

## COUNTERPART'S CAPABILITIES

Counterpart designs and manages development activities driven by our mission to strengthen the capacity of local institutions to address community-defined needs by focusing on partnerships with civil society and building strategic alliances with local leaders, organizations, and networks. Our elections-related work supports civil society in all aspects of the democratic process. From election observation to voter education campaigns, candidate forums, and advocacy for electoral reform, Counterpart focuses on accountable democratic processes with the will of the people -- and their inclusive civic engagement -- at the center. Our programs help establish the foundation of a vibrant, well-informed, and independent civil society that is able to play its role effectively in planning, monitoring, and expanding voter participation in elections.

Counterpart's election activities are demand-driven and based on local understanding of context and need. Partnership with local institutions, deep understanding of local context, and inclusive social accountability all lead to community acceptance and genuine impact. Counterpart has a rich history of supporting civil society around the world to further democratic rights generally and civil society's role in elections specifically. Many of Counterpart's key stakeholders are communities most in need: youth, women, the very poor, and residents of fragile states. Our approach to build local capacity reaches citizens across geographic, cultural, political, economic, and security environments, enabling support for national and local elections.

Counterpart provides a wide range of technical, analytical, and project management support for local civil society organizations involved in elections and democratic processes, with a focus on building the capacity of our local partners. This means that we provide technical assistance, mentoring, training, and financial support through grants to local partners. Counterpart's elections-related technical and analytical services include:

- Training for the design of voter and civic education materials.
- Grassroots public outreach training and creation of public outreach campaigns.
- Grants management and CSO capacity building.
- Coordination between key electoral stakeholders and political/contextual analysis.
- Support for domestic long election monitoring and short-term domestic election observation.

## GLOBAL EXPERIENCE AND LOCAL IMPACT

### SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

- **Burundi: The Youth for Peace Building in Burundi** (USAID, \$3M, 2014–17) project's goal was to reduce the risk of youth participation in violence around the 2015 general elections. Counterpart improved Burundian CSOs' capacities to support youth-led community mobilization and youth-led peace building and violence prevention activities.
- **Mozambique: The Civic Partnership for Good Governance** project (USAID, \$12M, 2016–20) partners with Mozambican CSOs to improve accountable and effective democratic governance, including free and fair elections. Counterpart facilitates civil society observation of electoral cycles to enhance credibility and participation in elections. CSO partners fielded 120 long-term observers to monitor the 2018 municipal elections. For the 2019 presidential elections, Counterpart supports broad-based, citizen election observation, integrating long-term and short-term needs to provide oversight of the entire electoral process.
- **Democratic Republic of Congo:** Counterpart's portfolio in DRC includes the *Demokrasia* project (USAID and DFID, \$20M, 2015–2019) and the U.S. State Department-funded **Promoting Increased Civic Engagement in the Lead-up to Elections (PRICE)** project (\$1M, 2016–17). *Demokrasia* assists local CSOs to promote informed, active, and peaceful citizen participation throughout DRC's delayed election cycle. As



of March 2019, nearly 4 million voters were estimated reached through face-to-face sensitization campaigns and an estimated 10.8 million through radio campaigns. PRICE activities strengthen CSO capacity to provide civic and voter education reaching over 900,000 citizens.

## MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA

- **Afghanistan:** USAID's flagship **Afghanistan Civic Engagement Program (ACEP)** (\$79M, 2013–19) increases CSO and the media's expertise in democracy and governance while expanding civic engagement. The project provides grants to a large and diverse network of CSOs at the provincial, regional, and national levels. These groups conduct voter and civic education outreach to communities in 30 of 34 provinces. They work in conjunction with local election authorities to inform citizens and resolve issues related to citizen access. ACEP also facilitates dialogue between civil society and the Afghan election management bodies.
- **Global: Innovation for Change (I4C)** (USAID, \$6M, 2015–19) combats disinformation -- including related to elections -- by working with a diverse virtual network of Asian CSOs, human rights and digital rights activists, media, bloggers, and citizens.
- **Timor-Leste:** The *Ba Distrito* project (USAID, \$5M, 2013–17) increased institutional and human capacity at local levels to administer local elections and facilitate access to justice and basic government services more effectively. These efforts focused on building the local governments to strengthen citizen participation. *Ba Distrito* delivered 895 broadcasts of films, videos, debates, radio programs, and PSAs to support voter and civic education and implemented civic and voter education messaging through 64 community theater performances.

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

- **Ecuador:** The **Civil Society Assistance Program** (USAID, \$3M, 2014–19) provided technical and financial support to local CSOs to enhance greater transparency and accountability with a focus on the 2017 presidential and parliamentary elections. Through the *Ecuador Decides Initiative*, citizens developed policy proposals on topics including education, the environment, and public reform. Candidate debates involved 46 candidates representing 16 political parties/movements. Five provinces were organized to promote open discussion and informed voting. Afterwards, CSO partners monitored the new president's actions towards implementing campaign commitments.
- **Guyana:** The **Youth and Citizens' Participation Project** (USAID, \$1M, 2016–17) strengthened the capacity of youth and civil society to increase citizen electoral understanding and participation. Working in partnership with the Guyana Elections Commission, the project conducted 213 voter education events focusing on youth and women across all 10 regional departments.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more, please explore Counterpart's *Inclusive Social Accountability Framework* here: [counterpart.org/inclusive-social-accountability](https://counterpart.org/inclusive-social-accountability).

## IN THE NEWS

### WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE: CONGO DEMOKRASIA VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGNS

*Through citizen forums and Tribunes d'Expression Populaire, the USAID/UKAID co-funded civic education project makes opportunities for groups to receive information specific to their circumstances*

In Kivu province, Counterpart's Demokrasia project team worked with the provincial branch of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) to organize a voter registration caravan to coincide with the launch of voter registration in Kasai province. Demokrasia organized three citizen forums for historically marginalized communities about the voter registration process and a three-month nationwide radio campaign to inform citizens about voter registration. "It was a fantastic idea to organize this citizen forum in this town that was the most affected by the violence," said Joseph Mputu, Provincial CENI Executive Secretary. "Finally, with this activity, the local

residents understand how important registering voters and participating in the electoral process is to preserving the peace." Separately, to spread civic education ahead of 2019 local elections, Counterpart produced comic strips presenting various themes. Each follows a familiar question-and-answer format involving Maman Demokrasia (Mother Democracy), a reoccurring character who teaches young people about the democratic electoral process.

