



BEYOND THE BALLOTS

The Global Elections and Political Transitions Newsletter



Welcome to CEPPS

The Global Elections and Political Transitions (GEPT) mechanism is a USAID Leader With Associates award held by the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS). CEPPS is a joint venture of three partners— the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

To help you stay on top of the latest GEPT programmatic and technical leadership updates from around the globe, we would like to share relevant and timely updates on the issues that are important to you. **If you are interested in receiving our newsletter, kindly "Opt In" below.**

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Highlights

This “Beyond the Ballots” edition focuses on CEPPS' monitoring, evaluation and learning efforts under the GEPT mechanism. In addition to highlighting our recent success in Tunisia, this edition will feature the work we have done in creating the GEPT Indicator Database to showcase all USAID and custom indicator trends. We will also discuss the ongoing inclusive monitoring, evaluation and learning (IMEL) approach for our programs and outline our consortium-tiered collaborative learning approach (CLA), which ensures proactive learning and engagement in every step of the adaptive management cycle and allows CEPPS to maintain a high level of responsiveness in our work. Our engagement on these three initiatives ensures that CEPPS fulfills the promise of the mechanism's goal to conduct inclusive programs that recognize that pathways to political empowerment will vary dramatically among marginalized groups.



CEPPS MEL staff present the IMEL approaches taken under the GEPT award. (November 20, 2019)

Global/Regional Trends

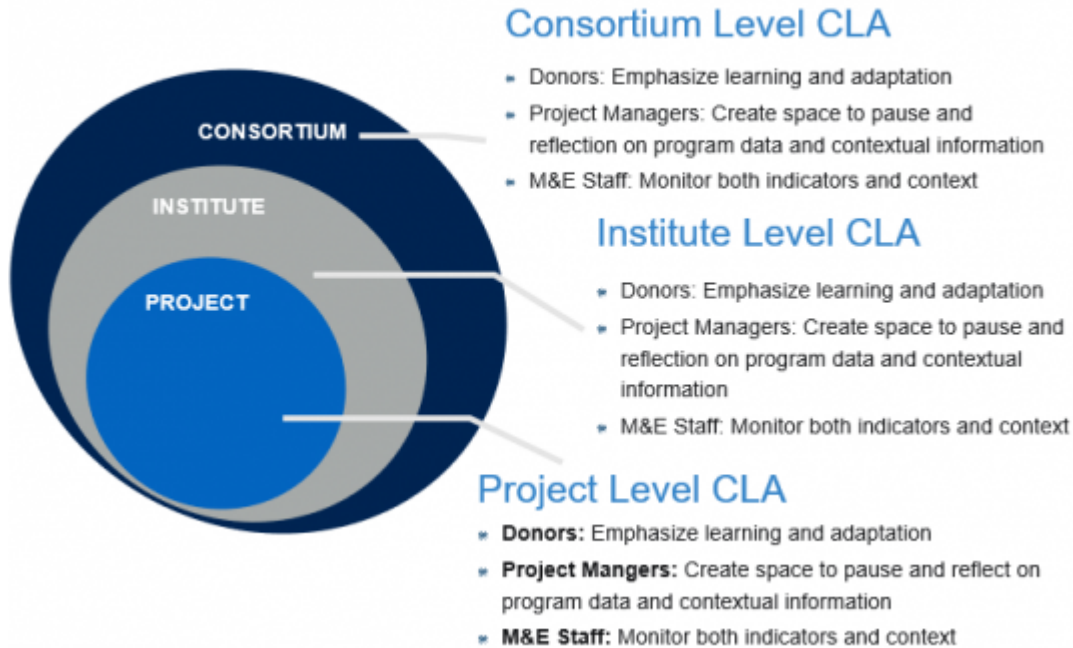
During the American Evaluation Association (AEA) conference in Minneapolis, MN this November, our CEPPS Monitoring and Evaluation Advisory Group (MEAG) presented a panel on “Evaluation and Learning as a Tool to Counter Democratic Backsliding.” The session was well attended by monitoring and evaluation practitioners who contributed to the constructive commentary with inquiries about the CEPPS approach to collaboration and learning in backsliding democracies. Linda Stern (NDI), Rakesh Sharma (IFES) and Natalie Trisilla (IRI) shared the CEPPS approach to intentionally collaborative evaluation and learning in the consortium. This includes jointly designed, conducted and utilized baseline and midline evaluations of current GEPT projects as well as jointly conducted reflection sessions to collaboratively and holistically consider a project’s results and challenges. These integrated approaches, implemented recently in Armenia, Burma, Jordan, Nepal and Ukraine, have resulted in more nuanced—and thus more actionable—recommendations and conclusions.



