

DEMOCRACY IN PRACTICE

The Annual Outcome Report 2025 of International IDEA



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Cover illustration: Women standing in a queue at a polling station, Bangladesh. Therese Pearce-Laanela,
International IDEA
Design and layout: International IDEA

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Abbreviations

ACJA	Administration of Criminal Justice Act (Nigeria)
ACTU	Anti-Corruption Technical Unit (Nigeria)
AECID	The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AFD	Agence Française de développement
AFTA	Articles for Federal Transitional Arrangement (Myanmar)
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AML	Anti-Money Laundering
ANFREL	The Asian Network for Free Elections
AU	The African Union
AUSSOM	The African Union Support and Stabilization Mission to Somalia
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BIRN	The Balkan Investigative Reporting Network
BMZ	The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CBP	Constitution-Building Processes
CCD	Climate Change and Democracy
CC-DEMOS	The EU Commission's Community of Practice of the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy
CEC	The Central Election Commission (Albania, Moldova, Ukraine)
CEDAR	The Centre for Elections, Democracy, Accountability and Representation
CELAC	The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CFT	Countering the Financing of Terrorism
CODE	The Consolidation of Democratic Engagement Project (The Gambia)
COP30	The 30th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
COSP	Conference of the States Parties
CRPH	The Committee Representing the Union Parliament (Myanmar)
CSO	Civil society organization
CTA	The Centre for Transparency Advocacy (Nigeria)
DA	Democracy Assessment
DAC	The OECD's Development Assistance Committee
DDR	Disaster Risk Reduction

DRIC	The Disability Rights Implementation Committee (Nigeria)
DW	Deutsche Welle
EBA	The Expert Group for Aid Studies (Sweden)
ECDC	The International Climate and Democracy Coalition
ECF	The European Climate Foundation (ECF)
ECNE	The European Cooperation Network on Elections
ECOWAS	The Economic Community of West African States
EEAS	The European External Action Service
EECM	Election Emergency and Crisis Monitor
EED	The European Endowment for Democracy
EFCC	The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Nigeria)
EMB	Electoral Management Body
ENEMO	The European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations
ENoP	The European Network of Political Foundations
EP	Electoral Processes
EPD	The European Partnership for Democracy
ERM	Electoral Risk Management
ERO	Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (Myanmar)
ESG	Environment, social, and governance criteria
EU	The European Union
FATF	The Financial Action Task Force
FCT	Federal Capital Territory (Nigeria)
FEO	The Fijian Elections Office (Fiji)
FFO	The German Federal Foreign Office
FIMI	Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference
FUF	Föreningen för utvecklingsfrågor/The Swedish Union for Development (Sweden)
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GDC	The Global Democracy Coalition
GDC	The Global Digital Compact
GDPR	The EU's General Data Protection Regulation
GECOM	The Guyana Elections Commission (Guyana)
GEM	Global Election Monitor
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GNESI	The Global Network for Securing Electoral Integrity

GSoD	Global State of Democracy
HNEC	The High National Elections Commission (Libya)
IACC	International Anti-Corruption Conference
ICPC	The Independent Corrupt Practices (and other related offences) Commission (Nigeria)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDRC	The International Development Research Centre (Canada)
IFES	The International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IGAD	The Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IHEC	The Independent High Electoral Commission (Iraq)
IPU	The Inter-Parliamentary Union
MCIRP	Myanmar Coordination Initiative for the Rights of People with Disabilities (Myanmar)
MFF	The EU's Multiannual Financial Framework 2028–2034
MiP	Money in Politics
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
NACS	The Nigeria Automated Clearing System (Nigeria)
NAPTIP	The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (Nigeria)
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NAZ	The National Assembly of Zambia
NBA	The Nigerian Bar Association
NDA	The National Democratic Alliance (Sierra Leone)
NDI	The National Democratic Institute
NLD	The National League for Democracy (Myanmar)
NUCC	The National Unity Consultative Council (Myanmar)
NUG	The National Unity Government (Myanmar)
OAS	The Organization of American States
OCv	Out-of-country voting
ODIHR	OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights'
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGP	The Open Government Partnership
OSC	The Online Safety Commission (Fiji)
OSCE	The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OGP	The Open Government Partnership

PDSS	Police Duty Solicitors Scheme (Nigeria)
PPR	Political Participation and Representation
PRAWA	Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (Nigeria)
PROPACI	Parliament's citizen participation platform (Uruguay)
REC	Regional Economic Community
RedOIE	Red de Observación e Integridad Electoral
REDPAR	Red Paraguaya para la Integridad Electoral (Paraguay)
RoLAC	The Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme (Nigeria)
RSF	Reporters Without Borders
SADC	The Southern African Development Community
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Center (Nigeria)
SCUML	The Special Control Unit on Money Laundering (Nigeria)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBv	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
Sida	The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSDTI	State Service Delivery Transparency Initiative (Nigeria)
SvAs	Special Voting Arrangements
TED	Team Europe Democracy
TI	Transparency International
TSJE	Tribunal Superior de Justicia Electoral (Paraguay)
UCG	Unconstitutional Change of Government
UCGL	United Cities and Local Governments
UKFCDO	The UK Foreign, and Commonwealth and Development Office
UN	The United Nations
UNCAC	The UN Convention against Corruption
UNFCCC	The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	The United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UN OHCHR	The UN Human Rights Office
US	The United States of America
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
vAPP	Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (Nigeria)
WYDE	Women and Youth Democratic Engagement

Figure 1. International IDEA's Democracy Assistance Monitoring and Evaluation (DAME) Framework

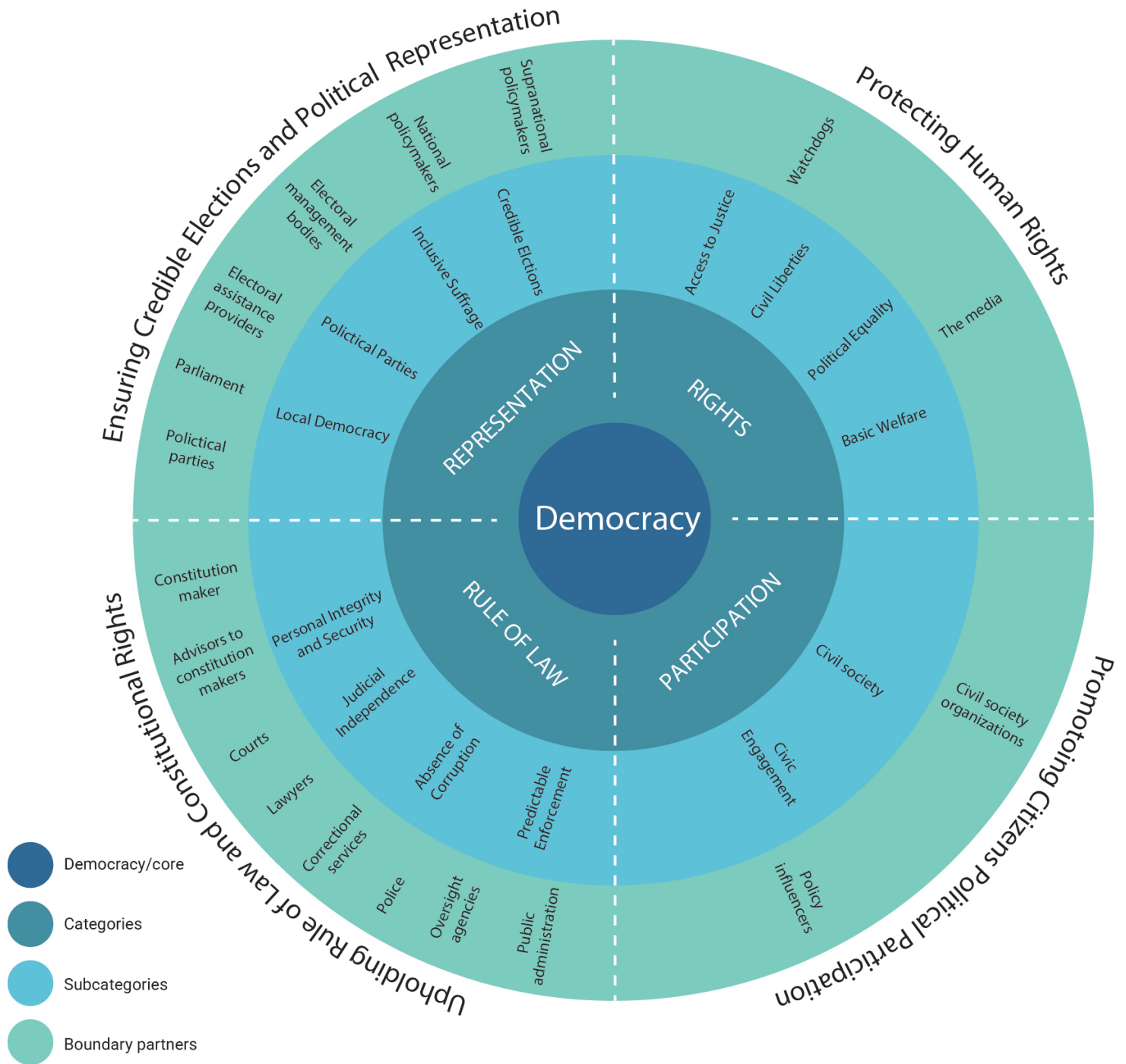
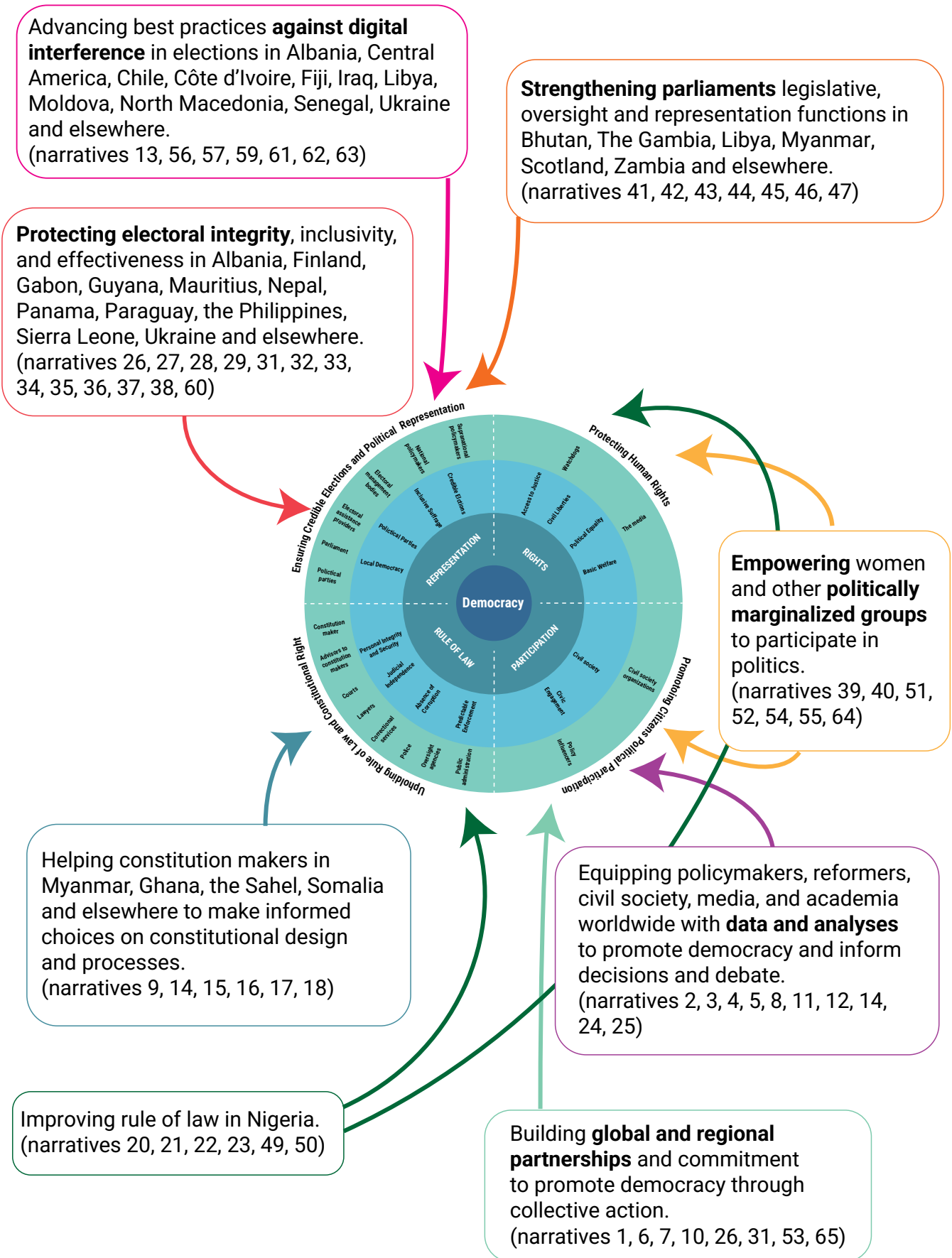


Figure 2. International IDEA's key outcomes in 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

International IDEA's results framework and system for learning-based management is informed by the latest thinking on, and understanding of, complex social and democratic change processes. Its focus is on mapping out what is often described as the 'missing middle' between what a project does and how its activities contribute to desired societal goals. **It thus pays special attention to results that are within the Institute's sphere of influence; that is, outcomes in terms of changes in behaviour, relationships and practices by the institutions and actors the capacity of which International IDEA is seeking to strengthen.** These 'target groups' are referred to in the results framework as boundary partners.

In line with this results framework, the 2025 Annual Outcome Report reports 66 outcome narratives on changes in behaviour, relationships and practices among the 16 types of boundary partners with whom International IDEA works. These narratives do not account for all of International IDEA's activities and results but are representative examples of what the Institute does and achieves. **Hence, the outcome narratives in this report shall be regarded as qualitative indicators of International IDEA's results.**

In its work on **democracy assessment** International IDEA aims to influence targeted **governmental and non-governmental policy influencers and policymakers** as well as targeted **journalists** across the world, to use International IDEA's datasets and accompanying analyses. In 2025, the Institute has:

1. Utilized International IDEA's 30th anniversary year to bolster policymakers' ability to support democracy and reasserting states' commitment to democracy itself.
2. Seen civil society organizations, think tanks, and advocacy groups worldwide actively leveraging Global State of Democracy (GSoD) data and

report findings to inform debate, promote democratic accountability, and support regional democratization efforts.

3. Seen the GSoD initiative becoming a key resource for academics and researchers in a range of published works in major academic volumes and opinion pieces.
4. Noted that high-profile political figures, such as Pita Limjaroenrat and Michelle Bachelet, cited the GSoD report and seen that the private sector is starting to make use of its conceptual framework.
5. Registered that International IDEA's Political Finance Database equips policymakers, reformers, and civil society with actionable insights, directly informing new regulations and strengthening democratic standards.
6. Inspired renewed partnerships between international, regional, national, and local policymakers and policy influencers to advance, protect, and promote democracy.
7. Deepened partnerships among democratic actors and influenced EU democracy policy.
8. Influenced the European Commission's 2028-2034 Multiannual Financial Framework and the Global Europe funding instrument and ongoing negotiations in Council.
9. Convened policymakers within the European Union to articulate strategies for addressing the political crisis in Sahel and coastal West Africa.
10. Strengthened collaboration with policy influencers and policymakers in US-based democracy organizations during a period of significant change for global democracy assistance.
11. Helped policymakers in Latin America to develop joint strategies to advance, protect, and promote democracy in the region.
12. Noted that GSoD analysis and data are being used by media to scrutinize democratic performance worldwide and inform citizens.
13. Empowered journalists and social leaders in Central America to counter disinformation and strengthen democratic integrity amid increasing threats to press freedom.

In its work on **constitution-building processes** International IDEA works with **advisers to constitution makers** to support **constitution makers** and **civil society** to design inclusive constitution-building processes and legitimate constitutions. In 2025, the Institute has:

14. Strengthened cooperation between actors working on transitional justice, constitution building, and peace mediation.

15. Fostered collaboration between local and regional actors in supporting constitutional transitions after unconstitutional changes of government in Africa.
16. Played a pivotal role in supporting Ghana's constitutional reform process by fostering collaboration among civil society organizations and facilitating constructive engagement with the Constitutional Reform Committee.
17. Helped build trust, promote crisis preparedness, and encouraged cross-country learning to advance credible elections and governance reforms ahead of the 2026 elections in Somalia.
18. Played a pivotal role in supporting Myanmar's pro-democracy actors to build trust and develop both union and state-level constitutional frameworks after the 2021 coup d'état.
19. Empowered Indigenous leaders across Asia to advocate for constitutional reform on environmental protection.

International IDEA has also supported **constitution implementers** to operationalize constitutions under agreed frameworks. In 2025, International IDEA has:

20. Helped protect detainees' rights through regular monitoring of detention practices in Nigeria.
21. Enhanced access to justice for vulnerable groups in Nigeria by strengthening cooperation among key stakeholders.
22. Increased acceptance of parole, restorative justice, and community service as alternatives to prison sentencing in several states in Nigeria.
23. Strengthened the rights of persons living with disabilities in Nigeria by supporting institutional reforms, advocacy, and improved physical and legal accessibility.

Within its work on **electoral processes** International IDEA works together with a professional community of **electoral assistance practitioners** to inspire and support **electoral management bodies, electoral policymakers** and **civil society** to adopt behaviours, relationships and practices that are conducive to credible and well-run electoral processes. In 2025, the Institute has:

24. Contributed to research, handbooks, and the ongoing development of best practices in electoral management.
25. Increased awareness of the impact of natural hazards on electoral processes by further strengthening interaction with disaster risk reduction and climate change professionals.

26. Contributed to establishing principles and global norms that address the nuanced risks facing elections today, by forming and influencing international partnerships and alliances.
27. Rallied global support for a UN resolution on political finance transparency which was adopted at the Conference of the States Parties (COSP) to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in December.
28. Sparked interest and laid the groundwork for informed comparative learning and future reforms in online voting.
29. Supported electoral policymakers in Sierra Leone to translate recommendations for electoral reforms into practical legislative changes.
30. Equipped electoral management bodies and other electoral stakeholders in Panama, Mauritius, and Finland with structured and collaborative resources for risk management, resilience-building, and crisis management.
31. Facilitated the adoption of the Stockholm Consensus on Electoral Integrity, which outlines key recommendations to enhance cooperation, safeguard electoral independence, promote respectful conduct, and advance democratic reform.
32. Advanced preparations for out-of-country voting for displaced Ukrainians across Europe.
33. Strengthened Ukraine's Central Election Commission preparedness for post-war elections by improving its practices for electoral risk management, communication, and ICT/cybersecurity.
34. Supported a consortium of CSOs in Nepal to establish a civil society platform to advocate for an electoral system that better enables women, Dalits, and youth to assume political roles.
35. Fostered unprecedented collaboration between the electoral management body, civil society organizations, and media to rebuild public confidence, combat misinformation, and increase voter awareness through inclusive information campaigns in Guyana.
36. Supported local CSOs in Gabon to address electoral violence and online disinformation by enhancing early warning and response mechanisms.
37. Helped the Paraguayan Network for Electoral Integrity (REDPAR) to defy political pressures and disinformation campaigns by fostering cooperation among domestic actors to protect electoral processes, institutions, and officials from malign influence and mis/disinformation.

Within its work on **political participation and representation** International IDEA cooperates with **political parties, parliaments, public administration,**

civil society, and **oversight agencies** with an aim to inspire and support these actors to adopt behaviours, relationships and practices that are conducive to political participation and representation. In 2025, the Institute has:

38. Inspired Presidential candidates in Gabon to sign the country's first voluntary Code of Conduct to support credible and peaceful elections.
39. Supported young women politicians, activists, and community leaders to gain skills, solidarity, and confidence to combat gender-based challenges in politics.
40. Supported women mayors in Peru to overcome barriers to women's representation in local government.
41. Contributed to embedding gender-sensitive scrutiny into the Scottish Parliament's systems and culture.
42. Inspired changes in planning processes of the parliaments in Zambia, Sierra Leone, and Botswana.
43. Sparked a shift toward more inclusive and participatory governance in Botswana by helping Parliament to prioritize citizen involvement.
44. Transformed the culture and professional identity of the Libyan Parliament's staff by reshaping relationships, behaviours, and professional practices.
45. Contributed to fostering collaboration, transparency, and mutual understanding between parliament and the media in Bhutan.
46. Facilitated Myanmar's legitimate interim parliament, the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), to expand its international outreach and advocacy.
47. Inspired the Gender Select Committee at the parliament in The Gambia to take significant steps to improve women's political representation by proposing a gender quota bill.
48. Equipped democratic actors in Myanmar with knowledge and networks to establish inclusive and accountable local governance in emerging constitutional frameworks.
49. Supported Nigeria to exit the Financial Action Task Force's Grey List by addressing threats to the integrity of the international financial system.
50. Contributed to introducing the State Service Delivery Transparency Initiative (SSDTI) in Nigeria, which is a scalable, sector-driven framework to improve accountability and service delivery.

51. Advanced self-determination, improved local administration, and fostered inclusive decision-making in Ngäbe Buglé Comarca, a semi-autonomous indigenous region in Panama.
52. Enabled over 2,300 residents in Peru to directly communicate their concerns to local authorities through structured, evidence-based dialogues.
53. Led the Global Democracy Coalition (GDC) with more than 130 partners to take collective global action to defend and advance democracy.
54. Empowered Belarusian women democracy activists with advocacy skills and professional networks.
55. Transformed gender social norms by facilitating men and women to share experiences and collaborate as equal partners.

In 2023 International IDEA consolidated its work on **digitalization and democracy** which aims at shaping the behaviour, relationships, and practices of a wide range of actors to protect and defend democracy against digital threats and reinforce it through technology. In 2025, the Institute has:

56. Formed partnerships with civil society, Electoral Management Bodies, and state agencies in Moldova, North Macedonia, Senegal and Côte de Ivoire to advance best practices against foreign interference in elections.
57. Pioneered global initiatives to support electoral management bodies shaping practices and strengthening capacity for democratic Artificial Intelligence (AI) in elections.
58. Advanced democratic reform in EU candidate countries by fostering regional collaboration and translating complex digital regulations into practical guidance for policymakers.
59. Fostered institutional cooperation, promoted responsible digital engagement, and helped local stakeholders develop sustainable responses to information-related risks in elections in Libya, Fiji, and Iraq.
60. Improved electoral campaign oversight in Albania by introducing a Code of Conduct on Digital Campaigning for political parties.
61. Reinforced Moldova's resilience against digital electoral interference and unregulated online political advertising.
62. Strengthened electoral integrity in Latin America by fostering collaboration and establishing frameworks to address disinformation and online political violence.

63. Supported the Chilean Congress in integrating ethical AI into its legislative processes, resulting in improved public access to information and strengthened collaborative practices.

In 2023 International IDEA also started work on **climate change and democracy**, which aims at shaping the behaviour, relationships, and practices of a wide range of actors to promote policies, practices, reform and innovation that allow democracies to formulate and implement effective and citizen-owned climate action. In 2025, the Institute has:

64. Inspired government officials, donors, development banks and CSOs to engage in discussions about how climate deliberation can anchor climate policy decisions in local community priorities.
65. Inspired civil society, government officials, and donors, to engage in joint action on climate-democracy nexus topics.
66. Contributed to a growing global conversation on how climate litigation can strengthen democratic accountability, which has inspired dialogue and cooperation across the legal, climate and democracy communities

Chapter 1

FOCUSING ON RESULTS WITHIN INTERNATIONAL IDEA'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

International IDEA's results framework and system for learning-based management is informed by the latest thinking on and understanding of complex social and democratic change processes and inspired by theory of change and outcome mapping methodologies. Its focus is on mapping out what is often described as the 'missing middle' between what a project does and how its activities contribute to desired societal goals. It thus pays special attention to results that are within the Institute's sphere of influence; that is, *outcomes* in terms of changes in behaviour, relationships and practices by the institutions and actors the capacity of which International IDEA is seeking to strengthen. These 'target groups' are referred to in the results framework as *boundary partners*.

In line with this framework, the Annual Outcome Report focuses its reporting on changes in behaviour, relationships and practices among the 16 types of boundary partners that International IDEA targets with its activities. As these changes are complex and therefore difficult to quantify, the report contains *qualitative* outcome narratives which describe how International IDEA has influenced boundary partner's relationships, behaviour and practice. The 66 outcome narratives in the report do not account for all of International IDEA's activities and results but are representative examples of what the Institute does and achieves. Hence, the stories should be regarded as indications or *qualitative indicators* of International IDEA's results.

To clarify what an outcome aims to *contribute to* at the societal level in countries, International IDEA has formulated impact objectives and indicators for change. The impact indicators comprise a mix of attributes, sub-attributes and indicators from International IDEA's GSoD indices.¹ Finally, the impact objectives are linked to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, which serve as overall goals for International IDEA's work.

¹ <<https://www.idea.int/gso-d-indices/sites/default/files/gso-d-indicators-and-sources.pdf>>.

As the ultimate achievement of the impact objectives and SDG targets depends on a complex web of societal and political processes that are beyond International IDEA's sphere of direct influence it is not meaningful to claim such societal changes as results of International IDEA's activities. However, the use of these goals and indicators aligns International IDEA's objectives to the international development agenda and demonstrates a project's *relevance* from that perspective.

