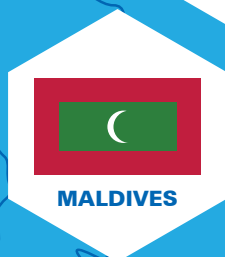
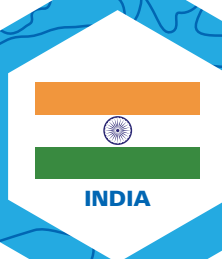
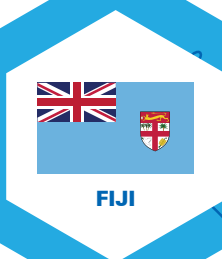
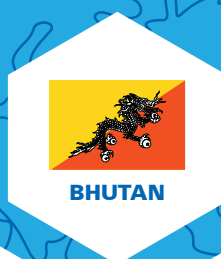




ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS

24TH JANUARY, 2017
NEW DELHI



CONFERENCE READER

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*



Dedicated to Young and Future Voters

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FOREWORD



Strategic, systematic and well designed electoral literacy and voter awareness programmes is vital to the foundation of strong democracy. 'Young and Future Voters' constitute a sizeable segment of population and it is necessary that their interests for electoral participation are appreciated and encouraged through sustained investment focused on educating, engaging and empowering them through well designed strategic interventions. While today's youth is the most connected in history, their potential in creating electoral awareness, educating and engaging the communities, peer group and future generation needs to be effectively appreciated and harnessed for deepening of the democracy.

Significant, substantive and notable good work has been done on the subject by different countries through strategic and innovative interventions. In view of the importance we attach to the young and future voters in India; it is proposed to hold International Seminar on 'Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters' as a part of the National Voters' Day celebrations.

I am delighted to introduce the Conference Reader that has been prepared in the Election Commission of India for supporting and facilitating the interaction during the Seminar. The Reader carries important papers from the Participating EMB's, International Organizations besides the additional Readings on the subject developed through in house expertise in the ECI. We intend placing this document and the deliberations of the Seminar on the VoICE.NET Platform for a continued dialogue on 'Knowledge Sharing' for the cause of 'Young and Future Voters' in the Democracies of the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Umesh Sinha'.

Umesh Sinha

Deputy Election Commissioner of India

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Educating and engaging young people in ways that prepare them for electoral engagement, is vital to the well-being of democratic polity, for now and in the future. I am, therefore, delighted to present the Conference Reader to support and facilitate the interaction in the forthcoming International Conference on 'Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters.'

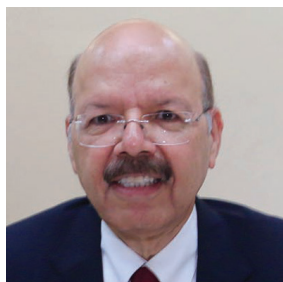
Like all other supposedly original works, this study owes a great deal of its content to the thoughts and efforts of persons other than the author. I am extremely grateful to Dr Nasim Zaidi, the Chief Election Commissioner of India, Sh A K Joti and Sh O P Rawat, the Election Commissioners for giving me this encouraging opportunity to work for the International Conference on 'Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters.' I am immensely thankful to Sh Umesh Sinha, Deputy Election Commissioner for all the valuable time he devoted in guiding and steering my thinking in developing the conceptual framework for the entire study despite his extremely busy schedule. I thank Ms Padma Angmo, Director, ECI for valuable suggestions coming from her as an Expert on Voter Education. I also thank Sh. Dhirendra Ojha, Director and Sh. V K Sharma, Consultant (IC), ECI for their help while developing this document. I thank Dr Aarti Aggarwal, Consultant, ECI for painstaking effort in going through the Reader and providing valuable guidance in designing the document. My thanks to the Staff of the ECI who provided all the assistance during my work on this study.

I welcome the expert contribution from different EMB's and International Organizations to the Reader. I am immensely grateful to them for contributing very valuable papers at a short notice. Their contribution will go a long way in developing innovative strategies and a continued dialogue on the subject. Voter Education Resources of different Election Commissions have been very helpful in developing the Section on Additional Readings. I must record my sincere thanks to them. Naturally whatever errors remain herein must be counted as part of my original contribution.

S D Sharma

Senior Fellow,
Election Commissioner of India

MESSAGE



Practice of citizenship development for electoral participation is critical to democracy and its sustenance. Given the size of population in the age group 15 to 19 years in the world of democracies, it is essential that young peoples' interests are understood, encouraged and their participation enhanced through careful study of challenges and elimination of all barriers to engaging them in electoral participation. Investment focused on educating, engaging and empowering them through well designed strategic interventions would help in preparing a young citizenry ready for voluntary, confident and ethical ballot decisions. It would also mean inculcating the habit of an enlightened participation right from a young age. We also need to harness their potential in creating electoral awareness and educating and engaging the communities, peer group and future generations.

Significant, substantive and notable good work has been done on the subject in different countries. Yet, lots more needs to be done. In this pursuit, we intend visiting initiatives and share our experiences to enrich our knowledge in this area of significance and import to our democracies. We make a beginning with the Seminar on 24th January as a part of this year's National Voters' Day celebrations which carries the central theme of 'Empowering Young and Future Voters.' I am happy to note the encouraging response for participation from the EMB's and international institutions and the fact that this is first event on VoICE.NET platform.

This Conference Reader 'Strategies to Empower Young and Future Voters' visits the strategies, initiatives and experiences from participating EMB's and international institutions besides Readings intended not only to support the interaction during the conference but a continued dialogue to enrich the knowledge base for sharing on the VoICE.NET platform.

While I welcome all the participants to the Seminar, I thank Mr. Umesh Sinha, Deputy Election Commissioner and his team and Mr. S D Sharma, former State Election Commissioner and now associated with the Election Commission of India as a Senior Fellow for preparing and editing this valuable document on strategies for empowering young and future voters from across the world. I am sure that the Conference Reader will be of immense value to the delegates during this conference and serve as a good reference document on the subject for a continued effort for global enrichment of the knowledge base for experience sharing for the cause of young and future voters of the world.

Nasim Zaidi

Dr Nasim Zaidi

Chief Election Commissioner of India

MESSAGE



I am happy to note that there has been a very encouraging response to the International Seminar on 'Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters.' We attach high priority to focus on young and future voters in view of the fact that India has a sizeable population in the age group 15 to 19 years. Strategic investment in this segment for engaging and encouraging electoral participation means securing and strengthening the future of democracy. In this context, the central theme of this years' 'National Voters' Day' celebration is the very subject of 'Empowering Young and Future Voters.' Interaction through an International Seminar on the subject at this relevant juncture provides a larger opportunity to gain from international experience, practices, policies and knowledge for developing innovative approach on addressing the issues and challenges in this area.

This Conference Reader captioned 'Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters' carries a rich resource on the subject aimed at supporting a robust interaction. I understand that the Conference Reader will be placed on the VoICE. NET platform for a continued enrichment of the knowledge base on the subject and will be available to the democracies of the World for the cause of young and future voters.

I welcome all the participants to the Seminar and convey my thanks to Mr. Umesh Sinha, Deputy Election Commissioner and his team and Mr. S D Sharma, former State Election Commissioner and now associated with the Election Commission of India as a Senior Fellow for preparing and editing this valuable document on strategies for empowering young and future voters. I am sure that the reader will be of significant value in supporting the interaction on the subject.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A K Joti'.

A K Joti

Election Commissioner of India

MESSAGE



One of the key goals of society is to have an active democratic citizenry originating in integrated civic and voter education and carefully inculcating the habit of meaningful electoral participation right from a young age. World over, the democracies have recognized this fact and invested in the form of research, innovative strategies, new initiatives, programmes and practices for empowering young and future voters for a confident and ethical electoral participation.

SVEEP, the flagship voter education programme of the Election Commission of India attaches high importance to the subject, demonstrated through a series of inbuilt strategic interventions for this age group. The central theme of this year's National Voters' Day celebrations is 'Empowering Young and Future Voters.' I am happy to note that the International Seminar on this subject has been organized as a part of the NVD celebrations. It is an opportunity for sharing rich experience, strategies, policies and practices in engaging and empowering young and future voters.

I welcome all the participants to the Seminar and convey my thanks to Mr. Umesh Sinha, Deputy Election Commissioner and his team and Mr. S D Sharma, former State Election Commissioner and now associated with the Election Commission of India as a Senior Fellow for preparing this valuable document namely 'Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters'. I am sure that the document will be useful in supporting the interaction on the subject and serve as a valuable reference document for a continued and larger enrichment of knowledge and sharing of experiences on the subject.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'O P Rawat'.

O P Rawat

Election Commissioner of India

INDEX

1
CONCEPT
NOTE

3
INTRODUCTION

PAPERS

- 6** **AUSTRALIA**
Empowering youth and future voters in Australia
- 10** **BHUTAN**
Inclusion of the Young and Future Voters in Bhutan
- 12** **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**
Strategies for empowering Young and Future Voters – experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 15** **FIJI**
Empowerment of young voters during annual National School Voter Registration Drive
- 18** **INDIA**
Empowering Young & Future Voters – investing in the young
- 22** **JORDAN**
Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters
- 25** **MALDIVES**
Investing in the Future of Democracy
- 29** **NEPAL**
Empowering Young and Future Voters
- 31** **SRI LANKA**
Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters
- 33** **TUNISIA**
Canada: Elections Canada Online



35 **AWEB**
Increasing Sense of Efficacy and Convenience of Voting for Young Voters

39 **INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS**
Youth Civic Education is Crucial to a Country's Democratic Health

41 **MALAYSIAN COMMONWEALTH STUDIES CENTRE**
Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters

ADDITIONAL READINGS

46 **AUSTRALIA**
National Indigenous Youth Parliament

47 **BRAZIL**
Voter of the Future (Eleitor do Futuro)

49 **KENYA**
Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters

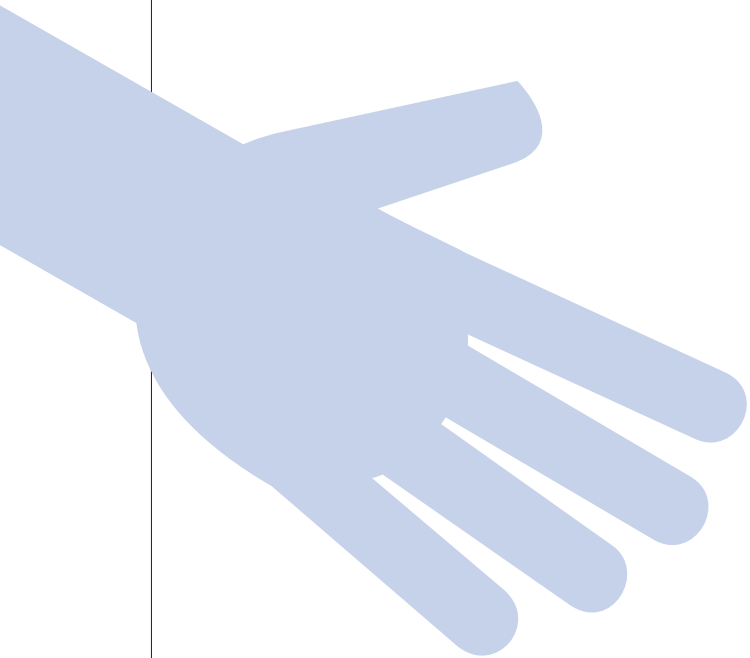
52 **UNITED KINGDOM**
Technology Driven Strategies for Youth Electoral Engagement in the UK

55 **UNITED KINGDOM**
UK Youth Parliament

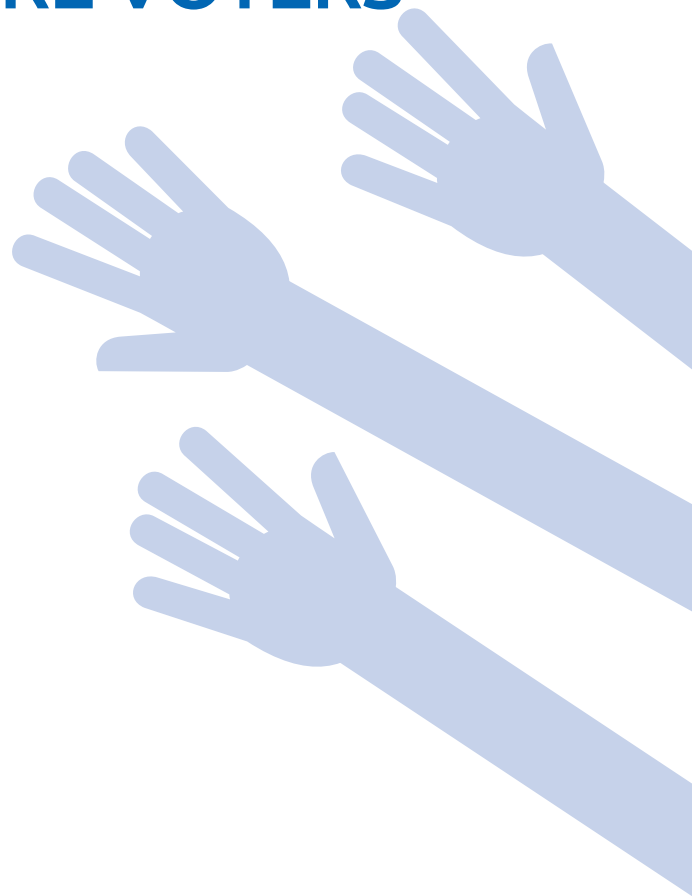
59 **UNITED STATES**
Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters

63 **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

65 **PROFILES**



INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON 'STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS'



CONCEPT PAPER

S.D.Sharma

Senior Fellow, Election Commission of India

The importance of developing the practice of citizenship and electoral participation is vital to investment in future of democracy and its sustenance. One of the key goals of society is to have an active democratic citizenry originating in integrated civic and voter education and participation right from a young age. As per the UN population statistics (2010) there are about 600 million 'young' people in the age group 15-19 in the world (a significant part of this population is a part of the democracies) of which 120 million (Census: 2011) are in India only. Given the registration and voting age of 18, there is a sizeable voter age population besides an equally large population of the 'future voters' in the age group 15-17 who will become voters in the next couple of years. The young and future voters, demonstrably, constitute a sizeable part of democratic polity and its future.

In this context it is necessary that young people's and future voters' voices are heard, their interests for electoral participation understood and encouraged through careful study, research and investment in the future of democracy. Investment focusing on educating, engaging and empowering them through well designed strategic interventions would help in generating a population capable of exercising informed and ethical ballot decision. While today's youth is the most connected in history, their potential in creating electoral awareness and educating and

engaging the communities, peer group and future generations needs to be effectively appreciated and harnessed.

Democracies across the world have approached the subject as per their own socio-political and legislative framework. Coupled with serious and analytical research work, strategic and well designed initiatives have been launched by EMB's in different countries for educating, engaging and empowering young and future voters. Such strategic initiatives include inter alia, curriculum based school level courses for different levels, student and teacher resources, extracurricular interventions, technology driven and mediated communication models and outreach, mock vote, campus engagement, facilitate registration as voter, confident and ethical participation etc.

In India, major initiatives of the Election Commission of India include the national flagship programme Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP). SVEEP inter alia focuses on several thrust areas for young people in the age group 15 to 19 yrs such as Social Media, Campus Ambassadors and National Service Scheme volunteers in awareness campaigns for electoral engagement, enrollment and active participation in ballot exercise. SVEEP III Project Plan includes sustained efforts for this age group in the form of strategies and initiatives which include designing educational materials and

full training kits, introduction of electoral literacy in formal curricula, linkages and networking with National Service Scheme, National Cadet Corps and Nehru Yuvak Kendras (Youth Centers) in outreach, youth Voter festivals, mediated communications besides Youth Parliament and 'Election Schools' etc.

Significant, substantive and notable good work has been done on the subject by different countries through strategic initiatives for empowering young and future voters. Yet, lots more needs to be done. In this pursuit, visiting these initiatives, sharing experiences and enriching knowledge in this area of significance and appropriately bringing these practices to democracies on a continued manner through a

Seminar will be a part of the VoICE.NET initiative set up as part of the New Delhi Declaration adopted in the International Conference on Voter Education For Inclusive, Informed & Ethical Participation (19-21st October 2016) held in New Delhi, India.

National Voters' Day (NVD), as you may be aware, is celebrated in India on 25th January every year. It is an important day for India, the largest democracy of the world with almost 850 million voters. In view of the importance we attach to the young and future voters, it is proposed to hold the Seminar on 24th January, 2017 as a part of month long activities under the NVD celebrations.

INTRODUCTION

S.D.Sharma

Senior Fellow, Election Commission of India

The importance of developing the practice of citizenship is vital to investment in future of democracy and its sustenance. Citizenship development in a democracy is about developing effective electoral engagement, participation, making informed choices and ethical ballot decisions. In the given context, one of the key goals of society is to have an active democratic citizenry originating in integrated civic and voter education and participation right from a young age. As per the UN population statistics (2010), there are about 600 million young people in the age group 15-19 in the world (a significant part of this population is a part of the democracies) of which 120 million (Census: 2011) are in India only. Given the registration and voting age of 18, there is a sizeable voter age population besides an equally large population of the future voters in the age group 15-17 who will become voters in the next couple of years. The young and future voters, demonstratedly, constitute a sizeable part of democratic polity and its future.

In this context it is necessary that young people's voices are heard, their interests for electoral participation understood and encouraged through careful study, research and investment in the future of democracy and obliterating any civic deficit. Investment focusing on educating, engaging and empowering them through well designed strategic interventions would help in generating a population

capable of confident and comfortable electoral participation besides exercising informed and ethical ballot decision. While today's youth is the most connected in history, their potential in creating electoral awareness and educating and engaging the communities, peer group and future generations needs to be effectively appreciated and harnessed for citizenship development.

Democracies across the world have approached the subject as per their own socio-political and legislative framework. Coupled with serious and analytical research work, strategic and well designed initiatives have been launched by EMB's in different countries to for educating, engaging and empowering young and future voters. Such strategic initiatives include inter alia, curriculum based school level courses for different levels, student and teacher resources, extracurricular interventions, technology driven and mediated communication models and outreach, mock vote, campus engagement, facilitate registration as a voter, confident and ethical participation etc.

Significant, substantive and notable good work has been done on the subject by different countries through strategic initiatives for empowering young and future voters. Yet, lots more needs to be done. In this pursuit, we intend visiting these initiatives, share our experiences and enrich our knowledge in this area of significance and import to our democracies on a

continued manner through a Seminar to start with, as a part of the VoICE.NET Initiative. We stand to gain from sharing of the experiences; And the Democracy gains.

In India, major initiatives of the Election Commission of India include the national flagship programme namely Systematic Voters Education Electoral Participation (SVEEP). SVEEP inter alia focuses on several thrust areas for young people in the age group 15 to 19 yrs such as Social Media, Campus Ambassadors and National Service Scheme volunteers in awareness campaigns for electoral engagement, enrollment and active participation in ballot exercise. SVEEP III Project Plan (2016-20) includes sustained efforts for this age group in the form of strategies and initiatives which include designing innovative educational materials and full training kits, introduction of electoral literacy in formal curricula, linkages and larger networking with National Service Scheme, National Cadet Corps and Nehru Yuvak Kendras in outreach, youth Voter festivals, mediated communications besides Youth Parliament and 'Chunav Pathshala' etc.

National Voters' Day (NVD) is celebrated in India on 25th January every year. It is an important day for India, the largest democracy of the world with almost one billion voters. In view of the importance we attach to the young and future voters, it is proposed to hold the Seminar (on 24th January, 2017) as a part of the activities of the activities under the NVD celebrations.

In Australia the Youth Electoral Study (YES Project) was launched by the Australian Electoral Commission for investigating the reasons of youth disengagement and youth voting behavior, what motivates Australia's young people to participate in voting and democracy. The study recommends focus at the school level and special emphasis on age group 15 to 19 years for achieving desired objectives of enrolment and participation. Australia, it may be mentioned, has well designed and structured programmes electoral education along with hands on practice for school levels with legislative support. New media has also been used as an instrument of larger engagement amongst youth. "Get Voting", Professional learning workshops, National

Electoral Education Center and National Indigenous Youth Parliament are important initiatives.