The CEPPS MEAG present on "Evaluation and Learning as a Tool to Counter Democratic Backsliding" at the AEA. (November 15, 2019).

Technical Leadership

Creating Decision-Making Space for CLA



The Collaborative Learning Approach (CLA) of CEPPS

With USAID's codification of CLA, donors and practitioners now have a mandate to collaboratively learn and adapt their programs to evolving contexts. This mandate helps MEL practitioners emphasize timely, context-relevant data utilization within the virtuous cycle of learning and adaptation.

In advancing CLA, CEPPS recognizes that learning and adaptation are "nested" within interdependent spaces. CLA's success is dependent upon the decision-making space we create at the project, institute, and consortium levels. Each space requires time and commitment to develop trusting relationships.

At the project level, donors need to signal their openness to evidence-based adaptation by emphasizing performance monitoring in service of learning and adaptation; and prioritizing outcomes over outputs. Program managers need to intentionally pause and candidly reflect on their program's trajectory within an evolving context. This includes regular reflection and analysis sessions before reporting on progress, like CEPPS partners do in Armenia, Nepal, and Jordan. Project-level MEL staff also need to support the CLA process by monitoring and documenting performance indicators, critical assumptions, risks and opportunities.

At the institute level, each CEPPS partner is creating channels for capturing adaptation and learning from programming, establishing an ongoing discussion about what we are learning from the practice on the ground. Additionally, the institutes are demonstrating their values: that learning from failure is part of the quality improvement cycle and should be embraced and utilized.

At the consortium level, CEPPS supports collaborative learning in several ways. First, the consortium promotes peer-to-peer learning through joint baselines and midterm evaluations. To date, CEPPS has conducted 13 evaluation in 12 countries. Working under a common evaluative framework, CEPPS partners analyze synergy and possibilities for increased impact created across joint programming. Second, the GEPT Database supports data analysis at the project, organization, and consortium level, tracking more than 1,000 indicators in 86 countries. Lastly, the CEPPS MEAG and the CEPPS Knowledge

Management Committee collaboratively generate technical learning products and tools for use within and beyond the consortium.

Through these processes, CEPPS is utilizing data for CLA at the project level, promoting a culture of learning at the institute level, and channeling learning within the consortium to generate new knowledge and insights for the larger DRG community.

Nepali youth vote for their favorite social media site in a mock poll event organized by IFES and local partner, Association of Youth Organizations Nepal (AYON), on International Youth Day. (August 10, 2019)



