effectively.

As part of its continued engagement with the KADSIEC, IFES trained over 150 master trainers, 50 electoral officers, the Chairman and commissioners in election administration.

Today, the KADSIEC has grown and Dr. Biniyat has been appointed as the National Secretary of the Forum of State Independent Electoral Commissions.

“Our journey with IFES has been a long and successful one. We would not be where we are today without the support of IFES. Although a lot of work still remains to be done, at least we have a foundation to build on.”

— Dr. Hannatu Biniyat, Chairman of Kaduna State Independent Electoral Commission
Pursuing a Peaceful Election

Kenya’s March 4 election ushered in the first elected government under the country’s new constitution. The election was regarded as credible, and saw Uhuru Kenyatta elected President by a narrow margin with 50.07 percent of the vote.

For Kenyans, this election also marked a more peaceful poll that saw significant improvements in the voter registration process.

“The voter registration process was different from before. It was a straightforward process [that was] less cumbersome and gave me some hope we are going somewhere with our election technology,” said James Gitau, a voter from Nairobi. “The use of fingerprint technology and taking photos while registering was great, and better than the previous process where it was more manual... Just seeing a government institution use laptops [by] a tree was by itself an experience.”

IFES assisted Kenya’s Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) in preparing for the general elections and the following by-elections. IFES focused on providing targeted technical assistance to the IEBC to enhance its capacity in multiple areas of the electoral process, including voter registration and results transmission.

“My hopes for Kenya are that we become a more mature democracy and a more open society where we enjoy the full freedoms that are now clearly listed in the bill of rights in the Constitution of Kenya.”

– Chairman Ahmed Issack Hassan, Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

Poll workers place banners outside the National Tallying Centre in preparation for Election Day in Kenya.
Apps Increase Transparency

There is an app for almost everything – even increasing transparency in the electoral process. In 2013, IFES developed two new apps that connected citizens with their government.

During the June 2013 parliamentary elections, Albanians were able to obtain information on election results faster than ever before through the Central Election Commission’s (CEC) results website and smartphone application developed by IFES. Making election data instantly available on laptops, tablets and smartphones via its media center and website, the CEC enjoyed a new and dynamic way of reaching the electorate. The use of such technologies reduced the potential for irregularities and manipulation, increasing overall confidence and acceptance of results. This ultimately contributed to a peaceful transfer of power, and helped diffuse the possibility of post-election conflict that had threatened previous election cycles when such timely data was not available.

In Zimbabwe, IFES created “ZimCon,” an application available on iTunes that allowed users to browse through chapters of Zimbabwe’s draft constitution, review its content and share points of interest with friends and colleagues via their smartphone or tablet prior to the referendum. The application aimed to engage voters so they would become familiar with the proposed constitutional changes prior to casting a “yes” or “no” vote.

New IFES-supported apps connected citizens with their government in 2013.
Implementing E-Voting

Technology offers new ways to conduct traditionally-manual processes. Its effect on elections is no exception.

A growing number of countries, at various stages of development, are considering the use of electronic technologies in electoral processes.

With this in mind, IFES documented its experiences with election technology in Implementing and Overseeing Electronic Voting and Counting Technologies.

This manual serves as a critical source of information for specialists in democracy and governance, election management bodies, civil society organizations, political parties and other stakeholders engaged in electoral processes around the world.

IFES worked with the National Democratic Institute to address the main issues in the effective design, implementation and oversight of electronic voting and counting. Detailed case studies on the use of these technologies take readers deep inside the election management bodies of the Philippines, the Netherlands and Brazil, documenting their experiences with e-voting.

One of the implications of this development for electronic voting...is the balance between implementation and oversight, and how this balance has been challenged in recent years through greater calls for transparency and oversight.

– Implementing and Overseeing Electronic Voting and Counting Technologies

Social Media Spotlight

Philippines

In February 2013, #eDemokrasya went viral during IFES’ conference on the use of social media and technology in democracy promotion.

