



Celebrating 25 Years



*Global Expertise.
Local Solutions.
Sustainable Democracy.*



For the last quarter century, IFES has remained committed to promoting sustainable democracy around the globe.

Within these 25 years, we have made strides in providing technical assistance to election officials, empowering the underrepresented to participate in political life and applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle. In our anniversary year, IFES has built on these gains:

In Papua New Guinea, we focused on building capacity and empowering women through developing an extensive training manual to boost advocacy skills for 22 additional women to be elected to parliament.

In Tunisia and Yemen, IFES supported election media centers that made sharing information with local and foreign journalists possible.

In Latin America, we partnered with Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute for a first-of-its kind workshop for election management bodies from the region.

From the Arab Spring to the creation of South Sudan in recent history, IFES has witnessed both full-scale revolutions and peaceful political processes where millions cast ballots in pursuit of transparent, inclusive government.

Our involvement in these milestone events sets a precedent for years to come as the global leader in democracy promotion.



Georgia

In Georgia, IFES developed the curriculum for a civic education course titled "Democracy and Citizenship" that is taught at 14 universities to empower the next generation of leaders.

Beyond a purely theoretical study of democracy and governance, the class uses interactive, hands-on methodology, strengthening students' understanding of human rights; civic engagement and responsibility; good governance; and Georgia's constitution by using real world examples. This includes the design and implementation of student action plans that address issues in the students' communities.

From improving physical access to education for persons with disabilities; addressing problems encountered by internally displaced persons and victims of war; fighting for gender equality; confronting threats to education; or targeting a problematic correctional system, students applied classroom learning to real world problems, leading the way for a more proactive, civically-engaged generation.

Professors urged students to become not just citizens, but "hyper citizens," by becoming engaged in their communities and making Georgia a more democratic nation. Over 800 Georgian university students have been reached through the course, and 1,200 will take the course this academic year. For this effort, IFES formulated a teacher manual and syllabus; published and distributed over 2,500 copies of an accompanying course book in Georgian and English; and is implementing an ongoing monitoring and evaluation strategy, which includes analysis of course enrollment and completion data, focus group interviews, classroom and student action project observations.

"Democracy and Citizenship was one of the most interesting courses I have ever taken. It truly improved my skills as an active citizen."

— **Levan Lortkipanidze**
Student,
IFES Democracy and Citizenship Course



Afghanistan

Women make up almost half (48%) of Afghanistan's population, providing an important perspective on social, economic and political matters.

With the goal of creating a network of young Afghan women with the requisite skills to be effective advocates, IFES launched the Future Leaders Club (FLC) in 2010. FLC is a training program for women 18-25 who display a strong interest in political activism. The program provides lectures and trainings on democracy, elections, advocacy and public speaking; these are complemented with practical exercises and exposure to civil society and provincial and national governmental bodies.

IFES hosted a series of study tours to expose FLC members to important socio-political entities and learn how they operate. Study tour locations have included the British Broadcasting Company, the Human Rights Commission and the Independent Election Commission. During

the 2011 program, FLC members also visited their provincial council offices where they were given unique opportunities to ask their elected council leaders what actions were being taken to protect women's rights and gender equity. In 2012, FLC members visited the upper and lower houses of the National Assembly where members were given a unique opportunity to speak directly with their lawmakers and learn firsthand how the legislature operates.

Implemented in the provinces of Kabul, Balkh, Bamiyan, Herat, Kandahar and Nangarhar, the FLC is building a vital network of female leaders who will become future social and political decision makers in Afghanistan. In the past three years, over 360 young women have successfully completed the FLC training program.