Elections Canada is mandated for special attention to teaching democracy, hands on experience, enhancing youth voter registration and turnout. Recent Initiatives of Elections Canada through a series of robust programmes such as 'Student Vote', use of Social Media and new technologies have helped in enhancing voter turnout especially amongst youth. Elections Canada studies and analyses the entire Youth Engagement Initiative and has made the inter alia the following three strategic recommendations to the Parliament: Allow pre-registration of new, young electors; allow voter information card as documentary evidence of address and allow young people to work as election workers.

In the US, Help America Vote Act, 2002 provides for school level special interventions including Mock Vote and Campus Engagement for students under the guidance of Electoral Assistance Commission of the US. The Act further provides for collaborations with the Non partisans for supporting school and college level electoral and civic education programmes, hands on experience, mock vote, campus engagement, facilitating young voter registration and voting. A large number of institutions of excellence, non partisans are engaged in robust and high grade research and support to school and campus electoral engagement.

The low levels of electoral participation by young people (18-24 years age group) have been a matter concern for UK democracy. This has been a subject matter of research studies by the Electoral Commission





Commission launched an ambitious voter education project for schools in collaboration with the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development. The project focuses more on the secondary school students because they are about to turn 18 years of age and will therefore be eligible to participate in elections. The project intends to foster understanding of the electoral process and develop leaders of integrity from an early age. In Namibia the Election Commission has a strategic focus through curriculum development

of the UK as also the other Institutions. The Electoral Commission of UK has made a series of strategic interventions for removing the barriers to registration, partnerships with National Students Union, use of internet and Social media besides addressing issues of social, political and economic exclusion and reducing the distance between the young people, polity and electoral process. Youth Parliament of 11 to 18 years age group is an interesting feature. Reduction of voting age to 16 years, National School Registration Programme, Modern Study Teaching in all Schools, Hands on Citizenship Development have been recommended for consideration.

In **Brazil** 'Voter of the Future' (Eleitor do Futuro) programme was launched in the year 2002 as a parallel mock election for the young people of 10 to 15 years. The programme was aimed at inculcating a sense of civic responsibility for enhancing electoral participation in future voters. It was felt desirable to engage the youth to address the issue at an early age as in Brazil, voting is optional for youth over 16 years of age and mandatory for all citizens over 18 years of age. Thus the main objective was to encourage youth engagement with the political process and teaching of the skills necessary to engage them in electoral processes in an astute and informed manner.

In Kenya, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries

for schools as per the Policy and the legislative mandate.

A careful analysis of all these illustrations brings out need for special focus on young and future voters in the age group of around 15 to 20 years for developing the practice of citizenship as an investment in the future of democratic sustenance.

The Common Strategies broadly include Focus on Voter Education, Curriculum Development, Mock Vote, School Debates, Voter Education Weeks, Hands on Experience, Pre registration at school level for age group 15 to 17, elimination of all barriers to registration and building up of confidence for voting through strategic initiatives for the young people of age group 18-20 besides use of New Media or the Social Media for empowering young people in this age brackets.

As a part of the VoICE.NET Knowledge Network Initiative, it is proposed to share our experiences and enrich our knowledge in a continued manner with a view to invest in the young people of our countries for citizenship development and to empower them for robust, confident, informed and ethical electoral participation for enriching our democracies in a sustained manner.



AUSTRALIA



AEC

Australian Electoral Commission

EMPOWERING YOUTH AND FUTURE VOTERS IN AUSTRALIA

Tom Rogers

Australian Electoral Commissioner

Youth, along with Indigenous Australians, continue to be the most underrepresented segment of Australian society on the electoral roll. A key feature of the Australian electoral system is compulsory voting. Despite this, and whilst the rate of youth participation in federal elections has improved in recent times, the challenge of engaging young people in the Australian democratic process remains significant.

By last year's 2016 federal election the eligible voting population had grown by nearly half a million from the previous election. In a positive development, the number of unenrolled Australians reduced significantly in the same period. The increase in overall enrolment from 92.4% to 95% is a significant success and was reflected in the youth audience with the number of 18-24 year-olds missing from the roll in 2016 decreasing by around 37% to 254,000.

As an electoral administrator I am unable to fully quantify or control all the factors

that influence disengagement in the political process. However, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) attempts to have a positive impact in this area by addressing some of the natural barriers to participation through the implementation of:

- a well-considered program of school-aged democratic education,
- enrolment processes suited to Australia's compulsory electoral system, and
- a comprehensive 'last minute' election communication campaign to encourage participation.

National Enrolment Rates by Age - 02 July 2016

Age	National Enrolment Rate	Federal Enrolment	Estimated Enrolment Eligible Population	Missing	% Missing
18	71.1%	192,063	270,308	78,245	28.9%
19	83.7%	228,404	272,899	44,495	16.3%
20-24	90.4%	1,237,618	1,369,310	131,692	9.6%
18-24	86.7%	1,658,085	1,912,517	254,432	13.3%
25-39	93.3%	3,881,545	4,162,036	280,491	6.7%
40-59	96.1%	5,476,251	5,696,375	220,124	3.9%
60+	98.7%	4,660,778	4,722,169	61,391	1.3%
Total aged 18 and over	95.0%	15,676,659	16,493,096	816,437	5.0%



These endeavours attempt to combat the issue of participation in the voting process but in very different ways and according to different timeframes. Educating school aged Australians is not going to significantly impact participation at the next federal election, but could contribute to the generational change required to have a widespread understanding of, and value for, our electoral system in the years to come.

It is also important to understand that the methods used are not static – effective communication channels in 2016 may not exist in 2019. This is particularly relevant for youth audiences who tend to engage in new media.

Future Voters

The AEC's education program consists of in-school election resources, electoral education training for teachers, electoral education resources and products (for classrooms and the community) and the National Electoral Education Centre.

Approximately 90,000 school students from across Australia visit the National Electoral Education Centre each year.

At the education centre students are provided with electoral education on Australian government and democracy, federal electoral processes and the democratic responsibilities of citizens.

A 90 minute session features a multimedia presentation that explores the history of Australian democracy, hands-on activities that help students to understand enrolment, voting and representation as well as voting in a simulated election.

The AEC's in-school election program, Get Voting, helps primary and secondary schools conduct in-school elections for real positions, such as representatives on student councils.



These authentic election experiences help students understand the federal electoral system and prepare them to fulfil their democratic responsibilities as adults.

In 2015-16 Get Voting materials were used to run elections for approximately 55,000 Australian students.

The AEC's teacher training helps develop the knowledge and skills needed to teach electoral education in both primary and secondary schools. This training includes both face-to-face sessions and an online course.

Educational products and programs provide the structure to deliver electoral education to the next generation of voters, enabling young Australians to understand their electoral responsibilities and the value of their vote.

Enrolment processes

The challenge of engaging youth is made more difficult by the requirement for an enrolment transaction to occur when they reach voting age or move house. The requirement to transact with the AEC exists for all Australians, although young Australians tend to be much more transient - moving out of home, taking a gap year (lengthy international trip after finishing school) or moving for tertiary studies or their first full-time job.

Laws passed by the Australian Parliament in 2012 allow the AEC to directly enrol eligible electors or update their details on the electoral roll based on information from other government agencies.

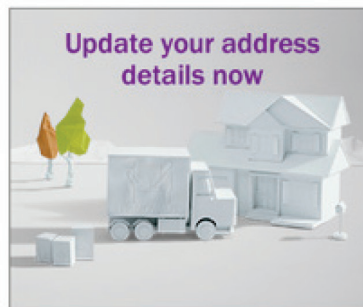
While direct enrolment processes have been a major contributor to the reduction of the number of people missing from the electoral roll, it is not applicable to everyone. Only trusted sources of data are used for direct enrolment and there are strict procedures for when direct enrolment or update can be applied.

The applicability of direct enrolment processes to young people can be particularly challenging given the higher likelihood of conflicting data due to more frequent residential movement.

Election campaign communication

Each election the AEC undertakes a comprehensive communication campaign in an effort to provide final participation reminders to the Australian electorate. These campaigns have several key audience groups that are catered for by carefully selecting communication channels, including channels directly target to young eligible electors.

The campaign consists of both advertising and public relations activities. At the 2016 federal election advertising channels used to target youth included:



Did you know nearly 1 in 5 18-24 year olds are not enrolled to vote in the upcoming federal election? Be like Simon Orchard and check your enrolment before 8pm on the 23rd May at www.aec.gov.au/check so you don't miss out!



1.5K Views

Like Comment Share



- traditional mediums such as television and radio,
- online television/catch up television,
- digital display,
- Social media,
- Mobile applications (such as music streaming sites like Pandora),
- electronic direct messages (templated emails sent to coordinated email databases), and
- Search.

At the 2016 federal election public relations activities used to target youth included:

- celebrity endorsement,
- youth media outreach,
- youth media editorial (example: Cosmopolitan magazine), and
- intermediary outreach (sporting clubs, retail employers and tertiary education institutions).

Using third parties provides communication on behalf of the AEC in a range of existing non-AEC communication channels that are trusted and frequently visited by the youth audience. This allowed participation messages to reach young eligible electors in a more attractive way than standard advertising.

Indigenous Australians

Research tells us that Indigenous Australians who make up three per cent of the population are much less likely to participate in the electoral process than other Australians. This provides a distinct target youth audience with over half of all Indigenous Australians aged under 25.

With a history of Indigenous disadvantage in electoral participation and a predominantly remote population, Indigenous Australians are a particularly difficult target group to reach and effect change.

The AEC operates a dedicated Indigenous Electoral Participation Program that is delivered across Australia by 20 Community Engagement Officers, the majority of whom are Indigenous. Program staff work directly with communities or in partnership with other organisations to deliver services in ways that meet cultural and regional needs of Indigenous Australians.

During the 2016 federal election, the Program developed a range of culturally targeted educational and engaging materials included videos, posters, websites and brochures featuring Indigenous branding and the tagline 'Our Vote, Our Future'. The Program utilised digital channels including a dedicated Indigenous Facebook page as well as YouTube to appeal to youth.

Positive role models such as young Indigenous sports stars and other young Indigenous celebrities were engaged to feature in a series of videos as an effective way to get young people to pay attention.

As with other Australians, there is unparalleled value provided by hands-on knowledge and experience



of the parliamentary and electoral processes experienced at a young age. One of the ways this challenge is met is through the conduct of the National Indigenous Youth Parliament - an event ran in 2012 and 2014 and due to be held again in 2017.

This week-long leadership program brings 50 young Indigenous Australian leaders aged 16 to 25 to our nation's capital (Canberra) to meet Australia's leaders, learn about democracy and attend a two-day simulated parliament to debate issues important to themselves and their communities.

The youth parliament not only benefits the participants but can help spread positive messages among Indigenous communities by involving friends and families, it can also help to dispel myths about the electoral process, and for some it can replace a negative experience about voting and governments with a positive one.



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Election Commission of Bhutan
(Ensuring Free, Fair & Democratic Elections and Referendums)

INCLUSION OF THE YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS IN BHUTAN

Dawa Tenzin

Secretary, Election Commission of Bhutan

In understanding the future of the Nation lies in the hands of the youth, it is important to call young voters to remind them of their role and responsibility in a democratic society: a society based on the sovereign rights of the people expressed freely to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural system and their full participation in all aspects of their lives through a secret ballot empowering their elected representatives for better growth of democracy.

To strengthen and sustaining vibrant democracy, every individual must share the burden of fundamental duty and responsibility because it is acknowledged that healthy democracy depends on the principle and practice of mutual trust and responsibility. A true democratic culture needs the commitment and participation of its citizen in every level at the society they exist. The importance of such democratic environment is the endeavor to walk the path of righteousness and taking stock of democracy with full conviction. Voting is a precious gift in democracy and

simply exercising that fundamental right is a visible form of people's participation.

Young voters must be made to believe that it's time for them to take the lead as they are not only the future of Nation but an important asset for the economic development at large. Disengagement will only result in exclusion and as such translate into negative impact for the society. Young minds must realize that their voice means a lot and participation in a vibrant democratic culture is a vital component in life.

In Bhutan, almost half of our population is under 25 years old and that segment of our population is increasing every year. Presently looking at the voters and voting patterns, less than thirty percent of total voting population are young voters and in every election their participation is found to be decreasing. Often, youth are apathetic to the political processes, be it voting during elections or engaging in discourses that are of national importance. To engage



our youths at the front of decision making, we must create favorable conditions through establishments of platforms from all stakeholders responsible for strengthening democracy.

Bhutan has become a Democratic Constitutional Monarchy in 2008 with the conduct of the first-ever parliamentary elections. Continuous and concerted effort is required to be dedicated so that Bhutanese democracy maintains the vibrancy that is characteristic of a mature and ideal democracy.

While the responsibility of inculcate civic learning, and undertake civic engagement may be the responsibility of citizens in general, the Election Commission of Bhutan, as an institution that is responsible for conduct of free and fair election and referendums, believes that it also has the duty to prepare the future electorates through proper and relevant civic and electoral education.

The Election Commission of Bhutan, an Independent Constitutional Body entrusted with mandate to conduct free and fair elections in Bhutan has come up with various activities to disseminate information on elections and democracy, organize programmes to create voter awareness especially our young voters. The major initiatives of ECB are the Introduction of Democracy Clubs in Schools and Educational Institutions in Bhutan in 2012; the Volunteer for Voter Information, Communication and Education (Volunteer -VOICE) adopted on 13th of August 2013 and the adoption of the Constitution of the Bhutan Children's Parliament on 2nd of June 2015.

Introduction of Democracy Clubs in Schools and Educational Institutions in Bhutan in 2012 has provided an opportunity for students to strive in active civic learning and skills development by initiating and implementing activities by schools that promotes youth in good democratic values and encouraging to achieve knowledge for essential informed choices from the very young age. It enables young voters to learn the principles and practice of the electoral democracy as early as possible so that they could participate meaningfully at the later part of their lives. The members of Democracy Clubs elect their representatives to the Bhutan Children's Parliament.

The Volunteer for Voter Information, Communication and Education (Volunteer -VOICE) adopted on 13th of August 2013 to involve interested Bhutanese youth

to serve as volunteers to carry out public awareness on electoral democracy and civic duties enhancing the sense of social responsibility through participation in the democratic process.

The adoption of the Constitution of the Bhutan Children's Parliament on 2nd of June 2015 saw another historic moment in the part of democracy, to better prepare our children as future leaders to understand their roles as citizen of the country taking such development to higher pedestal and honing their leadership skills in formulation of opinions, views and aspirations in real life situations. The Bhutan Children's Parliament is conducted every winter during the school holidays and those elected Members of the Bhutan Children's Parliament are provided structured orientation programme before the session so that its operations conform to the accepted parliamentary standards. The training sessions includes talks and lectures by invited relevant professionals in every related discipline of parliamentary works and democracy. The outcome of Bhutan Children's Parliament (BCP) might also be useful for consideration in the decision-making system and process of the government.

Since 2013, the Election Commission of Bhutan has designated 15th of September to be observed as the National Voters' Day (NVD) and the theme for the very first NVD was "*Youth in Democracy*" focusing on the young people who form the foundation of the Bhutanese democracy. On this day, we call upon youths to make speeches as school representatives, take part in Elocutions, Debates and quiz on democracy, etc. The ECB also distributes Voter Photo Identity Cards for youth who are 16 to 17 years of age to remind them as future voters. Most importantly, all youth on this day takes the NVD pledge to exercise their precious franchise in every election conducted to elect the most capable representative to serve the nation.

Besides many others, when Schools and Educational Institutions request to assist in conduct of elections for the post of student leaders, the ECB in order to use the opportunity for the purpose of educating students on the electoral processes through real-life polling experiences conducts as per the Guidelines for Conduct of Elections in Schools, Educational Institutions and Other Agencies, 2015. It provides students (youth) another platform to experience and better understand the electoral process at large.



BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA



CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS – EXPERIENCE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Dr. Suad Arnautović

Member, Central Election Commission of Bosnia-Herzegovina

Young voters have an important role in improving democratic processes, since they represent the future of any society. Every citizen of BiH, who has attained 18 years of age and at time the first identification document is issued, becomes automatically registered in the Central Voters' Register through the passive registration system.

The category "young voters" under the records of the BiH Central Election Commission mean the voters between 18 and 30 years of age. At the last 2016 Local Elections in BiH, a total of 673.821 voters were registered in the Central Voters' Register under this category, which makes up one fifth (20,1%) of the entire electorate in BiH. 54.72% of the voters cast the ballot at the 2016 Local Elections, and the turnout of young voters between 18 and 30 years of age

was lower than the total average and had amounted 51.29%¹.

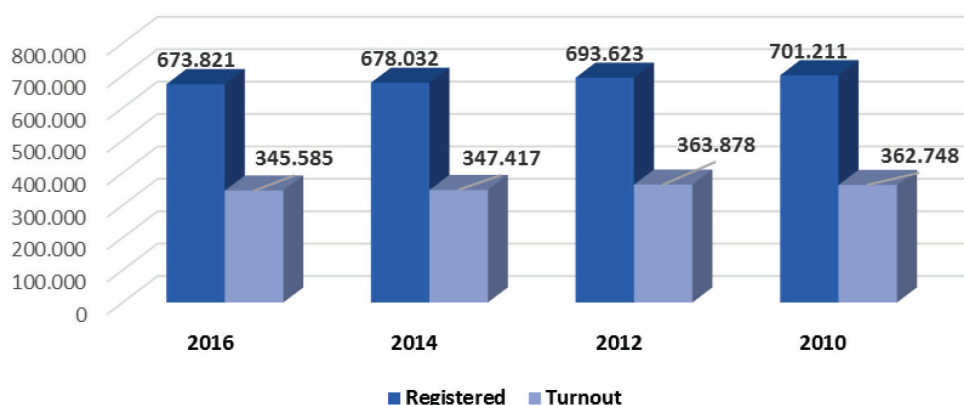
The turnout of young voters at the elections from 2010 to 2016 varies, but it exceeds 50%: it was 21.73% at the 2010 General Elections, 52.46% at the 2012 Local Elections and 51.24% at the 2014 General Elections.

The BiH Central Election Commission is not conducting continuous activities directed towards empowering and motivating young voters, because such activities

¹ Turnout data do not include City of Mostar voters, because the 2016 Local Elections were not announced for the City of Mostar due to lack of legal conditions and the data also do not include voters of Stolac municipality in which the elections on October 2, 2016 were interrupted.



Registered voters between 18 to 30 years of age and turnout (2010 - 2016)



are neither mandatory nor there are any funds programmed for this purpose. However, awareness raising activities that focus on young people are conducted in every election through projects that are funded by donors and development agencies.

In the period from 2010 to 2016 the BiH Central Election Commission conducted educational and motivational campaign for young voters, who have the right to vote, in order to encourage them to exercise their right and to cast the ballot. TV ads and radio jingles were prepared and broadcast by all public TV station and a vast number of private TV stations. Motivational spots and radio jingles were broadcast during September, including the Election Day. The educational - informational material was also published on the website of the BiH Central Election Commission in order to timely disseminate information to the voters and to all other participants in the elections.

In February of 2014 the ceremony of promoting the initiative to hold the Global Elections Days, which the BiH Central Election Commission has been marking since 2005, was dedicated to increasing participation of youth and women in democratic processes through

the elections, aimed at increasing youth turnout at the elections, and in particular the turnout of the first time voters. An appropriate leaflet was prepared for promotion of this event.

A renowned non-government organization, the Association of Election Officials in BiH (AEOBiH), has been actively working in BiH, bringing together present and former members of the Municipal/City election commission, election officials and volunteers, more than 1000 of them. The BiH Central Election Commission conducts various projects with this Association.



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f the initiative is to dards for fair and g awareness on the for the democratic administration and among the general public citizens.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Global Elections Day is celebrated every year, and the purpose of this year's event, the ninth in the row, is to promote the importance of choice and increase turnout of women, young voters and first-time voters.

During 2010 and 2011 in cooperation with the AEOBiH

and with the financial assistance of the Council of Europe a project was implemented focusing on raising the interest of young people in elections and political life in BiH. Since 2010 the AEOBiH has with the financial help of the donors² trained 9.500 students on electoral system of BiH and electoral policies in order to encourage them to actively participate in the election process and political life in BiH whilst promoting their engagement in the work of polling station committees and as the election observers. During 2015 and 2016 the AEOBiH trained 249 students on work of Municipal councils and local administration under the project “Involving youth in public affairs at the local level in BiH”.³

However, the biggest responsibility for promoting participation of youth in public and political life rests on the political parties in BiH and many of them have youth forums or organizations, which promote

participation of youth in public and political life in line with their strategies.