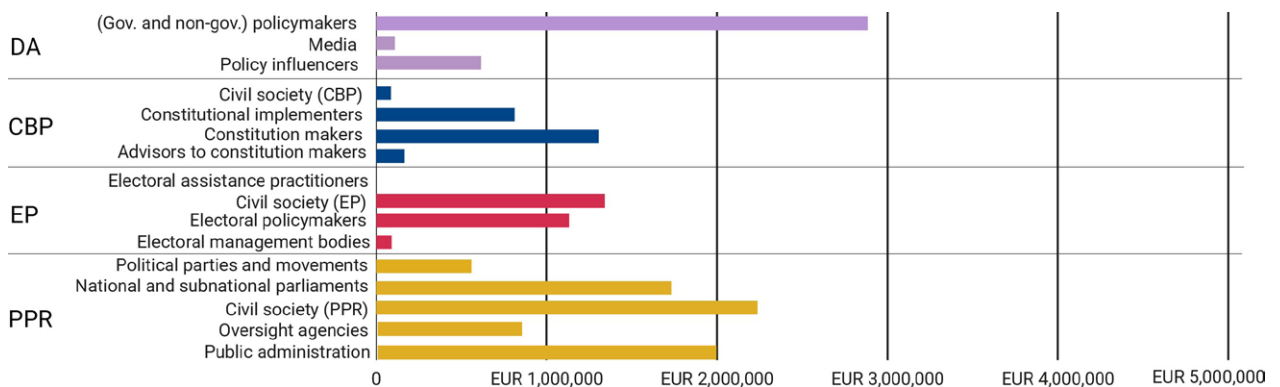
Annex outlines International IDEA's complete results framework and shows how the impact objectives, impact indicators, boundary partners and outcome objectives are interlinked with each other. All the outcome stories in this report are aligned with and mirror this results framework. Annex 2 outlines the Theory of Change that underpins the results framework.

Chapter 2

INTERNATIONAL IDEA'S INPUTS AND OUTPUTS IN 2025

In 2025, International IDEA invested EUR 46.7 million in delivering activities aimed at inspiring and supporting the Institute's boundary partners to carry out their democratic functions more effectively. Figure 1 lists these investments by boundary partner.

Figure 1. International IDEA's investments by boundary partner in 2025



This investment has been delivered through 98 restricted projects (including earmarked core funded projects) in addition to core funded products and services. International IDEA has grouped the core funded products and services into seven output categories and developed 15 standardized output indicators. These measure the quantity of products and services delivered and how many men and women have been reached by International IDEA's activities across the core funded projects. International IDEA's outputs in 2024 and 2025 are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. International IDEA's outputs in 2025

Output category	Output indicators	2025	2024
1. Publications: Handbooks, thematic reports, translations, policy papers and training modules published by International IDEA or jointly with partners	Number of released publications	99	115
	Number of copies distributed	1,920	8,106
	Number of downloads of publications from International IDEA's websites	76,496	58,890
2. Communication products: News articles, opinion pieces, press releases, films, social media posts and brochures produced by staff members and published either on one of International IDEA's websites or externally	Number of communication products	2,127	1,430
	Number of visits to individual webpages	2,349,233	2,054,796
3. Databases, and digital tools and platforms: Data or interactive software made available on one of International IDEA's websites	Number of visits to databases via International IDEA's websites	48,023	506,042
	Number of external media mentions of International IDEA's databases	-	634
	Number of visits to digital tools and platforms via International IDEA's websites	311,640	27,112
	Number of countries from which visitors come	187	151
4. Events and dialogues: Dialogues, network meetings, workshops, seminars, roundtables or conferences convened by International IDEA	Number of events and dialogues convened	159	160
	Number of participants	6,962	8,120
5. Training: Teaching on skills, knowledge and tools.	Number of trainings	8	15
	Number of participants	105	605
6. Advisory services: On-demand consultations provided by International IDEA	Number of boundary partners that receive advice from International IDEA	4,722	4,230
7. Capacity development: A process that takes place over a longer period with the purpose of assisting individuals and organizations to obtain, improve or retain the skills, knowledge and tools needed to do their jobs to a greater capacity; may include for example on-the-job training and coaching, advisory services, events and training, and the production of publications such as handbooks and manuals.	Number of projects with restricted funding	98	63

Chapter 3

OUTCOMES FROM DEMOCRACY ASSESSMENT WORK

In its role as a think tank, International IDEA has developed hundreds of publications on political parties, political finance, parliaments, citizens' engagement, electoral processes and constitution-building. The Institute also maintains several influential global databases on democracy, such as the GSoD Indices, which depict democratic trends at the country, regional and global levels across a broad range of different attributes of democracy in 158 countries. In recent years, the GSoD Indices have developed into a broader initiative that includes policy briefs, press releases and social media posts, as well as launches and workshops.



Source: International IDEA, Foresight Workshop on 'The Future of Democracy in the Western Balkans' organized by the Democracy Assessment team and the Regional Europe Programme, with support from BIRN Albania.

The GSoD initiative aims to provide up-to-date, incisive and relevant data, analysis and policy guidance that informs, influences, and helps shape the global debate on democracy. The strategy for implementing this approach is to influence targeted governmental and non-governmental policy influencers and policymakers as well as targeted journalists across the world, to use International IDEA's datasets and accompanying analyses in accordance with the following theory of change:

- **If the media** utilize evidence-based data and research to inform the public about democracy in a deeper, more nuanced, and more conceptually rigorous way, and hold decision makers to account to these standards.
- **If policy influencers** design and implement effective and evidence-based advocacy campaigns and recommendations based on data and research, for promoting democracy.
- **And if targeted policymakers** (representing governments, foundations and other major actors in democracy promotion) make evidence- and context-based decisions about how to promote democracy.
- **Then** rigorous, high-quality data and forward-looking analysis will inform policies and interventions that safeguard and promote democracy, and pro-democracy actors will have better access to the tools they need to help stem authoritarianism.

This chapter reports results from the three boundary partners that International IDEA is working with in its Democracy Assessment work. As these changes are complex, the report provides qualitative outcome narratives, which describe how International IDEA has influenced each of these boundary partners' relationships, behaviour and practices. These stories do not account for all International IDEA's activities and results in democracy assessment but are representative examples of what the Institute has done and achieved. Hence the narratives should be regarded as qualitative indicators of International IDEA's results.

3.1. POLICY INFLUENCERS PROMOTE DEMOCRACY BY DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE AND EVIDENCE-BASED ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON DATA AND RESEARCH, AND POLICYMAKERS RESPOND TO MEDIA AND POLICY INFLUENCERS BY MAKING EVIDENCE- AND CONTEXT-BASED DECISIONS ABOUT HOW TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY

3.1.1. Fostering Global Dialogue, Action, and Community to Support Democracy

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding.

International IDEA's 30th anniversary year in 2025 reinforced the Institute's ability to bring together diverse actors for productive dialogue and joint action on democracy. As evidenced by this outcome narrative, the series of anniversary activities generated important advancements with existing and new state partners, bolstering policymakers' ability to support democracy and reasserting states' commitment to democracy itself.

In 2025, International IDEA marked its 30th anniversary: three decades of supporting democracy worldwide through research, capacity development, convening of dialogues, and norm-setting advocacy. **Through these activities the Institute, alongside its Member States and other democracy actors, influenced policymakers to build new consensus, resolve, and action in support of democracy in a challenging era.**

In Stockholm, the Institute marked this occasion with a landmark gathering of Member States and other partners from around the world, including high-level representatives from electoral agencies, foreign ministries, and development cooperation agencies. As highlighted in one of the other outcome narratives in this report the summit programme complemented the simultaneous Stockholm Conference on Electoral Integrity, reinforcing International IDEA's status as a premier convenor of electoral management bodies and producing the Stockholm Consensus that now serves as a leading reference point for election management globally.

During and beyond this gathering, the Institute elevated its engagement with Swedish policymakers and policy influencers, including a sustained partnership with Sweden's Electoral Agency, a keynote speech by the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, a reception at the Riksdag hosted by the Speaker of the Parliament, and multiple stories and articles in major Swedish media. The secretariat also supported the incoming Chair of the Council of Member States, India, in developing a plan for their chairship in 2026, **which culminated in a multiyear project to conduct research and develop electoral capacity worldwide, leveraging International IDEA's expertise alongside the experience of the world's largest democracy.** In a reflection of International IDEA's unique combination of intergovernmental processes and programmatic delivery, **the events in Stockholm also inspired conversations with several countries on potential membership in International IDEA.**

As highlighted in some of the other outcome narratives in this report the Stockholm events were accompanied by a robust programme of global events aligned with the 30th anniversary, including in Pretoria, Santiago, Brussels, New York, Washington DC, Bandung, and Jakarta, hosted in partnership with the Institute's Member States and other partners to highlight the value of democracy and the importance of continued democracy support in diverse parts of the world. **In Stockholm and around the world, International IDEA's 30th year enabled Member States and other democracy actors to exchange**

In Stockholm and around the world, International IDEA's 30th year enabled Member States and other democracy actors to exchange good practices, identify common interests, and develop new partnerships—and ultimately bolster policymaking that strengthens the resilience of democracy.

good practices, identify common interests, and develop new partnerships—and ultimately bolster policymaking that strengthens the resilience of democracy.

3.1.2. GSoD Sparks Interest and Action Among Civil Society Actors

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union and the Bosch Foundation.

As evidenced by examples in this outcome narrative civil society organizations, think tanks, and advocacy groups worldwide are actively leveraging the GSoD data and report findings to inform debate, promote democratic accountability, and support regional democratization efforts. Users in 2025 included the Middle East Institute, Democracy Without Borders, the Kofi Annan Foundation, and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

Representatives from civil society worldwide tuned in to watch the launch of the 2025 GSoD report and promoted it afterward. Among them was Samson Itodo, International IDEA Board Member and Executive Director of Yiaga Africa, a leading organization advancing participatory democracy, human rights, and civic engagement across Africa. Samson described the report as a “masterpiece.” Moreover, the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies published an [article](#) highlighting the findings of the GSoD report for the

Maghreb and Mashreq regions and the Swedish Union for Development (FUF) produced a [video](#) interview on the report findings, emphasizing global declines in press freedom.

Other references to the GSoD ranged from a [report](#) by the Middle East Institute titled *Reimagining Syria: A Roadmap for Peace and Prosperity Beyond Assad* to an [article](#) by the Boston Consulting Group Henderson Institute on how businesses can support fragile democracies. Democracy Without Borders dedicated an [article](#) to the GSoD 2025 report and its key trends, also citing the Democracy Tracker. Moreover, organizations such as the Kofi Annan Foundation rely on the GSoD Initiative's data to feed into tools aimed at predicting election-related violence: for example, its Electoral Vulnerability Index 2025-2026 referenced Democracy Tracker in their country-specific reports for Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Brazil.

The GSoD Initiative's findings also inspired dialogue on regional democratization efforts in the Western Balkans. The GSoD's October foresight workshop, which explored future scenarios for democracy in the Western Balkans, was described by participants as 'a rich and intense discussion.' Ana Kovacevic at the National Democratic Institute's (NDI) Albania office said: 'The workshop was truly energizing and has certainly sparked further reflections

Civil society organizations, think tanks, and advocacy groups worldwide are actively leveraging the GSoD data and report findings to inform debate, promote democratic accountability, and support regional democratization efforts.

and the sense of urgency on rethinking the steps we can take to shape more democratic and resilient futures of the [Western Balkans].¹ Eckhard Störmer at Foresight Expert, posted on social media: 'It is crucial to have such future dialogue initiatives from International IDEA: bringing democracy activists, journalists and researchers in Western Balkans together to think about the future of democracy in their region.'

Finally, artists have used the GSoD framework to engage the general public around democratic principles and values. An interactive digital artwork, [Playing Democracy](#) by Ling Tan originally commissioned by the Barbican museum in London, used the GSoD framework to engage the public around democratic values and principles and provided an inclusive space to explore various political systems and social structures.

3.1.3. GSoD is Becoming a Key Resource for Academics and Researchers

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union and the Bosch Foundation.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative the GSoD initiative has become a key resource for academics and researchers worldwide, providing data and conceptual frameworks to deepen understanding of democratic trends. Its impact is evident in a range of published works, from country profiles and analyses of governance to references in major academic volumes and opinion pieces addressing democratic reforms. Users in 2025 included University of Birmingham, the European University Institute, and the Pew Research Center.

Across continents and a wide range of disciplines, academics are turning to the GSoD initiative in their work to deepen understanding of democratic trends, not only as a data source but also as a conceptual lens for research.

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For example:

- Nic Cheeseman, the Head of University of Birmingham's Centre for Elections, Democracy, Accountability and Representation (CEDAR), reported that the Democracy Tracker feeds into and shapes his academic analysis.
- A recent Routledge Research in Comparative Politics [volume](#) references the Kenya Democracy Tracker country profile as well as the GSoD Indices.
- A June 2025 [working paper](#) published by African Non-Military Conflict Intervention Practices (ANCIP) cites Democracy Tracker reporting on Sudan as part of an analysis of African Union responses to coups.

- A chapter titled 'Authoritarianism in Sub-Saharan Africa' in the Oxford Handbook of Authoritarian Politics [references](#) International IDEA's [2022 op ed](#) on the defining trends for democracy in Africa in that year.
- The Democracy Tracker's Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) profile was referenced in the European University Institute's Robert Schuman Centre [2025 country report](#) on the influence of external geopolitical actors in BiH.
- Alberto Aziz Nassif, a researcher at CIESAS Mexico, published an analysis of the report as an [opinion piece](#) in El Universal, writing, 'These international studies are interesting and useful because they allow us to compare ourselves and assess our progress in Mexico.' He used the report's data to raise concerns about planned reforms to the Amparo law, warning of their implications for access to justice.

The Initiative has also informed empirical studies on public confidence in democratic governance. A [paper](#) published in *Urban Science* references a previous edition of the GSoD report in its analysis of citizens' perceptions of government performance and democratic support in Sub-Saharan Africa. And the director of global attitudes research at the Pew Research Center, Washington DC, references the GSoD in an article exploring growing frustration with the functioning of democracy in cross-national surveys, [published](#) in the *Journal of Democracy* in January 2025.

3.1.4. GSoD is Increasingly Used for Political Advocacy

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union and the Bosch Foundation.

The GSoD Initiative's international reach and impact is steadily increasing. In 2025, high-profile figures, such as Pita Limjaroenrat, the legitimate winner of Thailand's 2023 general election, and Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, cited the GSoD report. As evidenced in this outcome narrative there are also examples of the private sector making use of its conceptual framework.

Prominent public policy influencers continue to draw on the GSoD Initiative, underscoring its relevance in informing global conversations on democracy. For example, Pita Limjaroenrat, the legitimate winner of Thailand's 2023 general election, amplified the GSoD report and the Democracy Tracker by reposting the launch announcement and engaging with related social media content, helping to bring the Initiative's analysis to reform-minded networks. Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, cited the Democracy Tracker and quoted from the 2024 GSoD

report during her speech to International IDEA's Council of Member States, marking the Institute's 30th anniversary celebrations.

In 2025, the private sector emerged as a more prominent user for applying the GSoD Initiative's conceptual framework, as businesses increasingly recognize the link between democratic governance and responsible investment. For example, **Covalence, a company based in Geneva that assesses businesses on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria, has integrated the GSoD Indices conceptual framework as part of its evaluation methodology.** Antoine Mach, Co-Founder and Managing Partner explained, 'With Covalence, we are currently working on an assessment of the contribution of companies to democracy, and the GSoD Indices' conceptual framework is inspiring in this regard.'

3.1.5. Turning Data on Political Finance into Reform

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

International IDEA's Political Finance Database is widely recognized as a key resource for evidence-based political finance reform.

International IDEA's Political Finance Database is widely recognized as a key resource for evidence-based political finance reform. As evidenced by this outcome narrative its comparative data equips policymakers, reformers, and civil society with actionable insights, directly informing new regulations and strengthening democratic standards worldwide. Among its users is the Open Government Partnership - a coalition of over 75 member countries and 150 local jurisdictions working to advance transparency and accountability.

For more than a decade, International IDEA's Political Finance Database has guided policymakers, reformers, and advocates to understand how money shapes politics and how transparency strengthens democracy. What makes the database stand out is its credibility and usability. Covering more than 180 jurisdictions, it compiles verified legal information in a comparable format that enables reformers to see how their countries measure up globally. For governments seeking to enhance transparency, the data offers both a mirror and a roadmap.

The database is recognized across the globe for its unique contribution to evidence-based political finance reform. Among its users is the Open Government Partnership (OGP) - a coalition of over 75 member countries and 150 local jurisdictions working to advance transparency and accountability. As evidenced by a quote from Joseph Foti, Principal Advisor at OGP, **the organization has endorsed the database as an invaluable benchmark for shaping its members' national action plans and measuring progress on open government reforms:**

For OGP members, this resource helps ensure that new action plan commitments are grounded in evidence and can drive measurable improvements. By measuring the rules that govern political finance, International IDEA's work equips governments and civil society alike with the tools they need to raise standards, close gaps, and advance the integrity of democracy worldwide.

Reformers have used IDEA's comparative insights to identify loopholes in their political finance systems, improve disclosure requirements, and strengthen oversight bodies. Civil society organizations draw on the data to hold governments accountable to international standards. In several countries, IDEA's data has directly informed new political finance regulations or amendments to existing laws.

As the global demand for political finance transparency grows, International IDEA's Political Finance Database continues to be the foundation for reform. The use of reliable, accessible, and comparable data gives boundary partners—including policymakers and activists—the ability to make decisions based on facts rather than assumptions.

3.1.6. Revitalizing International Partnerships to Promote and Protect Democracy

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

International IDEA's 30th anniversary brought together global leaders to confront the challenges facing democracy. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the event inspired renewed partnerships and a commitment to promote democracy through collective action.

International IDEA's 30th anniversary, coinciding with the 80th anniversary of the United Nations, created a rare inflection point for the global democracy community. Against a backdrop of rising authoritarianism, contested global norms, and shifting geopolitical power, the commemorative moment became an opportunity to listen directly to IDEA's Member States from every region and to forge new alliances.

During the high-level roundtable on 'Support for Democracy in a New Geopolitical Context', co-organized between IDEA, the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and the Trust, Accountability and Inclusion Collaborative, more than 70 leaders from governments, multilateral organizations, civil society, philanthropy, and academia came together to confront the pressures reshaping the democratic landscape. The discussions made it clear that while democratic norms face their deepest challenges in

decades, the convergence of the UN and International IDEA anniversaries open space for a renewed sense of shared purpose and a broader, more inclusive coalition for democratic renewal.

Member States emphasized that today’s geopolitical volatility requires new partnership models and leadership drawn from both the Global South and North, grounded in cooperation and mutual learning. International IDEA’s Global State of Democracy data, showing a ninth consecutive year of global democratic decline, underscored the urgency of this task. Participants highlighted the need to rebuild public trust by focusing on “democracy that delivers”—institutions capable of providing equitable services, economic opportunity, and accountable governance. Several delegations stressed that democracy must be a lived experience rather than a periodic electoral event, shaped by access to education, healthcare, livelihoods, and safety. At the same time, widespread disinformation and polarization demand collective solutions that reinforce civic space and strengthen resilient democratic systems.

The event showcased how IDEA’s membership, spanning Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Pacific, and Europe, brings diverse experiences that enrich global collaboration on democratic transformation. Countries reflected openly on their own journeys—successes, setbacks, and innovations—illustrating that democratic values are shared aspirations rather than regional or cultural inheritances. As Secretary-General Kevin Casas-Zamora noted, only exchanges involving actors rooted in both institutions and civil society can produce the ideas and pathways needed to renew democracy in this moment of geopolitical flux.

International IDEA’s 30th anniversary year laid the groundwork for revitalized alliances, a more inclusive global democracy agenda, and commitment to strengthening a multilateral system capable of supporting democracy that delivers for people.

3.1.7. Influencing EU Democracy Policy

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

The International Democracy Day Brussels 2025 Conference brought together global leaders, civil society, and youth to discuss democracy and inclusion. As evidenced by this outcome narrative it deepened partnerships among democratic actors and influenced EU democracy policy.

The International Democracy Day Brussels 2025 Conference, *A World Turned Upside Down: Democracy and Inclusion in an Age of Insecurity*, marked a milestone for International IDEA and its partners. The two-day event was

coordinated by the Institute's EU Liaison team on behalf of five democracy organizations and the European Commission and gathered nearly 400 participants.

High-level participation from Namibia, Mongolia, and EU Commissioners, alongside civil society and youth actors, ensured that diverse perspectives shaped the discussions. The first public address by the new EU Special Representative for Human Rights underscored the EU's commitment to democracy partnerships and rights-based democracy support.

The conference served as a symbolic moment to honour International IDEA's three decades of advancing democracy worldwide, reinforcing its role as a convener of institutions that protect and promote democracy. Its purpose was to strengthen such partnerships and enable various actors to feed into the EU's strategic positioning on democracy, evidence-based action, and long-term agenda-setting.

As intended the event catalyzed new alliances. International IDEA's partnerships with Sweden, the EU-LAC Foundation, and the European External Action Service were deepened, while collaboration with the European Economic and Social Committee and the Global Democracy Coalition (GDC) expanded IDEA's visibility. These relationships further position IDEA as a trusted convener for future EU democracy initiatives.

The conference also reinforced democracy as a priority in EU external action. **Discussions on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and democracy-security nexus fed directly into EU policy dialogues. A spotlight session on the Summit between the EU and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) generated actionable insights, later shared with the Commission through an on-demand input note, influencing summit preparations.**

International IDEA also utilized the opportunity to provide policy influencers and policymakers with analyses from the Global State of Democracy 2025 report and the EU-funded Youth Participation Index. **These resources sparked commitments to integrate youth perspectives into democracy programming across EU institutions.**

In conclusion, the International Democracy Day Brussels 2025 was more than a single event—it set the agenda for global democracy support in 2026 and beyond. By combining evidence-based advocacy with networking, the conference positioned IDEA and its partners at the forefront of efforts to safeguard democratic values amid rising insecurity. The conference highlights video can be viewed at <www.idd-brussels.eu>.

3.1.8. Strengthening Collaboration with EU-based Democracy Organizations and Member States to Promote and Protect Democracy

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

In 2025, International IDEA maintained and strengthened its position as a trusted partner to the European Union. As the EU remains the world's largest democracy assistance funder, this partnership shapes democracy assistance globally.

Through high-level engagement, targeted advocacy, and coalition-building International IDEA ensures that democracy remains central to EU priorities. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the Institute has influenced the European Commission's 2028-2034 Multiannual Financial Framework, the Global Europe funding instrument, and ongoing negotiations in Council.

In 2025, International IDEA maintained and strengthened its position as a trusted partner to the European Union. As the EU remains the world's largest democracy assistance funder, this partnership shapes democracy assistance globally.

Throughout the year, the Institute's EU liaison team sustained daily engagement with EU institutions and facilitated five high-level visits by the Secretary-General, the Institute's Management Committee, and the Global Programme and Africa and West Asia Directors, to Brussels. These visits enabled direct dialogue with the EU's political leadership.

To support the Institute's dialogue capacity with EU delegations, the EU liaison team developed a comprehensive Staff Manual on EU engagement, outlining EU structures, shared priorities, and avenues for collaboration. The manual now serves as a key resource for staff induction and ongoing strategic engagement.

Besides facilitating Staff Members' interaction with EU institutions, the EU liaison team promoted democracy assistance as a strategic priority in the EU's forthcoming Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034. In partnership with the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD), the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), the European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP), and the Open Government Partnership (OGP), the team co-led a joint statement outlining six recommendations for stronger EU democracy support.

Presented at the EU Council's Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM), the International Democracy Day Brussels, and through multiple bilateral meetings, the statement has influenced the Commission's Multiannual Financial Framework for 2028-2034, proposal tabled for decision in July 2026.

Moreover, **on requests from Sweden and other EU Member States, the team supported the development and adoption of a member-state owned non-paper** proposing ways to embed democracy support more strategically within the Global Europe instrument, the main financial tool to fund EU external action post-2027.

The paper emphasizes the need for predictable and flexible funding to counter democratic backsliding, protect electoral integrity, address foreign interference,

and sustain commitments to enlargement and global democracy programmes. Sweden circulated the non-paper in Council, and six EU Member States have contributed to shaping its content. **The collaborative process on the non-paper signals growing alignment on the need to make democracy a strategic pillar of the next EU multiannual budget cycle.**

3.1.9. Fostering Inclusive Democratic Engagement in the Sahel and West Africa

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union.

International IDEA convened policymakers within the European Union in a Team Europe Democracy workshop to articulate strategies for addressing the political crisis in Sahel and coastal West Africa. As evidenced by this outcome narrative one concrete outcome of the workshop was a clearer articulation of the need for more tailored engagement in the Sahel, which potentially can change strategies going forward.

Against a backdrop of unconstitutional coups and stalled political transitions, shrinking civic space, and deepening fragility across the Sahel and coastal West Africa, the 2025 Team Europe Democracy (TED) Regional Workshop—convened by International IDEA under the Supporting Team Europe Democracy initiative—contributed to highlighting a set of observations and practical suggestions aimed at supporting a more coherent and context-sensitive democratic governance engagement in the region. Bringing together the European Union and EU Member State representatives with civil society actors working on the frontlines, the workshop provided a space for discussing a joint approach in one of the world's most volatile political environments.

One concrete outcome of the workshop was a clearer articulation of the need for more tailored engagement in the Sahel, which potentially can change strategies going forward. Stakeholders noted the importance of locally informed strategies that recognize the complex political dynamics across the Sahel and West African regions. By collecting these perspectives and sharing them with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD, International IDEA was able to support ongoing reflections on how to respond when political regimes take a more autocratic turn and the grip on the population tightens.

