



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.

Kenya

Overview

The complexity of the political processes currently taking place in Kenya cannot be underestimated. The entire political landscape has changed since the 2007 elections due to a plethora of new entities and mechanisms. These include a new constitution; election commission; boundary delimitation; laws governing the conduct of elections and political parties; technology for voter registration; and a format for conducting national and county elections simultaneously.

To support this dramatic overhaul, IFES has been providing expert-level technical assistance to promote the development and sustainability of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). This targeted assistance includes support and capacity building in voter registration; civic education; results transmission and display; oversight of political parties; and development of dispute resolution mechanisms to facilitate the IEBC's role in conducting transparent, credible and violence-free elections.

IFES has worked in Kenya since 2002, originally assisting the Electoral Commission of Kenya with an electoral review process. In 2010, IFES provided technical support to the Interim Independent Election Commission on the implementation of an electronic results transmission system, which resulted in a timely, transparent release of constitutional referendum and by-election results.

Program Highlights

Boundary Delimitation: The IEBC Act (2011) required the newly appointed commissioners to finalize new electoral boundaries within five months of their appointment. At this time, IFES provided both geographical information systems experts and legal guidance to the IEBC. With this support, the electoral commission was able to conduct the required review of boundaries, finalize the report and respond to legal challenges.

Registration of Political Parties: IFES created software to facilitate the registration of political parties. The registration process required each party to provide data on a minimum of 1,000 party supporters in at least 24 different counties. With 53 parties registering, this would have required the Office of the Registrar to enter data on nearly 2.4 million voters. By providing software to political parties directly, the new system allowed them to perform data entry and validation, avoiding an insurmountable backlog within the Office of the Registrar. IFES then trained political parties on the use of this software, which 53 parties used to submit their party registration data.

Election Technology: IFES provided support to upgrade the existing results transmission and display system for the March 2013 election. IFES also assisted the IEBC in developing a polling station survey that included comprehensive data about electrical power and telecommunication channels available at each polling station, which informed the necessary upgrades to the results system.

Election Dispute Resolution: IFES has been working with the IEBC, the Political Parties Tribunal (PPDT) and the judiciary to strengthen mechanisms for election dispute resolution. This work has included training on the development of rules of procedures and the automation of case management systems for the IEBC and the PPDT.

Media Results Center: IFES worked with the IEBC to set up a media results center in Bomas of Kenya to serve as the focal point for transmission, tallying and reporting of election results and information relating to electoral operation.

In the Field

"[Mike Yard, IFES' chief of party in Kenya] is a person who has earned our respect, together with the organization he works for... We owe a lot of gratitude to IFES support."

- Ahmed Issack Hassan,
Chairman, Kenyan
Independent Electoral and
Boundaries Commission