The BiH Central Election Commission is currently in the process of establishing an Education Center, which will have a multifunctional conference room and a resource center that will accommodate educational courses, symposiums and roundtable discussions for the political parties, election administration, non-government organizations and the media. The center will also be used for organization of seminars, exchange of experience in the field of elections and electoral systems. The plan for 2017 is networking with the similar education centers in Georgia and Moldova, as well as to develop a special curriculum for young people and to set up a permanent budget line for education programs intended for young people, especially the first time voters.

2 USAID, the US Embassy, Council of Europe and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czech Republic

3 With the donor support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czech Republic



FIJIAN ELECTIONS OFFICE
My Election, My Fiji

EMPOWERMENT OF YOUNG VOTERS DURING ANNUAL NATIONAL SCHOOL VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE

Mohammed Saneem

Supervisor of Elections, Fijian Elections Office

Voter registration in Fiji started in 2012. The FEO conducted national registration drives as well as sent teams to overseas posts to register eligible Fijians. Following the issuance of the *Writ* for the 2014 General Election, a total of 591,101 voters had been registered from an estimated 620,000 eligible population. Of the 591,101, 192,071 were below the age of 30 and would be voting for the first time.

Post 2014 General Election, the FEO established that it would now need to focus on registering those who would become eligible after the General Election. Since education is both free and compulsory until year 13, FEO decided to design an annual registration drive in Secondary Schools and vocational training facilities.

With approval from the Ministry of Education, the FEO organizes this event with the assistance of the school administration.

Since the 2014 General election, the FEO has managed to register 21474 young Fijian voters who

fall in the category of 18-20 years of age with 10540 females and 10934 males out of an estimated eligible population of 26,000.

This paper provides details from the 2015 and 2016 National School Voter Registration Drive.

Description of Best Practices

The FEO began its National school registration and information drive in 2015 from 13 July to 7 August and also in 2016 from 6 June to 1 July targeting eligible voters across 178 secondary schools. Schools located in isolated areas and maritime islands were included in this drive as well.

The drive was conducted in the Central, Western, Northern and Eastern division by using 10 Voter Registration Teams. Registration Teams were also trained to carry out a 15 minute Voter Education and Awareness session.

Face to face information sessions pertaining to elections were conducted with senior secondary

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

1. Students that have reached the age of eighteen [18] are given the convenience and opportunity of being registered as a voter and at the same time the FEO is able to deliver key knowledge on elections at an early age.
2. Schools provide an opportunity for FEO to meet large numbers of students which would otherwise have to be through house to house registration.
3. Allows for more informed and educated voters.

Weaknesses:

1. Logistics issues arise when schools are not prepared to receive registration teams or when school activities during that period prevent students from getting registered.
2. For rural and isolated schools, limited resources available for students to be able to prepare and have required documentations ready for registration.

Opportunities:

1. As an annual event, there will be more positive turnout and increased participation from students in future.
2. FEO used secondary schools as a platform to advocate on democracy and elections which has allowed young Fijians to improve on their voter understanding and participation.
3. The FEO can develop appropriate school curricula related to democracy and elections from experiences shared during the information sessions.

Threats:

1. Lack of interest from school management/teachers in the preparation and coordination for the school visit.
2. Traditional style of thinking that registration is not necessary until the election is nearer.

school students. The teams also distributed awareness materials including the crowd favourite wrist 'slap-on' straps as well as the 'choose to register' armbands.

In 2015, the FEO registered 6065 students, however, 8005 students attended the initial information session. In 2016, 5807 students registered, but 8069 attended the information session.

The FEO uses the Information Sessions to promote electoral participation, create awareness on voter responsibility as well as provide information on the Fijian electoral processes.

Annual School Voter Registration drives received good coverage from print and broadcast media. International media also carried the news. The media recorded clips of young voters and their thoughts about their responsibilities after they became registered.

The FEO also used social media platforms to reach out to the young voters. FEO uploaded videos of the schools visited on Facebook to gauge and record how students felt about registering to vote for the first time. A number of posts were also put up on a daily basis to inform the public on the activities during the drive. Aside from elections, this is one of the busiest times on FEO's social media sites.

The Supervisor of Elections, at the launch of the 2016 Voter Registration Drive encouraged the students to become advocates for electoral participation and invited them to learn about Fiji's electoral system.

Challenges

1. Registration drive is conducted during school hours and has to be completed in the first part of the year as students and teachers are more focused on the final exams in the later part of the year. This results in 'left-overs' in terms of those students who are yet to turn 18.
2. In Fiji, voting is permitted at the polling station the voter has been assigned. At the time of registration, students would normally select the polling station nearest to their then residence. However, it is highly likely that most of them would move to other location for further studies. They will then be required to apply to the FEO again to change their polling station. In 2014 General Election the FEO received over 60,000 requests for change of polling station for similar reasons although not all

were from those that got registered in schools.

Outcome

Information sessions are generally informal and are designed to engage students through practical activities and questions. Focus is mainly on creating an atmosphere of electoral awareness and the concept of parliamentary democracy. This exercise contributed to building confidence in the FEO and the electoral process it conducts.

While the National School Voter Registration drive allows the FEO to engage with newly eligible voters

in schools, at the same time, the FEO is able to fulfil its core role of maintaining and updating the National Register of Voters. The drive has guaranteed the FEO to keep an up to date record of the National Register of Voters [NRV].

The FEO is a strong advocate in the electoral development of young Fijians with youths being one of our most important stakeholders. The nationwide school drive provided us with an opportunity to promote understanding and participation of the best electoral practices amongst our young leaders.



Registrations during the phase one drive at Saraswati College



Registrations during the phase two drive at Marist Brothers High School



Students showing their EVR cards during the phase two drive at Koro High School which was devastated by the Category 5 Cyclone Winston



Students showing their EVR cards during the phase two drive at Lelean Memorial School



ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

EMPOWERING YOUNG & FUTURE VOTERS – INVESTING IN THE YOUNG

Umesh Sinha

Deputy Election Commissioner of India

The national elections in India held in April-May 2014 witnessed historic voter turnout of 66.44%. Around 554 million voted in 2014 out of the 834 million who were registered as electors. This was a whopping increase in turnout over the previous national election in 2009 when India recorded a turnout of 58.19%. It was observed that women, youth and urban electors had lower participation in 2009 and earlier elections.

Realising the gravity of this participation deficit in the electoral process, Election Commission of India launched a national voter education programme after the national elections in 2009 – ‘*Systematic Voters’ Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP)*’. The participation challenges were identified as:

- i. Gender gap
- ii. Youth disconnect
- iii. Urban apathy

Accordingly overcoming the ‘Youth Disconnect’ with the electoral process was one of the focus of SVEEP programme. Various interventions were designed

around the youth, with additional gender focus within this segment, to remove any information gap and to facilitate youth participation in elections. Motivational campaigns were taken up to mobilise youth and encourage them to register in the electoral roll and vote in elections.

National Voters’ Day

In 2011, ECI initiated a practice to celebrate the ‘Voter’ on its foundation day, 25th January by celebrating it as National Voters’ Day. Since then the foundation day of ECI is observed every year as National Voters’ Day in every polling station location, at district and state headquarters.

With the aim to give the younger generation a sense of responsible citizenship and to encourage them to exercise their new franchise, ECI felicitates the newly eligible registered voters in over 0.7 million polling station locations as part of the National Voters’ Day observance. They are handed over their Elector Photo Identity Cards (EPIC) and a badge with the slogan “Proud to be a Voter-Ready to Vote”. They also take



an oath to strengthen democracy by taking part in the elections, which is now popularly termed as NVD Pledge. This forms the essential components of any NVD celebration.

The national NVD function is held at New Delhi. Besides the three essential components, the national function also awards election officials for 'Best Electoral Practices'. Partners and agencies who contribute to ECI's efforts towards holding free, fair and participative elections are also felicitated at the national NVD function every year.

The National Voters' Day is being celebrated with great enthusiasm across the country along with a series of outreach measures ahead of NVD like symposiums, cycle rally, human chain, folk arts programmes, mini-marathon, competitions and awareness seminars. Most of these activities are targeted at youth.

Campus Ambassadors

Campus Ambassadors are appointed from among the students in Colleges and Universities to bridge the gap in youth electoral participation. The Campus Ambassadors identify students, teachers and non-teaching staff and their family members who are not registered in the electoral rolls and facilitate their registration in the Electoral roll in co-ordination with the election machinery. They assist election machinery to organize special drive for registration including correction of errors, transposition of names etc in the electoral roll. Campus Ambassadors facilitate inclusion of voter education in various co-curricular activities /festivals of the campus through different activities such as slogan writing, poster making, quiz, debate, essay writing, song, street plays etc and also help in organising National Voters' Day programme in their campus besides acting as an educator and motivator in the family and neighbourhood and helping them in filling registration forms.

Engaging with Educational Institutions

Chief electoral Officers in the states have partnered with educational institutions, mainly colleges and Universities to reach out to the youth. College festivals, marathon runs, competitions like debates, plays, song composition etc have been successfully used to engage with students and disseminate electoral information among them. Special registration camps have been held in campuses to target newly eligible and young voters.



Partnership with Ministry of Youth and Departments

For reaching out to youth outside educational institutions, ECI has partnered with the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs and engaged various youth organizations affiliated with the Ministry. Special activities are planned with the youth organization for wide dissemination of information relating to electoral process. Special registration drives are held to include the youth outside educational institutions in the electoral roll. Sports competition in both rural and urban areas is among the popular activities taken up for engaging with these youth.

Use of popular media including FM Radio

Cinema slides, TV spots, hoardings have been widely used to appeal to youth. Besides interactive media like street play, flash mobs and similar activities which are popular among youth have been used to disseminate important information. FM radio is highly popular among the youth and it has been widely used by election managers to engage the youth with electoral process. Popular radio programmes and famous radio jockeys have included electoral awareness in their broadcast. Private FM Radio channels have held road shows ahead of elections in coordination with election machinery. Talk shows on radio have featured election officials to discuss various topics related to elections, interaction with voters have been arranged through phone-ins.

Cartoon strips 'Wah Election Wah!' were used in dailies to stir the complacent young urban non-voters with wit and humour, while also disseminating information of how, where and when. Set in a train



travelling through various parts of the country, the radio programme 'Loktantra Express' is also aimed at youth and uses song and speech, adding regional flavours to motivate listeners from different regions, age groups and sections to participate in the task of nation building by practicing their right to vote.

Use of Technology and Social Media

While mobile phone has high penetration in India, youth use the mobile phones for accessing various services besides just making calls. Special apps have been developed to facilitate voters and make enrolment easier besides accessing other information related to elections like locating polling stations, checking names on voter list besides getting SMS alerts for registration and voting.

Other popular media like internet and social media are widely used for imparting electoral education and information and for mobilising young voters.

Physical Events and Activities

A variety of physical events and activities are taken up under SVEEP for motivation and mobilisation. Competitions like drawing, debates, declamations, quiz in educational institutions on elections and voting enthuse young people. Activities like local and folk art competitions are used for targeting

young rural populace. Song writing competitions and Rock festivals in public places interest urban youth. Sporting events like kite flying, motor rallies, cricket tournaments, wrestling events, marathon runs, mass mobilisation events like rallies, human chains, and candle light vigils are utilized with good effect. Mock polls and dummy polling stations are effectively used to engage young people.

Icons

The task of enthusing and inspiring the disinterested and alienated citizens and address their apathy and skepticism to make possible their participation in the electoral process is imperative for greater electoral participation. It is crucial to associate a sense of pride with the right and duty of exercising one's franchise.

Identifying the ability of inspirational personalities to establish authentic connection with the masses, ECI associated with renowned Indians from various field enjoying national appeal and appointed them as ECI's National Icons to motivate Voters. Similarly renowned individuals in states were appointed as State Icons.

Celebrities popular among youth have been engaged by ECI to be ambassadors or Icons to motivate youth to participate in electoral process. While former President of India Dr A P J Abdul Kalam who had mass appeal, could reach out pan India, sportsperson like M S Dhoni appealed to youth. Olympiad Saina Nehwal and Marykom are youth icons and especially had appeal among women. Actor Aamir Khan promoted informed and ethical voting message of ECI for clean elections.

Electoral literacy for Young Adults

ECI partnered with the National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA) to take forward electoral literacy in the villages among young adults who are non or neo-literates. Electoral literacy content has been developed on all aspects of elections in form of flash cards and the same has been widely used by the election officials during the State and national elections.

Prospective Or Future Voters

Under the third phase of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation programme (SVEEP-III), one of the important target segments is prospective voters. These are the young people falling within the 15-17 years age group and who are on the threshold of adulthood. Special interventions have been conceived to inculcate electoral literacy among

young people through curricula and co-curricula in Schools.

Special interventions are simultaneously planned for those in the same age-group and outside schools. The theme for 7th National Voters' Day (NVD) is 'Empowering Young and Future Voters' and the same is the focus of ECI in the year 2017.

Electoral Literacy through Schools

State level Committees were set up in 2016 to assess the electoral literacy component in school curriculum and suggest additions, wherever required. The Committees have representation from State Education Board and election officials besides experts.

A national working group has been set up which consists of members from Education Department, Academics, CSO working in the field of education, Experts and Election Officials to chalk out co-curricula content and activities on electoral literacy, which can be suitably included in schools and adapted to impart awareness among those outside schools.

Interactive School Engagement

This is one component under the initiative of outreach to future voters wherein the around 6000 Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) covered at least one school within their constituency in January 2017 ahead of the 7th NVD and interacted with the students in 15-17 year age group (9th-12th standard). They responded to queries from the students on various aspects of elections and electoral polity. The ERO were equipped with a 'Voter Education' kit for their interaction with the school students. More than 600 District Election Officers (DEOs) and 36 Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) also covered at least one school, within their district and State/UT respectively during the same period. Badges reading 'I am the Future Voter of India' and Brochure on 'How to Register & Vote' were distributed among the students.

Electoral Literacy for those outside Schools

The production and distribution of voter edutainment

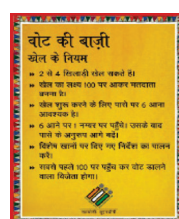


material for continuous education in an interesting and comprehensive manner was taken up in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2013. Focusing on consistent education and motivation, this project also takes from the concept of psycho-social learning. After studying and identifying potential target group for each tool in the initial stage, a field test of the tools was also done to assure their effectiveness. Frequently asked questions (FAQ) related to the electoral process and other topics are pictorially depicted and discussed through the story of the brother-sister duo of *Abha* and *Abhay* in the colourful and easy-to-understand picture book '*Garv se banein Matdata*', meant largely for new and semi literates, women and children.

The board games '*Vote Ki Baazi*' and '*Ready Steady Vote*' designed upon the traditional board games using folk art and motifs but with the twist of voter education, imparts education in an interesting and engaging way.

Stories in Popular Children's Magazines

Aiming at engaging the to-be voters and to catch them young, specific stories on voter education were taken up in popular children's magazines Tinkle and Lotpot. While in Tinkle the trope of the jungle was used, popular characters *Motu* & *Patlu* appeared discussing voting related topics in Lotpot, in a pictorial, colourful and interesting way of cartoon-strip format to attract the readers. The initiative aimed at long term effect of motivating and encouraging children and youth for greater participation in voting.





STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS

HE Mrs. Samar Haj Hasan

Commissioner, Independent Election Commission- Jordan

From mayoral elections to national presidential elections, voting affects all citizens' lives. All countries have a legal framework in place to protect the right of their citizens to participate in the political and civic life. However, college aged youth have not been voting in recent years or choosing to vote. The youth vote is very important as the regeneration of the population ensures that all people are represented and that all voices across the nation are heard. It is essential that college-aged youth start voting now to ensure the voting population renews itself.

Youth hold a complicated, sometimes negative view and perception of politics dominated by negative images of inter-party disagreements on national issues, corruption, lying, and a sense that politics is boring and confusing. There are claims and perception that youth are apathetic and disengaged from civic life. This is true as far as "traditional politics" are concerned, in fact youth are engaged in politics, but in unique ways. Although a college-aged youth may not vote in a national election, he or she may participate

in politics by organizing fundraisers for social causes or signing petitions to boycott certain products or services or in demonstrations

Research has shown that college-aged youth think that there is not enough information out there for them about voting. Students are at a loss for information about where to register to vote and how to vote. Not only that, but they also are lacking information about candidates and issues and lacking the motivation to vote.

In order to reach the youth aged between 18-24, information about how to directly reach them is vital. Traditional campaigns are failing because they do not reach the youth with enough information. Maybe when we tell them "you should vote" or "you should be a responsible citizen" or "the law gave you the right to vote" we don't convince them or motivate them to go and vote. It also doesn't make voting cool "to stand in line just to check a box", it has to be meaningful to them, and they need to realize how these issues affect them.

College-aged youth have a large number of differing opinions on current issues, and they come from all walks of life. Often, these opinions are shared through social media, a powerful tool for today's youth. Therefore, it is important to be innovative to provide youth with information, and to place information at the fingertips of the new voting population. College-aged youth are not likely to search for information about voting directly, so practitioners must constantly place it in front of them by using the most effective means to communicate with them.

As part of the political reform in Jordan, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) was established in 2011, and one of the roles of the IEC, is to raise awareness among the public in order to encourage political and civic participation throughout the electoral cycle. In the recent parliament election that the IEC conducted in September 2016, the challenge of the IEC was to gain trust of the public on the transparency and integrity of the election process, and of course the youth who represent over 50% of the population, were the most challenging segment of the public as their confidence and trust in the election process and the parliament performance was extremely low.

The IEC realized the importance of reaching out to the youth to convince them to engage and hopefully to vote. This was especially important since the youth in Jordan lack trust in the political system, saying that they have to go to the polling stations because it is their national duty and part of practicing your citizenship would not be effective. Therefore we decided that we need to have an innovative approach to communicate with and educate the youth voters, and what would be a better way to do this than bringing in innovative young people to do the job. We recruited a group of young people specialized in social media (they call themselves the 'crazy group') to build and implement a communication strategy to reach out to their peers. The biggest challenge was the timeframe. They had only 4 months to the day of elections to plan and implement.

The social media strategy included the following:

- Use of all social media tools- websites, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube.
- Focus on raising awareness and voter's education by providing detailed but simple information about all the stages of the election process.

- Voting procedures were simplified and easy to understand.
- Allowing the followers to freely express their ideas and perception about the elections, and encouraging them to engage in discussions.
- Provide responses to any inquiries in a fast and professional manner.
- Simplify the information through visual tools, info graphs and videos.
- Transparency in providing information to the public. For example, the 360degrees videos of the official meetings for critical decisions of the IEC commissioners were posted live for the public.

Videos presented by the decision makers at the IEC were used to allow, direct and open communication between the decision makers of the IEC (the commissioners) and the public. To attract the youth and engage them, games were created to simplify the election process, like voting and calculation of results. Periodical paper newsletters were replaced by digital tools to provide quick and visual information. A question and answer bank was created on the website to answer any questions by a press of a button. Mobile applications were used to facilitate the enquiry about ballot center locations and ballot boxes.

The Google form application was used to encourage volunteers to register in the volunteer program of the IEC. 6000 young volunteers registered through this application out of 10, 000 volunteers who participated in the volunteers program during election period. Members of the digital social media team were assigned to follow up and assess the trend and perception of the public, awareness messages, videos, info-graphs and engagement conversations were developed based on the public perception and needs.

As a result the IEC achieved the following:

- Responded to 97 percent of the questions with an average of 6 minutes response time.
- Reached 15, 166 tweets of # Jordan Elects by 3628 tweeters within 2 months.
- Increased Facebook followers from 7k to 154k.
- Created 4 videos which were viewed by an average of 51k people each.
- Created 2 games, and one calculator. The games were played by 10k people, and the calculator was used by an average of 7k people every time

we posted it on social media.

- The trend of the youth engagement shifted from “we don’t want to vote” at the beginning of the campaign to “where I can go to vote?”
- Produced videos of political messages , presented by the commissioners, the first one by the president of the IEC was watched by 1k people every hour for the first 24 hours

As an Election Management Body, at the IEC we learned the following:

- Engage youth in planning your strategy for youth awareness and education as they are the best to communicate with their peers.
- Use different tools as the youth get bored very quickly.
- Create games and visual tools to attract their attention.
- Messages need to be clear, meaningful and motivating.
- Teach students civics and inspire them to be active citizen at an early age.
- Give the youth the forum and space to express themselves freely, and respond with facts without criticizing them.
- Decision makers at the institution need to be accessible and engaged in the discussion.
- Practice transparency and clarity in your communication.