Uganda

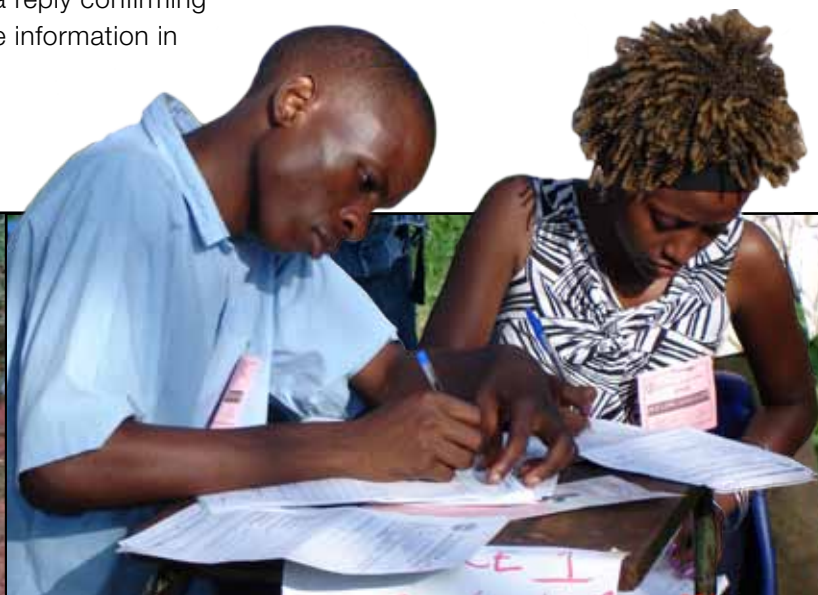
In past presidential and parliamentary elections, Ugandan voters had no easy way of checking their registration status or their assigned polling station. This was problematic, as the Electoral Commission of Uganda reserves the right to shift citizens from overcrowded polling stations, but does not issue notices of these changes. It was not uncommon for voters to become confused about where they should cast their ballots.

To remedy this, IFES collaborated with the electoral commission to introduce an SMS service to the electorate in January 2011, allowing voters to verify their polling station location via text message prior to and on Election Day. The service allowed voters to send an SMS to 8683 — or “VOTE” — with their voter identity numbers or, for newly registered voters, the 17-digit number on their registration receipt. Once the SMS was sent, voters received a reply confirming their polling station based on the information in the voter register.

The greatest number of texts on a single day— 179,283 of them — were received the day the polls opened. Demand peaked on Election Day when at one point 70 messages were received per second.

This SMS service was the second new media technology that was used to facilitate the voting process in Uganda.

In 2010, the National Voter Register (NVR) website was introduced to give individuals with access to the Internet the ability to verify their registration status and check the location of their polling station. The SMS service was created to reinforce the benefits of this website by providing people who did not have Internet access the same advantages the online NVR offered.



Dominican Republic

IFES partnered with the Dominican Republic's Central Electoral Board to promote and increase the political participation of voters with disabilities ahead of the presidential election in May 2012. IFES and *La Red Iberoamericana de Entidades de Personas Con Discapacidad*, a local partner, led an observation effort that included 22 persons with disabilities. Forty polling stations located in 10 different regions across the country were observed.

IFES also facilitated the interaction between the election management body, the election commission and 18 disabled persons organizations, which resulted in the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) showing their commitment to increasing access for this population.