The workshop also offered opportunities to reflect on programming priorities. In a region where many international and European bilateral donors have withdrawn, the workshop highlighted the importance of staying engaged in the Sahel, despite the setbacks posed by recent coups and governance disruptions. Exchanges with civil society organizations underscored the

importance of rebuilding trust between citizens and the state and articulated the urgent need for a new, locally driven social contract between the state and citizens. **These inputs informed the commissioning of targeted research on the social contract in the Sahel region that explored potential entry points for inclusive governance interventions**, such as community-level security initiatives.

Overall, the initiative reaffirmed International IDEA's role as a constructive convenor and facilitator that can offer a useful platform for knowledge sharing, aligning perspectives, and supporting coordinated approaches to democracy assistance across the Sahel and West Africa. **Its value lies in producing research that forms the basis for dialogue that can be translated into concrete steps toward more evidence-based and context-aware engagement in settings marked by increasing fragility or tightening authoritarianism.**

3.1.10. Strengthening Collaboration with US-based Democracy Organizations to Promote and Protect Democracy

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

In 2025, International IDEA increased interaction with US-based democracy organizations and US universities. As evidenced by this outcome narrative these activities reinforced collaboration, expanded partnerships and supported the democracy support community during a turbulent period for international democracy assistance.

In 2025, International IDEA's Washington, DC office repositioned itself as the organization's bridge to the US democracy support community, following the closure of USAID and the restructuring of the State Department's Democracy, Rights and Labor Bureau. This shift focused on expanding collaboration with non-governmental stakeholders.

The first strategic pivot of these efforts addressed the funding shocks caused by US foreign aid cuts. Global Democracy Coalition resources were redirected to provide emergency support to local democracy organizations in the Global South, many of which had lost US funding. In parallel, International IDEA partnered with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to document the broader consequences of these cuts through the report *When Aid Fades: Impact and Pathways for the Global Democracy Ecosystem*. The report provides policymakers and practitioners with a clearer understanding of how aid reductions affect the global democracy ecosystem and help inform policy debates on the future of democracy assistance.

A second core pivot focused on strengthening collaboration with US universities as forums for democratic dialogue and learning. **These engagements introduced students and faculty to International IDEA's tools and knowledge products and encouraged their use in coursework, research, and policy analysis.**

The Institute also contributed with global comparative perspectives to US public debates, particularly on electoral integrity and postal voting. This work helped counter disinformation on mail voting and inform public discussion through evidence-based analysis, with International IDEA's data cited in major media outlets including [Newsweek](#), [CBS](#), [The Guardian](#), and the [BBC](#). Moreover, the Institute expanded collaboration with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Swiss Embassy in Washington, DC, by co-hosting an event on the prosperity and democracy nexus. The event featured a keynote by Nobel laureate Daron Acemoglu and provided an opportunity to present IDEA's latest research in this emerging field to OAS audiences and Member States.

Finally, **International IDEA expanded engagement with Canada through collaboration with IDRC, participation in the Canadian Vote Summit, and exchanges among electoral authorities.** Elections Canada, Ontario, and British Columbia participated in an international gathering of IDEA member state electoral commissions marking the Institute's 30th anniversary, strengthening cross-national learning.

Together, these activities reinforced collaboration, expanded partnerships and supported the democracy support community during a turbulent period for international democracy assistance.

3.1.10. Strengthening Partnerships in Latin America to Promote and Protect Democracy

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA's regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean has strengthened cooperation between international, regional, national, and local policymakers and policy influencers to promote and protect democracy in Latin America.

Democracies are going through a period of radical uncertainty, driven by profound global changes. According to the 2025 International IDEA GSoD report, between 2019 and 2024, 54 per cent of countries registered declined in at least one dimension of democratic quality, compared to 32 per cent that showed improvements. Far from being an isolated incident, this marks

The Institute also contributed with global comparative perspectives to US public debates, particularly on electoral integrity and postal voting. This work helped counter disinformation on mail voting and inform public discussion through evidence-based analysis.

the culmination of a nine-year trend of decline, affecting even established democracies.

Latin America and the Caribbean stakeholders are cognizant of this situation, having witnessed weakened institutions, setbacks in human rights, and a profound crisis of representation whose roots reach virtually all its countries. In some cases, the drift toward authoritarianism has been evident. In others, citizen frustration threatens to undermine trust in democracy, paving the way for rhetoric that promises “quick fixes” at the expense of rights and freedoms. The risk is subtle, but persistent. The setbacks of the present are rarely heralded by military coups or abrupt ruptures. They arrive gradually, maintaining the appearance of legality while emptying democratic institutions of their content.

Aware of this reality International IDEA has joined the high-level efforts of the Presidents of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Spain, and Uruguay, to support and promote democracy known as the Summit for Democracy, which held its second meeting in Santiago in July 2025. In this forum, International IDEA held a high-level dialogue with world-renowned experts to deepen the understanding of the challenges and opportunities that democracy is facing and to propose concrete actions to address the threats that continue to erode democracy in the region.

International IDEA also facilitated the continuation of this dialogue within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly, in September 2025. In parallel, International IDEA joined the Democracy Festival, which sought to establish an inter-institutional coalition comprised of civil society organizations and international organizations, to carry out a series of activities to promote reflection, critical thinking, and citizen engagement on issues such as inequality, digitalization, and electoral integrity.

The key outcome of these efforts was the identification of joint strategies and the articulation of resources and actions to advance, protect, and promote democracy in a context of significant pressures.

3.2. MEDIA USE EVIDENCE-BASED DATA AND RESEARCH TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT DEMOCRACY IN A DEEPER, MORE NUANCED, AND MORE CONCEPTUALLY RIGOROUS WAY, AND HOLD DECISION MAKERS TO ACCOUNT

3.2.1. Local and International Media Use the GSOD to Scrutinize Democratic Performance

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union and the Bosch Foundation.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative the GSoD report has been widely referenced by both local and international media across various countries. In 2025, its analysis and data have been used by media outlets such as El Pais, Deutsche Welle (DW), The Guardian, BBC, New York Times, and SwissInfo, to scrutinize democratic performance and inform citizens.

International IDEA's Global State of Democracy Indices and reports, as well as the Institute's Democracy Tracker seek to inform national, regional and international media reporting on democracy. The aim is to shape well-informed media reporting and support journalists to be able to hold policymakers to account on democratic governance. Outreach to media has increased since the launch of the 2021 GSoD report, and hundreds of media outlets have been targeted with information about the report and the GSoD Indices.

The GSoD Initiative's data and insights have made headlines, but more importantly framed debates and helped to inform public understanding of democratic systems. In many cases, reporting moved from brief mentions to dedicated articles and feature spreads, such as [El Pais](#), [DW](#) and [The Guardian](#)'s in-depth coverage. The Guardian described the report as "the most comprehensive of its kind" in terms of country and temporal coverage. As global indices face resource and political challenges, the GSoD Initiative is perhaps becoming increasingly relied on by media.

Local and international media have continued to draw on the GSoD report's analysis. Notably, it has been used to call attention to threats to press freedom, including by [SwissInfo](#), [BBC](#), [RTP Portugal](#), [InfoBae](#) and the Financial Times Europe Express newsletter. The New York Times [cited](#) the report in its coverage of the Athens Democracy Forum, reflecting on polarization and backsliding. Media outlets have also increasingly begun to reference the Democracy Tracker in coverage of developments around the world, including on [Sudan](#), and in [Canada](#), [Vanuatu](#) and [Armenia](#).

Local outlets worldwide are using the GSoD report's data to scrutinize their countries' democratic performance in contexts as diverse as [Tunisia](#), [Mozambique](#), [Cuba](#), [Sri Lanka](#), [Peru](#), [Nicaragua](#), [Romania](#), [Luxembourg](#), [Poland](#) and [Ireland](#), among others. They also drew on the report to highlight how informed citizens and an active civil society play a critical role in resilient societies and democratic culture. In Latvia, LV Portals, the civic information portal of the Latvian official gazette, [cited](#) the GSoD report 2025 alongside other international reports in an article summarizing a [recent survey](#) of the legal literacy of Latvian residents and the importance of public understanding of their rights. [SwissInfo](#) used the GSoD report findings to contextualize the role of civil society in the Swiss political system, specifically in shaping the proposed Swiss e-identification system.

3.2.2. Empowering Journalists to Defend Democracy in Central America

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

As illustrated by the actions of a journalist in El Salvador International IDEA's Allies for Democracy Training Programme in Central America is empowering journalists and social leaders to counter disinformation and strengthen democratic integrity amid increasing threats to press freedom.

Democracy in Central America is at a critical juncture. In El Salvador, the concentration of political power and restrictions on civil liberties reflect a worrying deterioration of the rule of law, with more than 40 journalists already living in exile. According to Reporters Without Borders, press freedom is at its lowest point in half a century, and International IDEA's 2025 Global State of Democracy Report warns of a historic setback in freedom of expression.

In this context, the Allies for Democracy Training Programme, developed by International IDEA within the framework of the Improving the Resilience of Democracy in Central America project, funded by Luxembourg, has become a valuable space for learning and action. The programme has strengthened the capacities of journalists and social leaders in areas such as democracy, transparency, ethical communication, citizen participation, prevention of gender-based digital violence, security, and the fight against disinformation.

Likewise, the Regional Meeting on Electoral Integrity, Disinformation, and Digital Gender-Based Political Violence, held in Cartagena, Colombia, with the co-sponsorship of International IDEA, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), and Luxembourg, promoted the exchange of experiences to further strengthen democratic integrity in the region.

In a context where disinformation spreads easily and truth loses ground; a Salvadoran journalist actions illustrates how the programme has influenced behaviours. **Inspired by the programme, he began publishing articles and interviews that address contemporary challenges of communication and democracy.** From YSUCA radio, headlines such as 'Disinformation Gains Ground Due to Lack of Control on Social Media' and 'Disinformation Cannot Be Used as a Political (Gender) Weapon' reflect his commitment to an informed citizenry and to ethical journalism that promotes critical thinking.

Chapter 4

OUTCOMES FROM THE CONSTITUTION-BUILDING PROCESSES WORK

The Institute's Constitution Building Programme was formally founded in 2006, and International IDEA's constitution building assistance work dates to the early 2000s. In this time, International IDEA has accumulated vast experience in constitution building assistance in a wide variety of contexts including in Bolivia, Chile, Myanmar, Nepal, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, The Gambia, Ukraine, the Philippines, Tuvalu, and Yemen. The Institute maintains 'ConstitutionNet' an online information portal which provides up-to-date news and analysis of constitution building around the world, as well as thousands of background materials. ConstitutionNet is the 'go-to' online resource center for the field of constitution-building.



Source: International IDEA, from 26 to 28 May 2025, the Myanmar Programme conducted a first in-person Advanced Myanmar Constitution Academy in Mae Sot, Thailand, following years of online-only formats since the coup in 2021.

Working with *advisers to constitution makers*, International IDEA aims to support *constitution makers* and *civil society* to design inclusive constitution-building processes and legitimate constitutions, and *constitution implementers* to operationalize constitutions under agreed frameworks. The Institute does this by providing non-prescriptive comparative knowledge and options and facilitating processes that help stakeholders to explore solutions that suit their contexts. The theory of change underpinning this approach is that:

- **If** advisers to constitution makers utilize International IDEA's knowledge and networks to expand coordination and collaboration to advance good practices in constitution-building processes, they can effectively inspire and support constitution makers and civil society to constructively engage in inclusive constitution-building processes, and constitution implementers to implement the constitution under agreed constitutional frameworks.
- **If** constitution makers increase their knowledge and skills on constitution-building and apply these competencies to design a well-informed inclusive constitution-making process.
- **And if** civil society increases knowledge and skills on constitution-building and applies these competencies to hold constitution makers accountable, inform the public on constitution-building processes, and promote public participation in the process.
- **Then** responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision making (SDG 16.7) is ensured in the constitution-building process. And then the likelihood of overall success and legitimacy of the constitutional reforms increases, assuming that the constitution-building process and reforms are considered legitimate by citizens.
- **And if** constitution implementers increase their knowledge and skills, and apply these competencies to interpret and operationalize constitutional provisions following ratification in a manner that respects fundamental democratic principles and human rights;
- **And if** they promote respect for the rule of law and constitutionalism under agreed constitutional frameworks.
- **Then** tensions and conflicts in society are likely to reduce.

This chapter reports results from the four boundary partners that International IDEA is working with on constitution-building processes. As these changes are complex, the report provides qualitative outcome narratives, which describe how International IDEA has influenced each of these boundary partner's relationships, behaviour and practices. These stories do not account for all of International IDEA's activities and results in constitution-building processes but are *representative examples* of what the Institute has done and achieved. Hence the narratives should be regarded as *qualitative indicators* of International IDEA's results.

4.1. ADVISERS TO CONSTITUTION MAKERS USE INTERNATIONAL IDEA'S KNOWLEDGE AND NETWORKS TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY ADVICE AND ADVANCE INCLUSIVE PRACTICES IN CONSTITUTION-BUILDING PROCESSES

4.1.1. Engaging on Justice in Transition and Peace Mediation After Conflict

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the Netherlands, the European Union, and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA is playing a leading role in strengthening cooperation between actors working on transitional justice, constitution building, and peace mediation. Backed by various international partners, the Institute has assisted regional and national actors by facilitating negotiations, offering expert advice, and organizing dialogues amidst evolving conflict and governance landscapes.

For the past six years, International IDEA has successfully led a consortium of organizations through the first two phases of the EU's Facility for Justice in Conflict and Transition, a mechanism that provides short-term support and expert advice in the fields of transitional justice, constitution building, and the restoration of justice for affected populations, based on requests from national stakeholders, EU delegations, or the European External Action Service. Going forward, the consortium will build on its experience of working in more than 20 countries, supporting the interlinkage between constitutional reform and transitional justice, as well as wider issues related to building the rule of law in contexts of transition.

International IDEA has increased its engagement with the field of peace mediation for more than ten years. It launched the Edinburgh Dialogues on Post-Conflict Constitution building in 2014. **These dialogues offer a platform for both the mediation support community and constitutional advisors to strengthen relationships and exchange lessons from current or recent conflict-to-peace transitions.**

Twelve years after the first Dialogue, however, the world order and conflict dynamics have significantly changed, and so has the linkage between state building and peace mediation as mechanisms to solve conflict. The fragmentation of conflict parties hampers the signing of political agreements, with peace mediation and constitutional reform focusing on incremental negotiations rather than final settlements.

International IDEA is playing a leading role in strengthening cooperation between actors working on transitional justice, constitution building, and peace mediation.

With these changing dynamics in mind, International IDEA supports African regional and subregional organizations leading mediation efforts, serving as a facilitator for regional negotiators on issues relating to constitutional governance. **The Institute serves as a neutral convener for professional networking and problem solving, bringing regional and subregional special envoys and other mediators together with national stakeholders.**

Lastly, IDEA Staff Members continue to support other multilateral organizations, including the United Nations, with knowledge products and capacity development in the field of peace mediation in particular countries. For example, in 2025 the Institute set the stage to support Bangladesh' political transition, which started with mass student protests in July 2024 and culminated in the ousting of the Prime Minister and the beginning of an interim government. **These efforts have included support to key actors during negotiations over political reforms and a series of public talks to raise public knowledge of the reforms being discussed, and possible consequences.**

Constitution makers apply increased knowledge and skills to make informed choices on constitutional design and processes

4.1.2. Strengthening Democratic Constitutional Transitions in Africa

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with earmarked core funding from the Netherlands.

Through meetings, retreats and technical assistance International IDEA has fostered collaboration between local and regional actors in the Sahel region. As evidenced by this outcome narrative these efforts have strengthened regional frameworks and supported constitutional transitions after unconstitutional changes of government Africa.

The Sahel region in northern Africa faces a complex array of challenges, including political instability, violent extremism, poverty, and climate change. Unconstitutional Changes of Government (UCGs) are both a consequence of these problems and further exacerbate the issues, undermining state legitimacy and weakening already-fragile institutions.

In response to UCGs the African Union and Regional Economic Communities have launched diplomatic interventions. International IDEA has provided them with support in these efforts, both by strengthening regional networks and by supporting complex constitutional transitions through on-the-ground dialogues in countries such as Burkina Faso, Gabon, The Gambia, Mali, Somalia, and Yemen.

One of the key activities has aimed to strengthen regional and continental frameworks and capacities by convening high-level retreats with Special Envoys and High Representatives, regional and international organizations, governments, CSOs and researchers. In interviews undertaken for an evaluation at a high-level retreat in Dakar organized by IDEA in September 2025, participants confirmed that these gatherings are very relevant for them, as they **enable them to network, share experiences, and learn from and build relationships with each other. Respondents mentioned that it supports them to 'undertake collective reflection', 'strengthen bonds and solidarity', and 'strengthen multilateralism'. This helps stakeholders to find common ground and contributes to shaping in-country interventions.**

Some respondents highlighted that personal contacts developed through various conferences and meetings were very valuable and noted that International IDEA's role in convening such events contributed to the perception that the Institute is a neutral and trustworthy actor. These are soft assets that have been useful because they have enabled dialogue between key decision-makers in crises. It has also made it possible for the Institute to share experiences and comparative examples in politically tense contexts.

4.1.3. Enhancing the Resilience of Ghana's democracy

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with earmarked core funding from the Netherlands.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has played a pivotal role in supporting Ghana's constitutional reform process by fostering collaboration among civil society organizations and facilitating constructive engagement with the Constitutional Reform Committee.

International IDEA has since early 2025 been supporting the Ghana Constitutional Reform Committee and civil society organizations in shaping the constitutional review process in the country. The support has allowed the Committee to draw on IDEA's comparative insights on the identification and management of risks and the design of the constitutional reform process. **It has also enabled several civil society organizations to develop a shared understanding and coordinated approach towards the constitution building process. Eventually, the Institute has also been involved in influencing substantive constitutional design issues.**

One of the key participants in the Biennial Conference of the African Network of Constitutional Lawyers held in December 2024, which was supported by the Institute, was appointed to chair the Committee. In view of his knowledge of International IDEA, he immediately reached out to seek support. The Institute has since organized workshops, provided options papers, and convened

a retreat to allow the Committee to systematically synthesize the public submissions and develop its report and recommendations.

These outcomes in Ghana reflect the importance of early and proactive engagement through support to regional networks and strategic deployment of core funding. They also demonstrate the criticality of collaboration between the Institute's team on constitution-building processes based in the Hague and colleagues in the Africa and West Asia Programme.

4.1.4. Advancing Governance Reforms in Somalia

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from Norway.

International IDEA has supported Somalia's constitutional transition and democratization efforts since 2023. Despite challenges this outcome narrative shows how these initiatives have helped build trust, promote crisis preparedness, and encouraged cross-country learning to advance governance reforms ahead of the 2026 elections.

The dialogues have convened members of parliament, former ministers, election officials, and influential leaders in Somalia and contributed to developing relationships and trust between them.

Following Puntland's withdrawal from the permanent constitutional making process in Somalia in 2023, International IDEA has convened a series of dialogues with Somalia-based actors. **The dialogues have convened members of parliament, former ministers, election officials, and influential leaders and contributed to developing relationships and trust between them.**

After a recent period of intensified efforts to defeat the al Shabab insurgency and complete the stalled constitution review process ahead of elections in May 2026, Somalia's Federal Government has gained control over relatively limited areas of the country. The AU has continued to be supportive, with the renewed mandate of the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission to Somalia (AUSSOM) providing an opportunity to engage with the security sector. Meanwhile, a broad political agreement is needed for the conduct of credible elections in 2026.

In August 2025, International IDEA facilitated a mission of the AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to interact with Somalia stakeholders and civil society actors, where key messages of support for inclusive dialogue were conveyed. In November 2025, a deep diving strategic dialogue was facilitated between AUSSOM, the Election Commission of Somalia, and the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs of the federal government of Somalia.

The dialogue aimed to assess risks of crisis escalation around elections, to frame early warning interventions, and to encourage preparedness for quick

responses. It benefited from analyzing Somalia juxtaposed with the post-conflict transition processes in Ethiopia and South Sudan, enabling cross-fertilizing ideas.

Somalia interlocutors in the foregoing dialogues expressed their appreciation of the independent support provided by International IDEA, **noting that the convenings strengthened cooperation between actors as they catered for room to ventilate new ideas. They testified that this enables them to reconsider and shift some of their negotiating positions upon returning to their own institutional settings.**

4.1.5. Advancing Constitutional Development in Post-Coup Myanmar

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from Luxembourg, Norway, and Finland.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has played a pivotal role in supporting Myanmar's pro-democracy actors in developing both union and state-level constitutional frameworks after the 2021 coup d'état. Despite ongoing challenges and the lack of a consolidated single text for a constitutional agreement, stakeholders' credit International IDEA's efforts with advancing their constitutional work and building trust.

Since the 2021 coup d'état International IDEA has supported Myanmar's interim government institutions in their efforts to design a new transitional constitutional framework for Myanmar. Significant efforts have been invested in supporting the National Unity Consultative Council's (NUCC) Transitional Constitutional Working Group (TCWG) and an expanding group of anti-junta forces—including 2020 elected Members of Parliament (MPs), ethnic armed groups, civil society organizations, and political parties—to forge consensus and define their visions of a future federal democratic union. These agreements have been captured in various transitional arrangements, including the Articles for Federal Transitional Arrangement (AFTA) that aim to provide the foundation for a transitional government until the military junta is defeated.

Activities have enabled participants to formulate chapters of a future transitional arrangement and forge consensus on key principles in this regard.

The dialogues increased conceptual clarity and understanding of comparative federal models and the need to tailor them to the unique context of Myanmar. They also clarified constitutional and governance implications and highlighted the importance of engaging in an inclusive consultative process to create ownership and consensus once a single zero draft of a union transitional arrangement exists. The meetings served to foster frank information exchange and relationship building, which has made it possible for the actors to work more effectively together.

Both technical and process-oriented support have helped the democratic movement in Myanmar to overcome several instances of political deadlock and make progress in working towards a draft constitutional arrangement.

During interviews for an evaluation of this work the various stakeholders expressed appreciation of these efforts and said that both technical and process-oriented support have helped them to overcome several instances of political deadlock and make progress in working towards a draft constitutional arrangement. Nevertheless, full political consensus to reach an agreement remains elusive, with several union proposals on the table, including from the National League for Democracy (NLD)—the political party formed and led by Aung San Suu Kyi that won a landslide victory in the 2020 general elections.

In addition, International IDEA has supported the development of emerging interim state/regional constitutions. **By the end of 2025 six of fourteen state/regional constitutional arrangements have been published and adopted.** Persons interviewed for the evaluation unanimously expressed appreciation for International IDEA's virtual training and technical advice on constitutional design choices. They noted that expert comments on their draft constitutions helped them improve their final versions.

Civil society increases knowledge and skills on constitution-building and applies these competencies to hold constitution makers accountable, inform the public on constitution-building processes, and promote public participation in the process

4.1.6. Empowering Local Communities and Indigenous Leaders with Constitutional Tools for Environmental Protection

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA's new Environmental Protection in Constitutions Assessment Tool (EPIC) has empowered Indigenous leaders across Asia to advocate for constitutional reform on environmental protection. Since its introduction, users have applied EPIC to raise awareness and support law reform, illustrating its value as a tool for advancing community rights and environmental sustainability.

Drawing on years of supporting inclusive constitution-building, International IDEA has developed practical constitutional assessment tools that demystify constitutional texts and equip civil society stakeholders to engage meaningfully in constitutional reform. In 2025, this suite of resources was expanded with the launch of the *Environmental Protection in Constitutions Assessment Tool (EPIC)*, piloted in partnership with the Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact.

A two-day regional workshop on the EPIC in Chiang Mai, Thailand, brought together Indigenous leaders and advocates from eight Asian countries. Through guided analysis, group work and comparative discussion, participants learned to identify constitutional gaps, pinpoint leverage points for advocacy, and develop concrete reform proposals on Indigenous Peoples' rights, land and natural resource protection, and environmental sustainability.

By the end of the workshop, participants had increased their knowledge and skills on these topics and reported increased confidence in engaging with constitutional issues as well as a stronger understanding of their own constitutions. Indigenous women and youth leaders played a particularly active role, expressing urgency for reforms to ensure that constitutional recognition of their rights leads to real protection. As Khesheli Chishi, Chairperson of the Network of Indigenous Women of Asia, reflected, *"During this workshop, I learned constitutional skills that I was not aware of before . . . everything was simplified in a manner I can understand. With these tools in hand, I am sure I can create more awareness among Indigenous women."*

Since the training, participants have begun applying EPIC to support law reform and raise community awareness on environmental protection. For example, youth participants shared EPIC with their peers at a subsequent regional meeting of Asian Indigenous youth leaders, and another participant plans to use EPIC to inform legal inputs into an upcoming environmental law reform process in the Philippines. These early uses show how EPIC equips communities to view constitutions not as distant texts, but as something they have a stake in, and a practical tool for advancing their rights and environmental protection, a critically urgent endeavour in the face of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Constitutional implementers promote respect for rule of law and constitutionalism under agreed constitutional frameworks

4.1.7. Strengthening Detained Suspects' Constitutional Rights in Nigeria

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has helped protect detainees' rights in Nigeria. The key to success has been to foster greater accountability and trust among lawyers, magistrates, and police by supporting regular monitoring of detention practices.