Held in Manila and supported by the U.S. government, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Harry K. Thomas opened the conference by commending the Philippines’ “vibrant civil society sector.” Ambassador Thomas noted that Philippine civil society can ensure voters receive accurate information about their elections and engage with their elected representatives when using social media.

By the end of the first day, #eDemokrasya was trending number two on Twitter Philippines. On the second day, it hit number one during Harper Reed’s live video conference from Chicago. Reed shared his experiences from his time as the Chief Technology Officer for President Obama’s 2012 campaign.

This conference exposed election stakeholders to the trends in e-democracy practices and how to leverage greater collaboration to reach Filipino voters, especially youth.
A civic educator uses *boîte à images* (image boxes) during an IFES civic education session in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This innovative tool uses illustrations to show citizens how to vote.
Imparting civic education messages to populations with high illiteracy rates is challenging. IFES has been able to break this barrier and spread information across the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Guinea and Mali through the use of boîte à images (image boxes).

This innovative tool uses a series of illustrations to educate voters on political processes and issues during community voter information sessions. For example, some images might depict the voter registration process, which elicits discussion and allows a facilitator to deliver key messages to program participants.

IFES examined the effectiveness of using image boxes through an impact evaluation survey conducted in the Bandundu province of the DRC in 2010. The 2010 evaluation was based on a random control trial design and supplemented by surveying individuals who attended these voter education sessions in 2013.

Findings from both the 2010 impact evaluation and the 2013 survey indicate that attendance at image box civic and voter education sessions is associated with higher knowledge levels of electoral issues among respondents. Results also show that respondents who have attended these sessions and were exposed to informational messages on elections through the media report the highest knowledge levels and highest shares of “very good” scores.

Citizens in Guinea attend an IFES civic education session prior to Election Day.
For a democracy to be sustainable, a nation must invest in its future leaders. Over the last decade, IFES has been holding Democracy Camps in Kyrgyzstan to empower a new generation by instilling democratic principles.

By instituting an interactive methodology of group discussions, simulations, games and competitions, Democracy Camps provide middle and high school-age students the tools to advocate for change in their society. According to a recent survey of 141 alumni from 2013, 92 percent indicated increased knowledge of civic rights after their participation in the camp, while 82 percent said their civic activeness increased. Nearly half said they plan to run as a candidate in school elections.

The learning does not stop on the last day of camp.

In 2013, Azamat Karabotoyev, a 17-year-old student from Talas Oblast, attended the Issyk-Kul Summer Democracy Camp. Upon returning home, he was elected President of his student body, and later, President of a council of 20 schools across Talas. In election speeches for both positions, Karabotoyev credited the summer program for opening his mind and teaching him the importance of community service.
Ideas in Action

IFES’ university-level civics course on democracy and citizenship expanded to 22 universities in 2013 and has commitments from additional institutions for upcoming semesters. The growth in the number of university partners makes it possible for students across the country to incorporate civics learning into their higher education. More than 3,000 students have completed the course since its inception in 2011, with robust enrollment expected in future academic terms.

Using experiential learning techniques, this civics course exposes students to critical concepts of civic participation and political activism – areas of society still stymied by the legacy of Soviet control in Georgia. Students also explore facets of participatory democracy and governance, human rights and civic engagement within the context of Georgia’s democratic development.

“In Georgia, with our history, we have the feeling that we served government. Now, I realize how many rights I [truly] have and what [as a result] I can do.”

– Georgian university student enrolled in IFES’ civics course

Understanding these topics has created noticeable shifts in student attitudes toward civic engagement. Student evaluations have shown significant gains in a number of knowledge areas including citizen participation and good governance. Student focus groups have highlighted important shifts in dispositions and understanding of their role in Georgian society and perhaps most significantly, a strong desire to remain engaged and active in civic life. Many course alumni have gone on to pursue community improvement and civic activism personally and professionally.

Finding a Forum

Armenia

In February, IFES asked young people in Armenia about elections through a series of focus group discussions. IFES provided an open forum where young voters could define challenges within the electoral process, discuss election information sources; and offer recommendations for enhancing voter awareness.