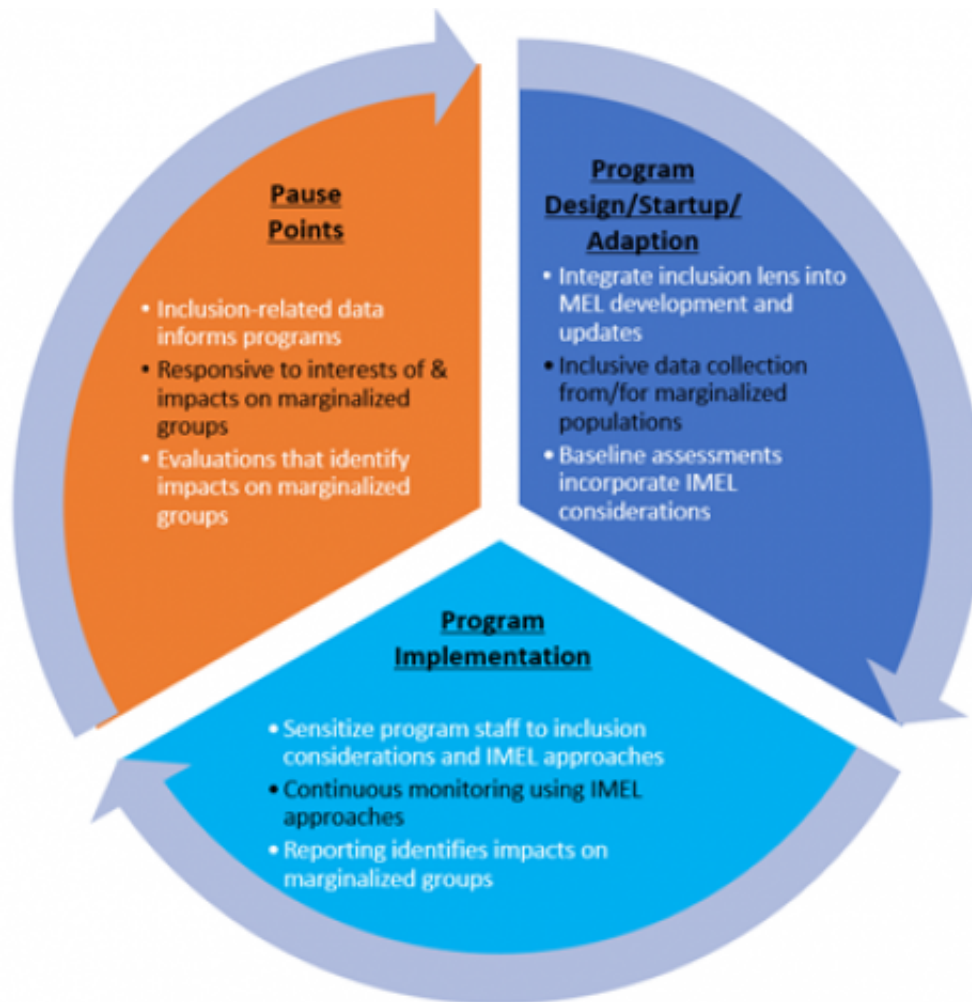
Inclusive Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Designing and integrating inclusive monitoring, evaluation and learning (IMEL) processes is critical to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of identity, are meaningfully represented in democracy and governance programming and can fully exercise their rights as citizens. CEPPS is prioritizing an integrated approach to IMEL practices by considering key inclusion questions when designing measurement strategies and metrics, data collection and analysis tools, protocols for reflection sessions, baseline assessments and internal evaluations. Such a coordinated approach better positions CEPPS to collect richer, more reliable data that provides insight into program interventions and our interaction with marginalized populations, ultimately fostering more inclusive, responsive and effective programming.

IMEL is grounded in well-established principles of inclusion and M&E approaches in the democracy and governance sector and will support CEPPS' goal of fully inclusive programming that advances democracy and democratic citizenship. It considers how MEL approaches can be designed in an inclusive manner in the formative stages of a program or when adapting to changing program environments by integrating an inclusion perspective. It also examines how that design is then operationalized through more reliable and effective data collection and reporting. Importantly, this approach uses more inclusive data to consider program effectiveness in addressing inclusion challenges, as well as adaptations that may be necessary to better address and advance inclusion within the program. This approach is iterative so that challenges and opportunities are consistently addressed (see figure below) and barriers, needs and priorities of marginalized groups are more fully considered in order to better advance program objectives and inclusive development more broadly. If baseline assessments, for example, are not inclusive and