In November 2023 International IDEA signed an agreement with the EU to manage a second phase of the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme

(RoLAC II), in Nigeria. One of the areas where progress has been made is the provision of legal assistance to detainees in police custody

The Police Duty Solicitors Scheme (PDSS) was introduced in Nigeria in 2004 to provide legal assistance to detainees in police custody. Its main purpose is safeguarding detainees' rights and helping to prevent unlawful detention, coercion, or abuse, which have been recurrent challenges in Nigeria's legal system. Through RoLAC International IDEA has supported the implementation of the PDSS and a key outcome from this work is the establishment of a network of legal aid volunteers. Assisted with RoLAC funding, the volunteers visit police stations regularly to support clients who would be put in custody awaiting hearing.

Legal volunteers interviewed for an evaluation 2024 attested that the PDSS has contributed to a shift of practice at police stations. Representatives of the Legal Aid Council in Lagos interviewed for a follow-up evaluation in 2025 confirmed that they had made similar observations and said that the presence of lawyers "keep the police on their toes". This finding was supported by interviews with the police, where they stated that they have changed their practices as RoLAC has supported them in introducing Standard Operating Procedures for how to question and detain suspects.

This oversight helps to prevent abuse, ensure that detainees have access to legal representation, and promotes accountability within the criminal justice system in Nigeria.

While the PDSS is widely recognized as a valuable justice reform initiative, some challenges persist. Notably, there have been reports of resistance by some police officers. In response to such challenges, RoLAC has provided funding for magisterial detention cell visits. During such visits, magistrates inspect police cells and detention facilities to verify that individuals are not being unlawfully or excessively detained and monitor the conditions under which detainees are held. **This oversight helps to prevent abuse, ensure that detainees have access to legal representation, and promotes accountability within the criminal justice system.**

These joint efforts are directly responsive to Nigeria's justice sector coordination challenges, and several key informant interviews with magistrates, lawyers, the Legal Aid Council, and the police provide evidence that **the approach is fostering improved trust and collaboration between lawyers, magistrates, and the police, and thus leads to enhanced protection of detained suspects' rights.**

4.1.8. Enhancing Access to Justice for vulnerable Groups in Nigeria

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has enhanced access to justice for vulnerable groups in Nigeria by strengthening justice sector cooperation. Sustained collaboration has led to tangible outcomes such as increased child protection restraint orders and ongoing cross-sector partnerships in Lagos and Edo States.

In November 2023 International IDEA signed an agreement with the EU to manage a second phase of the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme (RoLAC II), in Nigeria. One of the areas where progress has been made is improving access to justice for vulnerable groups.

During RoLAC II International IDEA supports a wide range of justice sector actors to implement the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP) in a coordinated and effective way. **A key outcome is that relationships between and cooperation among the various actors working on access to justice have been strengthened through committees that International IDEA has helped to set up at federal level and in four states.**

Moreover, the Institute has supported setting up committees for protecting the rights of children and persons with disabilities at federal and state levels. Work is ongoing to strengthen the legal status of these committees by establishing them as permanent commissions. **The committees have enabled increased information sharing, joint learning, coordination, and cooperation between the stakeholders, which has resulted in joint planning and joint implementation of activities.** As there are overlaps between the organizations this has led to greater clarity regarding roles and responsibilities, which increases effectiveness in providing access to justice services for vulnerable groups.

For example, in both Lagos and Edo States, International IDEA's support for prevention of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and child protection coordination has led to sustained outcomes. **In Lagos, coordinated efforts led to judges securing 11 child protection restraint orders—a record for the state. Similarly, in Edo, stakeholders held two coordination meetings in 2025 without RoLAC funding,** supported by the CSO Brave Heart's Initiative. This ongoing collaboration has strengthened relationships and fostered cross-sector partnerships.

Behaviourally, there is greater adoption of survivor-centred approaches, and communities are increasingly reporting cases due to outreach activities such as legal clinics. **In terms of practice, key protocols have been institutionalized, including the establishment of dedicated SGBV desks in some police stations in Lagos, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and Edo.** In Edo, the state leadership took up a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) established and initially supported by RoLAC, and expanded the structures, staffing and services.

4.1.9. Increasing Use of Non-custodial Sentencing in Nigeria

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

By supporting non-custodial sentencing and the transformation of the Nigerian Correctional Services this outcome narrative provides evidence that International IDEA has contributed to increased acceptance of parole, restorative justice, and community service as alternatives to prison sentencing.

In November 2023 International IDEA signed an agreement with the EU to manage a second phase of the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme (RoLAC II), in Nigeria. One of the areas where progress has been made is to increase the use of non-custodial sentencing.

Through advocacy and technical support Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA), a CSO supported by International IDEA, has played a crucial role in facilitating the enactment of the Nigerian Correctional Services Act. In a transformative shift from a punitive to a correction-driven paradigm, this legislation changed the name of the “Nigeria Prison Service” to “Nigerian Correctional Services”, and in November 2024 the federal Attorney General announced that non-custodial sentencing will be the default option for Nigerian going forward. The objective of these reforms is to ensure that offenders can contribute productively to society, promote rehabilitation, and relieve pressure on correctional facilities.

International IDEA’s continuous work on supporting the reforms has included a series of sensitization events, social media campaigns, and training to create awareness about non-custodial measures, probation, and suspended sentences. After a slow start, progress is now underway. For example, **the consistent use of community service orders in Lagos, Adamawa, and Edo States, and the operationalization of parole boards in Abia State demonstrate institutional and attitudinal changes among magistrates, judges, and correctional officers.** Moreover, in Adamawa, and Lagos States, the increased use of non-custodial sentencing reflects growing acceptance of restorative justice principles among judicial officers. The data from Lagos State, where 811 offenders successfully completed community service orders, illustrates this assessment.

Although the overall utilization of non-custodial options remains low compared to custodial sentencing, these emerging practices and testimonies from stakeholders in the judicial sector indicates increasing judicial and institutional buy-in and a normalization of alternative sentencing as a credible component of Nigeria’s justice system. However, stakeholders also note that some lawyers demonstrate resistance to these reforms and there is also concern that the public will not accept the application of such measures, which indicates that further awareness raising is needed to avoid a backlash.

4.1.10. Strengthening the Constitutional Rights of Persons Living with Disabilities in Nigeria

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

Although the overall utilization of non-custodial options remains low compared to custodial sentencing, these emerging practices and testimonies from stakeholders in the judicial sector indicates increasing judicial and institutional buy-in and a normalization of alternative sentencing as a credible component of Nigeria’s justice system.

International IDEA has played a pivotal role in strengthening the rights of persons living with disabilities in Nigeria by supporting institutional reforms, advocacy, and physical and legal accessibility. As evidenced by this outcome narrative these efforts have contributed to justice sector agencies recognizing persons living with disabilities as rights holders entitled to equal access to justice and public services.

In November 2023 International IDEA signed an agreement with the EU to manage a second phase of the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme (RoLAC II), in Nigeria. One of the areas where progress has been made is to protect and enhance the constitutional rights of persons living with disabilities.

During the first phase of RoLAC, the programme assisted in setting up the National Commission of Persons with Disabilities. In RoLAC II International IDEA is providing continued support to the Commission's work on advocating for the constitutional rights of persons living with disabilities. In an evaluation of the project **interviewees reported that these efforts have contributed to a marked shift in perceptions in society, from viewing persons living with disabilities as dependents or charity cases to recognizing them as rights holders entitled to equal access to justice and public services.**

Edo State recorded a particularly significant breakthrough. For nearly two decades, disability rights organizations in the state persistently advocated for stronger institutional frameworks to safeguard the rights of persons living with disabilities. International IDEA has played a catalytic role in these efforts by supporting disability groups to intensify their advocacy, raise public awareness, and engage both communities and high-level government actors. **In collaboration with the Ministry Women Affairs and Social Development, the Institute supported the establishment of the Disability Rights Implementation Committee (DRIC), which laid the groundwork for coordinated action.**

Further advocacy efforts with the State Public Service Commission led to policy declarations mandating that all public buildings be fitted with ramp access and parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities, a significant step toward improving physical accessibility in public infrastructure. **Over and above, the most transformative result of this sustained advocacy was the passage of the Edo State Persons with Disability Law, 2022, which established the legal framework for the creation of the Edo State Commission for Persons with Disabilities.** As of 2025, the Disability Commission is fully operational with dedicated office premises, staffing, and a government budget. The next critical step is to ensure the provision of adequate funding to facilitate the operationalization of the Commission and enable it to deliver on its mandate.

Another key area of progress has been the increased availability of sign language interpretation for citizens with hearing disabilities, which International IDEA has supported through the development of a legal glossary

These efforts have contributed to a marked shift in perceptions in society, from viewing persons living with disabilities as dependents or charity cases to recognizing them as rights holders entitled to equal access to justice and public services.

for sign language and training of sign language interpreters. The Institute's support to the National Sign Language Interpreters Association of Nigeria has enabled broader outreach, with skills now cascaded to State Councils and prosecutors. Under RoLAC II work has begun to establish sign language interpreters as a recognized profession and sensitize actors in the justice system to ensure that people with hearing disabilities get access to sign language representation.

Chapter 5

OUTCOMES FROM ELECTORAL PROCESSES WORK

International IDEA's Electoral Processes programme has been integral to shaping the field of electoral administration for 30 years and has implemented large electoral assistance programmes in countries such as Gabon, Guyana, Moldova, Mozambique, Myanmar, Peru, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, and Ukraine.



Source: International IDEA, polling and count in rural area (Nator, near the West Bengal border, Bangladesh).

International IDEA maintains a total of six electoral databases, which are designed to provide users with easily accessible quantitative data on aspects

of global electoral processes, such as [Voter Turnout](#), [Electoral System Design](#), [ICTs in Elections](#), [Voting from Abroad](#), and the prevalence of [Special Voting Arrangements](#). Some of the Institute's most used digital tools include the Electoral Risk Management Tool which aims to build the user's capacity to understand, analyze, and mitigate electoral risks; and the Electoral Cycle Tool that covers the actions that should be taken by a wide array of actors throughout the electoral cycle. An online portal to electoral knowledge resources co-developed by International IDEA receives over two million visits per year (see www.aceproject.org), while the more specialized datasets receive 500,000 annual user visits.

By working through and together with a professional community of *electoral assistance practitioners*, International IDEA aims to inspire and support *electoral policymakers*, *electoral management bodies*, and *civil society* to adopt behaviours, relationships and practices that are conducive to credible and well-run electoral processes. The Institute does this by providing non-prescriptive comparative knowledge and options, and by facilitating processes that help stakeholders to explore and adopt solutions that suit their context. The theory of change underpinning this approach is that:

- **If** electoral assistance practitioners are informed by norms, good practices and research on electoral processes and digitalization and elections and have the skills to contextualize such knowledge to local conditions, they can effectively inspire and support policymakers, electoral management bodies and civil society to adopt behaviours, relationships and practices that enable credible and well-run electoral processes.
- **If** electoral policymakers increase knowledge and skills on electoral processes and digitalization and elections and apply these competencies to recognize and consider risks in elections and to create an enabling environment for inclusivity and accountability in electoral processes, this will create an environment for electoral management bodies and civil society to develop knowledge and skills on electoral processes.
- **If** electoral management bodies increase knowledge and skills on electoral processes and digitalization and elections and apply these competencies to effectively respond to complexities and risks in electoral processes, implement the electoral cycle approach, and embrace principles of impartiality, integrity, transparency, efficiency, and professionalism in their work.
- **And if** civil society increases knowledge and skills on electoral processes and digitalization and elections and applies these competencies to effectively demand accountability from policymakers and promote public participation in electoral processes.
- **Then** political institutions will become more effective, accountable and transparent (SDG 16.6) and all citizens would be more politically included

(SDG 10.2); and then the likelihood of credible and well-run electoral processes would be strengthened.

This chapter focuses on results in the four boundary partners that International IDEA is targeting in electoral processes. As these changes are complex, the report provides qualitative outcome narratives, in which a description is given of how International IDEA has influenced each boundary partner's relationships, behaviours and practices. These stories do not account for all of International IDEA's activities and results in the area of electoral processes but are *representative examples* of what the Institute does and achieves. Hence, the stories should be regarded as *qualitative indicators* of International IDEA's results.

5.1. ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE PRACTITIONERS PROVIDE SUPPORT TO ELECTORAL PROCESSES INFORMED BY GOOD PRACTICES AND RESEARCH

5.1.1. Building a Global Evidence Base on Electoral Processes

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA's six databases and two dashboards on elections underpin global media coverage, support electoral stakeholders, and contribute to the development of best practices in electoral management.

International IDEA maintains a total of six electoral databases, which are designed to provide users with easily accessible quantitative data on aspects of global electoral processes, such as [Voter Turnout](#), [Electoral System Design](#), [ICTs in Elections](#), [Voting from Abroad](#), and the prevalence of [Special Voting Arrangements \(SVA\)](#). These datasets make up an important part of the evidence base which is used to inform International IDEA's knowledge production on global elections. Several of the Institute's handbooks and guides, including those on electoral system design, electoral management design, and elections during emergencies and crises, have been built on the trusted data featured in the databases.

In 2025, data from International IDEA's Special Voting Arrangements Database informed national, regional and international media's reporting on democracy, as over 50 media outlets responded to Trump's claims about postal voting in the United States, including Reuters, the BBC, El Pais, The Guardian, The Independent, and ABC. IDEA's data on electoral processes has allowed the Institute to support different EMBs directly, including the Mongolian

International IDEA's six databases and two dashboards on elections underpin global media coverage, support electoral stakeholders, and contribute to the development of best practices in electoral management.

Constitutional Court on electoral system reform, the Dutch Kiesraad's referendum on electoral system design, the Canadian EMB's ongoing studies on out-of-country voting, and the potential further development of special voting arrangements for elections in Ukraine and Ireland.

The [Global Election Monitor \(GEM\)](#) and the [Election Emergency and Crisis Monitor \(EECM\)](#) dashboards, launched in 2024 and updated throughout 2025, facilitated the enhanced number and scope of country briefs covering elections that were held. The briefs draw upon the evidence base provided by the International IDEA databases, while also providing data on various aspects of election management and the impact of natural hazards or extreme weather phenomena on elections. GEM is modelled on the Protecting Elections Framework, highlighting examples of challenges to electoral integrity through a series of tags, as well as examples of good practice which will help inform the 2025 Review of Elections. Both Dashboards feature a Codebook to help guide users through the process by which briefs are categorized and structured.

In addition to the quantitative and qualitative knowledge production tied to the databases and the dashboards, case studies help to further refine the evidence base and provide *contextualised* examples of specific elections-related developments which are utilized by electoral assistance practitioners and EMBs. So far in 2025, eight case studies have been published, covering themes such as the impact of natural hazards on elections, financing the cost of elections, electoral integrity, and protecting elections. These studies often draw upon data available on our dashboards as well as in the databases.

5.2. ELECTORAL POLICYMAKERS CONSIDER RISKS AND DEVELOP PRACTICES THAT FOSTER INCLUSIVITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

5.2.1. Deepening Cooperation to Address Risks of Natural Hazards in Elections

In 2025, International IDEA has strengthened its relationships with disaster risk reduction and climate change professionals.

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

In 2025, International IDEA has strengthened its relationships with disaster risk reduction and climate change professionals. As evidenced by this outcome narrative increased collaboration with these actors has contributed to raising awareness of the impact of natural hazards on electoral processes among electoral stakeholders.

Since 2001, at least 88 supranational, national, subnational, and primary elections and referenda in 48 countries have been affected by natural hazards. In 2024 alone, at least 23 elections in 18 countries were impacted by extreme weather events such as tropical storms, floods, heatwaves, wildfires, and natural events such as volcanic eruptions. Many of these natural hazards were exacerbated by climate change ([International IDEA 2025](#)).

In 2025, the Electoral Processes team carried out research and advocacy efforts to increase awareness among stakeholders of the impact of natural hazards on electoral processes and what measures can be taken to build resilience throughout the electoral cycle. Significant research contributions included the update of the [Election Emergency and Crisis Monitor \(EECM\)](#), and the publication of a chapter on 'The Impact of Natural Hazards on 2024 Elections' as part of the International IDEA and Electoral Integrity Project [Review of the 2024 Super-Cycle Year of Elections](#) and a [Stockholm Series Public Lecture on Climate Change and Democracy](#).

In terms of advocacy, International IDEA continued its efforts of integrating this issue into the agenda of the disaster risk reduction (DRR) communities. A key outcome of this work in 2024 was strengthened interaction and cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), which has resulted in International IDEA publishing knowledge resources and a blog on UNDRR's news portal, PreventionWeb. **In 2025, International IDEA deepened cooperation with UNDRR** and was invited by to present research findings during the 8th session of the [Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) held in Geneva in June 2025.

After the event, International IDEA was given the opportunity to publish on UNDRR's 'DRR Voices' blog hosted on PreventionWeb. Beyond the blog, the International IDEA case study series is featured on their website, along with other election-related publications, signalling an emerging community of practice. Also in 2025, International IDEA was approached by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to review the UNDP publication [Elections for People and Planet](#), which was published in mid-2025 and prominently highlights International IDEA's groundbreaking work on natural hazards and electoral processes.

It appears that these attempts to raise awareness among electoral stakeholders are now beginning to bear fruit. An example of this is that a Climate Resilient Elections Act, which draws on material developed by International IDEA, has been proposed as new legislation, for decision by the Congress in the United States.

5.2.2. Advancing Global Norms for Electoral Assistance

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

The Stockholm Consensus on Electoral Integrity captured the shared challenges that EMBs face in the context of a transformed environment in which elections are held.

Through strategic international collaboration, International IDEA has contributed to develop the Stockholm Consensus on Electoral Integrity, which establishes principles that address the nuanced risks facing elections today. As evidenced by this outcome narrative these principles have inspired international donors to review their approaches to electoral assistance.

The Stockholm Conference on Electoral Integrity in June 2025 marked a pivotal milestone for assessing progress, refining approaches, and expanding engagement among EMBs, donors, and other electoral stakeholders. **The Stockholm Consensus on Electoral Integrity captured the shared challenges that EMBs face in the context of a transformed environment in which elections are held.** The Consensus calls for enhanced cooperation, both internationally and regionally, to strengthen mechanisms protecting EMB independence, promote professional conduct, and ensure effective electoral reform.

With Sweden and France as partners, in July 2025, International IDEA supported the OECD's Development Assistance Committee's Governance Network to raise the importance of updated electoral assistance principles, aligning with Sweden's prioritization of electoral integrity in its foreign policy and development agenda. Other donors actively supported the discussions at OECD, underlining the need for innovative and globally relevant guidelines.

In 2025 the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) published a technical note based on work provided by IDEA. This technical note was designed to provide Sida with guidance on gauging and implementing electoral assistance, putting particular emphasis on the role of EMBs, the information environment, and civil society, as well as the transformed risk environment in which elections take place. Based on the insights of International IDEA's report for the Swedish Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA), the note highlights the need for context-aware, flexible, and people-centred approaches in electoral support.

Moreover, the Institute convened electoral actors to promote updated guidelines on electoral processes in the form of the Model Commitments for Genuine and Credible Elections, as well as the Global Network for Securing Electoral Integrity (GNSEI) principles on EMB independence and electoral reform. The collapse of USAID meant that the GNSEI network lost its secretariat and funding base, which created an opportunity to realign the network, making it less dependent on a single donor, and distributing leadership among its members.

Working closely with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), Red de Observación e Integridad Electoral (RedOIE), the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO), the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD),

the core GNSEI members have revitalized the wider network to prepare for the next round of key global norms documents.

Each of these efforts is designed to be responsive to the complexities of modern elections, such as the rise of voting outside traditional polling stations, the role of new technologies, disinformation, and the risks of legitimising unsustainable electoral processes.

5.2.3. Advancing Global Political Finance Transparency

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

In December 2025, 192 State Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) adopted the first-ever UN resolution dedicated to political finance transparency at the 11th Conference of the States Parties (COSP) in Doha. For International IDEA, the adoption of this resolution marks the culmination of years of sustained advocacy, technical leadership, and coalition-building through its Money in Politics programme.

For more than a decade, International IDEA has worked to elevate political finance from a largely domestic regulatory concern to a global governance priority. Through research, comparative data, country-level technical assistance, and targeted advocacy, the Institute has consistently highlighted the links between money in politics, corruption risks, unequal political competition, and declining public trust in democratic institutions. The UNCAC resolution reflects this accumulated body of evidence and expertise, translating it into a globally endorsed policy framework.

The resolution's adoption is the result of persistent and strategic engagement across multiple international platforms. International IDEA and its partners worked over several years to build political momentum through fora such as the International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC), the UN General Assembly, OECD, and regional anti-corruption dialogues. These efforts helped establish political finance transparency as a core component of anti-corruption reform and as an enabler of SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions.

Partnership has been central to this success. International IDEA collaborated closely with Transparency International (TI) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), forming a coalition that combined technical depth, policy credibility, and advocacy reach. International IDEA and IFES provided substantive input to the resolution's language, ensuring it reflects good international practices on political finance regulation, disclosure, oversight, and enforcement. TI, in turn, mobilized its global network of national chapters to build diplomatic and civil society support, helping secure broad-

In December 2025, 192 State Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) adopted the first-ever UN resolution dedicated to political finance transparency at the 11th Conference of the States Parties (COSP) in Doha.

based endorsement from States Parties. Last but not least a number of International IDEA's Member States facilitated the process in UNCAC: The resolution was tabled by Norway, Mongolia, and Ghana—all members of International IDEA—as well as Albania.

The adoption of the resolution is not an endpoint, but a platform for action. It opens new opportunities for follow-up work to support implementation at the national level, including legal reforms, capacity development for oversight bodies, and peer learning among States Parties. As custodian of global political finance knowledge and a trusted technical partner, International IDEA is well positioned to support countries in translating this historic global commitment into concrete reforms that strengthen democratic integrity worldwide.

5.2.4. Learning from the Philippines' online overseas voting experience

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

International IDEA's report on the Philippines' 2025 online overseas voting initiative provides a structured, practice-based account of the country's first large-scale digital enfranchisement effort, offering valuable operational insights for electoral management bodies worldwide. While still early to gauge its broader impact, this outcome narrative provides evidence that the publication has sparked interest and laid the groundwork for informed comparative learning and future reforms in online voting.

Following the May 2025 Philippine midterm elections, International IDEA published *Online Overseas Voting: Key Insights from the 2025 Philippine Mid-term Elections*, a practice-oriented assessment of the Commission on Elections' (COMELEC) first nationwide deployment of an Online Voting and Counting System (OCVS) for overseas voters. The publication documented institutional choices, operational arrangements, legal interpretation and constraints encountered during implementation of the OVCS. It responded to growing demand among electoral management bodies, policymakers, and civil society organizations for concrete, real-world evidence on how online overseas voting can be effectively employed to facilitate electoral enfranchisement in complex mobility contexts.

Prior to the report, considerations on digital voting solutions to enfranchise citizens residing abroad relied on fragmented pilots or largely theoretical debates, with limited access to systematic comparative operational insight. This included insufficient learning from countries that had implemented, suspended or rolled back digital voting initiatives due to cybersecurity vulnerabilities, integrity concerns or risks of foreign interference. By

transparently documenting COMELEC's approach, risk mitigation measures and turnout outcomes, the report provided a credible reference point to inform evidence-based discussion among peer institutions.

COMELEC circulated the publication internally and shared with national stakeholders in the Philippines to support institutional reflection and inform public understanding of the 2025 experience. The report thus served as a reference both for organisational learning and institutional accountability.

Since its release in early December 2025, the report has been disseminated through International IDEA's global and regional networks as a learning case. **So far, International IDEA has received qualitative feedback and expressions of interest from electoral management bodies and practitioners during regional and global events.** They recognized the value of the Philippine case as a well-documented example of large-scale online overseas voting.

It is too early to assess use by boundary partners beyond initial dissemination and interest. However, as the report expands the evidence base on the governance, risk management and institutional dimensions of online overseas voting, it is strengthening conditions for more informed electoral reforms to enfranchise mobile populations over time.

5.2.5. Towards a Resilient Electoral Legal Regime in Sierra Leone

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

With support from international IDEA electoral policymakers in Sierra Leone are translating recommendations for electoral reforms into legislative changes. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this has resulted in 23 draft constitutional amendments and 27 legislative amendments across eight laws.

In response to the disputed 2023 elections in Sierra Leone and the governance boycott by the main opposition APC party, the international community facilitated an agreement for national unity among the aggrieved parties. This led to the inauguration of the Cross-Party Committee on Electoral Systems and Management Bodies Review (Tripartite Committee) in November 2023, to review the conduct of the 2023 elections.

The Committee submitted a report with over 80 recommendations to the President on 1st July 2024. Although there have been delays in implementing these recommendations, the government has set up a multistakeholder Steering Committee and Coordinating Secretariat to oversee the process and has held consultations on the electoral system for the 2028 cycle.

With support from international IDEA electoral policymakers in Sierra Leone are translating recommendations for electoral reforms into legislative changes.

International IDEA has been instrumental to these reforms. By deploying an international legal expert to the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, the Institute delivered foundational outputs including a cabinet paper, consolidated constitutional and legislative drafts, and advisory notes on institutional strengthening. **The Institute's technical support enabled the translation of the Tripartite Committee's recommendations into practical reforms, such as 23 draft constitutional amendments and 27 legislative amendments across eight laws.**

International IDEA also enhanced capacity within the Bill Drafting Department of the Attorney General's office. The Institute deployed five support staff—three lawyers and two interns—and established a system for developing capacities. The two interns played substantive roles in legal research, drafting opinions, and providing feedback from committee consultations.