In conclusion, decision makers need to always remember that youth without opportunities or a connection to their communities may result in negative behaviors including substance abuse, delinquency, risky sexual behavior and dropping out of high school. Alternatively, young people with a clear sense of identity, a positive sense of self-worth and opportunities to achieve are likely to be successful. Preparing youth for successful transition to adulthood is an important investment which will increase the well-being of the next generation and ultimately the well-being of the whole society.

Encouraging youth electoral participation for young people and future voters should be a continuous effort throughout the electoral cycle, and it should be a collective responsibility of the policymakers, government, the education institutions, the media and the civil society. Moreover, it is important to show respect and value the young people and work with them as partners, therefore effective youth engagement strategies should include youth in planning and implementing, this will allow them to take ownership and mobilize others and become powerful models in their communities. By providing opportunities for youth civic engagement, we achieve a healthy development of young people which will contribute to the good of the country and the democratic process as a whole.



MALDIVES



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

H.E. Mr. Ahmed Sulaiman

Chairman, Election Commission of Maldives

Introduction

The Elections Commission of Maldives (ECM) was established on 7th August 2008 as an independent and impartial institution to conduct and supervise all state election and public referendums as well as to monitor the regulatory framework pertaining to the functioning of political parties. Under the Elections Commission Act (2008), 5 members are appointed by the President for a 5 year term with approval of People's Majilis.

With regard to the Constitution and the Elections Commission Act include educating and creating awareness among the general public on the electoral process and its purpose. Voter and civic education is highly essential for inclusive, informed and ethical participation.

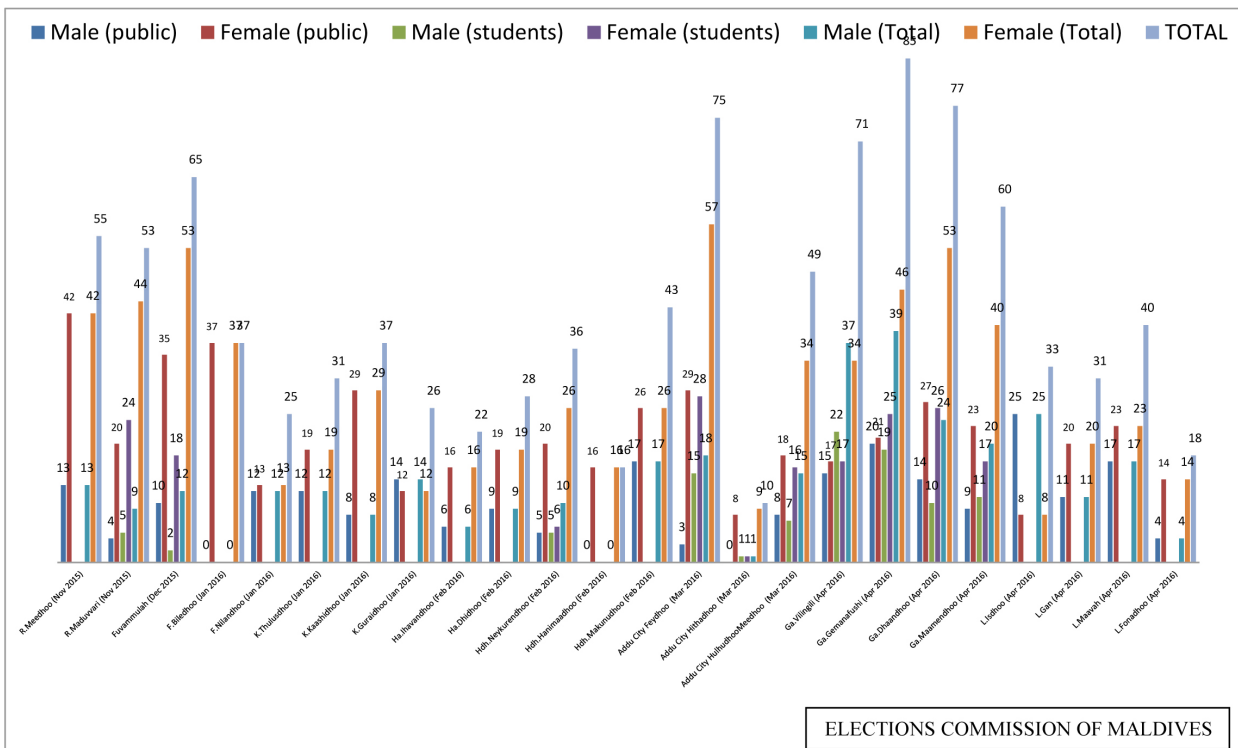
Civic education deals with and pays attention to educating the public about the various concepts underpinning a democratic society including types of government, political systems, citizen's responsibilities, and the role of media and other special interests.



Civic Education Program for School Students

Voter education, on the other hand, deals with more complex types of information about the voting process including voter rights, human rights, roles and responsibilities of voters, the meaning of concepts such as secrecy of ballots, public accountability, as well as the relationship between democracy and free and fair elections.

CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS CONDUCTED (2015 - 2016)



SUMMARY OF THE MODULES

MODULE 1: DEMOCRACY

In this module the participants learn

- The basic concept of democracy
- Important principles of democracy
- The pillars of democracy with the roles and responsibilities of each.

MODULE 2: ACCOUNTABILITY

Learning outcomes of this module are:

- What accountability is

- Importance of making the elected parties / candidates accountable
- What are the areas where they need to be accountable
- As a citizen, what is the importance being accountable in choosing candidate/s.

MODULE 3: ELECTIONS AND ELECTIONS PROCESS

This module directly focuses on the three main elections conducted in Maldives; Presidential Election, Parliamentary Election and Local Council Election. The processes, durations

given for various activities, such as duration for registration, re-registration, campaign duration and observer durations are main highlights.

MODULE 4: PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This module emphasises:

- The importance of each citizens participation in a democracy
- Who can be a citizen of Maldives
- Importance in participating in decision making process

Development of a Civic Education Program

In collaboration with UNDP, Elections Commission of Maldives started work on developing a curriculum for civic education in the year 2015. This project was successfully completed with the accomplishment of four different modules with its content. These modules were designed in such a way that the participants learn through the activities which they actively participate in. UNDP carried out the teaching of trainers, who could deliver the four modules to the public.

Piloting and conducting the program

In order to test the newly shaped civic education program, this program, it was organized in two islands in Raa Atoll called Raa Meedhoo and Raa Maduhvari. A total of 108 participants took part in this program. The participants for the pilot program were selected on the basis of a diversified criteria, including school students, parents, working citizens, NGO's, and general public.

After the pilot round, which was held in Raa Atoll, the necessary amendments were made to the civic education program and a second test round was conducted in Gn. Fuvahmulah for a total of 66 participants.

Finally, with the final amendments the program was conducted in more than 24 Islands for a total of 1023 participants.

Future enhancements for the current civic education program

In the process of conducting the program involving a variety of participants, it was noticed that the content of the program needs to be also inclusive of the following components:

- Youth Participation which will affect the number of new voter turnout
- Women Empowerment, not only as voters but as candidates and as political appointees
- Disability mechanisms of delivering the messages to the disable people in the most efficient manner



TOT completed trainers with UNDP and ECM Members



Civic Education Program for public



Civic Education Program for the General Public



Civic Education Program completed batch

Development of Voter Education Strategy

In collaboration with UNDP, Voter Education Strategy (VES) 2017 - 2019 was developed by a local consultant. To come up with efficient and effective strategy, there were discussions with stakeholders, employees of the Commission, Commissioners and also with related NGO's (Non-Government Organizations).

In this voter education strategy, some of the key areas which were focused upon:

- Development of a Mobile application with voter education and awareness content
- Carrying out social media campaigns in a wide range
- Provide a better platform for young people to express their concerns and come up with innovative solutions to address these issues
- Various forms of educational messages and methods must be employed to break gender stereotypes
- Disabled community members (including

sign language interpreters) could be used in developing and delivering many of the related content

- Engaging constructively with the public on key issues of concern and developing consistent campaigns of education could potentially change the negative perceptions

Implementation of Newly designed Voter Education Strategy

The newly designed voter and civic education strategy is ready for implementation and the first phase of it will function in the first quarter of 2016. In this phase a wide range of consultation meetings will be conducted for stakeholders. Wide array of modes will be discussed with the media to impart the information to the general public. Communicating of the Civic modules to emerging voters via school curriculum will be held at utmost importance in the first quarter of 2016.



EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS

Dr. Ayodhee Prasad Yadav
Chief Election Commissioner- Nepal

Introduction

Nepal and India enjoy excellent bilateral relations, and treasure very close, comprehensive and multidimensional relations since time immemorial. The relations are strengthened further by the age-old ties of history, culture, tradition and religion, and pronounced more in political, social, cultural, religious and economic dealings with each other. The open border between the two countries has been a unique paradigm of our ties and the frontier without restriction has greatly facilitated the free movements of our people to each other's territory. Moreover, such facilitation of the movement of the people has increased more exchanges and interactions at organisational and the people-to-people level.

In essence, Nepal- India relations are much more than the sum of treaties MOU or agreements concluded between the two countries. Our main thrust now has been to further widen and deepen our bonds of ties to the mutual satisfaction of our people at different aspects of life. In recent years, Republic of India has gained tremendous trust of its citizens on national affairs and governance. It has been reflected in the

largest democratic elections by increasing number of voters participating in the elections.

The trust in governance resulted in significant development of socio-economic sector and it has contributed to place the country in a better socio-economic position. The development of infrastructure, information and communication technology, energy, urban development, investment in foreign country and increasing role in international area are some of the major achievements besides the institutionalization of democracy at grass root level. Being a neighbour sharing a long open border with India, effects of democratic and socio- economic development will definitely impact Nepal positively.

With regard to the relationship between ECN and ECI at organisational and official level, ECI has significantly supported ECN during several elections of Nepal. The generous supports range from capacity development of election officials to logistic support. Different level visits have taken place between two EMBs. ECN is invited to most of the training and capacity development events organised by IIIDEM,

several electoral officials of ECN have benefited from these knowledge sharing forums.

The relation is further enriched and systematized with a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2011. We work together as per the MOU during the period of five years. Now Nepal has signed another fresh MOU to strengthen our mutual cooperation and trust which as I believe, will be instrumental to enhance mutual relationships for coming years. Likewise, both of our EMBs are founding members of the Forum of Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA) and we have actively participated in its activities with collective strength. Association of Asian Electoral Authorities (AAEA) is another forum in which we work together.

The Election Commission of Nepal has been conducting different activities for the promotion of the engagement of youth and future voters as guided by the national level policies of Nepal. The Constitution of Nepal states that 'the state makes efforts for the empowerment and development of the youths and provides them with appropriate opportunities for the overall development of the State'.

Similarly, the Youth Policy, 2015 has one of the objectives of preparing the youths committed and accountable to the state and the democratic system. The policy has recognized the empowerment and leadership development of the youth for national development besides their participation and mobilization in different development and welfare activities.

Following the national policy framework and realizing the multiplier effects of the participation of youths and potential voters in electoral process, Election Commission of Nepal has already started its practical strategic initiatives to engage youth and future voters through electoral education, capacity building, dialogue, interaction, participation and mobilization. As we have experienced, the youth have forward and backward linkage in strengthening democracy and governance, empowering them with democratic values will enhance their multifold participation in state affairs including electoral process and societal development.

Active participation and engagement of informed youth voters not only paves the way for well cultured democratic electoral practices but also contributes to make them aware of the governance system as a whole. Considering these realities, ECN has taken

several initiatives in encouraging voter education in Nepal. As there are more than 35% of youth voters out of around 14 million voters and 0.4 million citizens are expected to turn out into eligible voters every year, it is important to encourage and engage them in electoral process. A strategic approach of empowering youth and future voters ECN has launched several focused electoral education activities in Nepal. The Electoral Education and Information Center (EEIC) has provided ample opportunity for school student to learn about election and democracy in an interactive pedagogy. Mobile EEIC has been in operation for those who have not been able to visit EEIC.

Likewise, youths of political parties have been trained in electoral affairs including their role in election and electoral code. Youth and future voters of marginalised communities and People with Disabilities (PWDs) are also given due consideration in educating them about electoral practices. An integrated manual consisting of different topics including electoral management, democracy, electoral process, code of conduct, EDR and role of stakeholders among others has been prepared for the youth focused training.

The training for youths is being conducted in cascade method, MTOT at center, RTOT in Region and DTOT in local level. Similarly BRIDGE and Non BRIDGE trainings have been conducted inviting youths of different sector of societies in several modules. In addition to this, ECN has created platform in social media such as Face Book, YouTube, Twitter and other online media as most of the youth population are habitual to these sites. As a result a significant increase in youth participation in election (Voting) has been observed in the next CA election held in 2013. In this context, this workshop will be instrumental to learn new knowledge and methodologies related to youth and future voter participation in electoral process practiced in India and other parts of the world.

As mandated by the constitution, ECN is preparing to conduct 3 tiers of elections namely local level elections, provincial level elections and federal level elections within one year. The current focus is to prepare ECN in the form of legal infrastructure, operation management, collection of voter list and have dense dialogue with government and political parties including voter education to all sections of society including youth and future voters, woman, marginalized community and disabled people, among others in a systematic approach.



SRI LANKA

STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS

Mr. Mahinda Deshapriya

Chairman, Election Commission of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has achieved a special historical landmark in the democratic process by implementing universal franchise for the first time amongst Asian countries. Similarly, Sri Lanka is known as an enthusiastic state when electoral democracy is considered. Many wait anxiously to cast their vote at election time whatever the political understanding is. On the other hand, the irony is that many are unaware of the legal provisions and administrative procedures to be followed to obtain their voting rights. In simple terms, many of Sri Lanka's citizens are unaware of the fact that they should ensure their names entered in the electoral register at every annual revision of the register. The interest shown in this regard is also minimal.

The negative consequence of this situation is that a considerable number of citizens who are qualified are not registered as electors. It is because of this that steps were taken to name June 1st as 'Voters' Day' and conduct a special programme and events to create an awareness among the people and thus ensure that all the eligible citizens are provided the right to vote.

The main reason for naming a Voters' Day was the internationally accepted concept of 'All Inclusive

Elections' which means voting rights for all the eligible citizens. In fact, Sri Lanka is grateful to the Election Commission of India for its novel concepts in Voter Education under SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation). Every democratic country respects the policy of providing voting facilities to every citizen.

Sri Lanka is credited with a unique place when compared with other countries for the reason that we are among a few countries that revise the register of electors annually. In updating the register annually we are guided by the provisions in the Constitution which is the basic law of the country. It is because it explains that the sovereignty of the republic is protected by safeguarding the franchise. Article 3 of the Constitution emphasizes its legality i.e. by the words 'In the Republic of Sri Lanka Sovereignty is in the People and is inalienable. Sovereignty includes the powers of Government, fundamental rights and franchise.'

We have identified and drawn our special attention on the 'Voters' Day' to a few categories in the society. Empowering Young and Future Voters' is a key area. The attitudes and behavior of young people aged

16-24 towards participation in democratic process generally including electoral registration and voting in elections is very poor.

Many young people were negative about politics and were frustrated as they felt that politicians ignored them. The overriding view was that politics was boring and complicated which did not act as an incentive to become involved. Many felt that politics here focused more on religion and difference than 'real' issues such as health and education. The Election Commission of Sri Lanka also has taken measures to enlighten the schooling children on democracy and universal franchise in collaboration with the Ministry of Education in propagating the Student Parliament at school levels throughout the island. A pilot project was launched among 19 selected schools in Kandy district while 12 schools in the district of Ampara were selected for this purpose.

To celebrate the International Youth Day in Sri Lanka on the 12th of August 2016, by the beach of the historic Fort in Galle, the Election Commission (EC) together with the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) under the recommendations of a Youth Led Steering Committee carried out a program termed "Kites for Rights". The primary objective of this campaign is to encourage all national youth led organizations, networks and societies to engage in creating public awareness through creative and innovative ways about the importance of youth civic engagement. The Election Commission of Sri Lanka believed that a significant weight must be directed at

the national level up rise in youth civic engagement and the significant gap which still exists due to the need in strengthening engagement of youth in voter education in a systematic manner. #YouthVoteSL was a highly successful social media campaign.

The youth associations in the island have signed a petition which involved around two hundred and seventy five thousand youths demanding the revision of laws pertaining to Registration of Electors. According to the existing laws, only those who read the age of 18 years on the 1st of June are eligible to be registered in the electoral register. Yet by the time they exercise their franchise they are either 18 years and 6 months or sometimes exceed 19 years.

The Election Commission positively responded and assured the expedition of the revision of laws, a draft of the same has been forwarded to all the political parties in the island for their views and observations on the possibility of inclusion of all those who attain the age of 18 years at a time of an election thus allowing all to exercise their franchise. There is a drastic drop of youth representation in the Parliament where out of the 225 members, only 14 are below 35 years while only 3 individuals hail from families with no political backgrounds.

The Election Commission of Sri Lanka in its Participatory Strategic Plan, has emphasized the importance of engagement of youth and empowering future voters, as the Commission believes the ballot is more powerful than the bullet.



THE TUNISIAN STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS

H.E. Mr. Mohammed Chafik Sarsar

President, High Independent Election Authority of Tunisia

The electoral abstention is not a phenomenon specific to young people. However, the decrease of juvenile participation has taken a universal dimension.

Tunisian population is relatively young, indeed, 57% are under 35 years old. The question of the inclusion of young people is therefore a fundamental question for the future of democracy.

In the revolution process, we have noticed this paradox : we have , on one hand, the events of the revolution which have shown that young people are an important instrument in the advent of social and political transformation ; on the other hand, we notice that they weren't very present at the ballot box.

Certainly, a part of the solution must be provided by the political actors, who must regain the confidence and esteem of the voters, but in today's

communication, we will focus on the role of electoral management bodies.

ISIE has tried to develop a multidimensional strategy based on 5 pillars to encourage active participation of young people :

Review the reasons for the demobilization of youth

It is certain that young people are always more abstentionist. Because we are dealing with citizens who are still in training, who are in a phase of social and political integration. « Their interests mainly concern the living environment, family, friends and leisure. Some studies have shown that young people want more explanations about politics at school, and at university, without realizing that this is difficult because the school must keep a certain neutrality » (Vincent Tournier).

But the problems of young people vary according to country, social background and intellectual level, so it is necessary to study closely the real problems through focus groups, specialized studies and opinion polls to refine the diagnosis of abstentionism.

Opening up channels for discussion with young people

It is necessary to re-establish contact with young people, to overcome their systematic rejection of politics. The ISIE has tried to act through youth associations, which organize youth cafés, workshops, seminars, voter education campaigns and organize visits to the electoral commission offices for youth groups belonging to the Citizenship clubs.

At the same time, ISIE has tried to institutionalize the communication through agreements of partnership and exchange between the electoral bodies, ministry of youth, ministry of national education and the observatory of young people.

Also, by the launching of a civic education program with young radio stations, aiming to anchor the notions of democracy and elections, and to train responsible voters and, why not, future political decision-makers.

Innovate methods of action

The introduction of new methods of action is essential to attract young people :

The use of new modes of communication : teasing, songs and spots that convey language and images appealing to young voters.

One can not hide that social networks are the channels of communication to be exploited as a priority ; Tunisia is the second African country to have access in terms of coverage of networks and uses.

The introduction of new technologies for voter registration has proved its worth in 2014; The choice of the USSD protocol and the MMSing facilitated the participation of young people in the electoral process.

The celebration of the day of democracy for the

first time in Tunisia on September 15, 2016, was an opportunity for ISIE and its partners to organize a forum where associations, artists and photo competitions allowed rich exchanges on the issue of youth participation.

Encourage the participation of young people in the electoral administration

The recruitment of young people for awareness-raising campaigns, registration of voters and the management of voting centers, has allowed young people to join the electoral process. The election administration sets an example to demonstrate that elections are not an old affair.

Encourage the candidacy of young people for elections

Today we have the proof that the reversal of the tendency of the absenteeism of the young begin by a change of the political elite ; The typical example of this solution is what happened in the Canadian elections in 2015 ; where a young leader (Mr Trudeau), young candidate, was able to reverse the trend by a dazzling increase in participation and especially among young voters .