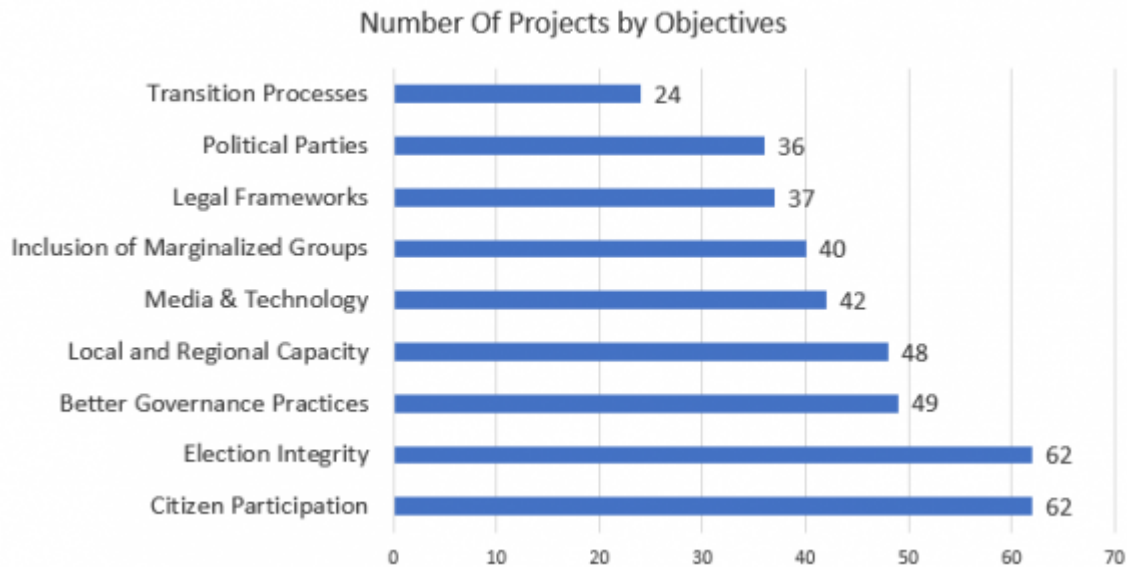
gender sensitive, program implementers may not collect appropriate data or might not measure program impact accurately. Designing and implementing inclusive MEL efforts also promotes adaptive management by better enabling program staff to be responsive to the realities facing marginalized groups and make adjustments as necessary to meet program objectives. CEPPS held a well-received discussion on the development and use of this IMEL approach in a public event held at IRI on November 20th.

CEPPS Inclusive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (IMEL) Program Cycle



Selected Results

CEPPS has created the integrated GEPT Indicators Database to help foster programmatic learning. In total, 34 core USAID indicators and over 1,000 custom indicators developed by CEPPS in 86 GEPT projects are housed in the database. Custom indicators in addition to core mechanism indicators provide CEPPS and its partners with a holistic view from which to assess the reach and scale of GEPT projects in addressing the seven programmatic objectives.



The chart above shows the seven objectives under GEPT and the associate award involvement under each of them.

Currently, CEPPS is developing reporting functionality that will enable its program staff to access templates of common MEL reports, including Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) reporting and Performance Indicators Reference Sheets (PIRS) directly from the database. This reporting functionality also will allow USAID to run indicator data quickly using programmatic, regional and/or thematic criteria for its own reporting and monitoring purposes. In addition to reporting, CEPPS also is using the data to inform learning processes, such as reflection and adaptation sessions in programs in Nepal and Armenia, and in its outreach and public information reporting.

Program Focus



Political Participation of Marginalized Groups in Tunisia

Picture to the left: IRI staffer, Hela Bellakanji, casts her vote proudly for Tunisia's future. (October 6, 2019)

Over the past year in Tunisia, CEPPS and its local partners undertook a range of initiatives that had significant effects on the engagement of traditionally marginalized groups in the country, specifically rural women and youth. Through past programming experience as well as an initial assessment, CEPPS identified these two groups as acutely underrepresented in and excluded from electoral processes.

