



Katherine Stalter &lt;kstalter@ndi.org&gt;

## Beyond the Ballots | May 2019

1 message

**GEPT Newsletter** <newsletter@cepps.org>  
Reply-To: GEPT Newsletter <newsletter@cepps.org>  
To: Katherine Stalter <kstalter@ndi.org>

Thu, May 30, 2019 at 5:39 PM

[View in browser](#)

# BEYOND THE BALLOTS

The Global Elections and Political Transitions Newsletter



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), a joint venture of three partners — the [International Foundation for Electoral Systems \(IFES\)](#), the [International Republican Institute \(IRI\)](#), and the [National Democratic Institute \(NDI\)](#).



## GLOBAL / REGIONAL TRENDS



*Managing Director of Hmwe Garbage Collection Limited testifying at the Shan State Hluttaw's Public Hearing*

Recent CEPPS public opinion research in several countries has shown the negative impact corruption can have on confidence in governance. In Kosovo, a CEPPS survey found that the increase in optimism from the 2017 parliamentary elections has evaporated, with corruption as the second greatest concern to citizens. In Moldova, a CEPPS poll found that 77 percent of citizens see corruption as “a very big issue.” Similarly, in Jordan, CEPPS research found that most citizens attribute the poor economy to corruption. Survey respondents in Kosovo and Jordan further noted that failure of political representatives to address these concerns is eroding confidence in democratic institutions.

These are deep-rooted challenges without a quick fix. However, CEPPS is examining and addressing corruption and unresponsive governance through innovative global and country-level programs. Under the [Learning from Emerging Approaches to Party Programming \(LEAPP\)](#) technical leadership project, for example, CEPPS is researching under which conditions civic interventions have incentivized more inclusive, responsive and accountable party policy processes. CEPPS continues to apply findings from the [Abuse of State Resources technical leadership project](#) in the design of new programs that seek to tackle corruption in elections. In Burma, CEPPS supported two state legislatures to hold their first public hearings to gain citizen input on proposed bills. In Tunisia, engagement between IWatch and the Court of Accounts demonstrated how an observer group and electoral oversight body can work constructively to address corruption issues in elections.



## TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP

### Raising Their Voices: How effective are pro-youth laws and policies?



*Youth collaborate during a Young Political Leaders School in Ukraine*

CEPPS recently [published a new report](#), the result of a collaborative research effort over a two year period, exploring the effect of pro-youth laws and policies on youth civic and political engagement. With support from the USAID GROW team, CEPPS formally launched the report at a half-day event coordinated by EnCompass at The Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. The event featured remarks from USAID's Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator Kate Somvongsiri, DRG Center Director Tim Meisburger, and Agency Youth Coordinator, Mike McCabe. Youth leaders from Afghanistan and Uganda drew from their experience working with DRG implementers to provide perspective on challenges and considerations for practitioners looking to engage youth. In addition, CEPPS experts shared an overview of the research findings and co-facilitated with youth leaders a series of deep dive discussions on the key topics of the report and their implications for practitioners.

The report analyzes four pro-youth legal and political mechanisms and offers recommendations for funders, implementers and local partners considering the implications of national youth policy strategies, reducing the minimum age for voting and candidacy, youth electoral quotas, and political party youth wings. The research on each of these participatory mechanisms suggests mixed results for substantive youth engagement, and provides valuable insights into the advantages and pitfalls of each approach. The findings emphasize the importance of engaging donor initiatives like Thinking and Working Politically (TWP), and using tools like Applied Political Economy Analysis to understand the incentives that lead political elites to discourage or facilitate reform implementation. For more information, contact Chris Stoller at [cstoller@iri.org](mailto:cstoller@iri.org).



## SELECTED RESULTS

## Ukraine CEC Training Center Initiatives



Findings from CEPPS midterm evaluations are beginning to provide valuable lessons on the ways in which mentoring initiatives build and sustain the capacity of local partners. Two examples from Ukraine and Tunisia are illustrative in this regard. In Ukraine, CEPPS/IFES support for the Training Center of the Central Election Commission (CEC) since 2016 has built significant internal training capacity. Previously, IFES support was required for these training activities; personnel in the Center are now confident they can effectively manage this important task without continued assistance. The Center has made such great strides on this front that other government agencies are using its services for their own training needs. The CEC also plans to work with relevant authorities to incorporate the Training Center wholly within the CEC organizational structure, in recognition of its clear value for building relationships with civil society through the provision of training programs on elections topics.

In Tunisia, domestic observer groups have sufficient capacity to observe different elements of the election process, but have not been able to coordinate in the past to ensure comprehensive observation. CEPPS/NDI has mentored six observer groups since 2017 to build their coordination capacity and develop partnerships for advocacy and communications using their findings. The result was a comprehensive observation effort for the 2018 Municipal Elections that contributed to public confidence in the integrity of the election process, and provided valuable data to electoral bodies and other stakeholders. Based on their findings, the six groups collectively issued 22 recommendations to electoral stakeholders with an aim to improve the conduct of the 2019 elections. It also established a model that can be sustained beyond the life of the CEPPS project with appropriate resources.