The support extended to joint capacity and knowledge sharing between the Attorney General's Bill Drafting Unit and the Office of the Law Clerk in Parliament. **The Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Minister Alpha Sesay, expressed satisfaction at the strengthened national capacity for bill drafting and the newly established working relationship with Parliament. He noted the intention to sustain this relationship and retain the short-term staff and interns as permanent government employees.**

5.3. ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES RESPOND TO COMPLEXITIES AND RISKS IN ELECTORAL PROCESSES BY EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTING THE ELECTORAL CYCLE APPROACH

5.3.1. Strengthening Electoral Integrity with an Integrated Framework for Protecting Elections

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding by Canada.

International IDEA's Integrated Framework for Protecting Elections enhances electoral integrity by equipping electoral stakeholders with structured and collaborative resources for risk management, resilience-building, and crisis management. As evidenced by this outcome narrative pilots in Panama, Mauritius, and Finland have resulted in increased stakeholder capacity and institutional integration of the Framework's tools.

In 2025, International IDEA launched an [Integrated Framework for Protecting Elections](#). It combines a range of resources that can be utilized by EMBs and other electoral stakeholders to strengthen their capacity to safeguard electoral

International IDEA's Integrated Framework for Protecting Elections enhances electoral integrity by equipping electoral stakeholders with structured and collaborative resources for risk management, resilience-building, and crisis management.

integrity in increasingly complex environments. The Framework is particularly useful for EMBs that aim to transition from informal, ad hoc, and siloed practices to more structured, institutionalized, collaborative approaches to protecting elections. At its core are strengthened [risk management](#), [resilience-building](#), [crisis management](#), and [gender sensitivity](#).

The Framework has been gradually developed with core funding over the years, but with restricted funding from Canada, International IDEA was able to pilot it in several countries. These exercises had two outcomes: For International IDEA, it was an opportunity to refine the Framework, whereas EMBs and other national stakeholders involved in the pilots benefited from improved knowledge and capacity to protect electoral integrity.

In Panama, the Electoral Prosecutor's Office and civil society organizations have begun integrating the Framework's resources and tools—such as [Electoral Risk Heat Maps](#)—into training programmes. Furthermore, the findings from the pilot phase informed planning processes, including the [General Election Plan \(PLAGEL\)](#), while participants reported increased confidence in discussing the matter. In Mauritius, several organizations have expressed their intention to formally integrate risk management into their institutional processes. Following the pilot in Finland, the Ministry of Justice continued engagement with local and regional electoral stakeholders on activities initiated in the project. Moreover, the Ministry commissioned expert-led scenario simulations based on the model introduced by the Framework.

These outcomes demonstrate how the Framework's integrated and gender-sensitive approach strengthens institutional and systemic resilience. By fostering collaboration across electoral stakeholders and encouraging adaptive, inclusive, and locally owned responses, the Protecting Elections Project thus advanced its overarching goal of supporting EMBs in safeguarding electoral integrity and building more resilient democracies.

5.3.2. Advancing Electoral Integrity by Building Global Consensus

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

The Canberra to Stockholm Series, organized by International IDEA and partners, facilitated a cycle of events to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices among electoral management bodies worldwide. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the findings from these discussions culminated in the [Stockholm Consensus on Electoral Integrity](#), outlining key recommendations to enhance cooperation and safeguard electoral independence.

Building on the 2023 Canberra Series on Electoral Integrity—a series of virtual seminars in partnership with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)—International IDEA partnered with the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and EMB (Valmyndigheten) to continue the learning exchanges between EMBs.

The [first webinar](#) in the ‘Canberra to Stockholm Series’ explored the challenges of reforming electoral processes and ensuring the franchise to all eligible voters. It included speakers from the Netherlands, Fiji and Spain, with panelists and audience members highlighting country specific examples of reform related challenges to electoral integrity. The [second webinar](#) in the series featured panelists from Cabo Verde, and the US states Colorado and North Carolina, and similarly focused on reforms to electoral processes aimed at adapting to new challenges in the election management landscape.

These two online webinars fed into the agenda of the Stockholm Conference on Electoral Integrity. **The conference brought together representatives of more than 40 EMBs, researchers, international development partners, and other stakeholders to exchange views and experiences on pressing issues facing the global electoral community.** The sessions focused on subjects such as designing and enforcing electoral reforms and regulations and mechanisms to safeguard EMBs and their workforce.

Findings of the webinars and the conference informed the Stockholm Consensus on Electoral Integrity, highlighting achievements in upholding electoral integrity as well as other emerging electoral challenges. The Consensus charts a four-point agenda for protecting electoral integrity, calling on national and international actors to enhance cooperation, strengthen mechanisms to protect EMB independence, promote respectful electoral conduct, and ensure timely and effective democratic electoral reform.

5.3.3. Preparing Out-of-Country voting for Ukrainian Refugees

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with earmarked core funding from Sweden, Finland, and France, and restricted funding from the EU.

Efforts led by Ukraine’s Central Election Commission and supported by International IDEA have significantly advanced preparations for out-of-country voting.

Efforts led by Ukraine’s Central Election Commission and supported by International IDEA have significantly advanced preparations for out-of-country voting. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this ensures that displaced Ukrainians across Europe can participate in upcoming national elections.

With millions of Ukrainians displaced across Europe, ensuring their right to vote in the next national elections is central to Ukraine’s democratic recovery and social cohesion. In response to this challenge, International

IDEA has supported Ukraine's Central Election Commission to strengthen its preparedness for large-scale out-of-country voting (OCV).

A core pillar of this effort was a series of eight high-level consultative visits to Poland, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Ireland—countries currently hosting up to 1.5 million Ukrainian voters. The primary objective of these missions was to consult directly with host-country authorities on how out-of-country voting for Ukraine could be practically, legally, and securely arranged in these eight countries. Discussions focused on voting location arrangements, security and logistics, legal frameworks, data protection, coordination with local administrations, and the use of facilities beyond diplomatic premises.

These consultations strengthened institutional trust, clarified host-country requirements, and helped shape realistic operational models for administering Ukrainian elections abroad at scale. They also opened avenues for technical cooperation and future administrative agreements to support Ukraine's post-war elections.

The process culminated in a high-level dialogue at the European Parliament on democratic participation abroad, consolidating lessons learned and setting the direction for continued international coordination. As a result, **Ukraine is now significantly better positioned to ensure that displacement does not result in democratic exclusion, making out-of-country voting a viable and integral component of post-war elections.**

5.3.4. Strengthening Institutional Preparedness for Post-War Elections in Ukraine

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with earmarked core funding from Sweden, Finland and France, and restricted funding from Norway.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has prepared Ukraine's Central Election Commission for post-war elections by strengthening its practices for electoral risk management, communication, and ICT and cybersecurity.

Preparing for post-war elections in Ukraine requires more than legal readiness—it demands institutional resilience in the face of security threats, cyber risks, and persistent information warfare. In 2025, International IDEA supported Ukraine's Central Election Commission (CEC) to strengthen its preparedness in three critical areas, related to these challenges: electoral risk management, communication, and ICT and cybersecurity.

Support focused on laying the foundations for a more structured approach to electoral risk management, enabling the CEC to better identify and assess operational, security, and disinformation-related risks in the electoral cycle. Initial steps were also taken to explore the responsible use of AI-supported tools for monitoring information threats and improving early warning capacities, particularly in relation to foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI). At the same time, targeted assistance addressed vulnerabilities in ICT and cybersecurity through technical assessments, and upgrade of ICT systems.

While significant gaps remain and full readiness will require sustained investment, these efforts mark important early steps toward building a more resilient electoral administration capable of operating under post-war conditions.

5.4. CIVIL SOCIETY PROMOTES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ELECTORAL PROCESSES AND DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY FROM POLICYMAKERS AND ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES

5.4.1. Advocating for Political Inclusion of Marginalized Groups in Nepal

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

A consortium of CSOs in Nepal, supported by International IDEA, established a civil society platform to advocate for an electoral system that better enables women, Dalits, and youth to assume political roles. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the platform has strengthened Nepalese CSOs to effectively advocate for all citizens political rights.

Nepal's 2015 constitution sought to address long-standing discrimination and exclusion based on class, caste, religion, language, and gender. While it introduced provisions for proportional political representation of women and historically disadvantaged communities such as Dalits, gaps in the legal framework allowed political parties to undermine these principles, limiting the participation of women and marginalized candidates.

Against this backdrop, International IDEA has worked on an EU-funded project aimed at strengthening the capacity of local CSOs to advocate for an inclusive electoral system. The Institute has equipped grassroots organizations with evidence-based knowledge and a collective understanding of gender and inclusion, enabling them to challenge discriminatory practices and advocate

for reforms in electoral laws. The project's strategies have included building CSO capacity for electoral reform advocacy, generating and using evidence for policy influence, engaging diverse stakeholders, producing and disseminating knowledge products, and institutionalizing Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) principles.

In its inception phase, International IDEA selected three partner CSOs through a competitive process and formed a consortium to work collectively on electoral reform, which functions as the platform to work on women, Dalit and youth rights. These CSOs received mentoring and financial support through sub-grants and developed innovative tools for political engagement. **The consortium subsequently facilitated the creation of a broader CSO platform, enabling more organizations to collaborate on shared advocacy goals. By 2025, this platform had strengthened cooperation among CSOs, with a smaller action group initiating joint advocacy plans.**

The mentoring approach embedded within CSOs proved effective for long-term capacity development and organizational support. **By institutionalizing inclusive practices and promoting sustainability, the project ensured that CSOs were equipped to continue electoral reform advocacy beyond its duration.**

5.4.2. From Mistrust to Collaboration in Guyana's Electoral Process

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union.

In preparation for Guyana's 2025 general and regional elections, this outcome narrative shows how International IDEA has fostered unprecedented collaboration between the electoral management body, civil society organizations, and media to rebuild public confidence, combat misinformation, and increase voter awareness.

In early 2025, as Guyana prepared for its general and regional elections, confidence in electoral information remained fragile. Past electoral cycles had been marked by misinformation, mutual distrust, and public fatigue with polarized narratives. Against this backdrop, International IDEA's EU-funded project, Supporting Civic Capacities and Engagement for Strengthening Electoral Integrity and Democracy in Guyana, catalysed a significant shift in how the electoral management body, civil society organizations, and media actors engaged with voters.

Working closely with the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM), and CSOs, International IDEA introduced collaborative approaches to promote voters' information about the voting procedure. **For the first time, voter-information**

materials were co-designed and co-branded and shared between GECOM and civic partners, ensuring comprehensive dissemination across ten regions.

The partnership process itself became an exercise in confidence-building. Civil-society leaders were thankful to get access to official information, while GECOM officials acknowledged that structured engagement with non-partisan organizations helped defuse misconceptions about bias. The joint design of materials also improved inclusion: simplified language and visual cues strengthened accessibility for voters with disabilities and with low literacy.

Perhaps the most striking behavioural change occurred among media professionals. Through IDEA-facilitated journalist workshops, editors and reporters from competing outlets learned about standards for verification and ethical reporting. **Participants cited International IDEA's training as pivotal in bolstering newsroom practices to become more proactive in safeguarding the integrity of information.**

The impact extended beyond information integrity as cooperative relationships forged between GECOM, CSOs, and media actors created a new informal network for ongoing democratic dialogue. Election observers later noted that the 2025 campaign period was among the most peaceful and transparent in two decades, with no incidents of politically motivated violence reported.

5.4.3. Strengthening Early Warning and Response to Disinformation and Electoral violence in Gabon

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union, the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Ahead of Gabon's 2025 transitional elections, International IDEA partnered with local civil society organizations to establish monitoring units addressing electoral violence and online disinformation. As evidenced by this outcome narrative these initiatives enabled more active civil society participation, strengthened collaboration with authorities, and improved the overall integrity of the electoral process.

Prior to the adoption of the new Constitution in 2024 and the new electoral law adopted in January 2025, Gabonese civil society played a limited and informal role in electoral processes. However, the new legal framework guaranteed the rights of civil society and for the first time, national citizen observer groups were able to deploy during elections. Building on these legal reforms International IDEA partnered with three national CSOs to establish two dedicated electoral monitoring units: one focused on election-related violence

and the other on online disinformation during the presidential and local elections.

Prior to the opening of the presidential campaign in April, the Electoral Violence Monitoring Unit conducted a participatory risk-mapping exercise to identify potential geographic hotspots, drivers and actors of electoral violence. **The process brought together CSOs, journalists, representatives of the Ministry of the Interior and academics, strengthening information-sharing and trust among stakeholders.** The Disinformation Monitoring Unit carried out a similar mapping exercise to identify platforms and actors involved in the spread of false or misleading electoral content. The unit also developed customized monitoring tools to systematically capture, verify and analyze online content.

Both units produced weekly analytical reports which were shared with national authorities, electoral stakeholders and international partners, improving situational awareness and enabling rapid response to emerging risks. **Gabon's electoral management bodies appreciated the production of verified data on electoral violence and disinformation, and this contributed to building trust between civil society and the national authorities.**

5.4.4. Defying Political Pressure and Disinformation Campaigns in Paraguay

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO).

With support from International IDEA the Paraguayan Network for Electoral Integrity (REDPAR) has defied political pressure and disinformation campaigns. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the key to success has been to improve cooperation among domestic actors to protect electoral processes from mis- and disinformation.

In Paraguay, the Tribunal Superior de Justicia Electoral (TSJE), was compelled to scale back its cooperation with International IDEA due to rising political pressures and disinformation campaigns. These campaigns portrayed TSJE's initiatives as foreign-driven or censorial, resulting in reputational risk and eventual withdrawal from a network of electoral stakeholders, which receives support from by International IDEA. Despite this setback, the Paraguayan Network for Electoral Integrity (REDPAR), remained committed to advancing electoral transparency and information integrity.

Even as uncertainty persists, attacks against CSOs and international cooperation actors decreased in 2025, creating space for REDPAR to re-engage stakeholders and expand its activities. Activities concentrated on reactivating REDPAR following a period of political tension that strained relations between

Gabon's electoral management bodies appreciated the production of verified data on electoral violence and disinformation, and this contributed to building trust between civil society and the national authorities.

civil society and electoral authorities. **These efforts culminated in a series of seminars in cooperation with the Universidad Católica “Nuestra Señora de la Asunción”, on critical themes including democratic backsliding in the region, the role of women and youth in electoral processes, and the growing scrutiny of electoral technologies.** This partnership has added significant academic legitimacy to REDPAR’s work and is expected to serve as a platform for future collaboration.

Beyond public engagement, REDPAR has focused on internal consolidation and strategic planning. Meetings are now frequent, featuring technical discussions and planning sessions. **Key CSOs have taken on a more prominent coordination role, organizing meetings and advancing ideas for future activities. Discussions are underway to expand the network.**

Looking ahead, strategic priorities include expanding the network’s membership base, launching media literacy campaigns to counter mis/disinformation, strengthening disinformation monitoring systems, and continuing advocacy for electoral reforms, especially regarding digital campaigning and gender-based political violence.

Chapter 6

OUTCOMES FROM POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION WORK

International IDEA's Political Participation and Representation Programme has over the years accumulated experience on civil society and citizen political engagement, women's, youth's and marginalized groups' political participation and representation, political finance, and political party strengthening. The Institute has worked with partners on these issues in varying contexts such as Albania, Bolivia, Botswana, Fiji, Kenya, Kosovo, Lesotho, Nepal, Mongolia, Myanmar, The Gambia, Tunisia, Ukraine, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Sierra Leone, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.



Source: International IDEA, Central Africa Dialogue on Transforming Gender Social Norms, Addis Ababa, 12–13 November 2025.

The Institute is also continuously scaling up its knowledge base and experience in parliamentary strengthening through its EU funded global project on parliamentary strengthening—INTER PARES—which is based on demand-driven, peer-to-peer partnerships between parliaments and has cooperated with over 40 parliaments worldwide. Currently the Institute implements large-scale projects with parliaments in Bhutan, Chile, Libya, Myanmar, and The Gambia.

International IDEA maintains a number of influential global databases on political participation, including the Direct Democracy Database which provides global comparative data about how the mechanisms of direct democracy are organized in 197 countries across the globe; the Political Finance Database which covers 180 countries and remains the leading and only database and resource on political finance regulatory frameworks world-wide; and the Gender Quotas database which is a key global resource on gender quotas and their impact on the participation and representation of women and men in parliaments. It also maintains the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics), which is a leading global platform which fosters networking, knowledge exchange, capacity building, and advocacy for gender equality in politics.

By cooperating with *political parties, parliaments, public administration, oversight agencies, and civil society organizations* as an interconnected ecosystem, where shifts in one actor affect the others, International IDEA aims to inspire and support these actors to adopt relationships, behaviours, and practices that are conducive to political participation and representation. The Institute does this by providing non-prescriptive comparative knowledge and options, and by facilitating processes that help stakeholders to explore and adopt solutions that suit their contexts. The theory of change underpinning the approach is that:

- **If** political parties increase their knowledge and skills and apply these competencies to mobilize all citizens effectively without discrimination, aggregate their interests into political programmes, recruit political leaders to contest elections, and organize governments and parliaments effectively, the party system becomes more inclusive, responsive and accountable to all citizens.
- **If** parliaments increase their knowledge and skills, and apply these competencies to exercise their legislative, oversight and representation functions effectively, they become more effective, accountable and transparent as well as more responsive, inclusive and participatory.
- **If** public administration increases their knowledge and skills and apply these competencies to become more responsive to constituents, use increased knowledge to make evidence-based policy decisions, and explain their decision-making processes to their constituents, government will become more effective, accountable and transparent as well as more responsive, inclusive and participatory.

- **If** oversight agencies increase their knowledge and skills, and apply these competencies to monitor, prevent and mitigate threats to democracy and threats posed by both illegal and illicit money in politics, by carrying out investigations, applying sanctions when needed and proposing legal reforms to hold political decision makers to account, political institutions become more effective, accountable and transparent.
- **And if** civil society organizations increase their knowledge and skills and apply these competencies to engage with representative institutions in a democratic and effective way and to hold political decision makers to account, political institutions become more effective, accountable and transparent, and public policy and practice become more responsive to the needs of all citizens.
- **Then** political institutions will be effective, accountable and transparent (SDG 16.6); decision making by legislators and government will be responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative (SDG 16.7); all citizens will be politically included, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status (SDG 10.2); and women will be politically included and have equal opportunities for political leadership (SDG 5.5). In such a political ecosystem, the legitimacy of the political institutions would be strengthened, which would reduce tensions and conflicts in society.

This chapter focuses on reporting results among the five boundary partners that International IDEA is targeting in political participation and representation. As these changes are complex, the chapter presents qualitative outcome narratives, where a description is provided of how International IDEA has influenced each of these boundary partners' relationships, behaviours and practices. These narratives do not account for all International IDEA's activities and results in the area of political participation and representation but are representative examples of what the Institute does and achieves. Hence, the stories should be regarded as qualitative indicators of International IDEA's results.

6.1. POLITICAL PARTIES CONTRIBUTE TO A PARTY SYSTEM THAT IS INCLUSIVE, RESPONSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE TO ALL CITIZENS

6.1.1. Promoting Peaceful Electoral Campaigning in Gabon

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union, the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Following Gabon's transitional period after the 2023 election annulment, International IDEA inspired presidential candidates to sign the country's first voluntary Code of Conduct to support credible and peaceful elections.

Following Gabon's transitional period after the 2023 election annulment, International IDEA inspired presidential candidates to sign the country's first voluntary Code of Conduct to support credible and peaceful elections. Despite initial mistrust, this outcome narrative provides evidence that the initiative helped foster a more peaceful electoral environment and inspired similar practices ahead of subsequent elections.

Following the overthrow of former President Ali Bongo Ondimba and the annulment of the 2023 elections, Gabon entered a transitional period aimed at restoring public institutions and returning to constitutional order. As preparations for elections gathered pace, national stakeholders expressed concerns about political polarization, inflammatory rhetoric and the risk of election-related tensions, while also identifying the need to strengthen the transparency and credibility of electoral processes. In this context, national authorities requested support from International IDEA to strengthen electoral integrity and build the capacity of key electoral actors.

To promote responsible campaigning and conflict prevention, International IDEA deployed a High-Level Mission to Libreville to advocate for the adoption of a voluntary Code of Conduct for Presidential candidates. While an established practice elsewhere, codes of conduct had never been implemented in the context of Gabonese elections. The Mission deployed by International IDEA engaged political parties, civil society organizations, traditional and religious leaders, and state institutions to facilitate dialogue around shared standards of ethical behaviour before, during and after the elections.

Despite high levels of mistrust among political actors, they reached consensus and on 27 March 2025 a public ceremony was held in Libreville during which confirmed presidential candidates signed Gabon's first voluntary Code of Conduct for a transitional election. The process was overseen by seven nationally recognized moral guarantors drawn from religious and traditional leadership, mandated to promote compliance and facilitate dialogue in the event of disputes related to the Code.

Although two of the eight candidates were unwilling to sign, national and international observers noted that the overall electoral environment was peaceful, and the 12 April 2025 the presidential election was conducted without any major security incidents. **Political and civil-society stakeholders highlighted the Code of Conduct as an important contribution to moderating campaign rhetoric and reinforcing expectations of peaceful behaviour among candidates and supporters.** Ahead of legislative and local elections held in September and October 2025, and inspired by the Code of Conduct for presidential elections, Gabonese institutions such as the media regulator introduced similar initiatives for candidates.

6.1.2. Claiming Young Women's Space in Politics

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative young women participating in International IDEA's Empowerment Academies have gained skills, solidarity, and confidence to claim their rights and combat gender-based challenges in politics. Participants testify that the Academies have become an important collaborative space for young women politicians, activists, and community leaders.

Young Women's Empowerment Academies convened by International IDEA under the EU funded Women and Youth Democratic Engagement (WYDE) Women's Leadership Initiative has supported young women to address gender inequalities in politics. **Participants from South Africa, Zambia, and Pakistan have specifically highlighted how they used the capacity gained from the academies to claim their rights to participate and be represented in politics, leadership and decision making.**

As an example, Ugyen Yangzom, one of the participants, gave testimony to this in her feedback to the initiative: 'The Academy has been a transformative experience for me. It gave me the opportunity to deeply reflect on gender social norms, leadership, and inclusive governance. Meeting young women leaders from diverse contexts inspired me to think beyond my own limitations and to see the collective power of women's voices.'

Participants also testify that the academies have become a platform for solidarity and a safe collaborative space for young women politicians, activists, and community leaders. As an illustration of this Juhi Thomas Jelkie, who has participated in one of the Academies, in an evaluation stated that one of her key takeaways was that interacting with women from communities allowed her to access the right people and strengthen her own political campaign.

Moreover, the networks built has empowered young women to stand up when they face harassment and bullying from male colleagues. For example, when Precious Banda, the Young Women of Africa President, faced cyberbullying by a male politician within her party, she had the boldness to act. Her action enabled her to obtain a cease-and-desist letter from a lawyer resulting in the perpetrator deleting all his posts, including 13 status updates and three live videos insulting Precious. She is now advocating that the perpetrator should be disqualified for running as a political candidate.

Participants also testify that the academies have become a platform for solidarity and a safe collaborative space for young women politicians, activists, and community leaders.

6.1.3. Empowering Women Mayors in Peru

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative women mayors in Peru, supported by International IDEA, have created an active support network, improved public communication, expanded social services, and overcome barriers to women's representation in local government.

In Peru, women hold only 8 per cent of mayoral positions. Underrepresentation, political violence, and a lack of support networks limit their capacity for public action. Territorial dispersion and the absence of space for exchange deepen discrimination.

As part of the project Consolidating Peruvian Democracy, funded by the European Union, International IDEA launched a comprehensive empowerment model for women mayors, which integrates technical training, political mentoring, and innovation spaces. In 2024, the mentoring programme began with 13 women mayors, who reported improvements in their public communication, accountability, and team management skills. Most of them implemented regular public hearings and achieved budget execution rates exceeding 90 per cent. In 2025, the programme expanded to 33 female mayors and incorporated sessions tailored to each mayor's individual needs.

These advances have translated into tangible improvements for citizens. The mayors have expanded access to social services, secured funding for educational infrastructure, and created or strengthened community health and protection services. Furthermore, they have institutionalized citizen advisory councils, neighbourhood hearings and other mechanisms for political participation.

The programme reduced institutional isolation thanks to an active support network among mayors and mentors with political and management experience. These spaces facilitate direct dialogue with members of Congress, former ministers and specialists, and reduces barriers to women's continued tenure in representative positions, such as political harassment.

6.2. PARLIAMENTS EXERCISE THEIR LEGISLATIVE, OVERSIGHT AND REPRESENTATION FUNCTIONS TO BECOME TRANSPARENT, INCLUSIVE, RESPONSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE TO ALL CITIZENS

6.2.1. Turning Promises on Gender Equality into Progress

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

By providing a practical framework for gender-sensitive scrutiny, International IDEA, through the EU-funded Inter Pares programme, contributed to embedding gender-sensitive scrutiny into the Scottish Parliament's systems and culture. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this institutional shift supports Members of the Scottish Parliament to push for progress on gender equality, by shaping laws and policies that deliver more gender-equal outcomes.

Gender equality in politics is not only about who sits in parliament. It's also about the laws parliaments make, the evidence they consider, and how they oversee government actions and spending. For example, gender equality laws and policies are often underfunded and unimplemented, and the gender impact of decisions is not explored. This contributes to persistent inequalities, despite clear evidence that more gender-equal societies are [more prosperous](#), [peaceful](#), and have [higher levels of human development](#).

To help address this gap between political commitment and practical action, International IDEA developed a [five-step model for gender-sensitive oversight and law-making](#) in 2022. The framework helps parliaments systematically examine how laws, budgets, and policies affect women and men differently. It was informed by practices in Ireland and Italy, and refined through testing with partner parliaments in Malaysia, Chile, and Bhutan to ensure adaptability across contexts.