A door-to-door voter registration campaign led by CEPPS-trained women ambassadors, accompanied by rural women who had participated in prior campaigns, reached 6,028 rural women ahead of the presidential and parliamentary elections. CEPPS's gender analysis demonstrated that such a targeted, intensive approach was necessary to reach rural women, whose high rates of illiteracy, limited mobility and geographic isolation created layers of barriers to political participation. As a result of the campaign, which took place in six governorates, 1,815 rural women registered to vote, representing 30.1 percent of those reached by the campaign. CEPPS also deployed an outreach caravan for the women ambassadors, allowing them to talk with women in their homes and in public areas to inform them about the 2019 national elections, and where and how to register to vote.

CEPPS also supported 33 Youth Change Makers (YCM) to raise awareness among youth about the importance of political participation and registering to vote for the 2019 parliamentary and presidential elections. YCMs carried out debates, trainings, festivals, awareness campaigns and sports events in ten governorates across Tunisia, reaching more than 27,000 young people. CEPPS also worked with two popular Tunisian singers to produce a song to address youth disillusionment with politics. The song was widely played on the radio and was accessed more than 250,000 times on YouTube.

Reading List

- o [Want to Prevail Against China? Prioritize Democracy Assistance](#)
- o [Europe, the Great Powers, and their Challenges](#)
- o [Why has Colombia's President become so Unpopular?](#)
- o [Sri Lanka Pre-Election Assessment Statement](#)
- o [Tunisia Parliamentary Elections Statement](#)
- o [Tunisia Statement on Presidential Election \(1st Round\)](#)
- o [Raising Voices in Closed Spaces: Strategic Communications Planning for Nonpartisan Citizen Election Observer Groups: Step-by-Step Guide](#)
- o [Violence Against Women in Elections Online: A Social Media Analysis Tool](#)
- o [Social Media, Disinformation and Electoral Integrity](#)

- o [Internally Displaced Persons' Electoral Participation Gap](#)
- o [Saba 2019 Island Council and Senate Electoral College Elections: Technical Observation and Assessment](#)

CEPPS in the News

- o [Foreign election monitors concerned by detention of Tunisian candidate \(Daily Mail\)](#)
- o [Tunisia's democracy: A source of inspiration for the Arab world \(Middle East Eye\)](#)
- o [Young Bosnians Turn Hateful Graffiti Into Joyful Art \(Balkan Insight\)](#)
- o [Open audition: Ukraine's comedian president invites citizens to run in July poll \(Reuters\)](#)
- o [Kyrgyzstan's Zere Asylbek Back With a Moody Political Track \(The Diplomat\)](#)
- o ['He achieved nothing': Bitter legacy of Tunisian vendor who sparked uprising \(Middle East Eye\)](#)
- o [A Coup Offered Hope to Zimbabwe. Has Its New President Delivered? \(The New York Times\)](#)
- o [In a blow to its political elites, a modest law professor is set to become Tunisia's next president \(The Washington Post\)](#)
- o [Making youth voices count \(Myanmar Times\)](#)
- o [Taiwan, US stage GCTF workshop on defending democracy \(Taiwan Today\)](#)
- o [IRI to Hold Consultative Forum on Extractives Industry \(Freedom Newspaper, Gambia\)](#)
- o [Reps. Titus, Young Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Promote Disability Rights Worldwide \(Rep. Titus Press Release\)](#)
- o [Kyrgyzstan: Practicing democracy in summer camp \(DW\)](#)
- o [No transparency: Who pays for Africa's election campaigns? \(DW\)](#)
- o [The credibility challenge: how democracy aid influences election violence \(Taylor and Francis Online\)](#)
- o [Recharge Canadian international development assistance \(IRPP\)](#)

CEPPS Partners

Core Partners

International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES): [View site](#)

International Republican Institute (IRI): [View site](#)

National Democratic Institute (NDI): [View site](#)

Associate Partners

American Bar Association's Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI): [View site](#)

Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL): [View site](#)

Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA): [View site](#)

International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL): [View site](#)

Internews: [View site](#)

Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR): [View site](#)

Search for Common Ground (SFCG): [View site](#)

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