The focus groups engaged university and high school students, as well as young voters from outside the capital city of Yerevan. Young voters had much to say leading up to Armenia’s presidential election. They understood the causes and consequences of vote-buying and vote-selling, bringing real-world examples to the table.

The findings from these group discussions demonstrate how complex the issues related to vote-buying are, and how deeply they remain engrained in the current political culture. These youth opinions serve as an important contribution to a deeper national dialogue on this topic. IFES hopes that through the engagement of young voters in this dialogue – and the development of motivational messages geared to them over the long term – a new political culture can eventually be built.
Election Guide

In 2013, www.ElectionGuide.org – the most comprehensive, timely source of verified election information available online – got a facelift.

This website, managed by IFES’ F. Clifton White Applied Research Center on Democracy and Elections, received its new, user-friendly interface in October. Highlights of the site include a running display of statistics on global voting patterns, an interactive map of upcoming polls, a calendar of upcoming elections and advanced search features to increase a visitor’s access to information on elections around the globe.

For example, following Egypt’s 2014 referendum, www.ElectionGuide.org reported voter turnout and provided key updates on the poll, including provisions of the referendum and a description of the electoral system. This timely information has made the site a go-to spot for election facts from the world’s most-watched polls.
Public opinion can play a critical role in the political and electoral development of a country. In 2013, IFES conducted public opinion and specialized population research in Albania, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Guatemala, Kosovo, Libya, Ukraine and Venezuela. Research bolsters advocacy efforts of civil society organizations that are working to increase gender equality and women’s empowerment in emerging and recovering democracies. These surveys captured sentiments on new governments, local politics and the effectiveness of voter education efforts for mainstream and underrepresented populations.

In nations experiencing or recovering from instability, women are usually significantly underrepresented. They are vulnerable, and empirical information is often lacking. In an effort to strengthen equal participation, IFES collected qualitative and quantitative data in Libya to better assess the status of women. *The Status of Women Survey in Libya* provides IFES and local partners critical information to tailor programming to respond to the specific needs of men and women in transition.

The Ukraine surveys are an example of IFES’ long-standing work in public opinion. They have gauged Ukrainian opinions on politics and the future of their country from post-independence, through the Orange Revolutions, through today.

Last year, IFES completed its 21st Ukrainian public opinion survey, incorporating vital questions about persons with disabilities and their access to the political process for the first time. This survey also marked the last major data point on public sentiments before the outbreak of protests seen since late 2013.
In Memoriam

Joe Napolitan: A Friend to IFES, Democracy Worldwide

IFES had a long and close relationship with Joseph “Joe” Napolitan. Napolitan was a part of IFES from the very beginning, working hand-in-hand with IFES founder, F. Clifton White.

Napolitan served on IFES’ Board of Directors from 1991-2009. As a Board Director, Napolitan helped focus IFES programming on the importance of elections, ensuring we would be one of the most effective organizations in promoting democracy. He was a friend and mentor to many.

Napolitan was among the founding fathers of political consulting as a profession. One of the original members of the American Association of Political Consultants and the International Association of Political Consultants, he transformed the way candidates communicated with voters. He made his avocation into a profession. He helped elect people on virtually every line of the ballot – from U.S. President to local leadership. He knew every trick in the book and added a few chapters of his own. The Election Game and How to Win It remains mandatory reading for those in democracy and governance.

From the candidate, to the voter, to the election commission, he understood that elections are a vital part of a sustainable democracy. Napolitan’s insight and guidance in the world of elections and democratic governance will be greatly missed.

Yusdiana: Boosting Election Accessibility

IFES was deeply saddened by the passing of Senior Disability Rights Adviser Yusdiana (“Diana”) of Indonesia.

As a young adult, Diana contracted polio and learned how to navigate life, physically, emotionally and mentally, using a wheelchair. She went on to advocate tirelessly for equal rights and strived to increase the political participation of persons with disabilities.