A major outcome of these efforts came in 2023, after the Scottish Parliament's [gender-sensitive parliament audit](#) found that committees were inconsistent in applying a gender perspective to their work. Without external prompting, the **Conveners' Group (committee of chairs) chose to adopt International IDEA's framework as the foundation for their new principles and training on gender-sensitive scrutiny**. Officials reported that the framework was pivotal to the decision, as it 'bridged the gap between theory and practice so well', helping chairs visualize what gender-sensitive scrutiny could look like in their own work.

The framework is now incorporated in the Parliament's official committee guidance, shaping how Members and staff plan inquiries, take evidence, and monitor government action. As the Parliament's Head of Scrutiny explained, 'the framework clearly sets out not only the "how" but also the "why"... and provides a practical five-step process which forms the basis of our own internal guidance.' **The Parliament ran training for committee clerks based on the framework and now plans to commission research to assess how committees apply gender-sensitive scrutiny in practice.**

The Parliament is already playing an important role in uncovering hidden inequalities, from the [high prevalence of gender-based violence](#) among women with learning disabilities, to [persistent gaps in sports participation](#) and [men's mental health](#).

This story showcases the broad reach of International IDEA's knowledge, as well as its practical application by parliaments across the globe, even to those outside the Institute's immediate network of IDEA Member States, EU Member State Parliaments and partner parliaments.

6.2.2. Co-Creating Parliamentary Strategic Planning Practices

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

International IDEA organized a workshop with the National Assembly of Zambia and participants from 11 parliaments to strengthen strategic planning and foster peer learning. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the event led to practical changes in participating parliaments' planning processes and resulted in the co-creation of a practitioner-informed handbook for parliamentary strategic planning.

International IDEA implements the EU funded Inter Pares programme, which is based on demand-driven, peer-to-peer partnerships between parliaments. As part of the Programme's partnership with the National Assembly of Zambia (NAZ), International IDEA organized a workshop which responded to the NAZ's request to strengthen its strategic planning processes, increase staff buy-in, and learn from peers ahead of its next planning cycle.

Although parliaments worldwide regularly prepare strategic plans, no concise, practice-focused handbook exists to guide the work. This shared gap across Inter Pares partners and other parliaments in the region shaped the workshop's purpose and methodology. The event became a driver of behavioural change and enabled the co-creation of the first *Handbook on Parliamentary Strategic Planning*.

International IDEA prepared discussion notes that presented global practice into short prompts which were shared in advance. This ensured that participants from 11 different parliaments—Botswana, Canada, Denmark, Ghana, Ireland, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sweden and Zambia—were prepared for practical discussions. The event combined high-level exchange with technical debate, seating senior staff in a fishbowl format to examine actual procedures, operational constraints, and lessons.

Shortly after the conference, participating parliaments reported changes of practice. **At the NAZ, the workshop prompted adjustments to the roadmap and concept note for the new strategic plan, especially on stakeholder engagement.** Senior staff showed greater ownership of the process, a change attributed directly to peer conversations in Lusaka. **In Sierra Leone, the delegation reopened its planning process, added supporting pillars to its objectives, initiated formal indicator discussions with the monitoring and evaluation unit, and began drafting a more detailed implementation plan. The National Assembly of Botswana initiated more systematic engagement with Members of Parliament (MPs) and external stakeholders for its next planning cycle based on workshop lessons.**

The workshop had a dual purpose: it produced immediate, country-level changes of practice and shaped a global knowledge product—a co-developed, practitioner-informed guide to support parliaments worldwide. Two institutional features stood out. First, trusted facilitation: International IDEA created a neutral space where participants felt confident to disclose constraints and try peer solutions. Second, the process globalized local practice: context-based experiences were translated into knowledge assets with wider applicability, and participants recognized transferable elements they could adapt to their own contexts.

Immediate outcomes, such as revised roadmaps, and strengthened stakeholder engagement mechanisms, demonstrate that co-creation changes practice. The emerging Handbook both drew from and reinforced the workshop's lessons, offering a replicable model for turning everyday parliamentary work into durable, peer-verified institutional change. Such a model builds globally relevant knowledge from country-level work and embeds knowledge production inside country-level activities. While parliaments differ in structure and politics, their shared responsibilities make co-created knowledge both transferable and transformative.

6.2.3. Enhancing Inclusive Governance: Parliament-Civil Society Cooperation in Botswana

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

Following Botswana's 2024 elections, a collaborative workshop between Parliament and civil society organizations sparked a shift toward more inclusive and participatory governance. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this momentum led to Parliament prioritizing citizen involvement in its new Strategic Framework.

After Botswana's 2024 general elections, the Parliament assumed a critical role in scrutinizing the new government's legislative agenda, overseeing its actions and ensuring that the needs and perspectives of all Botswanans are considered. With 70 per cent of MPs serving their first term, the moment presented a renewed need to strengthen Parliament's engagement with citizens and civil society. Historically, such engagement had been limited due to low parliamentary interest and constrained civil society capacity, restricting meaningful citizen participation.

By organizing a workshop in Gaborone on 17–19 March 2025, International IDEA built on its ongoing partnership with the Parliament through its EU-funded Inter Pares programme, to take advantage of this opportunity. Held shortly after the elections, the workshop convened newly elected MPs, parliamentary

staff, CSOs from diverse sectors, and representatives of selected EU Member States Parliaments. It underscored the importance of civil society engagement in strengthening democratic processes, shared good practices in public consultations, and created space for open discussion on expectations and opportunities for collaboration in the evolving political landscape.

The workshop generated a notable shift in parliamentary attitudes. MPs emphasized the value of civil society as a partner in promoting inclusive and accountable governance. Hon. Goretsetse Kekgonegile, Chair of the Committee on Labour and Home Affairs, noted: 'Civil society organizations are essential partners in ensuring that democracy is inclusive and that citizens' rights are safeguarded.' CSOs, in turn, felt heard and empowered. As Kagiso Molatlhwa, then Executive Director of BOCONGO, reflected: 'This has been a great opportunity for the civil society as we have now established direct links and contacts with Members of Parliament, ... to ensure that our voices are heard through them in parliament.'

In its new Strategic Framework, presented in September 2025, the Parliament in Botswana included 'fostering an inclusive & participatory democracy' as one of its key priorities. This commitment includes plans to introduce structured mechanisms for public hearings, citizen petitions, and systematic collaboration with CSOs.

Importantly, the workshop also translated into concrete institutional change. In its new Strategic Framework, presented in September 2025, the Parliament included 'fostering an inclusive & participatory democracy' as one of its key priorities. This commitment includes plans to introduce structured mechanisms for public hearings, citizen petitions, and systematic collaboration with CSOs—marking a considerable shift from previous practice.

Building on the workshop's momentum, the EU Delegation to Botswana and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) initiated a new project—expected to begin in January 2026 - dedicated to strengthening Parliament-CSO collaboration. Finally, the activity also created a valuable two-way flow of knowledge, linking Inter Pares' partnerships work with its knowledge production. The workshop drew on Inter Pares' *Guides on Citizen Engagement for Parliaments*, which were under development at that time, while insights from Botswana's experience helped shape and enrich the guides in return.

6.2.4. Forging a Modern Parliamentary Institution in Libya

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

Within the framework of the EU-funded project Supporting the Libyan House of Representatives, a series of study visits became a powerful catalyst for change. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this transformed not just procedures but the very culture and professional identity of the parliament's staff by reshaping relationships, behaviours, and professional practices.

The journey began in Copenhagen, where the delegation witnessed the quiet efficiency and professionalism of a modern parliamentary administration. The experience offered a powerful, tangible model for the Libyan team, revealing administrative staff as active, respected guarantors of procedural integrity, rather than passive implementers. This sparked a fundamental shift in mindset. As Dr Rasmi Al-Barawin, the Deputy President of the Diwan, reflected in June 2025:

Our visit to the Danish Parliament has been immensely beneficial. We believe that true institutional growth stems from learning and reflects on the experiences of long-standing parliamentary traditions. Such exchanges are essential for broadening perspectives and enhancing performance.

This sentiment echoed across the delegation, cementing a new belief in the value of their own roles.

Further inspired by what they saw in Greece, staff returned with a new spirit of collaboration, breaking down old departmental barriers. They began to see their work through a new lens of long-term strategy and planning, moving away from simply reacting to daily tasks. **The focus shifted to how they could work together more effectively to support the parliament as a whole. Perhaps the most significant change was in professional relationships between staff members, and between Members of Parliament and their staff. The staff members are no longer just implementers but have become active architects of a stronger parliamentary institution.**

Furthermore, exposure to the career-based, non-partisan civil service in Italy's Chamber of Deputies instilled a powerful new sense of professional identity. Staff began to see themselves as dedicated guardians of institutional knowledge and continuity, regardless of political changes. **This fostered a new culture of mentorship and knowledge-sharing among junior and senior staff, ensuring that new skills and a renewed commitment to professionalism would endure.**

The study visits did more than transfer knowledge; they built a shared vision. They forged a community of professionals united by a common commitment to serving Libya's democracy with greater effectiveness and integrity.

6.2.5. Advancing Parliamentary—Media Relations in Bhutan

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA contributed to fostering collaboration, transparency, and mutual understanding between

Parliament and the media in Bhutan. With the validation of Parliament's Media Engagement Strategy, signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the media and Parliament, and the establishment of parliamentary press pool the parties formalized their commitment to continued cooperation.

Bhutan's transition to democracy was initiated by King Jigme Singye Wangchuck who voluntarily abdicated the throne in 2006 and introduced democratic reforms culminating in the first elections in 2007. One of the key challenges for the young democracy has been to effectively connect civil society to the legislative and oversight processes. These processes have been undermined by opinion-based and partly unfair and misleading criticisms by the media.

International IDEA has supported strengthening the parliament-CSO relationship with the EU-funded Nyamdrel project, which in its second phase has further progressed to fostering the relationship between parliament and the media. These efforts have yielded significant results, transforming a previously strained and mistrustful dynamic into one of collaboration and mutual understanding.

Prior to the project's interventions, interactions between MPs and journalists were marked by suspicion and frequent misunderstandings. Limited direct engagement with the government further compounded this divide, fostering distrust on both sides. Recognising these challenges, the Institute facilitated a parliamentary-media symposium that served as an essential platform for dialogue. This event provided MPs, parliamentary staff, and journalists with the opportunity to engage openly, share perspectives, and clarify expectations regarding their respective roles.

The Institute supported the establishment of the Parliament Media Network. This network in Bhutan introduced clear protocols for engagement, ensuring that accredited journalists now have equal access to parliamentary information and benefit from predictable communication timelines.

Participants from both the media and the parliament credited this symposium as a turning point; it helped dismantle barriers and dispel longstanding misconceptions. **With the validation of the Media Engagement Strategy and signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the media and parliament, the parties formalized their commitment to continued cooperation and set a benchmark for future engagement.**

Building on this momentum, the Institute supported the establishment of the Parliament Media Network. This network introduced clear protocols for engagement, ensuring that accredited journalists now have equal access to parliamentary information and benefit from predictable communication timelines. **The creation of a formal parliamentary press pool standardized the processes through which media professionals interact with parliament, resulting in a more transparent and accessible flow of information.**

Notably, journalists within the press pool have developed a deeper understanding of parliamentary procedures, meaning there is no longer a need to repeatedly explain the workings of parliament to media representatives. This increased familiarity has streamlined communication and fostered a sense of professional respect between both parties.

Perhaps the most notable outcome is the sense of ownership that has emerged among stakeholders. While the project provided the initial impetus and support, both parliament and the media have since taken full responsibility for maintaining and evolving these new mechanisms of engagement. **The parliamentary press pool now operates as a self-sustaining entity, and the collaborative networks established during the project have led to ongoing, independent initiatives that extend beyond direct project involvement.**

In summary, the project has not only contributed to an improvement in the relationship between parliament and the media but has fostered a culture of open dialogue and cooperation. These developments are now becoming integral to the institutional landscape, supporting greater transparency, accountability, and trust in Bhutan's democratic processes.

6.2.6. Building International Support for Myanmar's Elected Parliament

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from Luxembourg, Norway, and Finland.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has helped Myanmar's interim parliament to significantly expand its international outreach and advocacy, particularly through active participation in successive Inter-Parliamentary Union Assemblies.

The relationship between Myanmar's legitimate interim parliament – the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH)—and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) began in June 2022 when International IDEA initiated the participation of the CRPH Chairperson and the acting Speaker of the Myanmar Parliament to attend the UN General Assembly annual meeting with the IPU, in New York. Since then, CRPH delegates have regularly attended IPU annual meetings, with support from International IDEA.

In 2025, CRPH delegates advocated for humanitarian support after the March earthquake, and advanced Myanmar's democratic cause at the UN Parliamentary Hearing, the UN Women–IPU “Beijing +30” workshop, and a Congressional Briefing in Washington, D.C. **These efforts resulted in the IPU Governing Council twice reaffirming the CRPH's status as Myanmar's legitimate parliamentary interlocutor, adoption of key declarations and resolutions in support of CRPH, and strengthened international recognition and alliances for the restoration of democracy in Myanmar.**

Participation in thematic sessions and workshops enabled CRPH Members of Parliament to highlight the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar, especially the plight of children and women, and to call for urgent international action,

International IDEA has helped Myanmar's interim parliament to significantly expand its international outreach and advocacy, particularly through active participation in successive Inter-Parliamentary Union Assemblies.

ensuring that Myanmar's crisis remains on the agenda of global parliamentary bodies.

6.2.7. Introducing a Gender Quota for the Parliament in The Gambia

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

After a study trip to Kenya, organized by International IDEA, the Gender Select Committee at The Gambia's parliament drafted the country's first Gender Committee Women Bill.

After a study trip to Kenya, organized by International IDEA, the Gender Select Committee at The Gambia's parliament drafted the country's first Gender Committee Women Bill, which was subsequently presented to the National Assembly. To ensure successful passage of the bill, the Committee has begun outreach efforts to raise awareness among National Assembly Members.

The Gambia's National Assembly currently has a mere 8.6 per cent representation of women, a situation largely influenced by various religious and cultural factors that hinder women's active participation in politics. This political underrepresentation translates to women having limited ability to influence decisions on issues that directly affect them. To address these challenges International IDEA is implementing the EU-funded Consolidation of Democratic Engagement (CODE) project, which focuses on promoting inclusive governance, with a particular emphasis on enhancing women's political participation and representation.

In one of the CODE activities International IDEA supported the Gender Select Committee of the National Assembly to undertake a study visit to the Kenyan parliament. The purpose of the visit was to inspire the Committee to prioritize gender-sensitive legislation, by providing them with the opportunity to observe and learn from Kenya's successful practices and policies in increasing women's representation in governance.

As a result of this learning experience, the Gender Select Committee drafted The Gambia's first Gender Committee Women Bill, which was subsequently presented to the National Assembly. The aim of the bill is to foster a gender inclusive movement by advocating for a constitutional amendment that would establish a quota system reserving a specific number of seats for women in the legislature. This would be a crucial step toward addressing the gender disparity that has characterized the National Assembly since The Gambia's independence in 1965.

The bill was submitted to the office of the Clerk in October 2025 with plans to be tabled in March 2026. **To ensure successful passage, the committee has begun outreach efforts to raise awareness among National Assembly Members, ensuring they comprehend the significance of the bill and garner the support needed for its approval.**

6.3. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IS INCLUSIVE, IMPARTIAL AND RIGOROUS

6.3.1. Strengthening Local Governance for Myanmar's Democratic Transition

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from Luxembourg, Norway, and Finland.

In its Myanmar programme, International IDEA has organized trainings and workshops that have equipped democratic actors with knowledge on the distinctions between local administration and local government, and principles of decentralization and fiscal federalism. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this has empowered them to establish inclusive and accountable local governance arrangements, which influence emerging constitutional frameworks.

In the aftermath of Myanmar's 2021 coup d'état, democratic actors face the urgent challenge of building inclusive, accountable local governance structures in territories liberated from military control. In support, International IDEA launched a series of webinars and in-person workshops in 2024-2025, targeting members of the National Unity Government (NUG), Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (EROs), civil servants and local administration bodies.

Led by international and Burmese experts, these trainings provided knowledge on the distinctions between local administration and local government, and principles of decentralization and fiscal federalism. Through interactive sessions, participants explored comparative models from countries such as Nepal, South Africa, and Australia, gaining practical insights into structuring local governments to deliver services, raise revenue, and ensure accountability. The workshops emphasized democratic elections, transparent tax collection, and the need for local governments to hire civil servants and manage their budgets.

Participants testified that they significantly increased their knowledge of international local governance models and democratic practices. They also broadened their networks, which foster greater coordination among ministries and federal units. **Subsequently, these insights and strengthened networks contributed to the inclusion of local governance arrangements in emerging state and regional transitional constitutional frameworks.**

In parallel, International IDEA organized webinars focused on local governance for key stakeholders in Chin State, which allowed participants to consider the practical implications of the emergence of 24 local administration bodies across Chinland. **During these webinars participants addressed challenges**

of operating in a conflict-affected environment, and the need for enhanced cooperation with the NUG. Lively discussions addressed the division of competencies between state and local governments, the advantages and disadvantages of decentralization, and the importance of developing practical handbooks and policy frameworks. The webinars also highlighted gender disparities and the need to encourage more equal participation.

6.4. OVERSIGHT AGENCIES MONITOR, PREVENT AND MITIGATE THE THREATS POSED BY ILLEGAL AND ILLICIT MONEY IN POLITICS AND HOLD THE EXECUTIVE POWER ACCOUNTABLE

6.4.1. Helping Nigeria Exit from the International Financial Action Task Force's Grey List

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

International IDEA has helped Nigeria to successfully exit the Financial Action Task Force's Grey List. This de-listing is expected to have a profound and lasting positive impact on Nigeria's financial system and overall economy.

This outcome narrative provides evidence that assistance by International IDEA has helped Nigeria to successfully exit the Financial Action Task Force's Grey List. This de-listing is expected to have a profound and lasting positive impact on Nigeria's financial system and overall economy.

In November 2023 International IDEA signed an agreement with the EU to manage a second phase of the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme (RoLAC II), in Nigeria. One of the areas where progress has been made is strengthening the integrity of Nigeria's financial system.

Over the last few years Nigeria has been listed on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Grey List. FATF was established in 1989 by the G7 countries to develop policies aimed at combating money laundering, terrorist financing, and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system. FATF's Grey List refers to a group of countries or jurisdictions that they have identified as having strategic deficiencies in this regard. These countries are working with the FATF to address shortcomings through an agreed action plan, and they are subject to increased monitoring until they make sufficient progress to be removed from the list.

To be on the Grey List has immense consequences for the financial systems and economic life of any country. Even the smallest financial transaction using international financial instruments can be rendered nugatory as the foreign institutions will not allow the transaction to occur. This reaches to the very

heights of economic activity as the country's ability to undertake financial transactions is called into question.

Recommendations had been made by FATF regarding the course of action necessary for Nigeria to be removed from the list and International IDEA has supported several strategic interventions to this end. Among other things, the Institute facilitated reviews and roundtables led by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Special Control Unit Against Money Laundering (SCUML) to assess residual money laundering and terrorist financing risks and the alignment of key institutional strategies with national anti-corruption frameworks.

The Institute has also supported Nigeria's participation in global forums, including the annual Conference of States Parties, enhancing international engagement and cooperation on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism issues. Importantly, IDEA also supported training of law enforcement and sanctions bodies on terrorist designation and compliance, and the EFCC to acquire and deploy a Case Management and Archiving System, strengthening the commission's forensic and open-source intelligence analysis capacity. Moreover, targeted capacity building was delivered to financial institutions, as well as to the Designated Non-Financial Institutions, businesses, and self-regulating professions, including the Nigerian Bar Association.

All these interventions responded to the FATF recommendations and contributed significantly to Nigeria's exit from the FATF Grey List in October 2025. The de-listing will have long lasting and deep impacts on the Nigerian financial system and consequently on the economy in its totality.

6.4.2. Ensuring Accountability for Service Delivery in Nigeria

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

Nigeria's State Service Delivery Transparency Initiative has been introduced as a scalable, sector-driven framework to improve accountability and service delivery in Nigeria. As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has supported the anti-corruption strategies and institutions that underpins the Initiative and its implementation in Kano and Anambra states.

In November 2023 International IDEA signed an agreement with the EU to manage a second phase of the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme (RoLAC II), in Nigeria. One of the areas where progress has been made is improving accountability of service delivery in the public sector.

A central part of the anti-corruption reform work accomplished under RoLAC I was the development of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy to provide the overarching framework for an all-inclusive fight against corruption. **RoLAC's support for the implementation of that strategy further led to the development and adoption of state-specific anti-corruption strategies in Anambra, Kano, and Adamawa states.** Central to all the strategies is the prevention of corruption through the strengthening of oversight and internal control mechanisms in the public sector, increasing citizen's awareness and participation in the fight against corruption as well as the ethical re-orientation of the citizenry.

The State Service Delivery Transparency Initiative (SSDTI) is an accountability reform effort in key service sectors in the target states. The basic approach is to strengthen frameworks for increased cooperation, collaboration and coordination among the different internal control and oversight units in concerned the public sector towards improved responsibility in service delivery. It essentially operationalizes Anti-Corruption and Transparency Units (ACTUs) supported by International IDEA, which are institutional frameworks for ensuring accountability, transparency, and the reinforcement of ethical standards in public service delivery.

The SSDTI is owned and driven by the public sector and capacitates and mobilizes stakeholders to oversee service delivery standards. This ensures that it is tailored to the sector and specific service, which is expected to result in a continuous improvement in service delivery. In Kano and Anambra states, the state governments quickly embraced the initiative, adopting it as the key driver of their service improvement commissions and sought further support from International IDEA, resulting in the pilot roll-out of the SSDTI initiative in two major hospitals in each of the states.

6.5. CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGE WITH REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS IN AN INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE WAY TO IMPROVE PUBLIC POLICY AND PRACTICE, AND TO HOLD POLITICAL DECISION MAKERS TO ACCOUNT

6.5.1. Strengthening Intercultural Governance in Panama

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union.

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has advanced self-determination and fostered inclusive decision-making in Ngäbe Buglé Comarca, a semi-autonomous indigenous region in Panama. The key to success has been

to support intercultural dialogue and collaboration among traditional leaders, government officials, and community members.

In Panama, a Comarca refers to a semi-autonomous administrative region that is predominantly inhabited and governed by Indigenous Peoples. These regions have their own systems of governance frameworks, which allows indigenous communities to manage local affairs, resources, and political representation. In Ngäbe Buglé Comarca, it has been deemed necessary to develop complementary regulations to the existing law.

In this context, International IDEA organized a dialogue process with traditional and formal authorities and leaders of the Ngäbe Buglé Region, to identify governance obstacles. Participants included the highest traditional authorities, such as the General Chief, regional chiefs, and the President of the General Congress, as well as mayors. Government representatives included the Vice Minister of Indigenous Affairs and the Governor, as well as the representative for the region. Having encouraged women to participate, some attended with their young children.

This Knowledge Exchange on Governance and Implementation of Law 10 identified proposals for improved governance and citizen participation, including a High-Level Commission in which the Comarca participates in the decision-making process on the allocation of its own funds within the General Budget. Another proposal was granting early voting rights to temporary indigenous migrants, as well as improvements of the distribution of polling places within the Comarca. The initiative culminated in a workshop in David, Chiriquí, which brought together mayors and municipal officials. This meeting connected the legislative vision with local action and fostered cooperation.

6.5.2. Restoring Democratic Trust in Peru: Neighborhood Hearings and Civic Engagement

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union.

In response to Peru's democratic decline, International IDEA and El Comercio have implemented neighbourhood and university hearings, enabling over 2,300 residents to raise their concerns to local authorities through structured, evidence-based dialogues. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this initiative has strengthened civic engagement, accountability, and cooperation between citizens and mayors.

Peru is experiencing democratic decline. International IDEA's Global State of Democracy indicators show sustained setbacks in representation and

In response to Peru's democratic decline, International IDEA and El Comercio have implemented neighbourhood and university hearings, enabling over 2,300 residents to raise their concerns to local authorities through structured, evidence-based dialogues.

participation, while citizen's satisfaction with democracy reaches only 10 per cent, the lowest level in Latin America. Only 7 per cent trust Congress and 9 per cent trust political parties.

To address this crisis of representation, International IDEA is strengthening consultation spaces at all levels of government in Peru, focusing on local governments. Together with *El Comercio*, the country's oldest newspaper, the Institute is implementing Neighbourhood Hearings, a mechanism that directly connects citizens with their mayors, under clear rules that require listening, responding, and making public commitments.

International IDEA designed the methodology and has provided technical assistance to the initiative, which includes two stages. First, a workshop is held in which residents identify and prioritize their main concerns, formulating representative and evidence-based questions. These questions are then presented to local authorities at a public hearing, where mayors must offer concrete, achievable answers and solutions with defined deadlines. *El Comercio* subsequently provides journalistic monitoring of compliance with these commitments.

In 2025, more than 2,300 people participated in eight hearing processes, in which residents identified, organized, and presented their main civic problems to eight mayors. The hearings have since become an established practice for accountability and strengthening of civic engagement, which fosters an environment of trust and cooperation between local parliamentary authorities and communities.