The Tunisian constitution has fixed the electoral majority at 18 years .

It also stipulated in its article 133, that the electoral law must guarantee the representativeness of the young people in the local councils.

The electoral law of 2014, provided that any candidate list for the legislative elections must have a young candidate among the first four candidates.

The current draft of the electoral law provides that, the list which does not have among its three first candidates one young candidate, is ineligible.

It is certain that these actions need time and monitoring to provide results, and may be that the emergence of a young political elite could be the beginning of the expected change.

INCREASING SENSE OF EFFICACY AND CONVENIENCE OF VOTING FOR YOUNG VOTERS

Kim Yong-Hi

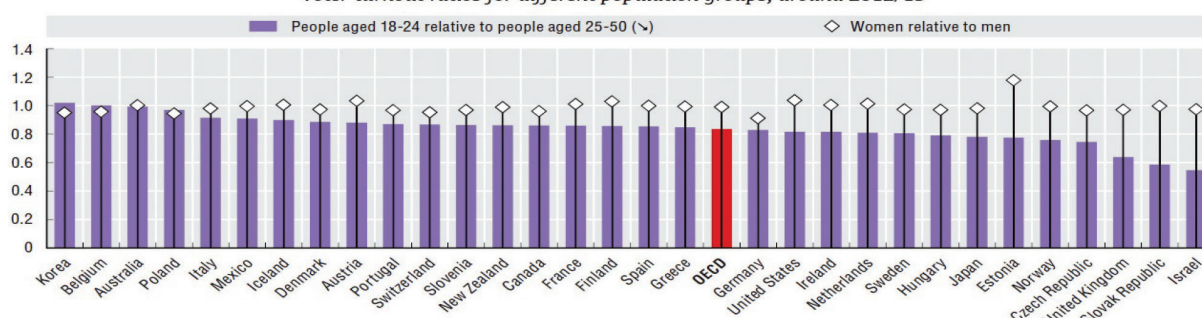
Secretary General, Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)

The aim of this paper is two-fold. I will first examine reasons behind widespread indifference towards voting among young people in today's electoral scene, especially how perceived inefficacy of exercising voting rights is being translated into their low turnout. Then, I will try to make some suggestions on the ways to increase young voters' political participation through 1) enhancing the accessibility of information in the form of media familiar to them; 2) encouraging mobilization

among like-minded young voters through which they broaden their self-consciousness as political actors and make an impact; and 3) ensuring convenience of their voting in exercising voting right.

According to the data from the OECD Social Indicators for the year 2016, as shown in the figure above, voter turnout among those 18-24 years old across the globe is, on average, 16% lower than that of those 25-50 years old (Figure 7.8). This is not a singled-out

7.8. Young people tend to vote less
Voter turnout ratios for different population groups, around 2012/13

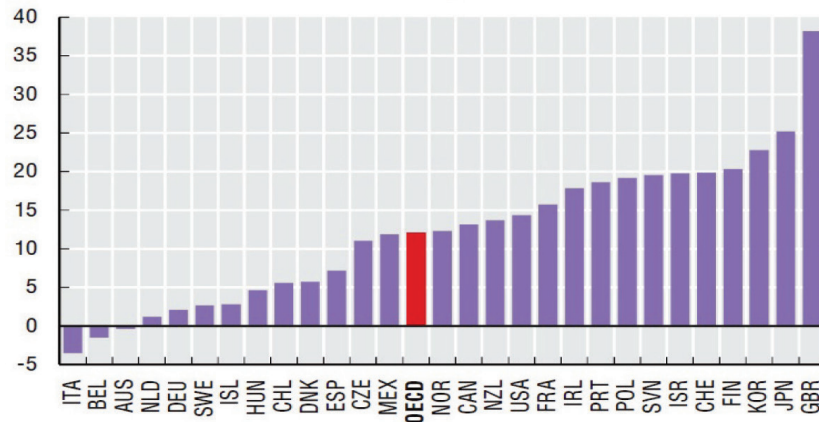


Source: Module 4 of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES 2011-16) and European Social Survey (ESS) for other countries.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933405752>

CO4.3. Older people are more likely to vote

Percentage point difference in voting rates between those 55+ years old and those 16-35 years old



phenomenon but part of a bigger and continuing trend. In a similar survey conducted in 2011 (Figure CO4.3), the percentage point difference in voter turnout rates between those 55+ years old and those 16-35 years old in most OECD countries shows that older people are more likely to vote than young people. Comparing the two figures, one can observe that the Republic of Korea is a rare exception: the voter turnout among young people has significantly increased from 2011 to 2016. According to the statistical data provided by the National Election Commission of Korea, in the 2012 National Assembly elections, turnout for voters in their 30s was 27.9%, much lower in comparison to that of those 60+ years old, which was 68.6%, and also that of 50s, which was 62.4%. However, as shown in Figures A, the turnout for those 19-50 years old was well above 50%. Later in this paper, I would like to examine two major driving forces behind this increase. Let us first develop a better understanding of what motivates people to vote and what not to.

The act of voting is indicative of one's sense of

belonging to and responsibility for the larger community. In general, high voter turnout is observed in countries where elections are being held for the first time or a new election system has been introduced. With historic changes like the revision of a Constitution or an end of an authoritarian regime, citizens tend to feel not only more obliged to fulfill their civic duty by going to the polling stations but also more optimistic about the impact they can make on the society by casting ballots. Such belief in the efficacy of their power as political actors, which reinforces their interest in various political agenda and foments diversity in the array of opinions, however, subdues as time goes by.

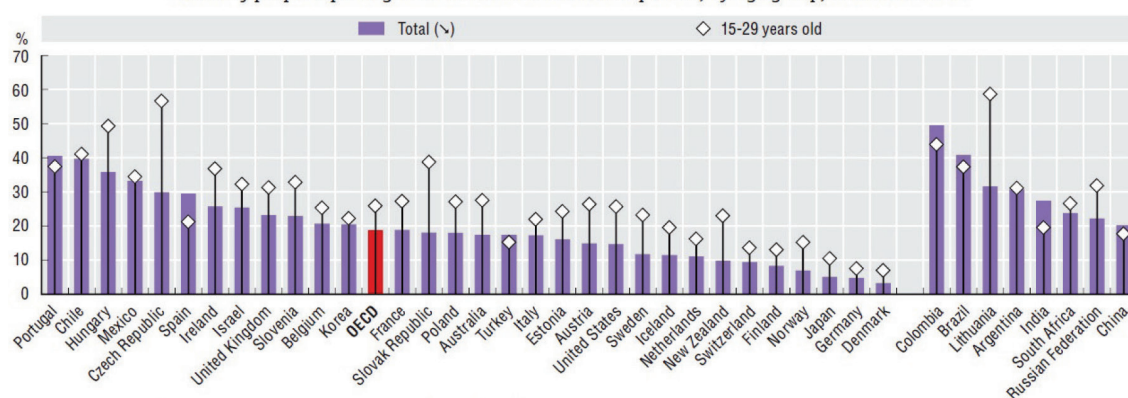
The motivations for such withdrawal may vary—political fatigue, disenchantment with the overestimated probability of casting a decisive ballot, or even a positive stability in institutions, a case in which election of certain individual politicians does not bring significant changes to the society. The common denominator among these motivations is that voters lose their interest in voting when they



[Figure A] Overall Voter Turnout by Age for 2016 National Assembly Elections in Korea

[Figure B] Voter Turnout by Age on Early Voting for 2016 National Assembly Elections in Korea

7.9. One in four young people in OECD not at all interested in politics
Share of people reporting to be not at all interested in politics, by age group, around 2012-14



Source: European Social Survey ESS6-2012, ESS7-2014 and World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-14.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933405767>

assume that their votes will make no difference. In addition to the perceived inefficacy of voting, the political disinterest becomes more prominent among younger generations due to their tendency to pay more attention to individual benefit than collective benefit.

According to the statistics provided by the OECD, on average, 25% of young people report to be not at all interested in politics compared to 20% for the total population in OECD (Figure 7.9). Among young people aged 15 to 29, disinterest in politics is especially high in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Hungary. Spain and India are rare exceptions where young voters on average are less disinterested in politics than the general population is.

Civic education on universal and equal suffrage as one's inalienable right and duty should continue to take place in public sectors to alleviate the problem. Helping prospective voters to gain hands-on experience on casting a ballot also proves to be effective in familiarizing them with the electoral processes that could otherwise appear vague. Among those with a weak sense of civic duty, however, appealing to their calculation of cost and benefit will induce the best outcome. Instead of invoking a sense of obligation from young voters, a more effective approach would be increasing the perceived benefits of voting while, at the same time, lowering the costs of voting in terms of time and energy.

In order for that to happen, education system must be able to convince the young voters that their self-interest can be served through their act of public engagement. Election management body must be able to provide them with a convenient voting

experience such as postal voting, mobile voting, and early voting. In addition to that, political parties and candidates must identify young voters' needs and come up with effective policies that address to those issues. When there is assurance for both sense of efficacy and convenience in the act of voting, young voters will be more readily persuaded to invest their time and energy into the electoral process—not just in voting but from looking up candidates' pledges to participating in election campaigns and even observing elections—at their own will.

For young voters to find voting a more convenient experience, EMBs may introduce internet voting and mobile voting as complementary methods of voting. If implementing internet voting poses controversies due to concerns related to cyber-security and secrecy of ballot and the issue of "digital divide" among different age and economic groups, providing an early voting option would also help better accommodate young voters' convenience in voting. As part of its attempt to ensure convenience of voting, the National Election Commission of Korea has successfully implemented what is called the "ubiquitous" early voting system, which uses the integrated voters list and nationwide communication network. What the system enables is the convenience of being able to vote for the constituency to which the voter belongs in any polling station across the country. The early voting was most popular among the voters aged between 19 and 30 and largely increased their turnout, proving that reducing time and energy to be spent on voting lessens barriers to young voters' participation.

For young voters to become acutely aware of their self-interest at stake during the election period, information pertinent to their concerns needs to

be easily available to them. After acquiring and analyzing information, they will need to exchange and compare their ideas, forming networks of like-minded individuals to raise a collective voice loud enough not to be ignored by candidates and political parties seeking to be elected. Speaking from my personal experience, politicians and parties cannot help but paying more attention to needs of those who will likely to show up to vote.

It is the EMBs' job to help voters make an informed choice by developing and making accessible a platform for election information using media familiar to young generation. More so in today's Facebook-Instagram-Twitter generation, securing success in channeling grassroot political initiatives that take place on-line to off-line spaces would play a key role in strengthening representative democracy. EMBs, as much as they need to stay neutral, are also entitled to instill in voters the confidence that they are main political actors and their opinions matter for political parties and candidates. EMBs' role is to remove hindrance to various forms of political mobilization and to help systemize the way in which people form groups. Political parties, candidates, civic groups, individual voters, and other types of influencers must lead the change voluntarily.

Social media democratizes information sharing and helps individuals with very narrow interests quickly and easily connect with others who share their beliefs, diversifying the society's opinion pool and bringing attention to more voices. According to a survey of 3,760 U.S. adults by the Pew Research Center, 35% of people 18-29 years old say social media is the most helpful source of information on the 2016 presidential election. We have seen how powerful of a political tool Social Media is from the example the 2016 U.S.

Presidential election. In the 2002 Presidential election of Korea, from which the ninth President Moo-hyun Roh was elected, internet also played a crucial role. In January 2002, Roh had only garnered support from 1.6% of voters. However, with the active campaign of the organization named "People Who Love Roh Moo-hyun," which begot its birth on the internet, he gained popularity within the short time period and was elected as a President with the 48.9% of votes.

Korea had imposed sanctions on election campaigns, prohibiting any form of campaign except for during the specified period (from the 14th days prior to election day to one day prior to the election day). In 2012, however, Korea removed the regulation for campaigns taking place on the internet in order to provide accessible candidate information voters. As a domino effect of such initiative, Korea today has a very vibrant on-line political scene. The recent impeachment of President Park in Korea would have not been possible without the citizens' peaceful demonstrations on the streets. And these demonstrations would not have been organized without strategic and systematic attempts to transform the collective energy for change that started on-line to the candle light demonstrations on the street.

Electoral participation is at the heart of representative democracy. It acts as an indicator of the country's democratic consolidation and social cohesion. Voter turnout from young generation holds much significance in that it is telling of the outlook on a country's democratic progress. Simply put, the future of our democracy depends on our future voters. When EMBs and society successfully persuade young voters of efficacy and convenience of voting, there we shall see the meaningful increase in young voters' political participation.



YOUTH CIVIC EDUCATION IS CRUCIAL TO A COUNTRY'S DEMOCRATIC HEALTH

William Sweeney

President/CEO, International Foundation for Electoral Systems

Introduction

Recent large-scale youth survey findings suggest that today's youth – the largest young generation ever – are less engaged in political processes than previous generations and are beginning to 'opt-out' of democratic systems.^{1, 2} Unresponsive institutions and other barriers to youth participation and influence in public life are often cited as major contributors to this decline. In response, election management bodies and international organizations have noted the importance of effective civic education, and have offered recommendations to mitigate or remove institutional barriers, such as the adoption of legal and policy mechanisms – legislative quotas, youth parliaments, lowered voting age, among others – as a means to increase youth engagement in political processes and public life.^{3, 4, 5}

1 Afrobarometer; International Youth Day: Despite interest, African youth are not connecting with political processes; No. 41; August 2015.

2 Arab Youth Survey 2015; Asda's Burson-Marsteller; 2015.

3 Enhancing Youth Political Participation throughout the Electoral Cycle; United Nations Development Programme; 2012.

4 Youth Participation in National Parliaments; Inter-Parliamentary Union; 2014.

5 Nearly every country has some type written policy, action plan, or strategy focused on youth. YouthPolicy.org offers a list

During its 30-year history, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) has found that a culture of democracy flourishes only when citizens are informed about democratic principles, and translate that knowledge into action by: engaging with institutions and other public structures; performing community service; and, exercising leadership. Through its global portfolio, IFES advances good governance, and empowers underrepresented populations to participate in the political process; youth civic education is an integral part of this work.

The term "youth" typically refers to the transitional period from childhood to adulthood during which individuals' relationships with government change from passive to active. Reaching the age of enfranchisement is a milestone that enables young people to formally participate in public structures. Investment in young people offers communities and societies a tangible demographic dividend as research suggests that early civic education and engagement establishes life-long patterns of participation in community and public affairs. Educating young people

of countries with links to their respective youth documents: <http://www.youthpolicy.org/nationalyouthpolicies/>

on the values, culture, and practice of democracy through effective youth civic education before they reach the voting age is crucial to a country's future democratic health, and ultimately, peace and stability.

IFES designs and implements youth programs that foster an understanding of citizens' rights and responsibilities in a pluralistic society and creates a culture of engagement for those who have not yet reached the voting age in their communities. IFES also provides training, incentives, tools and opportunities for new voters to participate in elections and advocate for positive change within their communities. With IFES support, in countries around the world, young people have built networks and other public forums to discuss and debate issues of importance; trained for and served as poll workers and election observers in their communities. This is in order to uphold principles of free, fair, and transparent elections; and ensure themselves a seat at the table during peaceful democratic transitions by drafting codes of conduct applied during high intensity pre- and post-election periods.

Measures for Effective Youth Engagement

Formal School-based Civic Education:

Occasionally, schools and other youth-serving institutions in a country lack curriculum, qualified teachers and/or other resources dedicated to youth civic development. Yet in countries where traditions of civic education and democratic society are nascent, these resources are vital in fomenting democratic values, attitudes, and habits in young people. To address this need, IFES developed a fully-accredited university-level civics course titled 'Democracy and Citizenship', and piloted the course in six higher-learning institutions in the Republic of Georgia. Today, the course is offered in 27 universities across the country in collaboration with the Georgian Civic Education Lecturers Association, and seeks to strengthen students' understanding of governance, civic responsibility and civil society. This is alongside enhancing their critical thinking skills and encouraging active participation in public life. There are more than 7,000 alumni throughout Georgia who have taken this course, many of whom have undertaken a variety of civic activities since their studies.

Similarly, in Kenya IFES works with the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

(KICD) to develop curricular materials for primary- and secondary- level schools. These materials seek to demystify the election process, and ensure that young voters will exercise their constitutional right to register and vote when they reach voting age.

Non-formal Civic Education:

Outside of the classroom, young people often have the opportunity to engage in creative or experiential learning which is an instructional method that emphasizes learning from experience, and can include internships, volunteerism, field studies, or simulations. IFES supports this type of learning through a variety of activities including multi-day residential 'Democracy Camps' featuring a program of lectures, small group exercises, competitions, theater and sports, where students hone problem-solving skills and explore values such as leadership, responsibility, and civic participation. Additionally, other activities such as debate and after-school clubs, street theater, and peer-to-peer communication and mentorship programs help ensure knowledge of civic and voter information.

Applying Theoretical Knowledge to Public Life:

The development of practical skills associated with active civic engagement is best achieved when students apply theoretical concepts explored inside the classroom to daily life outside of school. An outgrowth of the 'Democracy and Citizenship' course is a micro-grant program where youth-led organizations compete for funding in order to conduct projects of their own design. Putting theory into practice helps young people cement the link between conceptual notions of what citizenship is, and the look and feel of active citizenship in practice.

During the summer of 2016, IFES provided grants to 11 youth-led organizations in Georgia working to address voter and social issues throughout the country. These dedicated young people seek to make the lives of others better through their work. Meri Namgaladze, founder of 'Youth for Public Interests' in Batumi, Georgia, noted, "*My experience with [IFES] civic education courses and action project encouraged me to establish my NGO, Youth for Public Interests, together with my course mates, who are fellow D&C course alumni.*"⁶ These dedicated young people reached thousands of their peers and other Georgian

⁶ International Foundation for Electoral Systems Dialogues on Democracy featuring Meri Namgaladze; <http://www.ifes.org/multimedia/podcast-dialogues-democracy-featuring-gvantsa-tughushi>

citizens through their work, which has an important impact on their communities.

Youth and Peaceful Societies:

In the current climate of globally targeted terrorist attacks and civil wars that are increasingly likely to export catastrophe beyond their borders, identifying the causes of youth radicalization and mitigating violent extremism have captured the world's attention. As such, international bodies have recognized that it is more important than ever to ensure that young people have meaningful opportunities to engage in mainstream civic and political processes, as well as provide economic opportunity.

The U.N. Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 2250 in December 2015, which urged member states to actively include youth in political dialogue, with a focus on the 18-29 age range. IFES believes that including youth as active participants in their societies decreases the likelihood that they become involved in violent conflict and civic unrest because it provides them with greater awareness of the rights of others and the various legitimate means of resolving grievances peacefully. In particular, this can help to

stabilize high intensity pre- and post-election periods. By engaging youth in the aftermath of violent revolution and ethnic conflict, IFES has found these efforts ultimately contribute to peaceful elections.

In support of youth's role in peaceful elections IFES helped students in Burundi address electoral violence and conflict in their communities by supporting the drafting of a Code of Conduct that was disseminated throughout the country; additionally, in consultation with the electoral commission, IFES organized a series of workshops that brought together nearly 23,000 young people to discuss elections and promote non-violence. These workshops helped participants understand what is at stake during elections and equip them with tools to mitigate potential election-related conflicts.

In Syria, IFES organized the 'Musharaka Youth Forum', which is focused on providing a safe space for displaced Syrian youth living in Turkey to share their experiences, engage with others in their communities and begin taking steps toward creating the stable and secure community environment that is a necessary foundation for meaningful civic participation.



STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS: MALAYSIAN COMMONWEALTH STUDIES CENTRE

Karamjit Singh

Trustee, Malaysian Commonwealth Studies Centre

Introduction

In his remarks to the 2006 American Bar Association conference, Justice Anthony M. Kennedy described the Rule of Law as having three essential facets:

- i. "The Law is superior to, and thus binds, the government and all its officials.
- ii. The Law must respect and preserve the dignity, equality and human rights of all persons.
- iii. The Law must devise and maintain systems to advise all persons of their rights, and it must empower them to fulfil just expectations"

It follows from these comments that if elections and constitutional structures within a democratic framework are to function effectively and produce appropriate outcomes; then voter education has to be an essential part of this fabric.

All of us, whether in the Global North or South, live within pluralistic societies. Yet, a common demographic feature is the age profile of our populations and its relevance to the electoral process.

