



## Factsheet

# Center for Anti-Corruption and Democratic Trust

At IFES, the Center for Anti-Corruption and Democratic Trust builds election integrity and civic trust by tackling persistent and emerging corruption challenges present in electoral processes and that pose threat to democracy. As an incubator for thought leadership and technical practice, we are reinforcing our decades of experience with new evidence and approaches for innovative responses. Driven by our local partners, we elevate the voices of democratic champions in pursuit of democracy that delivers for all.

### Political finance integrity

Unregulated money in politics corrupts and undermines the electoral process. IFES works to:

- Strengthen political and campaign finance regulation and oversight capacity;
- Support civil society and media monitoring, investigating, and advocacy;
- Leverage open data and transparency technology;
- Facilitate research and awareness-raising activities;
- Work with partners in multilateral fora to share information, good practices, and develop new standards.

### Independent and accountable electoral institutions

Independent institutions are crucial for a vibrant democratic culture, providing oversight and protecting processes from manipulation. IFES works with election bodies, audit institutions, anti-corruption agencies, human rights bodies, and judicial commissions to strengthen democratic safeguards against influence and capture. This includes institutional autonomy and accountability, strategic planning, and risk-based management.

### Investigating and prosecuting election offenses and crimes

Administrative, civil, and criminal investigation, prosecution, and sanction of election violations strengthens election integrity and accountability. IFES employs a range of strategies, including:

- Support to electoral bodies, specialized investigators, anti-corruption agencies, and prosecutors to enhance responses to and cooperation against election crimes
- Assist civil society and media to monitor and investigate electoral offenses and crimes
- Partner with civic actors to engage in strategic litigation, improve access to information requests, and conduct responsible messaging.

### Responsible use of state resources

Abuse of state resources skews political fairness, disrupts government services, and undermines trust in democratic norms and values. Over time, incumbent abuse can contribute to state capture. IFES focuses on prevention and detection through:

- Strengthening oversight bodies, including by introducing good practices for detecting abuse through audits
- Supporting civil society and media in monitoring and developing advocacy campaigns for enhanced accountability
- Promoting legal and regulatory reform.

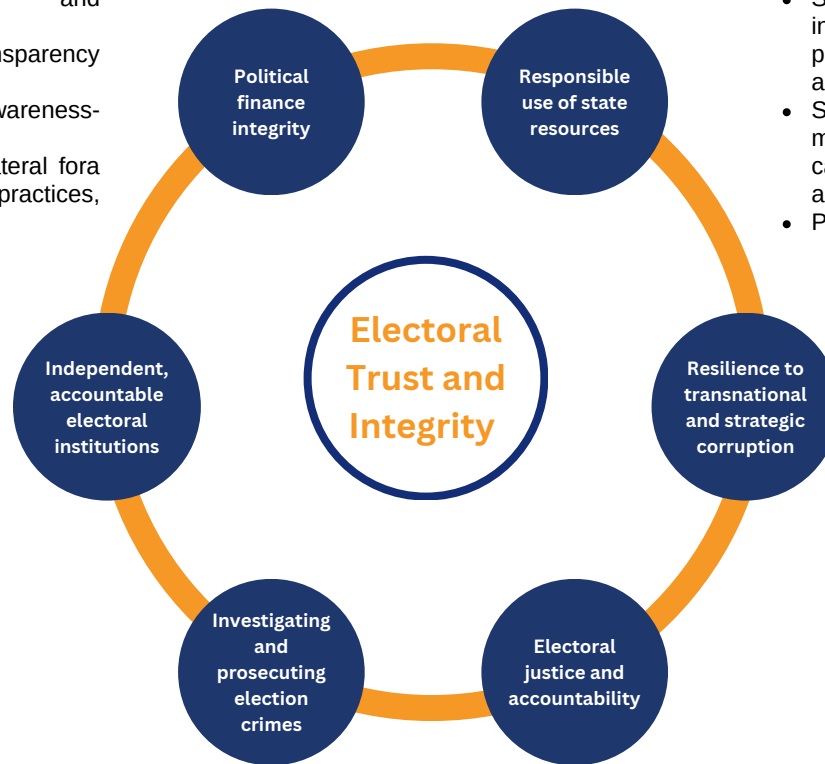
### Resilience to transnational and strategic corruption

Malign foreign actors use corruption and illicit financial flows to disrupt elections, manipulate public opinion, and undermine democracy. IFES collaborates across government institutions, civil society, and the media to prevent, detect, and prosecute foreign-led corruption and its domestic proxies. IFES is also exploring how collective action can mobilize local actors against transnational corruption through advocacy and reform.