The change in behaviour is significant. At the beginning of the programme, mayors were reluctant to participate in open hearings. Over time, and after learning about the methodology, they became actively involved and facilitated their implementation. At the same time residents strengthened their capacity to organize information, present evidence, and demand results, which contributes to safe, regulated, and evidence-based dialogues that reduce mistrust and improve collaboration between public and social actors. *El Comercio* contributes to these results by increasing the visibility of the activities and monitoring the commitments made.

6.5.3. Global Democracy Coalition: Regional Dialogues and Solidarity in Action

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the Bosch Foundation and the Ford Foundation.

Since the first Summit for Democracy in 2021, International IDEA convenes the Global Democracy Coalition (GDC) with more than 160 partners in the global

#democracy community. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the GDC has demonstrated that strong professional networks are essential for collective global action to defend and advance democracy.

In 2025, International IDEA served as a convener of GDC's network of democracy advocates, CSOs, youth leaders and policymakers in fora across four regions: Europe, Africa, America and Asia-Pacific. Each regional forum strengthened cooperation between the actors, as they created space for reflection and collaboration on how to strengthen democracy in an increasingly complex environment.

In Milan, discussions focused on countering polarization and democratic backsliding. In Buenos Aires, partners explored civic innovation as a way to reconnect citizens and institutions. In Nairobi, democracy and human rights advocates, and environmental justice practitioners, came together on a shared agenda. In Bangkok, youth and digital rights took center stage, with young voices leading the conversation on the future of democracy.

Together, these dialogues built a global mosaic of experiences, challenges and lessons that now guide the Coalition's collective advocacy and programming. They reaffirmed that democracy looks different across contexts but faces shared struggles that can only be addressed through collective global action, based on trust.

The GDC also showed what solidarity means in practice. When the shutdown of United States foreign aid left many democracy and human rights organizations in sudden uncertainty, the Coalition acted quickly. Using the funds from the Global Forum, GDC created an emergency fund to help partners bridge urgent funding gaps. Nine local organizations in the Global South received support, enabling them to continue their work when it mattered most.

This decision captured the essence of the Global Democracy Coalition: a network of more than 160 democracy organizations that stand together in times of challenge. It showed that collaboration goes beyond dialogue. It is about taking care of one another and ensuring that those defending democracy are never left alone.

Moving forward, the Coalition will build on the lessons of 2025 by continuing to strengthen regional collaboration and exploring sustainable ways to support partners. The past year proved that collective action is the Coalition's greatest strength and that together, GDC members can turn solidarity into resilience and resilience into impact.

6.5.4. Empowering Belarusian Women Democracy Activists

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Since the first Summit for Democracy in 2021, International IDEA convenes the Global Democracy Coalition (GDC) with more than 160 partners in the global #democracy community.

In 2025, International IDEA supported ten young Belarusian women leaders to deepen their democratic skills. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the participants developed their personal and professional capacities, strengthened networks, and gained confidence to apply their new skills in practice.

With funding from Sida International IDEA carefully selected ten young Belarusian women leaders who embarked on a joint six-month journey of learning and experience sharing on democratic practices. The project was composed of two study visits to Stockholm and Brussels, participation at a high-level conference and continuous online engagement.

Throughout the project, the participants had the opportunity to grow and hone their knowledge and skills in interacting with policymakers, trainers and each other. The study visit to Brussels enabled meetings with key policymakers on all matters pertinent to Belarus in the European Union. To maximize learning participants prepared for and debriefed after each meeting with the project staff.

One participant noted: “The advocacy and study visit to Brussels set an unexpectedly high bar for my personal growth. I really appreciated how you prepared us for every meeting, and the feedback you gave afterwards.” Feedback from another participant indicate that these efforts influenced both their relationships and behaviours: ‘I’m not a fan of grand words, but this programme truly changed the way I see myself and the people around me—I know now how to position myself to be heard by others. We literally learned something—and then immediately tried it out in real situations.’

Participants testified that they strengthened relationships with each other, which will help them to support each other as democracy activists going forward. Moreover, they are already utilizing their new insights in their professional life, as expressed by one participant in the final project evaluation: “One of the most positive changes for me is that I’ve already taken concrete steps in my professional growth. I spoke publicly for the first time since emigrating [from Belarus]—as a speaker at a conference organized by the Council of Europe. I don’t think I would have dared to do it without the programme. It really gave me the confidence to step forward, trust my voice, and apply what I’ve learned in real situation.”

6.5.5. Inspiring the Transformation of Gender Social Norms Through Male Engagement

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

Through a series of dialogues co-facilitated by International IDEA, participants from more than 30 countries in Africa confronted patriarchal expectations. As evidenced by this outcome narrative the exercise strengthened their joint commitment and shared responsibility to transform gender social norms that hinder the political participation and representation of women.

The 2023 UNDP Gender Social Norms Index shows that nearly half of people worldwide believe that men make better leaders, and only a third see women's equal rights as essential to democracy. These norms are reinforced daily in families, institutions, and the public sphere.

By creating spaces where men can listen, reflect, confront privilege, and show vulnerability, International IDEA is inspiring stakeholders at different levels to promote the transformation of gender social norms. In 2025, the Institute co-facilitated a series of regional dialogues under the EU-funded Women and Youth Democratic Engagement (WYDE) Women's Leadership Initiative—which International IDEA is co-implementing with UN Women, IPU, and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). The dialogues brought together men and women politicians, aspiring leaders, and civil society actors from more than 30 countries in Africa.

These spaces inspired participants to reflect and challenge patriarchal based social norms that hinder the political participation and representation of women. They explored how patriarchal systems shape not only political life, but personal and emotional life as well, engaging deeply to #DebunkSocialNorms. **Through the dialogues, participants confronted patriarchal expectations and strengthened their joint commitment and shared responsibility to transform gender social norms.**

Men spoke openly about the impact of patriarchy on their own well-being and women described what genuine allyship looks like. Safe mixed-gender spaces allowed honest conversations about bias, leadership, and power. **Many expressed a renewed dedication and commitment to changing the leadership cultures in their communities and institutions.**

For example, Justus Lemtukei from South Sudan said that 'transformative actors are men who not only support women but also work to change the structures, policies, and cultural norms that perpetuate inequalities'. Curtis Dorley from Liberia noted that 'men must establish self-reflection and personal transformation—we must examine our own privileges if we want to make change'. And Ahli Anselme Sodji from Togo concluded: 'We need to redefine power for men; the old version of men has to die; a new man must emerge who is not afraid of gender equality.'

The WYDE Women's Leadership Initiative demonstrates that progress can happen when men and women work together as equal partners. The dialogues reflect a deep shift towards structural change that begin not only through institutions, but through people willing to confront norms, challenge inequality, and build a #DemocracyForAll grounded in dignity, respect, and shared leadership.

Chapter 7

OUTCOMES FROM DIGITALIZATION AND DEMOCRACY WORK

In 2023, International IDEA consolidated its work on digitalization and democracy which aims at shaping the relationships, behaviours, and practices of a wide range of actors to protect and defend democracy against digital threats and reinforce it through technology. This is done by reinforcing the resilience of key democratic institutions against digital threats, by supporting authorities and policy influencers (such as civil society) and by influencing global and regional policymaking around technology. International IDEA focuses on supporting locally led and locally designed solutions that respond to digital threats by providing neutral perspectives, sharing international best practices, standards and perspectives, and conveying dialogue spaces.



Source: International IDEA, implementation phase of our AI Literacy for Electoral Actors project. The objective of this initiative is to raise AI literacy and resilience among electoral management bodies and civil society through a series of executive workshops held across the globe.

The programme is underpinned by the following theory of change:

- **If** policy influencers within civil society effectively advocate that governmental policies and regulatory frameworks are needed to protect democratic institutions and processes from digital threats and challenges posed by emerging technologies.
- **If** EMBs and other relevant institutions' capacity to build resilience against digital threats is enhanced and maintained.
- **If** advisors to governmental policymakers (including EMBs) influence policy choices so that they are informed by an understanding of the impact of technologies on the quality of democracy.
- **If** governmental policymakers (including electoral policymakers) are influenced by policy influencers and their policy advisors to develop policies and regulatory frameworks that protect democratic institutions and processes from digital threats and challenges posed by emerging technologies.
- **If** public administration uses these policies and regulatory frameworks to develop rules and regulations to bolster and uphold democratic principles and values in the conceptualization and implementation of digital innovation and technological reforms.
- **And if** digital oversight bodies and civil society hold policymakers and public administration accountable for their digital strategies by monitoring how they prevent and mitigate threats to democracy posed by digital innovations and ensure in their operations that the implementation of digital governance complies with fundamental democratic principles and values.
- **Then** it becomes more likely that technology is developed, designed, governed, regulated, and used by informed, engaged and critical citizens under democratic principles, thus sustaining and affirming the protection and advancement of more democratic and inclusive societies.

The digitalization and democracy work cuts across other work at the Institute, in particular the electoral processes and the political participation and representation work. Therefore, activities can potentially be undertaken in cooperation with seven boundary partners, as outlined in the Theory of Change.

The outcome narratives in this section do not account for all of International IDEA's activities and results in digitalization and democracy but are *representative examples* of what the Institute has achieved so far in this work.

7.1. BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO COUNTER FOREIGN INFORMATION MANIPULATION IN ELECTIONS

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the European Union.

This outcome narrative provides evidence that International IDEA has empowered civil society, electoral management bodies, and state agencies in Moldova, North Macedonia, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire to advance best practices against foreign interference in elections.

Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) is today an inextricable part of elections. Some governments use all tools at their disposal to manipulate the information environment around elections to advance their strategic objectives. As political discussions have moved online, these governments have weaponized the digital flows of information to manipulate public opinion and erode trust in government, democratic institutions and democracy in general.

As the threat and presence of foreign interference in electoral processes grows, International IDEA has been positioning itself as a trusted advisor and expert resource that empowers electoral actors to counteract the influence of FIMI in elections. As part of these efforts, International IDEA has published practical knowledge resources on the topic and supported electoral actors such as CSOs, media, and EMBs.

In September 2025, the Institute released a Global Methodology on the Enablers and Incentives of Electoral FIMI. The Guide has been used by CSOs to guide national analyses and identify enablers and incentives of electoral FIMI in Moldova, North Macedonia, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire.

In September 2025, the Institute released a [Global Methodology on the Enablers and Incentives of Electoral FIMI](#). **The Guide has been used by CSOs to guide national analyses and identify enablers and incentives of electoral FIMI in Moldova, North Macedonia, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire.** These analyses seek to identify reforms and dialogue spaces to address domestic vulnerabilities and to increase FIMI resilience. The fact that the analysis is led by networks of local actors is crucial as it enables them to both identify the contextual intricacies that characterize disinformation and to develop the collaborative strength needed to build democratic resilience against FIMI.

In addition, International IDEA's Digitalization and Democracy team has built relationships with state agencies with the mandate to counteract the impact of domestic and foreign information manipulation. Exchanges with agencies, including the Swedish Agency for Psychological Defense and France's VIGINUM, are expanding IDEA's ability to consult on how to design institutions that safeguard the integrity of electoral information. These initiatives culminated in the development of a publication on the institutional design of responses to counter information manipulation and strengthen democratic and institutional resilience.

To promote this publication and support the launch of the European Center for Democratic Resilience, IDEA convened a High-Level Dialogue in Brussels with senior representatives from EU institutions, NATO, national authorities, and civil society. The event aimed to facilitate the exchange of expertise and best practices on institutional approaches against information interference in Europe, consolidating International IDEA's leading role as a facilitator of global discussions on FIMI.

7.2. SHAPING BEST PRACTICES FOR INTEGRATING AI IN ELECTIONS

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from Microsoft and OpenAI through the Society Resilience Fund.

International IDEA has pioneered global initiatives to support electoral management bodies to utilize AI in a responsible way. As evidenced by this outcome narrative these efforts have fostered a collaborative community of nearly 200 officials from over 70 countries, who are shaping best practices for integrating AI in elections.

The ways in which EMBs can use AI in electoral administration have grown exponentially. Yet these use-cases are entangled in a network of risks and challenges related to human rights, electoral integrity, regulation, and democratic governance. In the last two years, International IDEA has designed knowledge products and capacity development initiatives to support EMBs on their AI journey.

In 2024, International IDEA published the first-ever global resource on the use of AI by EMBs, which charts existing and potential applications of AI in elections. The report offers a practical framework outlining implications and risks for EMBs when considering the use of AI for specific purposes, so that democratic principles can guide their conduct. This framework served as the seed for the AI for Electoral Actors project, funded by Microsoft and OpenAI, which converted these learnings into an advisory curriculum which IDEA has applied in workshops across Latin America, Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Balkans, and Eastern Europe.

Over the course of late 2024 and early 2025, the Institute built on this work to **establish an expert community on electoral AI, where nearly 200 electoral officials from more than 70 countries have contributed with experiences and challenges to a wide knowledge bank on electoral AI.** These reflections have been captured in interviews, podcasts and survey data disseminated on International IDEA's public channels. In addition, they have been used to design the next phase of the Institute's support on electoral AI to EMBs.

Participating electoral experts have collaboratively consulted on a blueprint for the use of AI in elections that ascertains a common understanding of the risks, opportunities, and mitigation strategies necessary for democratic AI in electoral management. This blueprint was shared at the Institute's Member State Exchange on AI and Electoral Management, where electoral representatives from Member States and other stakeholders further elaborated on the role for responsible AI in democratic processes.

Over the course of late 2024 and early 2025, the Institute built on this work to establish an expert community on electoral AI, where nearly 200 electoral officials from more than 70 countries have contributed with experiences and challenges to a wide knowledge bank on electoral AI.

International IDEA's leading role in facilitating a space to discuss AI in electoral management has resulted in both internal and external action among EMBs. Moreover, the Institute has been instrumental in building an international community where electoral experts can convert their experiences with AI into stories that inform regional and global behaviours and practices.

7.3. STRENGTHENING ELECTORAL INTEGRITY IN EU ACCESSION COUNTRIES THROUGH DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from Stiftung Mercator.

International IDEA advances democratic reform in EU candidate countries by translating complex digital regulations into practical guidance. As this outcome narrative illustrates the initiative fosters regional collaboration and enhance electoral resilience against digital threats in countries such as Albania, Moldova, North Macedonia, and Ukraine.

International IDEA's Closing the Digital Gap on Elections in EU Accession project, funded by Stiftung Mercator, bridges the gap between the EU's complex digital regulatory framework and the practical needs of EMBs in candidate and potential candidate countries to the Union. The project's core principle is that safeguarding electoral integrity requires not just fair laws and transparent procedures, but also institutional capacity to address challenges posed by social media, artificial intelligence, and digital political advertising.

In 2025 the Institute published *Navigating the European Union's Digital Regulatory Framework*, a report which played a pivotal role by explaining how EU laws—including the Digital Services Act, Artificial Intelligence Act, the Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertising Regulation, and GDPR—impact elections. The report included country analyses which assessed each candidate country's progress towards the EU's digital rulebook, highlighting both innovative solutions and areas for improvement. **By translating these regulations into accessible insights, the research helped electoral management bodies, policymakers, and civil society in both the EU and countries such as Albania, Moldova, North Macedonia, and Ukraine to align domestic reforms with the EU's digital standards.**

Beyond influencing policy through research, the project has strengthened regional networks and fostered cross-border learning between EU policymakers and electoral actors in neighbouring states. Dialogues in Tirana

and Chisinau brought together electoral authorities, digital regulators, civil society, and EU peers from various countries to discuss convergence with EU standards, management of online political campaigning, and combating disinformation. These gatherings underscored that EU accession hinges not only on institutional capacity and infrastructure, but equally on digital readiness.

In Eastern Europe, IDEA convened discussions which revealed how digitalization reshapes electoral vulnerabilities—including cybersecurity, disinformation, and diaspora engagement—and demonstrated the protective role of EU-aligned digital governance. **The Institute has thus contributed to shifting the digital debate in accession countries from a technical matter to a core democratic issue, strengthening regional networks and cross-border learning.**

Ultimately, the project underscores that progress toward EU membership is inseparable from efforts to enhance democratic resilience against foreign interference and disinformation, laying the foundation for more secure and credible elections across Europe’s enlargement region.

7.4. ADDRESSING INFORMATION-RELATED RISKS FOR ELECTIONS IN LIBYA, FIJI, AND IRAQ

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO).

Electoral management bodies face complex information environments where building credibility is crucial to countering disinformation and securing public trust in electoral outcomes. As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has fostered institutional cooperation, promoted responsible digital engagement, and helped local stakeholders Libya, Fiji, and Iraq to develop sustainable responses to information-related risks in elections.

In a project funded by the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO) International IDEA has supported EMBs in various countries to address intentional mis- and disinformation in electoral processes. The approach has been to convene local electoral stakeholders with an aim to help them to create a shared understanding of the issues at hand, identify areas where cooperation between them would be beneficial, and test and strengthen that cooperation through smaller or larger initiatives.

In Libya, the High National Elections Commission (HNEC) has been actively involved in the project and gradually demonstrated increased ownership

International IDEA has fostered institutional cooperation, promoted responsible digital engagement, and helped local stakeholders in Libya, Fiji, and Iraq to develop sustainable responses to information-related risks in elections.

in managing information integrity challenges. **Notably, a Code of Conduct for Countering Digital Risks in the Electoral Process—which promoted responsible online engagement and self-regulation by 2025 election candidates—was officially launched by HNEC on January 13, 2025.** This marked a significant milestone in Libya’s efforts to formalize ethical standards in the digital electoral space.

Moreover, the HNEC has committed to integrating a “Filter” Facebook page platform, which has been developed by the project. **Throughout 2025, the platform published several posts addressing misleading narratives and electoral disinformation.** A monitoring report on the 2025 municipal council elections was prepared, providing detailed insights into mis/disinformation patterns, public responses, and evolving digital risks.

In Fiji, International IDEA’s efforts to establish a group of electoral stakeholders which would address malign influencing practices and disinformation were initially challenging. Some civil society actors remained hesitant to fully engage publicly due to past political dynamics with the previous Fijian Elections Office (FEO) administration. However, the initiatives supported by IDEA built new energy and broader participation, which demonstrated the group’s relevance and potential. Gradually, the stakeholders have thus moved from external driven coordination to more locally owned, structured, and impactful engagement.

As an example of this, the FFO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Online Safety Commission (OSC). **The MoU represents a milestone in institutional cooperation and reflects the growing commitment of Fijian actors to address information-related risks to electoral integrity.** Stakeholders in Fiji have acknowledged that this step would not have been possible without International IDEA’s neutral convening platform, which has helped rebuild trust between institutions.

In Iraq, International IDEA’s effort to support a coordinated, multi-stakeholder response to information-related risks have gradually taken shape through sustained engagement with the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC), civil society, academia, and international partners. Following a roadmap workshop in Erbil in July, **stakeholders identified concrete areas for cooperation, ranging from improving IHEC’s transparency and crisis communication to enhancing voter education, increasing voter turnout, and countering sectarian narratives.**

A follow-up event in August allowed participants to translate these priorities into detailed Terms of References outlining the roles of IHEC and CSOs ahead of the November 2025 parliamentary elections. **Notably, stakeholders agreed to launch “Iraq Filter”, a digital initiative inspired by Libya’s Filter Facebook platform, aimed at identifying and addressing misleading narratives in real-time.**

7.5. IMPROVING ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN OVERSIGHT IN ALBANIA

Funding

Enabled by core funding and the financial support of the Rule of Law Centre of Finland. Co-implemented by International IDEA and the Rule of Law Centre in Finland.

International IDEA contributed to introducing a Code of Conduct on Digital Campaigning ahead of the 2025 elections in Albania. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this helped Albanian political parties, electoral authorities, media, and civil society to work from a shared framework which defined what digital accountability should look like.

Ahead of Albania's general elections in May 2025, International IDEA, in cooperation with the Rule of Law Centre of Finland, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Central Electoral Commission in Albania, facilitated the introduction of a Code of Conduct on Digital Campaigning. Conceived as a voluntary set of commitments signed by the ten main political parties, the Code aimed at curbing disinformation, increasing transparency, and promoting more respectful online debate.

While the Code did not transform Albania's digital campaign culture overnight, it introduced a new framework for accountability, and the process provided a model for how oversight could function in future elections. The Code's relevance was referenced in OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' (ODIHR) final report on Albania's elections and by the European Commission's 2025 enlargement package, acknowledging it as a positive step toward improving transparency and accountability in digital campaigning.

As an example of the positive outcomes, **all ten political parties appointed a focal point for online content and civil society groups, and electoral observers established a monitoring mechanism to track and report online violations.** These practices helped drawing public attention to online campaigning practices, including networks of anonymous pages, influencers, and microtargeted ads which previously operated in a grey zone. **Equally significant, the initiative sparked sustained debate about ethics in online campaigning.** Questions about accountability for hate speech, the financing of online content, and the use of personal data for campaigning moved from technical forums into mainstream discussion.

The Code provided the first structured pilot in digital campaign governance in Albania, revealing both what is possible through cooperation and what requires regulation. It also built institutional capacity—connecting fact-checkers, platform representatives, and monitors in ways that can strengthen future oversight efforts. **However, the Code's most important impact lay in the**

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conversations it set in motion. For the first time, Albanian political parties, electoral authorities, media, and civil society were working from a shared framework to define what digital accountability should look like.

7.6. REINFORCING MOLDOVA'S RESILIENCE AGAINST ELECTORAL INTERFERENCE

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from the EU and Sweden.

Electoral processes in Moldova have been significantly affected by covert digital interference and unregulated online political advertising. As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has supported the Central Electoral Commission to address these challenges by improving regulatory frameworks.

In 2024–2025, the presidential election, the constitutional referendum on the future accession to the EU, and the 2025 parliamentary elections in Moldova were marked by a sharp rise in third-party digital political advertising and interference, with coordinated networks and non-resident actors influencing the electoral processes without transparency. Anticipating these risks, International IDEA supported Moldova's oversight bodies to respond with evidence-based enforcement.

During the 2025 parliamentary elections, International IDEA provided the Moldovan Central Electoral Commission (CEC) with weekly analytical briefings and continuous monitoring of political advertising across Meta, Google, TikTok and Telegram. For the first time, the CEC thus gained real-time, cross-platform visibility into illicit and non-compliant campaign activity. The monitoring revealed that:

- More than €508,000 was spent on in digital political advertising on Meta, much of it by actors outside Moldova's reporting framework.
- Unregistered "non-campaign spenders" outspent all official contestants combined.
- Coordinated digital networks generated 200,000 posts on Telegram, likely administered from abroad.
- Political advertising on Google and Telegram was run by non-resident actors without required disclosures.

- Artificial amplification networks on TikTok and Instagram manipulated visibility for specific political actors.

Based on International IDEA's alerts and evidence, the CEC requested clarifications from actors whose declared expenditures did not match platform data. Where discrepancies persisted or clear violations were identified, the CEC initiated sanctions for non-compliance and issued public warnings about the risks of opaque digital political advertising.

The monitoring process highlighted systemic regulatory gaps, including the absence of rules governing third-party online political advertising, the lack of required declaration of official communication accounts, insufficient granularity in digital expenditure reporting, and unclear provisions on digital activity during silence periods. Moreover, the monitoring process exposed targeted influence narratives—including gendered disinformation and content aimed at diaspora voters—strengthening the CEC's ability to protect vulnerable groups. **The findings inform the CEC's post-election regulatory proposals and are driving institutional discussions on aligning Moldova with the EU Regulation on Political Advertising Transparency.**

By the end of the electoral cycle, Moldova's oversight institutions demonstrated a significantly stronger capacity to detect, investigate and act on illicit digital campaigning and non-compliant political finance activity. This experience has accelerated Moldova's progress toward a more transparent, accountable and resilient digital political finance environment.

7.7. ADDRESSING DIGITAL INFORMATION CHALLENGES TO PROTECT DEMOCRACIES IN LATIN AMERICA

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).

As evidenced by this outcome narrative International IDEA has strengthened electoral integrity in Latin America by fostering collaboration among electoral stakeholders. A concrete result of this work is the Intersectoral Decalogue for Information Integrity with a Gender Lens, which lays the foundation for a coordinated and sustainable response to mis- and disinformation in electoral processes.

The AECID-funded project Strengthening Electoral Integrity Ecosystems to Protect Democracy in Latin America is guided by a central principle; electoral integrity must be understood as a complex ecosystem in which multiple strategic actors interact. Building on this principle, the project seeks to

strengthen capacities to safeguard electoral processes from political and technological risks. It covers Chile, Uruguay, Mexico, Colombia, Perú and Guatemala and promotes partnerships to address disinformation and online political violence against women.

In 2025, the Regional Meeting on Electoral Integrity, Disinformation and Online Violence against Women in Politics, held on 15-16 October in Cartagena de Indias, brought together representatives from electoral bodies, journalists, fact-checkers, and civil society organizations specializing on gender and digital rights, and representatives from digital platforms and academia.

Interactions between these diverse actors allowed them to shift from fragmented efforts to discuss joint approaches aimed to confront disinformation and political violence against women. **As a concrete step to move from talk to action they developed an Intersectoral Decalogue for Information Integrity with a Gender Lens, which establishes a common language, defines roles and lays the foundation for a coordinated and sustainable response to mis- and disinformation in electoral processes.**

The post-workshop evaluation revealed a notable increase in participants' perceptions of the value of regional coordination. Testimonies reinforced how new insights shape collective action. A journalist noted: 'This dialogue was essential to identify common challenges regarding disinformation and narratives that erode public trust.' A representative of an electoral body emphasized that 'active cooperation is needed to pool strengths and resources to confront a growing and serious problem like disinformation.' Other voices stressed that 'confronting disinformation and digital violence requires all of us,' and that 'we only improve by reviewing what has worked in other countries and joining forces.'