Through a leadership position with the Indonesia Disabled People’s Association, she traveled across Southeast Asia as an ambassador to raise awareness about the need for greater inclusion in the political process. She was instrumental in the development of the General Election Network for Disability Access in Southeast Asia (AGENDA) – an initiative supported by IFES. Along with AGENDA colleagues, Diana successfully advocated for persons with disabilities to be included in the 2012 Association for Southeast Asian Nations Human Rights Declaration.

Diana observed five elections in Indonesia and in Cambodia, and provided feedback to election management bodies on how to make the electoral process more accessible. In June 2013, she spoke at the 23rd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva. Her attendance marked growing recognition and appreciation for the political rights of persons with disabilities.

“As a person with a disability who grew up experiencing many barriers, I see my participation in elections gives me the opportunity to make a decision on who best will represent my voice in parliament and government.”

— Yusdiana,
Senior Disability Rights Adviser, Indonesia Disabled People’s Association
Nelson Mandela: Giving a Voice to the Voiceless
Nelson (Madiba) Rolihlahla Mandela, was a humble leader who focused on the joint effort and shared success of nation building.

Mandela saw democracy as a collective triumph achieved through a collective leadership. He believed democracy was a system based on equality; a leadership based on humility; and a citizenry based on active participation – not the acts or desires of just one person.

Jailed for 27 years, a Nobel laureate and the first black President of his country, Mandela was the voice and figure of the anti-apartheid movement. His release from prison in 1990 became synonymous with the trilemma of democracy, freedom and equality – allowing him to be instrumental in talks about the creation of a multi-racial and truly democratic South Africa.

In 1994, IFES was touched by his humility when our team was able to ensure that the presidential elections were free, fair and credible. We assisted the Election Commission of South Africa under the leadership of Justice Johann Kriegler – a 2011 recipient of IFES’ Charles T. Manatt Democracy Award – with a core team of 13 experts who focused on opening lines of communication to address high levels of fear of political violence and civil unrest.

Mandela’s guiding forces were respect and inclusion, generosity and pragmatism. He ensured that those who were no longer in power, were still included and still felt like citizens of South Africa.

Even after stepping down from the presidency, Mandela remained committed to improving the state of the human condition. His lasting legacy is not only of uniting a severely divided country and overcoming racism, but of celebrating the contributions of each citizen, and each human, into a collective triumph.

“Nelson Mandela committed his life to the struggle for justice for all. South Africans continue to unite as a nation in their celebration of Mandela Day. These celebrations inspire us all to appreciate and exercise the hard-won right to vote and to keep the flame of South Africa’s electoral democracy burning brightly. In this way we truly honour the life of the father of our nation, Tata Madiba.”

– Electoral Commission of South Africa
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 disclaimer: The above information represents unaudited financial statements of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems for the period ending September 30, 2013. Audited financials will be posted and available online at www.IFES.org when complete.
Celebrating Democracy

Mexico’s former Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) President Dr. Leonardo Valdés Zurita set a high standard for promoting and exchanging good electoral practices around the world. Since IFE’s establishment in 1990, Mexico went from one of the most closed political systems in the world to a respected democracy. This is why Valdés was selected as the international recipient of the 2013 Charles T. Manatt Democracy Award.

IFES and IFE have been partners since 1993 to advance democracy in Mexico and empower citizens to become active participants in the electoral process by engaging national and international stakeholders.

“The President of IFE needs to be committed to democracy not only in Mexico, but also worldwide,” said Valdés. “For that reason, what I consider a great contribution is the consolidation of the Federal Electoral Institute. I believe that IFE is now a reference for democracy in Mexico and also internationally. By sharing IFE’s experience, we improve our work in Mexico and contribute to other electoral authorities.”

The presentation of the 2013 Charles T. Manatt Democracy Awards took place on September 24 in Washington, D.C. Senator Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) and Representative Kay Granger (R-Texas) rounded out the 2013 honorees.

The Charles T. Manatt Democracy Awards are presented each year to a member of the international community, one Democrat and one Republican who demonstrate the dedication to democracy and human rights embodied by the award’s namesake, the late IFES Board of Directors Chairman Charles T. Manatt.