### PROGRAM FOCUS

## El Salvador: Restoring Trust and Public Understanding in the Nation's Electoral Processes

In February, voters in El Salvador went to the polls to elect a new president amid numerous socioeconomic and political challenges, including high rates of violence, economic stagnation, and an ongoing battle against corruption. The credibility of these important elections were affected by low levels of trust in the Supreme Electoral Tribunal. According to a [Latinobarometro poll](#), before the election the TSE had the lowest level of trust and confidence of all government institutions in the country, with 82 percent of respondents saying they had little to no confidence in their electoral institutions. Recognizing that a credible election could help restore trust in the beleaguered electoral process, the CEPSS partners worked together to prepare both citizens and officials for Election Day.



*A JRV member (poll worker) holds up a ballot during the vote count on February 3, 2019*

CEPPS/IFES supported the TSE's information technology division to test its transmission systems prior to Election Day, identify and address potential problems, and ensure the TSE would be able to release the election results accurately and steadily. Efforts to support the TSE to engage with voters complemented these activities. CEPPS/IRI partnered with TSE to conduct a voter education and get-out-the-vote campaign #QueChivoVotar ("Voting is cool") reaching approximately 440,000 people. The campaign included radio and television advertisements, a social media campaign, and a voter education mobile unit – the *Vota Bus* – which allowed voters to practice casting their ballot and to find their voting station's location.

On Election Day, CEPPS/NDI assisted the newly established "Observador Electoral 2019" (OE2019) consortium to deploy 850 domestic election observers to monitor a statistically representative sample of 700 polling stations. Observers reported an overall successful election day, and increasing public confidence in the electoral proceedings. Additionally, this observation effort increased youth engagement in the electoral process by mobilizing a new coalition of public and private universities. Together, and by establishing meaningful partnerships with local organizations and institutions, CEPPS partners contributed to a

credible and successful election in El Salvador, supporting the country's continued democratic progress.

## Armenia: Supporting Democratic Gains



*CEPPS/NDI shared international best practices for debates ahead of the December 5 live, televised parliamentary debate in Armenia*

In September 2018, CEPPS partners began a four-year GEPT award “Strengthening Elections and Political Processes in Armenia” (SEPPA) to support the country’s remarkable political transition. During the snap parliamentary elections in December 2018 the partners were active in supporting a professionally-managed election with an active and informed electorate. CEPPS/IFES trained 61 poll-worker trainers and further supported 700 training sessions at 55 locations throughout the country for 20,000 Precinct Election Commission (PEC) members representing all 2,100 PECs. In collaboration with national TV broadcasters Public TV Armenia, and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty’s Armenian service, CEPPS/NDI supported a range of pre-election civic education programs, including one-on-one interviews with party leaders and thematic debates -- in addition to the culminating eleven-party debate on December 5th. CEPPS/IRI released results of its national public opinion poll, and conducted a series of consultations with the government, the National Assembly and the general public. The CEPPS partners are working with the newly-elected legislature as well as other state and non-governmental partners to further consolidate Armenia’s significant democratic gains in its new era of representative governance and accountability.



## READING LIST

- A disability [rights assessment](#) of the 2018 municipal elections in Tunisia, with key recommendations to improve access and opportunities for persons with disabilities
- [America in Comparative Perspective](#), a chapter in *Electoral Integrity in America: Securing Democracy* evaluating the U.S. electoral process using the IFES Electoral Integrity Assessment framework
- A [research paper](#) outlining the various legal approaches to election annulments and the considerations involved when determining whether to annul an election result
- The [Holistic Exposure and Adaptation Testing \(HEAT\)](#) process is a methodology for EMBs to use to strengthen cybersecurity in elections
- A [new toolkit](#) to provide election observers with the resources to incorporate a disability rights perspective into their observation missions
- An [election observation mission report](#) for the 2018 Zimbabwe elections, including recommendations to various stakeholders
- A [new resource](#) to help civic and political activists understand disinformation and protect information integrity
- Think10 is a [new interactive tool](#) providing guidance for politically active women to assess and enhance their safety
- The Economist Intelligence Unit releases its [2018 Democracy Index](#)
- [New research](#) from IRI answers the question: Why Don't Tunisians Know Their Rights?
- Here are [three elections](#) to watch in 2019
- The role of the Communist Party as [China's influence](#) grows in the developing world



## CEPPS IN THE NEWS

- Bustle: [Violence Against Women In Politics Goes Far Beyond The Midterms — And The United States](#)
- All Africa: [NDI and IRI urge Political Parties to Accept Election Outcomes in Nigeria](#)
- Foreign Policy: [Armenia's Revolution Will Not Be Monopolized](#)
- Foreign Policy: [Zimbabwe Crackdown Saps Hopes of Reform](#)
- Politico: [How Ukraine became the battleground for global cyber warfare](#)
- Zero Project: [Zero Project announces the winners of its 2019 “Innovative Practices and Policies” awards](#)
- Council on Foreign Relations: [Women candidates in Zimbabwe face harassment and threats of violence](#)



## 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](#)



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**CEPPS** | Strengthening Democracy through Partnership

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

1225 I St, NW, Suite 800  
Washington, DC 20005

[Unsubscribe from this newsletter](#)

[Opt-out of all future mailings from us](#)