### Electoral justice and accountability

People-centered access to electoral justice and fair and transparent resolution of election disputes is crucial for maintaining trust in elections. IFES works with electoral and judicial bodies and civil society to:

- Ensure compliance with international and regional election dispute resolution (EDR) and electoral justice standards
- Refine legislation and rules of procedure underpinning electoral justice systems
- Bolster effective and fair investigation and arbitration
- Promote access for all citizens to electoral justice
- Support digital tools and open data to enhance dispute management in a timely and effective manner.



# Highlighting Our Impact

IFES Center for Anti-Corruption and Democratic Trust

## Southeast Asia: Driving Collective Action in Regional Anti-Corruption Initiatives

To advance anti-corruption work in Southeast Asia, IFES is working through the Anti-Corruption and Transparency (ACT) Program, which engages ASEAN Member States to transform analysis into action by comprehensively strengthening ASEAN's anti-corruption efforts and leveraging commitments for national policy action. Its successes include hosting high-level dialogues, supporting civil society engaged in innovative anti-corruption programming, and deepening collaboration with ASEAN officials. Recently, ACT expanded the Southeast Asia Network for Transparency, Accountability, and Governance (SEANTAG), intended to drive collective action to improve anti-corruption through ASEAN and other regional bodies.

## Tanzania: Enhancing Readiness of Judicial Officers to Enhance Electoral Justice in Local Elections

IFES supported the Judicial Training Institute of Lushoto with the development of a training curriculum on electoral justice for the local government election scheduled in 2024, drawing from IFES's global judicial EDR tool. The training of trainers held in September provided judges, magistrates, and deputy registrars with enhanced knowledge on procedural and open electoral justice, types of pre and post-election disputes including electoral corruption, election remedies, and the role of the courts in protecting information integrity in elections.

## Ghana: Strengthening Civic Monitoring and Analysis of Money in Politics

Ghana's regulations on campaign finance, in place since the return to civil rule in 1992, have seldom been enforced, which is a great concern given the significant and increasing amounts of money flowing through Ghanaian politics. IFES supported civil society groups in Ghana to monitor political contributions and expenses during the December 2024 elections, aiming to gather data to inform legal reform efforts after the elections. The goal is to increase transparency regarding money in politics and to level the playing field in Ghanaian elections, allowing the country to strengthen its leading role in West African democratic processes.

## North Macedonia: Delivering Effective Governance through Institutional Integrity Training

In partnership with the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (SCPC), IFES delivered a series of integrity trainings for the country's 100 appointed integrity officers in central and local institutions. Under the National Strategy for Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest, these integrity officers are charged with integrity oversight responsibilities, including drafting integrity plans and rulebooks and monitoring their delivery. With IFES assistance, more than 80 integrity officers learned about the fundamentals of the integrity system and challenges and obstacles for implementation, leading to 53 new integrity declarations signed by various state institutions at the central and local level.

## Lebanon: Supporting Intersectional Advocacy to Counter Corruption and Political Exclusion

Using its flagship *Intersectionality Assessment*, IFES analyzed how marginalized communities experience corruption and political exclusion at the local level in Lebanon, before partnering with civil society organizations to build intersectional advocacy plans to counter corruption and enhance participation. With a civic coalition representing women, persons with disabilities, youth, and other at-risk communities, IFES is supporting locally-driven action to monitor local governance, improve access to justice, and advocate for legal reform at the national and international level.

## El Salvador: Strengthening Political Finance and Cryptocurrency Oversight and Integrity

IFES partnered with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) to create the institution's first Political Finance Oversight Unit, officially inaugurated in May 2024. To outfit the Unit with the tools it needs to execute its functions, IFES supported the development of an online platform to streamline collection and analysis of financial reports and monitor the adherence of political parties to electoral law. The platform also includes a tool to monitor and report on cryptocurrency contributions made to campaigns in El Salvador, where Bitcoin is legal tender. This tool not only facilitates the collection of previously unavailable data of cryptocurrency in campaigns, but also builds the TSE's oversight performance for illicit political finance.