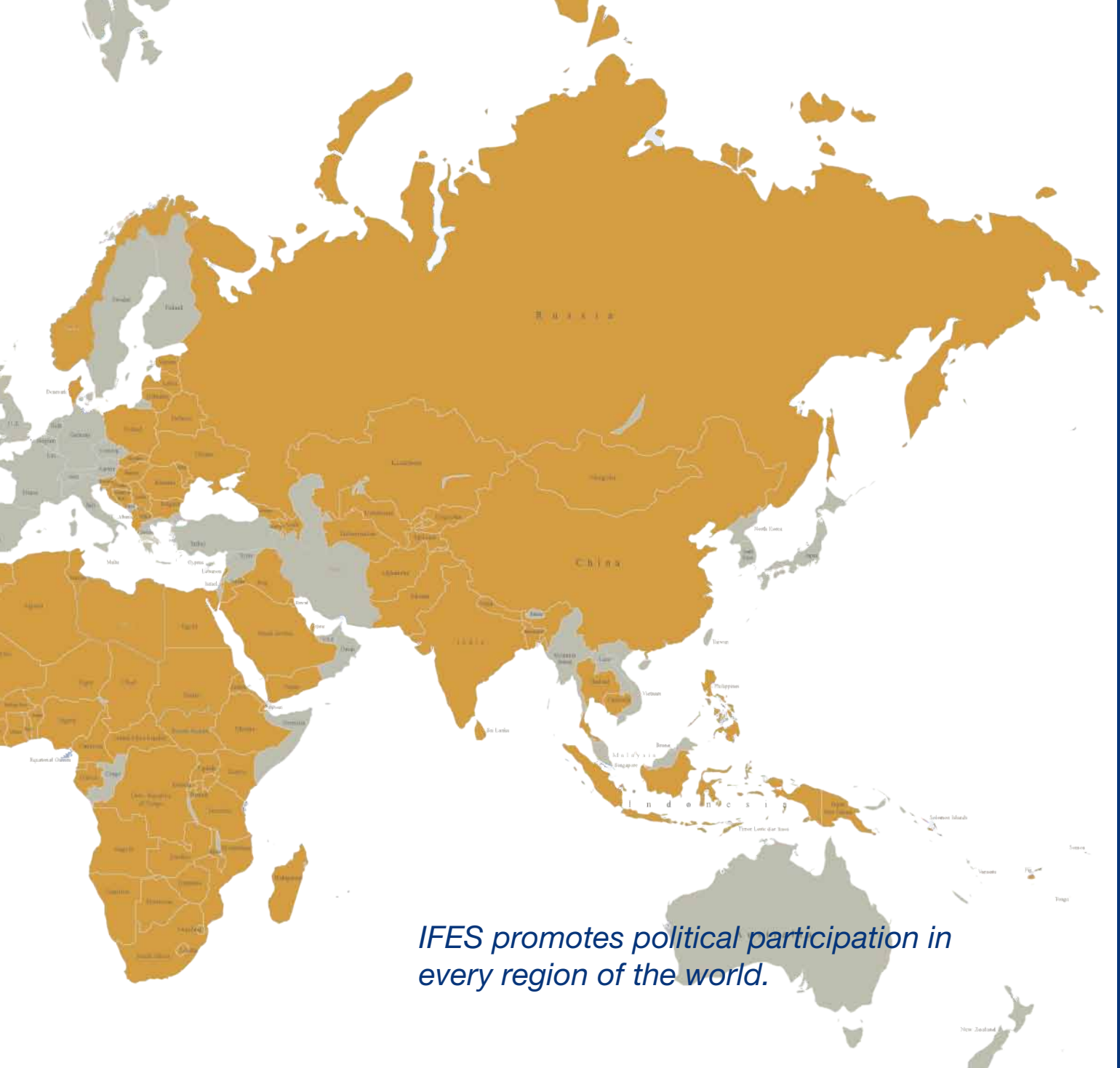
A number of important actions were taken thanks to this MoU, including promoting the production of the *plantilla* – a cardboard folder with holes that guide blind voters to the candidate of their choice, facilitating the voting process for persons with visual impairments, the production of a TV

“I had to learn how to face many barriers at an early age. I met other people with disabilities; this motivated me and showed me that there existed laws and that we could fight to eliminate the barriers...I think the job we are doing right now will set the stage for all people to participate in the electoral process.”

– **Cristina Francisco**
IFES Country Director

spot to motivate the participation of persons with disabilities in the election process as well as the inclusion of person with disabilities as election verifiers in the election verification campaign. This campaign encouraged Dominicans to confirm the accuracy of their information ahead of Election Day so they could learn the exact location of their voting center.





IFES promotes political participation in every region of the world.

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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