In parallel, a series of workshops on AI and electoral management for EMBs established frameworks to assess the uses, risks and regulation of AI in electoral administration. **These workshops enabled EMBs to adopt new practices for algorithmic risk assessment, counter-disinformation efforts and the responsible, and ethical use of AI during elections.**

The collaborative practices generated through these milestones not only helps navigate immediate tensions within the electoral integrity ecosystem but also shapes working relationships for the upcoming 2026 and 2027 electoral cycles across the region.

7.8. BUILDING A DIGITAL BRIDGE BETWEEN PARLIAMENT AND CITIZENS IN CHILE

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with core funding and restricted funding from the European Union.

In Chile International IDEA has supported the Congress to integrate ethical AI into its legislative processes. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this has resulted in improved public access to information and strengthened collaborative practices on digital governance.

Since 2023, International IDEA has implemented an EU-funded parliamentary support project in Chile with the aim of reinforcing effective legislative processes at the Parliament. As reported in 2024, the project has contributed to informed discussions of laws that directly impact the lives of millions of Chilean citizens, including but not limited to legislation on electricity rates and gender issues.

In 2025, International IDEA has positioned itself as a key player in the digital transformation of the Chilean Congress, accompanying the Chamber of Deputies in its transition towards integration of artificial intelligence in its institutional work. This collaboration, carried out together with the European Union, made it possible for the Chilean Congress to open a unique space for exchange with the European Parliament and to learn first-hand about the experience of ArchiBot, a pioneering model of ethical and controlled use of AI in legislative processes.

During this process, International IDEA identified that AI applied to legislative work was an area with high potential to improve access to public information, strengthen the systematization of legislative knowledge, and promote more collaborative working practices. Inspired by this idea, the Chilean Congress not only adopted the technical model, but also the underlying philosophy of institutional control and inclusion. **This materialized in a tangible commitment for the ArChileBot project to become a tool for improving access to the legislative process in Chile.**

The relationship with International IDEA evolved from knowledge facilitation to strategic collaboration in digital governance, directly influencing the design of ethical protocols and the implementation roadmap. This process generated a significant change in behaviour within the Chamber of Deputies as the technical and legislative teams adopted a more comprehensive view of AI, understanding it as a means to strengthen the democratic bond and not as an end in itself. **Interdepartmental cooperation was consolidated, and a new institutional culture oriented towards responsible innovation emerged.**

In 2025, International IDEA has positioned itself as a key player in the digital transformation of the Chilean Congress, accompanying the Chamber of Deputies in its transition towards integration of artificial intelligence in its institutional work.

Chapter 8

OUTCOMES FROM CLIMATE CHANGE AND DEMOCRACY WORK

In 2023 International IDEA started new work on climate change and democracy, which aims at shaping the behaviour, relationships, and practices of a wide range of actors to promote policies, practices, reform and innovation that allow democracies to formulate and implement effective and citizen-owned climate action. This is done by bringing attention to comparative international practices, standards and perspectives; creating accessible comparative knowledge resources; conveying and facilitating dialogue spaces between stakeholders; and building capacity of local and regional partners on



Source: International IDEA, from 14 to 21 November, International IDEA was at the Climate Change COP30 in Belém, Brazil.

the climate change and democracy nexus, in accordance with the following theory of change:

- **If** policy influencers within civil society have the capacity and knowledge to effectively advocate for policies, reform and innovation to mitigate democracy's structural weaknesses (e.g. short-termism, self-preferentialism, policy capture or inconsistency); leverage democracy's inherent qualities (e.g. consensus-building, free flow of information, civil society engagement); and foster democratic innovation (e.g. climate assemblies, climate litigation and institutions for future generations) that are needed for more effective and citizen-owned climate action.
- **If** advisors to governmental policymakers influence policy choices and institutional reform proposals so that they are informed by an understanding of how democracy's weaknesses and strengths impact the effectiveness, sustainability and legitimacy of climate action.
- **If** governmental policymakers are influenced by policy influencers, policy advisors, media and civil society organizations to pursue policies, reform and innovation for more effective and citizen-owned climate action in line with their binding international commitments as Parties to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.
- **If** media utilizes International IDEA's climate change and democracy resources to inform the public about the climate change and democracy nexus and hold policymakers to account for progress on the reforms and innovations to strengthen the capacity of democracies to engage in effective and citizen-owned climate action in line with the Paris Agreement commitments.
- **If** public administration is capable of translating ambitious citizen-owned climate agendas into effective action on climate mitigation and adaptation while paying special attention to concerns about just transition.
- **If** oversight agencies with mandates on climate policy effectively monitor and articulate the interests of young and future generations to increase intergenerational justice perspectives in climate policymaking.
- **And if** parliaments exercise their legislative, oversight and representation functions to become transparent, inclusive, responsive and accountable to all citizens on climate policy and action.
- **Then** it becomes more likely that democracies develop and implement effective and citizen-owned climate action responding to their Paris Agreement commitments, which will strengthen democratic legitimacy and resilience and increase citizen's trust in democracy.

The climate change and democracy work cuts across other work at the Institute, in particular the political participation and representation. Therefore, activities can potentially be undertaken in cooperation with seven boundary partners, as outlined in the Theory of Change. As these changes are complex, the report provides qualitative outcome narratives, in which a description is given of how International IDEA has influenced each boundary partner's relationships, behaviours and practices. These stories do not account for all of International IDEA's activities and results in the area of climate change and democracy but are representative examples of what the Institute does and achieves. Hence, the stories should be regarded as qualitative indicators of International IDEA's results in this area.

8.1. PILOTING CITIZENS ASSEMBLIES IN THE AMAZON TO INFLUENCE CLIMATE POLICYMAKING

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from Agence Française de développement (AFD), the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, and core funding.

Together with Delibera Brasil, International IDEA piloted two citizen assemblies to address climate finance governance gaps and presented the findings at COP30. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this inspired government officials, donors, development banks and CSOs to engage in discussions about how climate deliberation can anchor climate policy decisions in local community priorities.

International IDEA's Climate Change and Democracy work is exploring how deliberative democracy can enable citizens and regional and local governments to close the vertical participation gap in climate policymaking. The aim is to make citizens' voices heard in setting climate policy priorities, at the local, regional and international levels.

Building on the Institute's 2024 [publication](#) on *Deliberative Democracy and Climate Change: Exploring the Potential of Climate Assemblies in the Global South*, International IDEA and its local partner, Delibera Brasil, in 2025 piloted two climate assemblies in Brazil. These convened local and state governments and CSOs in the municipalities of Pará State in the Brazilian Amazon, where the 30th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)—COP30—was organized in November.

Lessons from these assemblies – summarized in the [case study report](#) *Amazonian Climate Deliberation: Insights from Three Citizen Assemblies on*

Climate Finance Held Ahead of COP30 – were subsequently shared at strategic events at COP30. The events strengthened the relationships between local and state governments, climate finance actors, deliberation facilitators and climate-focused CSOs. They also gave these actors space to reflect on how citizen deliberation in climate assemblies can produce actionable recommendations to governments on how to make climate finance more accessible, transparent, and effective.

Stakeholders appreciated the process. For example, Larissa Rodrigues, Cabinet Adviser to Camille Bemerguy (Deputy Secretary of Bioeconomy in the Pará State Secretariat for Environment, Climate and Sustainability) noted: “Climate assemblies are like a gift to the state government, a very good diagnosis of what has to be done”. In Magalhães Barata, City Councillor Silvano Costa da Silva highlighted that the climate assembly’s deliberations enabled the community to develop consensus around what issues to prioritize and craft proposals for better management of local public resources.

Such testimonies illustrate that **the climate assemblies and the results presented at the COP30 events helped connect local communities and government agencies with global climate finance actors, countering the vertical participation gap in climate finance governance.**

8.2. LAUNCHING THE INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE AND DEMOCRACY COALITION AT COP30

Funding

Enabled by core funding and implemented with restricted funding from USAID and the European Climate Foundation (ECF).

At COP30 in Brazil, International IDEA launched the International Climate and Democracy Coalition community of practice. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this inspires civil society, government officials, and donors, to engage in joint action on climate-democracy nexus topics.

After long-term network and partnership building efforts, International IDEA’s Climate Change and Democracy team in 2025 established the International Climate and Democracy Coalition (ICDC), a community of practice for likeminded organizations active at the intersection of climate change and democracy. The community illustrates how these organizations have deepened their collaboration and serves as a platform for knowledge exchange, research coordination, policy outreach and joint action.

After long-term network and partnership building efforts, International IDEA’s Climate Change and Democracy team in 2025 established the International Climate and Democracy Coalition (ICDC), a community of practice for likeminded organizations active at the intersection of climate change and democracy.

Capitalizing on International IDEA's observer status in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process, the ICDC was launched at an event hosted by the German Pavilion at COP30. The event gathered top-level speakers and drew high interest, including leaders within the German Government and the European Climate Foundation (ECF). Actors from Brazil and the Pacific were also included, to anchor discussions in on-ground perspectives. Among other things, the event gave space for participants to reflect on how autocratization and the green backlash are interrelated, and what action to take to reverse these trends.

During the event Natascha Beinker, Head of the Climate Policy Division at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), underscored the importance of taking concrete and joint action on the climate-democracy nexus. Laurence Tubiana, CEO of the ECF and Special Envoy for Europe at COP30, emphasized that setting ambitious targets for climate action is not enough, and that democratic governance innovation is required, especially as surveys show citizens overwhelmingly want their governments to do more to tackle the climate crisis.

Such testimonies illustrate that **International IDEA's efforts to establish and launch the ICDC build alliances in this field which strengthens professional interaction and coordination among decision makers, donors, CSOs, and other policy influencers.**

8.3. ENHANCING DIALOGUE ON THE DEMOCRATIC POTENTIAL AND LIMITS OF CLIMATE LITIGATION

Funding

Enabled by and implemented with core funding.

By introducing a democracy perspective to the field of climate litigation, International IDEA has contributed to a growing global conversation on how climate litigation can strengthen democratic accountability. As evidenced by this outcome narrative this has inspired dialogue and cooperation across the legal, climate and democracy communities.

International IDEA's report [Let the Courts Decide? The Potential and Limitations of Climate Litigation from a Democracy Perspective](#), argues that climate litigation is not a technical legal remedy alone, but a democratic tool for strengthening democratic accountability, access to justice, and political participation. Launched during the 2025 International Civil Society Week in Bangkok, the Institute invited legal experts, democracy activists, and policymakers from across the Asia-Pacific region to engage with its findings.

Through a panel discussion with practitioners on the frontlines of environmental advocacy and litigation, the launch event created a space for exchange across the legal, climate and democracy communities. It inspired dialogue on how climate litigation can enhance transparency, clarify state obligations, and open new avenues for accountability, particularly where political processes have been exclusionary or failed to deliver. At the same time, speakers highlighted significant democratic risks and limitations of litigation, including structural barriers to access to justice, power asymmetries between citizen plaintiffs and state institutions, and the dangers of over-reliance on courts.

Youth and Indigenous voices were intentionally uplifted in these discussions, emphasizing how those most affected by environmental damage are increasingly engaging with legal avenues to demand accountability. As articulated by Raymond Baguilat, Head Legal Officer at the University of Pretoria Law Center Institute of Human Rights: “Education and awareness of rights are gateways for Indigenous peoples to participate and use litigation as a tool for protection.”

The dialogue initiated through the report launch was further reinforced by a Stockholm Series lecture by Professor Christina Voigt, hosted by International IDEA in December 2025. Her lecture extended the discussion beyond national contexts and situated climate litigation within a broader international and multilateral democratic framework. Hearing directly from a youth plaintiff in a Swedish climate litigation case helped ground these discussions in lived experience, showcasing the interconnectedness of the international climate justice movement.

CSOs working at the nexus of democracy and climate action were actively engaged, and these exchanges strengthened their understanding of how the international legal system underpins transnational climate litigation, increasing their ability to participate in informed, critical debates on the role of courts in climate justice.

Annex 1. International IDEA's results framework

Impact objective for Electoral Processes Impact indicators

Credible and well-run elections	<p>GSoD sub-attribute: Credible Elections² GSoD sub-attribute: Electoral participation³ GSoD indicator: Subnational elections free and fair⁴ GSoD indicator: A3 Electoral process⁵ GSoD indicator: EMB capacity⁶</p>
Boundary partners in Electoral Processes	Outcome objective
<p>Electoral assistance practitioners: Organizations and individuals who provide technical assistance and capacity development on how to plan for and organize credible and well-run elections⁷</p>	Electoral assistance practitioners provide contextualized support informed by norms, good practices and research
<p>Electoral policymakers: The legal entities and individuals who prepare and take decisions on the legal frameworks for electoral processes</p>	Electoral policymakers consider complexities and risks and support practices that foster inclusivity and accountability in electoral processes
<p>Electoral management bodies: Organizations or bodies with the sole purpose of, and legally responsible for, managing some or all of the elements essential to the conduct of elections and direct democracy instruments—such as referendums, citizens' initiatives and recall votes—if those are part of the legal framework</p>	Electoral management bodies recognize and respond to complexities and risks, and effectively implement the Electoral Cycle Approach
<p>Civil society (Electoral Processes): Organizations and associations that serve the public's needs in relation to electoral processes but operate outside of the governmental and corporate spheres</p>	Civil society promotes public participation in electoral processes and demands accountability from policymakers and electoral management bodies
Impact objectives for Constitution-Building Processes	Impact indicators
An inclusive constitution-building process informed by international knowledge and experience of constitutional design and processes	There are no suitable impact indicators for constitution-building <i>processes</i> . Progress is tracked with qualitative methods

² The extent to which elections for national, representative political office are free from irregularities.

³ The level of electoral participation by the adult voting age population in the most recent national election.

⁴ The extent to which subnational elections are free and fair.

⁵ The extent to which the electoral laws and framework are fair and implemented impartially by the relevant electoral management body.

⁶ The extent to which the electoral management body has sufficient staff and resources to administer a well-run national election.

⁷ This category of boundary partner includes organizations such as International IDEA, UNDP and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

Impact objective for Electoral Processes Impact indicators

The constitution is implemented under agreed constitutional frameworks and contributes to reduce tensions and conflict	GSoD sub-attribute: Personal Integrity and Security ⁸ GSoD indicator: Internal conflict ⁹
Boundary partners in Constitution-Building Processes	Outcome objective
Advisers to constitution makers: Organizations and individuals that provide technical assistance and capacity development on implementation of constitutional reform ¹⁰	Advisers to constitution makers use International IDEA's knowledge and networks to provide high-quality advice and advance inclusive practices in constitution-building processes
Constitution makers: Usually a body that has been mandated by a government to lead a process of constitutional reform and draft a constitution; Can also refer to an informal group that develops a draft constitution for a country without an official mandate	Constitution makers apply increased knowledge and skills to make informed choices regarding constitutional design and process
Civil society (CBP): Organizations and associations that serve the public's needs in relation to constitution-building processes but operate outside of governmental and corporate spheres	Civil society holds constitution makers accountable and promotes inclusive public participation in constitution-building processes
Constitutional implementers: The various bodies in a state that are responsible for upholding and implementing constitutional reform, most notably the judiciary	Constitutional implementers promote respect for the rule of law and constitutionalism under agreed constitutional frameworks
Impact objectives for political participation and representation	Impact indicators
Public administration is inclusive, impartial and rigorous	GSoD indicator: Rigorous and impartial public administration ¹¹ GSoD sub-attribute: Predictable enforcement ¹² GSoD indicator: Bureaucratic quality ¹³
Civil society engages freely with representative institutions in a democratic and effective way	GSoD sub-attribute: Civil Society ¹⁴ GSoD indicator: Political empowerment ¹⁵ GSoD sub-component: Freedom of the press ¹⁶
Parliament exercises its legislative, oversight and representation functions effectively	GSoD attribute: Representation ¹⁷ GSoD sub-attribute: Effective parliament ¹⁸

⁸ Measures the extent to which bodily integrity is respected and people are free from state and non-state political violence.

⁹ Measures the extent of political violence in a country and its actual or potential impact on governance.

¹⁰ This category of boundary partner includes organizations such as International IDEA, UNDP, the Venice Commission and the Max Planck Foundation.

¹¹ Measures the extent to which public officials are rigorous and impartial in the performance of their duties.

¹² Measures the extent to which the executive and public officials enforce laws in a predictable manner.

¹³ Measures the extent to which the bureaucracy has the strength and expertise to govern without drastic changes in policy or interruptions in government services.

¹⁴ Measures the extent to which citizens engage with civil society.

¹⁵ Measures the extent to which there are gaps between men and women in terms of political participation.

¹⁶ Measures the extent to which news media outlets are diverse, honest, critical of the government, free from censorship and independent.

¹⁷ Measures the extent to which elections for legislative and executive office are contested and inclusive.

¹⁸ Measures the extent to which the legislature can oversee the executive.

Impact objective for Electoral Processes Impact indicators

Political parties and movements contribute to a party system that is inclusive, responsive and accountable to all citizens	GSoD sub-attribute: Free political parties ¹⁹ GSoD indicator: B1 and B2 Political pluralism and participation ²⁰ GSoD indicator: Party system ²¹
Oversight agencies monitor, prevent and mitigate threats posed by both illegal and illicit money in politics	GSoD indicator: Executive oversight ²² GSoD indicator: Executive embezzlement and theft ²³ GSoD indicator: Executive bribery and corrupt exchanges ²⁴
Boundary partners in political participation and representation	Outcome objective
Political parties and movements: Political parties are registered, whereas political movements are more informal political groups that may or may not participate in elections ²⁵	Political parties and movements carry out their functions in a way that contributes to a party system that is inclusive, responsive and accountable to all citizens
Civil society (political participation and representation): Organizations and associations that serve the public's needs in relation to political participation and representation but operate outside of the governmental and corporate spheres	Civil society engages with representative institutions in an inclusive and effective way to improve public policy and practice, and to hold political decision makers to account
Oversight agencies: Governmental agencies or bodies that are mandated to provide oversight of the government's legislative and/or executive branches; The most recognizable oversight agencies are ombudsmen and national audit offices	Oversight agencies monitor, prevent and mitigate threats posed by both illegal and illicit money in politics
National and subnational parliaments: The legislative branch of government	Parliaments exercise their legislative, oversight and representative functions in a way that aims to be transparent, inclusive, responsive and accountable to all citizens
Public administration: The executive branch of government	Public administration exercises practices and decision-making processes to become more transparent, inclusive, responsive and accountable to all citizens
Impact Objective DA	Impact Indicators DA

¹⁹ Measures the extent to which political parties are free to form and to campaign for political office.

²⁰ B1 measures the extent to which people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and the extent to which the system is free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings. B2 measures the extent to which there is a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections.

²¹ Measures the extent to which the party system is stable and socially rooted.

²² Measures the extent to which or how likely it is that a body other than the legislature, such as a comptroller general, general prosecutor or ombudsman, would question or investigate executive branch officials if they were engaged in unconstitutional, illegal or unethical activity.

²³ Measures the extent to which members of the executive or their agents steal, embezzle or misappropriate public funds or other state resources for personal or family use.

²⁴ Measures the extent to which members of the executive or their agents grant favours in exchange for bribes or other material inducements.

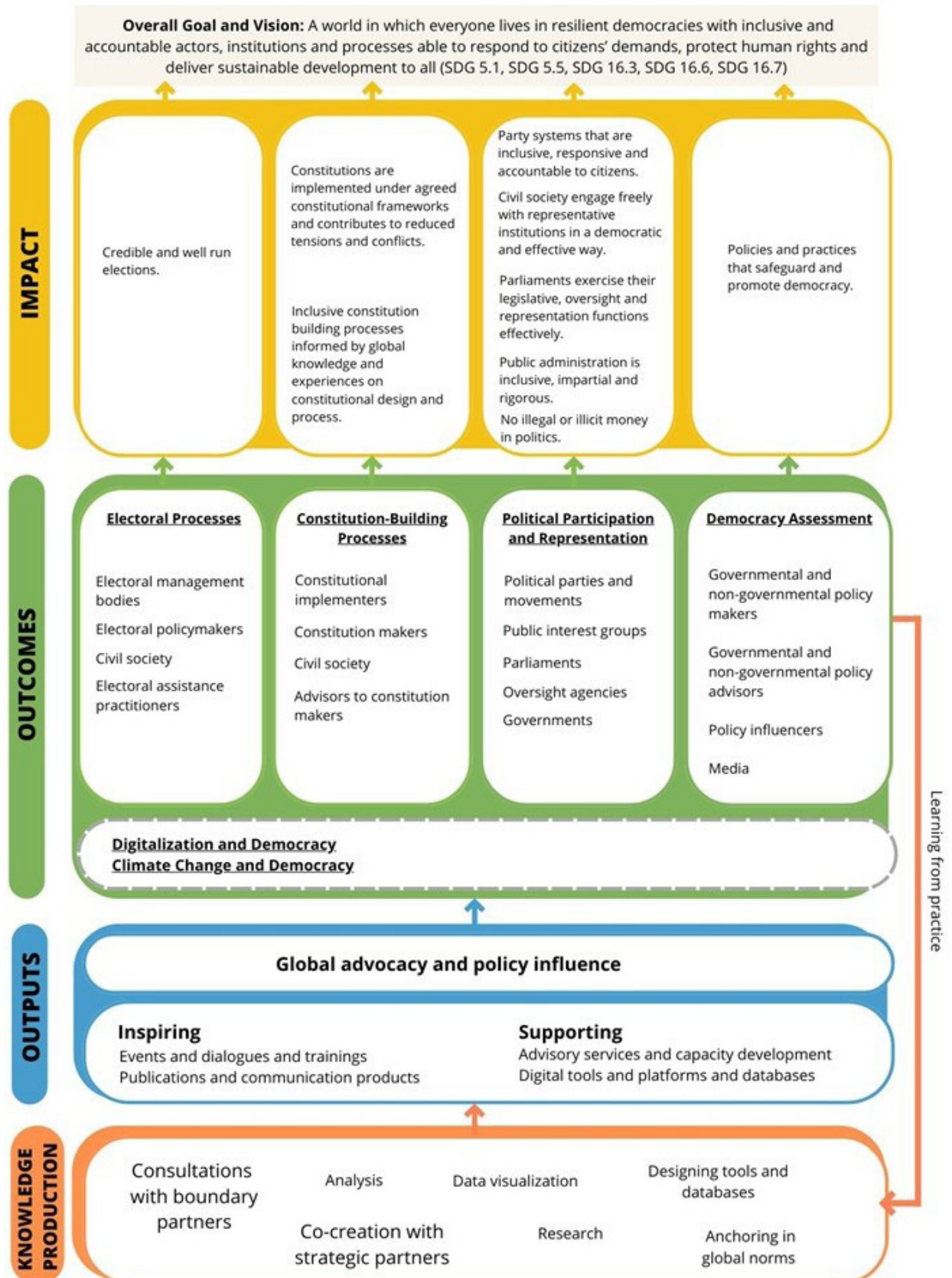
²⁵ Many political movements have had aims that established or broadened the rights of disadvantaged or subordinated groups, such as abolitionism, the women's suffrage movement and civil rights movements.

Impact objective for Electoral Processes Impact indicators

Policies and practices that safeguard and promote democracy	There are no suitable impact indicators for democracy assessment. Progress must be tracked using qualitative methods
Boundary partners in democracy assessment work	Outcome objective
Governmental and non-governmental policymakers: Governmental policymakers are strategic decision makers in parliament, the government and government agencies; non-governmental policymakers are strategic decision makers in civil society. This category of boundary partner includes governmental advisers to policymakers, such as parliamentary staff members and public servants, and non-governmental advisers to policymakers, such as thematic experts in civil society organization (CSOs).	Policymakers make evidence- and context-based decisions about how to promote democracy.
Policy influencers: Organizations and individuals that attempt to influence public policy through advocacy and lobbying; the most recognizable policy influencers are CSOs operating at the domestic and international levels, as well as academia.	Policy influencers design and implement effective and evidence-based advocacy campaigns and recommendations based on data and research, for promoting democracy.
Media: Traditional and non-traditional media	The media utilize evidence-based data and research to inform the public about democracy in a deeper, more nuanced, and more conceptually rigorous way, and hold decision makers to account to these standards.

Annex 2. International IDEA's Theory of Change

International IDEA's Theory of Change



About International IDEA

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization with 35 Member States founded in 1995, with a mandate to support sustainable democracy worldwide.

WHAT WE DO

We develop policy-friendly research related to elections, parliaments, constitutions, digitalization, climate change, inclusion and political representation, all under the umbrella of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We assess the performance of democracies around the world through our unique Global State of Democracy Indices and Democracy Tracker.

We provide capacity development and expert advice to democratic actors including governments, parliaments, election officials and civil society. We develop tools and publish databases, books and primers in several languages on topics ranging from voter turnout to gender quotas.

We bring states and non-state actors together for dialogues and lesson sharing. We stand up and speak out to promote and protect democracy worldwide.

WHERE WE WORK

Our headquarters is in Stockholm, and we have regional and country offices in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. International IDEA is a Permanent Observer to the United Nations and is accredited to European Union institutions.

OUR PUBLICATIONS AND DATABASES

We have a catalogue with more than 1,000 publications and over 25 databases on our website. Most of our publications can be downloaded free of charge.

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Does democracy assistance work? Does the work of International IDEA yield results? These are complex questions that International IDEA's Annual Outcome Report for 2025 strives to answer. It does so by presenting outcome narratives which describes how International IDEA has inspired and supported its partners to work more effectively. These narratives are to be regarded as qualitative indicators of the results of International IDEA's work.