We know, for example, that in India over half of its population is aged less than 35 years whilst in the United Kingdom over half our citizens will soon be 60 years or older . We also know from our electoral experiences in the United Kingdom that the older you are, the more likely it is you will vote. However, the health of our democracies depends on having this forward looking strategic perspective and responding to this particular youth dynamic in our societies.

Additionally, there are statutory distinctions between different Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and some may not have the role or resources conferred on them in order to discharge a responsibility for informing citizens about their voting rights. This in turn raises the question that if EMBs cannot undertake this then who can act as honest brokers?

The final general comment to be raised is- if we reflect on the third point identified by Justice Kennedy – is how do we assess the effectiveness of systems or activities which advise and empower young and future voters?

Some Examples of Strategic Initiatives Focusing On Young and Future Voters

Since 2001, the Malaysian Commonwealth Studies Centre has developed an electoral democracy programme of seminars and other activities which has brought together senior leaders from a number of Election Management Bodies largely (but not exclusively) in the Commonwealth. The Indian Election Commission, have consistently supported the Centre's activities with the attendance of successive Chief or Election Commissioners throughout this period. These senior leaders have discussed various strategic issues including those covered within the title of this particular seminar because of its cross cutting global significance.

Some examples of strategic initiatives focusing on young and future voters are:

- i. The innovative Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme and other initiatives such as the *Pappu* videos/outdoor and signature campaigns/reminder messages on SMS/ essay competitions; all of which were initiated by the Indian Election Commission. The Commission had given considerable thought to engaging with this young demographic through the use of social media against a background of a society with a majority young population, having the sophistication of one third of the world's software engineers but also with marked differences between its rural and urban communities.
- ii. The relatively new structure of the Independent Nigerian Election Commission (INEC) and deadlines for the 2011 Presidential elections meant that 240,00 ad hoc staff were mostly recruited from the National Youth Service Corps who registered 73.3 million citizens within a few weeks. INEC also utilised multiple traditional and new media technologies because of its younger voter profile.
- iii. One of the statutory duties of Elections Canada (EC) is to communicate clearly about the electoral process, registration procedures, and identification required to vote. The 2011 national census showed that 15.2 % of the population was aged between 18 – 24 years. The EC's programme of electoral reminders, using different modes of communication, its election website, national advertising campaign, suite of information products and outreach campaigns all had a specific dimension targeting young and future voters.
- iv. In the 2014 South African national and provincial elections, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) developed a strategy focusing on youth with the following elements – a content plan intended to appeal using platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Mxit; monitoring social media channel activity and responding to requests for information; advertising across a range of internet, social media and traditional channels; and sponsoring the development of two specific mobile phone applications.
- v. During the early years following its establishment in 2001, the United Kingdom Electoral Commission (EC) focused on trying to raise awareness amongst young people as part of its statutory responsibility (then) for voter education. The public awareness campaigns targeted at this demographic group provided information about voter registration but also adopted a campaigning approach emphasising how specific social issues such as poverty, health, education and employment required active citizenship through the voting process.

Conclusion

It is believed from experiences at the Centre that some senior leaders have recognised the critical significance of this particular issue and have tried to address this with targeted specific communication and content strategies. The New Delhi Declaration following on from the conference on Inclusive Participation, combined with the current leadership of the VoICE.NET initiative by the Indian Election Commission and the launch of the Indian International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) affords an opportunity for supporting a sustained global emphasis on enhancing institutional capacity in and sharing information about innovative strategies to empower young and future voters within democracies.

A large, light blue hand is positioned in the upper left corner, reaching towards the center. In the lower right corner, three smaller, light blue hands are shown, each with a long arm extending from the bottom right towards the center. The background is white, with blue diagonal stripes at the top and bottom edges.

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON 'STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS'

ADDITIONAL READINGS ON 'STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS'

S D SHARMA
SENIOR FELLOW
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA



AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS YOUTH PARLIAMENT

The National Indigenous Youth Parliament (NIYP) is a week-long unique learning programme for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the age group of 16 to 25 years and interested in learning about Australia's democracy and to have a say in Australia's future.

NIYP brings together the future Indigenous leaders from around Australia to discuss and deliberate the issues affecting their communities. The participants interact with law makers, gain hands on experience in functioning of the Parliament especially the legislative process.

The first Indigenous youth parliament was held in 2012 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of granting the right to vote to Indigenous Australians in federal elections. 50 parliamentarians in the 2012 NIYP were selected from a field of more than 180 applicants; 35% came from remote communities, 45% from regional centers and 20% from urban communities. The next programme was held from 28th May to 3rd June, 2014

Announcement for NIYP 2017 has already been made by the Australian Electoral Commission. Prior to the national programme the participants attend a day long training session in their respective State

Aims and Objects

NIYP is an exciting opportunity for young aboriginals and Torres Strait island people in the age group of 16 to 25 years to learn about Australian Democracy. It provides firsthand experience of democratic polity in operation to these young indigenous people. The programme also aims to reduce Indigenous disadvantage in electoral participation

Participation and the Programme

NIYP is organized by the Indigenous Electoral Participation Programme of the Australian Electoral Commission in partnership with the Museum of Australian Democracy and the YMCA at Old Parliament House in Canberra.

Fifty young Indigenous people from different parts of the country participate in this week-long leadership programme which promotes youth advocacy, active community leadership and a commitment to democracy and its processes.

The participants are chosen on the basis of their community leadership activities, nature and relevance of their deliberative contribution to the event and the learning experience they carry with themselves back to their communities. Six people are chosen from each state and territory, and two from the Torres Strait Islands.

The programme includes expert training in how government functions, the legislative process, debating on different issues and dealing with the media. Participants get an opportunity to interact with and learn from the nation's leaders, members of Parliament, dignitaries, the parliamentary press gallery, Indigenous community leaders, senior public servants and academics.

One of the important components of the programme is a two-day simulation of the parliament at work. This event is organized at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, where participants debate bills and important issues of

NIYP 2017 – coming soon

The National Indigenous Youth Parliament (NIYP) is an exciting opportunity for young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 to 25 to learn about Australia's democracy and to have a say about Australia's future.

More information about NIYP 2017 and how to apply will be available on this page **late January 2017.**

Register your interest for NIYP 2017

are you:

- A young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person aged 16 to 25?
- Interested in learning about parliament and how laws are made?
- Passionate about issues that affect you, your community and your country?
- Willing to stand up and be heard?

Yes?
The National Indigenous Youth Parliament is for you!

apply now!

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS YOUTH PARLIAMENT 2014
28 May – 3 June Canberra

What is NIYP?
The National Indigenous Youth Parliament (NIYP) is an exciting program run by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) in collaboration with the YMCA and the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.

NIYP is an opportunity for 50 young Indigenous Australians to learn about Australia's democracy and to have a say in Australia's future.

When?
NIYP runs from 28 May to 3 June 2014 in Canberra. Participants will attend a training day in their state or territory in April 2014.



What's in it for me?

- A 7-day residential program in Canberra, including meals, accommodation and travel.
- New friends and networks.
- An opportunity to meet members of Parliament.
- A chance to debate issues and laws in the chambers of Old Parliament House.
- Support and guidance from a mentor.
- Activities to challenge and inspire!

Who can apply?
Indigenous Australians aged between 16 and 25 with an interest in government and parliament.

What skills are required?
None specifically, just a willingness to get involved and to stand up and be heard.

What does it cost?
If you are offered a place the participant fee is \$200. We can advise you on how to obtain sponsorship to cover the fee.

How do I apply?
Download an application pack from www.aec.gov.au/Indigenous or contact the AEC office in your state or territory and we'll send one to you.

More information
Go to www.aec.gov.au/Indigenous or contact the Australian Electoral Commission in your state or territory:

NSW	02 9375 6303	Indigenous-NSW@aec.gov.au
Vic.	03 9285 7142	Indigenous-VIC@aec.gov.au
Qld	07 3834 3450	Indigenous-QLD@aec.gov.au
WA	08 6363 8025	Indigenous-WA@aec.gov.au
SA	08 8237 6559	Indigenous-SA@aec.gov.au
Tas.	03 6235 0516	Indigenous-TAS@aec.gov.au
NT	08 8982 8006	Indigenous-NT@aec.gov.au
ACT	02 6271 4709	Indigenous@aec.gov.au

Applications close Monday 10 March 2014.



The National Indigenous Youth Parliament is an exciting program run by the Australian Electoral Commission in collaboration with the YMCA and the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.

Apply at www.aec.gov.au/Indigenous

Proudly supported by



relevance to their communities.

NIYP is a unique opportunity for young Indigenous Australians to build networks and meet other young Indigenous Australians from remote, rural, regional and urban settings. It is an opportunity to talk about community issues, to develop awareness about the matters that affect their everyday lives and to make their voice heard. Former youth parliamentarians support and mentor the participants.

More information is available at

www.aec.gov.au/Indigenous

Coming soon - National Indigenous Youth Parliament 2017! Learn about democracy and have your say in Australia's future. Applications open late January but you can register your interest today at www.aec.gov.au/Indigenous.

Make sure to like our Facebook page to keep up-to-date with all things #NIYP2017.

Also a massive congratulations to former 2014 NIYP participant Elijah Douglas – QLD finalist for the 2017 Young Australian of the Year award!



BRAZIL

VOTER OF THE FUTURE (ELEITOR DO FUTURO)

Introduction

'Voter of the Future' (Eleitor do Futuro) programme of Brazil presents interesting insight into the strategies for empowering young and future voters. The programme was launched in the year 2002, at the time of presidential election where EDF was launched as a parallel exercise with specific focus on youth belonging to the age group 10 to 15 years.

Aims and Objectives

In Brazil, voting is optional for youth over 16 years of age and mandatory for all citizens over 18 years of age. The program was aimed at sensitizing the young voters towards civic responsibility and empowering them for future electoral participation. The main objective was to encourage youth engagement at an early age with the political process and teaching of the skills necessary to engage them in electoral processes in an astute and informed manner.

EDF Programme: Parallel Election for Young People, 2002

Under the EDF programme a parallel election was organized in the year 2002 for young people by the State Electoral Courts of several provinces under necessary guidance, encouragement and support from the Federal Electoral Court (FEC). The FEC assistance included permission to use the same electronic voting (e-voting) equipment as the formal vote for the EDF parallel elections. About 20,000 students of 10 to 15 years age group participated in the parallel elections.

The Follow up

Different states pursued the programme in line with the national initiative of 2002. However, follow up lacked regularity and the rigor, dependent upon the interest taken by the Regional Electoral Courts. In view of the positive outcome of the 2002 parallel mock vote, and building on a concern that the overall sense of citizenship needed to be supported and strengthened in a generation that had no memories of the dictatorship that ended in 1985, the Electoral Judiciary School of the Federal Electoral Court reviewed the EDF in consultation with the State Electoral Courts in 2003 and developed a revised EDF.

Revised EDF Program

The overall objective of the revised EDF program is to prepare Brazilian youth for responsibility of voting and in that process playing a determining in future of the country. The specifics of the roadmap and the focus age groups were left to the discretion of respective State Electoral Courts. The coverage of the age groups varied amongst the states between 10 and 15 years. Broadly the following objectives were accepted by all the SEC's for further follow up and action:

- Strengthening the sense of citizenship amongst children in the age group 10 to 14 years.
- Motivate youth to actively engage in the electoral process by voting, and to instill the desire and

capacity to conscientiously exercise this right and responsibility to vote in the next generation of voters.

- Educate young people about good and bad electoral practices.
- To alert young people against practices and attitudes that vitiate electoral processes with a view to encouraging an ethical approach to electoral politics.

Approach and Methodology

Different approaches and methods are used to achieve the objectives and goals of EDF. Nevertheless, the central theme of democratic electoral processes in all the cases remains the same i. e. conducting a free, fair and transparent mock vote as per law. In some cases the EDF vote parallels municipal elections while in others it parallels state or federal elections.

The Problem Areas

One of the problem areas the EDF mock ballot faces is the level of partisanship that may emanate from real-world political parties and the resultant influence that may detract from the educational goals of the exercise. Regional Electoral Court of the Federal District of Brasilia recognized this problem and developed a fictional electoral process based on a series of artificial parties focusing on specific issues of interest to young people such as health, liberty, sport and leisure, public security and education.

Characteristic Features of EDF Process

It would be appropriate to mention that the EDF mock election is conducted in a manner similar to the real process to provide genuine exposure to the young people. A notable characteristic of the mock ballot is the formal structure and the process. It includes:

- Advance training to the school staff and students in the proper operation of polling booths and electoral policing.
- Full formal mechanisms including deployment of presiding judicial institutions, including the need to complete specially generated candidate registration applications, with the local educational authorities playing the role of electoral registrars.
- Deployment of same e-voting machines that are used in formal elections.
- Results are tabulated and released in much the same manner as local, state and federal elections.

Impact Analysis and the Correction

1. The EDF mock election has a special impact in states with a long standing tradition of vote-buying, partisan manipulation and disrespect of electoral laws. Focused and interactive seminars and lectures are held for explaining the substance of the electoral laws and the necessity for rule of law for the political process. In addition, exercise is undertaken to engage students in a discussion on ethics in political process with the objective to instill a sense of civic virtue that will undercut the residual aspects of *coronelismo*, or local political bosses controlling electoral outcomes through patronage and misuse of power.
2. The EDF program activities and its substantive impact depend on level of cooperation and support from the schools. Brazilian law prescribes compulsory education up to the age of 16. Cooperation from local education authorities is vital to the success of the programme.
3. A major portion of the SEC's efforts is directed towards development of the civic education curriculum and teacher's resources for the classroom.
4. Special attention is given to training of the teaching staff. Some of the states offer distance education programs to disseminate information and further advance the program's aims and objectives. Such initiatives may strengthen the expansion of federal initiative, which until now has been limited to larger urban areas.
5. While there is widespread awareness on existence of the EDF programme, the actual exposure and participation is not commensurate with the effort and the outcome which needs substantive improvement in coverage of young populations.

Concluding Observations

Finally the sense, that political participation is a wider civic responsibility, is bolstered by the approach that the Electoral Courts take in design and implementation of the EDF. Unlike previous federal and state programs which were handed down and imposed by the presiding institution, the EDF initiative on the state level are explicitly inclusive, requiring the cooperation, inputs and active assistance from, not only educational authorities and institutions, but also the civil society organizations working in the area of

democratic enhancement through youth education and capacity development to the more general enhancement of widespread citizenship and civic inclusiveness.



KENYA

'STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS'

The Constitution Kenya enshrines specific provisions and the guiding principles for the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission to conduct voter education in the Country. The Directorate of Voter Education and Partnerships is mandated by the IEBC to carryout voter education in partnership with other agencies. Development of a Voter Education curriculum is one of the strategic initiatives taken by the IEBC. It aims at informing the public on their rights, responsibility and values. It plays a major role in creating awareness and ensuring quality participation of all Kenyans including young and future voters. The following discussion briefly brings out the approach of the IEBC in voter education inter alia for the young and future voters.

Strategies

IEBC has developed and implemented Voter Education Programmes employing different strategies for inter alia young and future voters.

- A comprehensive voter education curriculum for use by all voter education providers in the country.
- Mounted mass media campaigns utilizing media scripts, newspaper ads, media appearances and endorsements by media personalities.
- Conducted voter education campaigns for various electoral processes through 96 vernacular, English and Kishwahli radio stations and 8 TV stations.

- Employed various social media platforms such as Twitter, Face Book, YouTube and others to engage youth in 'elections conversation' and to have them register as voters. The 'Short Messaging Services (SMS)' were also extensively employed to communicate specific messages;
- Produced different curriculum support material and Information, Education and communication (IEC) literature on the voter registration targeting inter alia the youth voters besides other categories of voters.
- Engaged various agents including Media, Provincial Administration, Political Parties, Faith-Based organizations and volunteer Community Mobilizers among others to mobilize voters.
- Mounted various activities such as Voter Marathon and road shows to spur voter registration.

Partnership strategies

IEBC has adopted following broad strategies for partnerships in voter education:

- Direct Voter Education outreach through IEBC field staff.
- Partnership with International, National and community voter education providers, FBOs, Youth organizations, Women Organizations, Village elders and the general public.
- Empowering IEBC accredited Community Based Organizations, Private Sector and Civil Society.
- Media engagement (TV, Radio, print, Social Media).
- Road shows at County and Constituency levels.
- Participate in educational, social and cultural events.
- Active involvement of school children and their parents.
- Simulation of the voting Process at the ward level.
- Engagement of Voter Educators and mobilizers at ward level.
- Stakeholder engagement forums at all National, County, Constituency and Ward levels.
- Active involvement of Faith Based Organizations.
- Engagement of respected influential personalities and celebrities.
- Conducting Annual Voter Education Week (AVEW).
- Partnership with State and Non-state Actors.

Expected outcomes

- Increased participation of registered voters at the polls;
- Reduced cases of electoral violence and fraud;
- Reduced cases of spoilt/rejected votes;
- Increased participation of the youth, women and

marginalized in the electoral process;

- Enhanced secrecy of the ballot and freedom of choice;
- Informed voters and informed choices.

Platforms of voter education

- SMS through existing operators
- IEBC Website Platform operational.
- Radio Announcement Standard radio spot for all the national and community radio stations.
- Newspaper Advertisement in the top 3 newspapers.
- Television TV spots at prime times
- Posters, fliers, stickers and brochures printed and distributed countrywide.

IEBC materials

IEBC has developed a series of the well designed and user friendly attractive voter education materials for educating voters.

Handbooks, Booklets: 'Yes, I Can Vote!' A user friendly Guide to voting; Handbook on Elective Positions.

Posters: Kugombea si Kugombana, Voting Procedure, Youth (Mavijana), Sample Ballot Paper, Come Out and Vote and Say No to Bribery.

Brochures: On Election Day; Elective Positions.

Stickers: Vote Your Future, Kenya-My Choice-My Vote, Cast Your Vote be on the Right Side of History, Am proud I voted, Peaceful Campaign Starts with Me, Unleash your vote, Be a Guardian of our Country - vote, Our future is in Our votes – vote on....., Don't turn your back on our future-vote on,

Voter Education in Schools

School Children Leaflet

- A special brochure was prepared for students in primary schools to carry home to their voting age parents/guardians. This strategy targeted 9.5M school children in both public and private schools. In conjunction with the Directorate of Children Services organized a successful Kenya Children Assembly Elections.

Voter Education Curriculum for Schools

- A Voter Education Curriculum for schools has been prepared in collaboration with Ministry of Education and the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development.

Engagement through Universities

During the 2013 General Election, the IEBC partnered with Kenyatta University on the entertainment platform. The Universities have been inviting IEBC to:-

- Educate on Democracy Election Management and Election Operations.
- Conducting elections for student bodies.
- Participating and educating public during cultural events.
- Sharing voter education materials.

Role of university students and staff

1. To be examples to all other youths that Kenya is a democratic country.
2. By exercising your right in election. E G
 - By registering as a voter,
 - Reaching out for peace,
 - Participating in civil/voter education as volunteers,
 - Participating in politics,
 - Shunning tribalism.

Voter Education for Schools Project: Nurturing Democracy in Schools

The IEBC launched an ambitious voter education project for schools in March 2015. For this purpose the Commission has established a partnership with the Ministry of Education and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development to realize the goals of this project.

