

IFES Executive Curriculum in Electoral Leadership

Comprehensive Electoral Leadership
Training for EMB Leaders



What is iEXCEL?

iEXCEL is a scenario-based electoral leadership curriculum that develops the skills needed to **strengthen institutional independence, deliver elections within the context of a crisis, resist manipulation** of elections by political actors, and **foster institutional resilience and capacity**.

Electoral leaders often operate at the center of fundamental power transitions, under enormous political pressure, and while facing uniquely complex challenges to their independence. This role has become even more challenging with the proliferation of new media and election technologies that offer bad actors evolving opportunities to undermine electoral institutions, processes, and public perceptions. iEXCEL draws on real-world peer experiences to help prepare leaders of election management bodies (EMBs) to effectively meet these challenges.

What topics does iEXCEL address?

iEXCEL contains four comprehensive and reinforcing modules:

- ✓ Introduction to Electoral Leadership
- ✓ EMB Independence
- ✓ Ethical Leadership
- ✓ Crisis Leadership

Each module includes a realistic simulation or set of scenarios based on real-world situations. In the Ethical Leadership module, participants practice making ethical decisions in complex situations. In the EMB Independence module, participants role play a challenging Election Day scenario, interacting with different stakeholder groups. In the Crisis Leadership module, participants practice risk mitigation planning and handle an Election Day technology crisis.

Who can benefit from an iEXCEL training?

The intended audience for this training program is senior electoral leaders – both new leaders and those who have managed elections in the past but who may be facing new challenges. The curriculum was designed with a particular focus on EMB chairpersons and commissioners, but may also be impactful for CEOs and departmental leaders within the EMB.

How is iEXCEL delivered?

The curriculum can be delivered in different ways: as a retreat for existing leaders, an orientation for new commissioners, or as a rapid response measure before a challenging election. It can also be delivered as part of a long-term institutional-strengthening program with the EMB that includes ongoing mentorship and peer-learning.

“The iEXCEL curriculum was without a doubt relevant and timely... The simulation was really valuable and provided a glimpse of election-day reality.”

SENIOR ELECTION OFFICIAL, ASIA-PACIFIC



International Foundation
for Electoral Systems



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

CEPPS

Strengthening
Democracy
through Partnership

Illustrative iEXCEL Training Agenda

DAY 1

Electoral Leadership

- Introduction to Electoral Leadership
- Leadership Approaches
- Characteristics and Sources of Effective Electoral Leadership and Influence

EMB Independence

- EMB Models and Defining Characteristics of EMB Independence
- Institutional, Personnel, Financial, and Functional Autonomies and the Importance of Accountability
- Behavioral Autonomy and Threats to Independence
- Electoral Leadership and EMB Independence

DAY 2

SIMULATION: Asiana Election Independence Scenario

DAY 3

Ethical Leadership

- Values, Norms, Ethics and Ethical Leadership
- Ethical Decision-Making
- Gender and Ethical Leadership
- Ethical Organizations
- Managing Institutional and Behavioral Change

DAY 4

Crisis Leadership

- Is it a Crisis?
- A Strategic Approach to Crisis
- Prevention and Preparation
- Crisis Response and Decision-Making
- Crisis Recovery and Learning
- Cross-Cutting Issues in a Crisis

DAY 5

SIMULATION: Carana Election Crisis Scenario

The curriculum is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The opinions expressed in the curriculum are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.