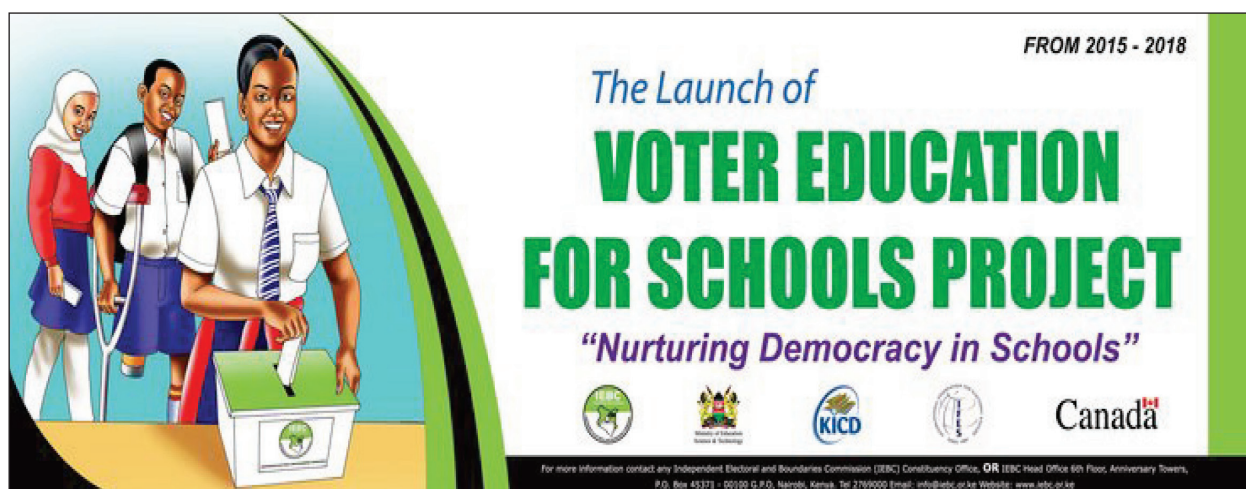
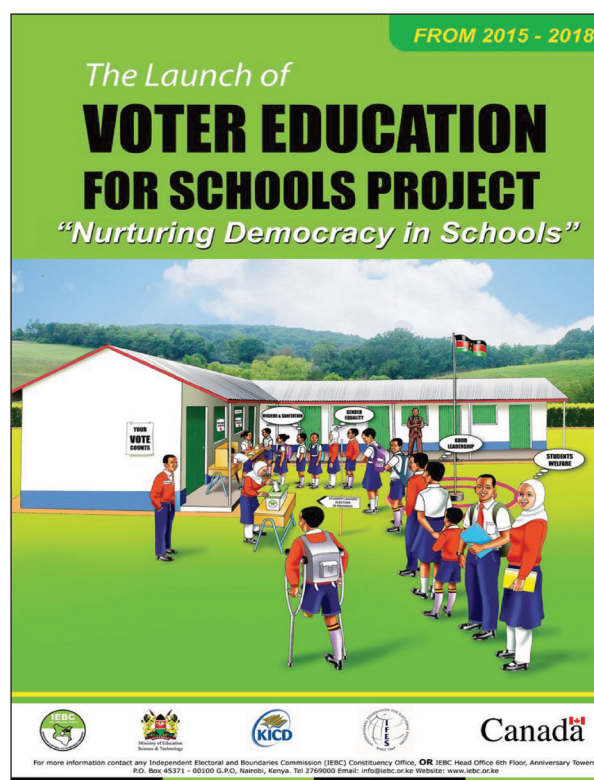
The project focuses more on the secondary school students because they are about to turn 18 years of age and will therefore be eligible to participate in elections.

The project is funded by the Canadian Government

through the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). It is meant to nurture democracy in young Kenyans.

Implementation of the project will include developing a curriculum and curriculum support materials; piloting the curriculum in selected schools; training teachers and students on the curriculum and handbooks; establishing the best platforms to engage the young people in schools; and rolling out the curriculum in schools nationally.

IEBC will work within the existing structures of the Ministry of Education, including County Directors



of Education, District Education Officers, Student Government and Student Councils. The Commission will consult all the stakeholders widely and integrate the project with existing initiatives.

The project is forward looking and intends to foster understanding of the electoral process and develop leaders of integrity from an early age

The banners announcing the launch of a new voter education initiative for schools in Kenya, led by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICED) may be seen at Annex III. The project is supported by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development.



TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE UK

Background

That, the voter turnout in the UK came down from 84% in the year 1950 to 65% in the year 2010, had been a matter of concern in the relevant quarters. Official turnout records of 59.4% in the 2001 general election were the lowest since 1918, and the lowest ever under the full democratic franchise. Turnout among youth was a matter of larger concern. The Ballot Study, 2011 reflected that up to 60 per cent youth do not vote in the UK. A survey of first-

'The 2001 general election saw voter turnout drop to its lowest level since the advent of universal adult suffrage, with just 59.4% of eligible voters choosing to exercise that right. Research by the MORI Social Research Institute at the time of the election suggested that low turnout was particularly pronounced among young people, with an estimated 39% of 18–24 year olds casting a vote. More encouragingly, the surveys revealed that young people were just as likely as others to see voting as important and something which can make a difference.'

The UK Electoral Commission

'Voter Engagement and Young People'

Research Report:

July 2002

time voters carried out for Radio1 revealed that 30 per cent did not believe their vote counts and 20 per cent felt inability for a ballot decision in view of disengagement. Despite the concerning statistics, more than half claimed they would vote if they could do so online or using text messaging. From the 15.5 million votes cast during the last series of the X Factor in the UK, it emerged that the young people do like voting, but they would often not participate in the elections that employ traditional voting methods.

Strategies for Using Social Media and e- initiatives for Electoral Engagement

Digital Dialogues Report of the UK publicized strategies for using social media for engaging citizens, e-government information and service delivery; e-democracy consultation objectives were publicized. Since then, a large number of technology driven initiatives at national and local government have been launched for civic and electoral engagement.

2010 UK election

While most research into the 2010 UK election did not specifically examine methods of voter enrolment and information prior to the election, a study of the election campaign by Rachel Gibson and colleagues reported that UK parties and politicians primarily "operated on old-fashioned, top-down broadcasting principles", rather than through interactive dialogue methods. They reported that "the internet has become an organizational necessity for election campaigning but ... it has not brought about that strategic change some have argued we should expect."

2012 London Mayoral election

2012 London Mayoral election saw extensive use of social media to engage citizens generally and young people in particular, with some interesting uses of social media. One such site is **Bite the Ballot** – the name itself reflective of the informal irreverent tone of social media and youth engagement. A visit to the **Bite the Ballot** site in May 2012 revealed the following invitation:

“Bite the Ballot, Spirit of London Awards, UpRise and media partner Community Channel’s London360 are giving you the opportunity to be part of the biggest **voting Registration Rally** for young people in the UK, in the run up to the London Mayoral Elections on May 3rd 2012. Many youth organizations as well as media partners will be present on the day. Full list of exhibitors and performances will be published later this week!”

The invitation went on:

“ON THE SATURDAY 14TH APRIL 2010, THE MINISTRY OF SOUND IN LONDON WILL HOST A DAY OF INSPIRATION AND EDUTAINMENT WITH SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS, ARTISTS, DANCERS, COMEDIANS, CELEBRITIES AND MOST IMPORTANTLY YOUNG LONDERS (Bite the Ballot, 2011) [original emphasis]”.

Bite the Ballot describes itself as “a grassroots campaign created by young people to inspire others to speak up and be a part of the decisions that directly affect us” and calls upon UK youth to:

“Join us, have your say, it’s our future! We have now got a direct voice to the people that make the decisions ... we can’t change the laws but we can have our say and if we come together people will have to take notice! Do not wait for someone else to voice what you are thinking – shout it loud and clear for yourself, do not be counted as part of the masses – be counted as an individual, with individual opinions and most of all do not grumble silently about decisions that are made on your behalf – make the decisions for yourself: VOTE! (Bite the Ballot, 2011).”

It is significant and relevant to the focus of this study that the Bite the Ballot campaign calls on young people to vote, but also noteworthy that it uses a range of attractors such as music, comedy, dance, celebrities and unconventional messages, including its own name and theme.

The site also borrowed the 2008 Obama slogan ‘Yes we can’ in its campaign for its YouthVoteLondon campaign.

The ‘Bite the Ballot’ developed a special logo for the YouthVoteLondon campaign. Another major campaign for the 2012 London Mayoral election was conducted by the official site, London Elects (www.londonelects.org.uk).

London Elects is part of the Greater London Authority (GLA), but is an independent body responsible for organizing the elections for Mayor of London and the London Assembly. This includes press, radio, TV and online campaigns to urge citizens to vote and tell them how to vote, designing and printing the ballot papers and counting votes. Information about the London Elects campaign is available at <http://www.londonelects.org.uk/our-public-awareness-campaign>.

The London Elects created a separate Facebook page during the 2012 London Mayoral election.

Other sites of interest for Voter Engagement

Other key online sites involved in the 2012 London Mayoral election identified were:

www.bitetheballot.co.uk
www.londonelects.org.uk
www.aboutmyvote.co.uk
www.ukpoliticalinfo/london-mayor-election-2012.htm
www.citizensuk.org.

Rock Enrol!® : Engaging Young People in Democracy

Rock Enrol!® is a high quality, interactive resource pack to encourage young people to register, vote and engage them in the democratic processes to be active citizens. The Rock Enrol!® resource pack creates that opportunity by using fun and interactive activities. The sessions aim to develop political and electoral literacy and inspire young people to engage in democratic debate. They encourage young people to discuss what they care about and why they should register to vote. The pack uses games and activities to get students discussing important issues, whether local or global. There is also an opportunity for students to make their voices heard by registering to vote.

What does Rock Enrol!® include?

The resource pack includes:

- A core 45-minute lesson plan (session 1) with 3 additional lesson plans with more activities (sessions 2-4).
- Supporting audiovisual material.
- Supporting guidance.
- Lesson hand-out.
- Publicity materials (poster and flyer) for running Rock Enrol!® sessions in your school, college or youth group.
- Welsh versions of the Rock Enrol!® resource pack – core 45-minute lesson plan (session 1) with three additional lesson plans (sessions 2-4), supporting guidance and publicity flyer.
- an adapted version of Rock Enrol!® activities for people with a learning disability and supporting guidance developed with Mencap.

The original Rock Enrol!® lesson framework, which includes the 'Vote with your feet' and 'Show me the money' activities, was co-created by the Cabinet Office and youth-led organization Bite the Ballot. Session 2 and 3 activities – 'Critical issues', and 'Power game' are taken from the Youth Count! Democracy Challenge toolkit developed by UK Youth.

Anyone including teachers, youth group leaders and young people themselves can use Rock Enrol!®. Sessions are straightforward to prepare and run. The resources provide fresh ideas or innovative ways to engage young people. They are flexible and can be tailored to suit different groups and settings. Rock Enrol!® sessions are aimed at students aged 16+ but can be used for younger age groups without the registration element.

Although they are not subject-specific, the sessions are particularly useful for supporting:

- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the citizenship curriculum programme of study at Key Stage 3 and 4, and with students of GCSE citizenship studies.
- The revised citizenship curriculum's statutory requirements to help pupils learn how citizens actively participate in the UK's democratic system and think critically and debate political questions.
- post-16 learners – for example within tutorial programmes in colleges and school sixth forms and as part of units of work on personal and social development for foundation learners

Snapchat Election Story in the UK

FollowMyVote is dedicated to improving the elections through innovative technologies such as blockchain technology to ultimately enhance voter turnout and transparency. When the Snapchat election story on the day of the UK elections was demonstrated, it was noted with a positive response. This is a blend of new technology and excitement surrounding voter participation.

Snapchat is a fairly new Smartphone app that lets users send messages and images to one another. The unique part is that the message gets deleted after being viewed.

One feature that has been added to Snapchat is called "stories". One can choose to send a message to one friend or opt to make the message one's story. This means all of friends in a group will be able to view this message for the next 24 hours.

Recently, Snapchat has been producing stories of their own called "Our Stories". These are essentially a culmination of pictures and videos from all the people at one event. Users of the app submit their picture or video to the event story. The event could be a holiday, concert or even a snowstorm. The Snowmageddon snow storm of 2015 story reportedly got 27 million views on the app.

Feedback on Snapchat

A feedback on this new tech youth voter engagement blog is as follows:

"We were extremely excited to see a Snapchat election story for the UK election. Hundreds of people had submitted photos and videos of their voting experiences. Young voters got to share their first voting experience with the world, while others simply encouraged people to get out and vote. Either way this was an awesome use of technology to support democracy. We also really liked the fact that the app stayed non-partisan. There was only one story topic and the submitted media was from voters. There were no advertisements or stories dedicated to a certain party. Below is one of the pictures we managed to snag from the Snapchat election story." The details may be accessed at followmyvote.com

Promoting Voter Registration at May 2015 Elections

The Electoral Commission is an independent body that

regulates the political parties and election finance and set standards for well-run elections; put voters first by working to support a healthy democracy, where elections are based on principles of trust, participation and free of undue influence. Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 the Commission has a statutory responsibility to promote public awareness of electoral systems in the UK and to provide voters with information on how to participate in elections including how to register to vote.

The Commission ran a multi-media public awareness campaign before 2015 elections to encourage people to register to vote by the 20 April deadline. The campaign was aimed at reaching everyone not currently registered to vote. As per the review of public awareness campaign organized by the Electoral Commission and others it was found that inter alia students are always a key under-registered group in terms of the guidelines of the Commission. However, they are a group with a large online presence convenient to access by the concerned organizations.

Building a voice

The Electoral Commission worked closely with partners targeting this sector, including National Union of Students (NUS), Association of Colleges (AoC), Universities UK, The Association of Heads of University Administration and GuildHE, Vice Chancellors and Principals of colleges and universities across the UK, encouraging them to pledge their support to get students to register to vote. By the end of our campaign, 76 academic institutions had signed up on our website to support the campaign by running activities such as displaying posters in campus buildings, emailing their students and holding voter registration events.

Voter registration toolkit

A 'voter registration toolkit' was developed to help student unions and colleges communicate the move to individual and online voter registration to their students as effectively as possible. The toolkits were jointly branded with the NUS and AoC and included website banners, leaflets, posters, suggested social media activity and suggestions for practical activities for students to set up and carry out on campus.

It also included guidance and tips to union staff on how to encourage students to register.

#RegAFriend

Students and other young people were specially targetted with '#Register a Friend' digital campaign in March and April 2015. The aim was to prompt young people who have registered to vote, to encourage their non-registered friends to do the same and then to share messages through social media to spread the word. The campaign was supported by student unions and young people from across the country, and resulted in significant social media coverage. On Twitter alone, there were nearly 2,500 uses of #RegAFriend across 3,201,539 unique users with a potential reach of 11.2 million people.

This was helped by the support of celebrities such as broadcaster Rick Edwards and singer Paloma Faith who retweeted #RegAFriend tweets to their followers, as well as through national press coverage. As well as student unions, the campaign was supported by a variety of organisations across the country, including the NUS; the National Citizens Service; Uni's Not For Me (UNFM); UK Youth; the National Youth Theatre; Street Games; National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS); Spareroom.co.uk; RED Driving School and the London Sports Trust. The combined support from those organisations alone across social media and other channels resulted in a potential reach of over 1.8 million people.

UK YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Introduction

The UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) provides a unique opportunity to the young people of age group 11-18 years in the United Kingdom a firsthand experience of democracy in operation where they use their elected voice to bring about social change through meaningful representation and campaigning.

The idea for a youth parliament originated from young people in 1996. Andrew Rowe, a Member of Parliament championed the cause to be later described as 'Founding Father' of the UKYP. From 1998 to 2000, a steering group of young people and organisations chaired by James Moody (a young

person), established the organisation and conducted the 1st Annual Sitting of UKYP in January 2001.

Members of youth parliament are elected in youth elections throughout the UK. Once elected, MYPs attend and organise events and projects, run campaigns and help decision makers on the issues that matter to young people.

Aims and Objects

Aims and objects of UKYP include inter alia, giving a voice to the young people of the UK on relevant issues for due consideration by:

- Local, regional and national government
- Providers of services for young people
- Other agencies with interest in the views and needs of young people

Key Features of the UKYP

- Comprises of representatives of young people in age group 11-18 years from across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
- Encourages participation from all young people and operates on a local level through Local Authorities (England only).
- Ensures that young people in the UK get a voice on issues that affect them (Reference Article 12 of the UN BYC Convention on the Rights of the Child.)
- Gives young people the opportunity to be involved in the democratic process at a national level.
- Empowers young people to take positive action within local communities.
- Solely issue based and a non-party political organisation, and as such, seeks to represent no party political voice.

Youth Parliament is for everyone

Youth parliament provides numerous opportunities to engage young people in electoral literacy, from supporting campaigns to debating in online forums, utilising social media and filling in ballot papers online. It also encourages young people to stand for elections. Any young person who is a resident of the UK, and aged between 11 and 18 years old (inclusive) has the right to stand for election as an MYP and the right to vote for their Member of Youth Parliament.

Manifesto

The views of young people are reflected in the UK Youth Parliament Manifesto, which contains statements on the issues MYPs think are most

important. Manifesto may be seen at UKYP website: www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk

Representation

Each Local Authority across England represents one UKYP constituency. Each constituency is entitled to at least one Member of the Youth Parliament. The allocation of members to each constituency depends on the number of young people living in that constituency.

Role of the Youth Voice Programme

The Youth Parliament is managed by the British Youth Council, as a part of the Youth Voice programme. Day-to-day management is carried out by the BYC staff. The work across the regions and nations is overseen by a team of Youth Democracy Coordinators. Their role is to support the work of elected MYPs. They organise the induction meeting, BYC Conventions and support the work of the Procedures Group representative (PG) and Regional Secretary (RS).

The Procedure Group takes decisions that guide the development of UKYP. PG also makes requisite arrangements for the Annual Sitings and other sessions of the UKYP.

The Campaigns; 'Make Your Mark' consultations

'Make Your Mark' is the largest youth consultation of the UK. It is run by the British Youth Council with the topics as may be decided by the UKYP. At the House of Commons event, Members of Youth Parliament debate top 5 topics from 'Make Your Mark' and vote. In view of the devolved nature of the UK democracy and to ensure proper representation of the issues from the all nations, two priority campaigns (one on a devolved issue and the other on a reserved issue) are run every year.

Youth Parliament Connect with Different Levels of Governance.

There are various areas where Members of the Youth Parliament can have a positive impact as discussed below:

Local level

Members are elected in their respective constituency. At the point of their election, they may choose to work on local campaigns and raise a profile of young people's voice in their respective constituency.

Regional level/Devolved level

Members attend Youth Council Conventions. They get an opportunity to share best practices, network with other youth parliaments and youth councils as well as join forces on local campaigns at these forums. Their role is to speak to the group on behalf of the young people of their constituency. The PG representatives then take this to a national platform and make decisions in the Annual Sitting and the House of Commons event.

National level

There are two national events for UK Youth Parliament; the Annual Sitting and the House of Commons. The Annual Sitting takes place each summer, towards the end of July. Members of the Youth Parliament are expected to consult their constituents before attending this sitting for enabling themselves to amend the UKYP manifesto. After the manifesto has been voted upon, a national consultation is launched in a manner that every 11-18 year old in the UK can take part in called 'Make Your Mark' followed by the House of Commons debate in November.

At the House of Commons event, chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons, the MYPs decide two priority campaigns for the coming year. This is done by debating the top five topics from the 'Make Your Mark' ballot exercise. Based on these debates MYPs cast two votes for their priority campaigns, one for a devolved (England only) issue and one for a reserved issue (UK wide). This is due to the devolved nature of the UK democracy and to ensure relevant representation of the issues from the all nations.

Code of Conduct and Commitment

A well structured Code of Conduct and Commitment has been defined for the Members of the UK youth parliament. This code outlines the principles, conduct and commitment that are expected of the Members of the UKYP during their term of the office. (See supplement)

SUPPLEMENT I

Code of Conduct and Commitment for Members of UK Youth Parliament

Principles

As an MYP you have the responsibility to uphold the

following principles:

- The UK Youth Parliament seeks to represent no party political view and the discussions of the UK Youth Parliament are to be solely issue based
- The UK Youth Parliament will ensure that the young people of the UK are given a voice on any issue that affects them and as laid out in Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), as long as it does not affect the rights of others
- The UK Youth Parliament will respect the issues as laid in the UNCRC to ensure that every young person who participates in the work of the UK Youth Parliament has his/her rights respected and protected
- Any young person aged 11 and up to 18, has the right to have his/her view heard and listened to by the UK Youth Parliament
- As an elected MYP your duty is towards:
 - The young people who voted for you
 - The young people who didn't vote for you
 - Every young person in your LA/Constituency

Responsibility

During your term of office it is your responsibility to:

1. Identify, discuss and debate issues of concern to young people.
You could do this by getting involved in questionnaires, hold surgeries in schools, reply to letters and emails, take part in meetings and respond to plans and consultations.
2. Act on those issues and identify how to make a change at a local level, or resist unwanted change. You must also follow up decisions or actions.
You could do this by lobbying, meeting decision makers, organising consultations and campaigning.
3. Develop and increase the representation of young people to their benefit.
You could do this by supporting your student and youth councils, working with the press to promote a positive image of young people in the media and take opportunities to promote the need to involve young people at meetings and events you attend.

Conduct

As a Member of Youth Parliament we ask you to comply with the following expectations of conduct when undertaking your duties:

1. Your choices and decisions should be informed by what your constituents believe. This is in addition to your own research

2. At all times you should act and communicate in a way that does not damage the reputation of UK Youth Parliament (and therefore the British Youth Council). Communication includes letters, phone calls, face to face meetings and social media.
3. Use a separate dedicated social media profile (such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter) for your role within UK Youth Parliament in order to avoid accusations of party political allegiance. If you would like to make party political statements on your personal profile it should contain no reference to UK Youth Parliament. (See social media guidelines).
4. You should not represent any political party; you should respect and listen to the views of others, challenge discrimination and promote equal opportunities.

Expectations

The following are expected of you during your term of office:

1. It is important that you take your role and duty seriously when you are representing the UK Youth Parliament, both in and outside UK Youth Parliament meetings.
2. You must attend your local youth forum / cabinet meetings and other meetings in your constituency area and maintain regular contact with your worker, which includes answering and responding to emails, texts, phone calls and letters.
3. At local and regional meetings you will be asked to report on what you have done and helped with an action plan. You must notify a worker in advance if you are unable to attend a meeting. This should be 48 hours in advance for a local meeting and 3 weeks for regional or national meetings (unless it is an emergency).
4. As an MYP, you are expected to have, as a minimum, access to an email address through which you can be contacted by the UK Youth Parliament.
5. You should check UK Youth Parliament related emails at least once a week and respond to questions, consultations, meeting requests and anything else related to your role as a MYP.
6. When using the official online groups MYPs should only post messages which are in accordance with the MYP Code of Conduct, and which conform to the BYC Child Protection and Equal Opportunities policies.
7. It is your responsibility to report any difficulties with emails or communication to your worker so we can find a solution. You must report any changes to your contact details (address, phone, email etc.) or problems with receiving messages about UK Youth Parliament within 10 days to your worker and to your regional Youth Democracy Coordinator.
8. It is your responsibility to report any changes in your medical needs or dietary requirements within 10 days to your worker and to the regional Youth Democracy Coordinator

Support

In return for complying with the Code of Commitment and Code you will receive from UK Youth Parliament and your worker:

1. Regular notice and information about meetings and events.
2. Opportunities to attend regional and national events, meetings and activities. Everyone will be offered these opportunities, but your commitment and what you have done in your term of office will be taken into consideration before agreeing you can attend. Sometimes places may be limited, or the staff and transport costs of attending events too high, so you may not be able to attend every event or meeting that is offered to you.
3. Transport costs to and from your home to all meetings in your role as a MYP should be covered by your Local Authority. Please speak to your Local Authority / BYC to ensure you are not out of pocket for any expenses.
4. Support from a worker to travel to and from regional and national meetings and events where your attendance has been agreed in advance with your worker. Travelling without a worker may be possible only if agreed in advance with parents/ carers and your worker.
5. Appropriate refreshments and subsistence while taking your duties
6. Support with your own personal development and development of your role as a MYP to help you do the best you can.
7. Relevant and appropriate training and accreditation opportunities.
8. Not delivering your responsibilities on behalf of the young people you represent, inappropriate behaviour or not meeting the expectations of what we require from an MYP may result in the implementation of a local or national disciplinary procedure. Any punishment or restrictions will be decided based on individual circumstances, but it could ultimately mean dismissal from the UK Youth Parliament

SUPPLEMENT II

UK Youth Parliament calls for Votes at 16 in the House of Commons Chamber 11th November 2016

276 elected members of UK Youth Parliament (aged 11-18) debated the top issues affecting young people across the country today, live in the House of Commons Chamber. Chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons, Rt Hon John Bercow MP, Members of Youth Parliament voted to campaign on votes at 16 and a curriculum for life in 2017.



112,687 young people across the UK voted to lower the voting age to 16 as their top priority in the recent Make Your Mark ballot, with 978,216 votes.

Votes at 16 has been a campaign for the UK Youth Parliament for several years and there were passionate speeches for the campaign in the House of Commons Chamber today. Speaking on the topic of lowering the voting age to 16, **Victor Sarpong**, aged 15, Member of Youth Parliament for Member of Youth Parliament for Havering, said: "Votes at 16 has been on the agenda for a long time and it's time young people aged 17 and 18 were given the vote in every part of the UK. Next year, we will continue to push for votes at 16 in all elections and referendums, so that 1.5million young people can rightfully have their say!"

Curriculum for Life was chosen as the priority campaign for England. Previously the UK Youth Parliament has campaigned on the topic and Members of Youth Parliament have engaged with a Youth Select Committee inquiry-a British Youth Council initiative, delivered in partnership with Parliament. **Lili Donlon-Mansbridge**, aged 17, Member of Youth Parliament for Poole, said: "UK Youth Parliament is committed to pursuing a curriculum that prepares young people

for life. We believe that the place of citizenship education and PSHE in the curriculum should be radically overhauled and next year Members of Youth Parliament will be campaigning to ensure this remains a priority"

Jonathan Baggaley, Chief Executive, PSHE Association, said: "Young people are struggling with the pressures and anxieties of today's world. With this vote they are telling us they want schools to prepare them to meet these challenges through PSHE education and citizenship education.

The fact that this is a continuing priority for the UK Youth Parliament tells us once again that not enough has been done to improve the status of PSHE education in schools.

We hope that the Government listens to these young people today and strengthens the status of PSHE education in all schools for the good of our young people, and our society. We look forward to supporting the UK Youth Parliament and British Youth Council with their campaign."

UK Youth Parliament will now develop campaign actions to enable Members of Youth Parliament to hold a day of action on Friday 20th January 2017.



US: STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING YOUNG AND FUTURE VOTERS

Introduction

Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters' in the US derive support from the comprehensive and well defined legislative provisions under Help America Vote Act, 2002. HAVA was passed by the U.S. Congress

in 2002 to make sweeping reforms to the nation's voting process. The highlights of the initiatives for young and future voters include campus engagement programmes for universities and colleges, schools and involving students into the electoral process, mock election programme and achieving desired objectives through partnership building with non partisan, non profit organizations. Its strengths lie in strong technological base and the support from the legislative framework

National Student and Parent Mock Election

National Student and Parent Mock Election, a national nonprofit and nonpartisan organization established under Section 295 of HAVA, works to promote voter participation in American elections to carry out voter education activities for students and their parents. These activities inter alia include

- (i) Simulated elections at least 5 days before the actual elections that permit participation by students and parents;
- (ii) School forums and local cable call-in shows on the national issues to be voted upon in an 'issue forum';
- (iii) Speeches and debates before students and parents to local candidates or stand-ins for such candidates;
- (iv) Quiz team competitions, mock press conferences and speech writing competitions;
- (v) Weekly meetings to follow the course of campaign;
- (vi) School and neighbor campaigns to increase voter turnout, including newsletters, posters, telephone chains and transportation.

The EAC provides grants to support above programs and activities. The National student and Parent Mock Vote Election presents awards to outstanding student and parent mock election projects.

Encouragement to Institutions of Higher Education

The EAC encourages institutions of higher education (including community colleges) to participate in the Programme, and make all necessary materials and other assistance available without charge to any institution which desires to participate in the Programme.

Many states and counties in the US are organizing Voter Education Weeks for benefit of schoolchildren and their parents. California High School Voter

Education Weeks details as an illustration are attached at Annex I for information

Help America Vote College Program (HAVCP)

HAVCP was established by the EAC in the year 2004 under express provisions of the Help America Vote Act for student engagement in the electoral process at the State and local governments as poll workers. The student participation as poll workers fosters student interest and education in the election process. The programme also leverages the technology skills of a tech-savvy generation as well as recruits the next generation of poll workers

HAVA/EAC Support for HAVCP

The programme is supported through grants from EAC authorized under HAVA to encourage student participation as poll workers or assistants, to foster student interest and education in the election process, and to encourage state and local governments to use students as poll workers. The grants also aim to relieve poll worker shortages by engaging students as poll workers. Sections 501 to 503 of HAVA provide detailed legislative framework for EAC to administer and provide grants for the programme.

Aims and Objects of HAVCP

The purpose of the HAVA College Poll Worker Program is to:

1. Encourage students enrolled at institutions of higher education (including community colleges) to assist State and local governments in the administration of elections by serving as poll workers or assistants;
2. Encourage college students to become cognizant of the elections process and civic education, and to assist in the smooth administration of elections in their community; and
3. Encourage state and local governments to use the services of the students participating in the program. EAC is particularly interested in supporting programs that propose partnerships between various student and other university organizations and local election officials in order to mobilize college student interest in elections and create meaningful activities for students leading up to and on Election Day.

Grants for HAVCP

EAC administers several grant programs designed to promote improvements to the administration of elections for federal office and increase awareness

of elections by addressing critical issues such as research into voting technology, improvements that ensure accessibility for voters with disabilities, the shortage of poll workers and teaching young people about election processes and the importance of civic responsibility. For this purpose, EAC seeks proposals from colleges (including community colleges), universities, and nonprofit organizations to assist EAC in implementing the HAVCP.

EAC encourages applicants to propose development of curriculum, training guides, and best practices associated with both recruiting poll workers with disabilities and making polling places more welcoming to those with disabilities. EAC is also encouraging applicants to recruit student poll workers that speak foreign languages to assist with language accessibility challenges at the polling place. Materials developed by grantees are made widely available to other organizations through the EAC clearinghouse and other distribution mechanisms.

Non-partisan Approach: An Essential requirement for Eligibility

While sanctioning grants under the Programme, the Commission is expected to ensure that the funds provided are spent for projects and activities which are carried out without partisan bias or without promoting any particular point of view regarding any issue, and that each recipient is governed in a balanced manner which does not reflect any partisan bias.

Coordination with Institutions of Higher Learning

EAC encourages institutions of higher education (including community colleges) to participate in the Programme, and is expected to make all necessary materials and other assistance (including materials and assistance to enable the institution to hold workshops and poll worker training sessions) available without charge to any institution which desires to participate in the Programme.

College and High School Student Engagement Programmes for Voter Registration

College and High school voter registration programs are an effective means of increasing electoral participation among young people. To address low turnout among youth, a number of states, counties, and cities across the country have adopted laws, administrative rules, and mandates to increase youth participation through college and high school voter registration programmes. These programmes help in

educating youth in civic and electoral process and are supported by legislative framework of HAVA and appropriate funding by EAC

Help America Vote Foundation

Section 601 of HAVA provides for establishing the Help America Vote Foundation as a charitable and nonprofit corporation

Aims and Objects

The aims and objects of the foundation are to

- (i) mobilize secondary school students in the US to participate in the election process in a nonpartisan manner as poll workers or assistants
- (ii) place secondary school students as nonpartisan poll workers or assistants to local election officials in polling places across the US
- (iii) establish cooperative efforts with State and local election officials, local educational agencies, superintendents and principals of public and private secondary schools, and other appropriate nonprofit charitable and educational organizations exempt from taxation.

Partnerships with non-partisans and non-profits

EAC encourages partnerships with non-partisans and non-profits for implementation of its programmes. Necessary funds are also provided as per prescribed procedures. A large number of such organizations are working for voter education and collaborate with educational institutions, election offices. Standards and the guidelines of EAC and use of technology tools are vital to the partnerships besides non partisan approach. Some illustration of such partnerships are voter education programme of National Education Association of America for school children, Campus Election Engagement Project, League of Women Voters, New America Foundation and like that a large number of organizations.

EAC Guidelines: Social Media as an Education Tool

A recent Pew Research Center survey found that 92 percent of 18 to 29 year olds use social media and networking sites regularly and actively. The numbers will go up for all age groups. (the figures will vary for other countries). The EAC Guidelines prescribe using Social Media as an educational Tool especially for young and future voters.

Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, mobile apps, and e-mail

can help in reaching young and first-time voters.

Tips for using social media are indicated as below:

- An effective social media site requires a significant time commitment from staff but offers substantial cost savings over traditional media methods.
- Dedicate knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff to listen and respond appropriately to direct voter questions and comments.
- Develop an electronic "I Voted" sticker for Facebook pages. Encourage followers to use it and contact their followers on election day.
- Ask nonpartisan civic and advocacy groups, schools, and colleges or universities to include a link on their Web sites to follow your office on Facebook and Twitter.

ANNEX I

California High School Voter Education Weeks

Best Practices Shared by County Elections Offices below are ideas that have been shared by counties to promote civic engagement in high schools around California. These projects have been used and proved to be successful. If you have ideas that would like to share, please email them to Steven. Carda@sos.ca.gov so they can be included in future communications.

Political Party and Candidate Forum in a Mock Election Atmosphere (Placer County)

- ✓ Select a school or schools that would like to encourage their staff and students to become more civically engaged.
- ✓ Contact representatives of political parties and invite them to come make a short presentation to the school about their party and its platform. (set boundaries on subject matter)
- ✓ Invite local candidates that may have been elected recently and encourage them to tell their story. Have them explain the process and experience from the time they decided to run for office to the day they were elected. (set boundaries on subject matter)
- ✓ Encourage a question and answer period where the students can inquire about the process of a working democracy.
- ✓ Allow teachers and students who are eligible to register to vote, to apply on site.

- ✓ Create a mock election ballot and give attendees the opportunity to cast their ballot, just as they would on Election Day.

Conduct a Mock Election (Sacramento County)

- ✓ Select a school that is enthusiastic about giving students the opportunity to encouraging their students to become involved in their democracy.
- ✓ Create a mock election ballot with issues relevant to high school students.
- ✓ Work with school to provide a "polling place" on campus. Bring voting equipment that students can use to simulate an actual election day.
- ✓ Use this time to encourage students to become poll workers on Election Day.

Host a Voter Registration Drive on Campus (Plumas County)

- ✓ Select a high school with a Government teacher who is passionate about democracy.
- ✓ "Elections 101". Present a slide show to Government classes giving the basics of participating in a democracy.
 - How to Register.
 - Am I eligible to register to vote?
 - What to expect after you're registered to vote.
 - What the County Election Office does.
 - How does the county know which contest I get to vote on?
 - Where can I find information on what I am voting for?
- ✓ Coordinate a Voter Registration Drive on campus.

Assist High School with Student Body Elections (Plumas County)

- ✓ Select a high school with an upcoming student body election.
- ✓ Create a schedule with the Student Leadership Instructor, school administration and select a location on campus for the polling place.
- ✓ Work with a local ballot printer to have ballots donated to school.
- ✓ Provide poll worker training class to Senior class volunteers. (these students were selected because they were not voting on student body officers for the upcoming year.)
- ✓ Election Day! Set up a polling place! Provide the roster, badges, voting booths, ballot boxes, polling place signage, "I Voted" stickers and of course the American flag to make it identifiable.
- ✓ Allow student poll workers to announce results at school assembly/rally.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

COUNTRIES

Afghanistan

H.E. Mr. Najibullah Ahmadzai

Chairman, Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan

Mr. Ahmad Murtaza Habibyar

Executive Officer, Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan

Australia

H.E. Mr. Tom Rogers

Electoral Commissioner of Australia

Bhutan

Mr. Dawa Tenzin

Secretary, Election Commission of Bhutan

Mr. TseringPenjor

Training Coordinator, Election Commission of Bhutan

Bosnia-Herzegovina

H.E. Dr. AhmetSantic

Member-Commissioner and past President
Central Election Commission of Bosnia-Herzegovina

H.E. Dr. Suad Arnautović

Member-Commissioner and past President
Central Election Commission of Bosnia-Herzegovina

Fiji

Mr. Mohammad Saneem

Supervisor of Elections, Fijian Elections Office

India

Mr. UmeshSinha

Dy. Election Commissioner,
Election Commission of India

Jordan

H.E. Mrs. Samar Haj Hasan

Commissioner Independent Election Commission of Jordan

Maldives

H.E. Mr. Ahmed Sulaiman

Chairman, Election Commission of Maldives

Ms. Fathmath Shaba Sagir

Officer, Election Commission of Maldives

Nepal

H.E. Dr. Ayodhee Prasad Yadav
Election Commission of Nepal

Mr. Navraj Dhakal

Joint Secretary, Election Commission of Nepal

Sri Lanka

H.E. Mr. Mahinda Deshapriya
Chairman, Election Commission of Sri Lanka

Mr. Rizan M. A. Hameed

Asstt. Director (Intl. Relations)
Election Commission of Sri Lanka

Tunisia

H.E. Mr. Mohammed Chafik Sarsar
President, High Independent Election Authority of
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Mr. Vasu Mohan

Regional Director (Asia-Pacific),
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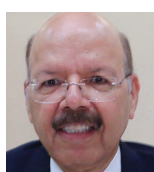
Intl. IDEA

Ms. Shana Kaiser
Program Manager, International Institute
for Democracy & Electoral Assistance

MCSC

Mr. Karamjit Singh
Trustee, Malaysian Commonwealth
Studies Centre

PROFILES



Dr Nasim Zaidi

**Chief Election Commissioner
Election Commission of India**

Master's degree in Public Administration, Mason Fellow for Public Policy,

Post Graduate Diploma in Business Finance, Doctorate in Bio-Chemistry

Dr. Nasim Zaidi, assumed charge as 20th Chief Election Commissioner of India in 2015. He worked in regulatory framework both at national & international levels. Before joining the Commission, he served as Secretary to the Government of India in Ministry of Civil Aviation. During his long career as an officer of the Indian Administrative Service, he has served in increasingly responsible positions at both the provincial and federal government levels. Dr. Zaidi has published several papers in scientific and administrative journals.



Achal Kumar Joti

**Election Commissioner
Election Commission of India**

Graduated in Science, Masters in Chemistry

Mr Joti assumed charge as Election Commissioner of India in 2015. He is an officer of the Indian Administrative Service with 40 years of experience of Public Administration. He has served as District Magistrate and Collector, Secretary in Industries, Revenue and Water Supply in the State of Gujarat. He also worked in the Ministry of Shipping, Govt. of India before becoming the Chief Secretary of Gujarat. He served as Vigilance Commissioner before joining Election Commission. He has experience of elections having worked as Returning Officer and District Election Officer.



Om Prakash Rawat

**Election Commissioner
Election Commission of India**

MSc. in Physics, MSc. in Social Development Planning

Mr Rawat assumed charge as Election Commissioner of India in 2015 prior to which he retired as Secretary to the Govt. of India, Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, Department of Public Enterprises. During his long career as an officer of the Indian Administrative Service, he served at various important portfolios at Centre and state level. As Director/Jt. Secretary in the Defence Ministry he was deputed to South Africa in 1994 as United Nations election observer to oversee first post-apartheid elections in that country. He received Prime Minister's Award in 2010 for excellence in Public Administration for innovative group initiative "Recognition of Forest Rights".



Umesh Sinha

**Deputy Election Commissioner,
Election Commission of India**

Masters in Business Administration

Mr Sinha belongs to the Indian Administrative Service and has more than three decades of experience in administration and governance. He has held several important positions like Collector, Chief Development Officer, Commissioner and Secretary in various Departments. As the Deputy Election Commissioner with over 7 years of electoral experience, Mr. Sinha is responsible for the Functional Division and the conduct of Elections throughout the country. He has initiated innovative programmes in the Election Commission of India, and won awards for the same.



Tom Rogers

**Electoral Commissioner,
Australian Electoral Commission**
Graduate from the Royal Military
College

Mr. Rogers graduated as an officer from the Royal Military College (RMC) Duntroon in 1983 and served in a variety of military postings, including the Australian Defence Force Academy, Senior Instructor in Leadership at RMC Duntroon, and Commander of a United Nations observer mission on the Golan Heights. After he left the Australian Army in 2000, Mr. Rogers worked for Raytheon Australia, where he was a senior project manager and led the team that delivered the Sydney Olympics' major preparedness and readiness activity.

He also spent a number of years as the Director of Programs and then Executive Director at the Australian Institute of Police Management (AIPM). The AIPM is administered by the Australian Federal Police to deliver highly respected executive development programs for leaders and future leaders of Australasian police and other public safety organisations.

He was appointed the Australian Electoral Commissioner in December 2014, having acted as the Electoral Commissioner from December 2013, and previously filled roles as the Deputy Electoral Commissioner and the Australian Electoral Commission's state manager (and Australian Electoral Officer) for NSW.

Dawa Tenzin

Secretary, Election Commission of Bhutan
Graduate from Sherubtse College, Bhutan

Mr. Dawa Tenzin has been associated with the Election Commission of Bhutan since its inception. He had worked as the Chief Administrative Officer and was the Director in 2011. He took charge as the Secretary in 2013. Previously, he had held various posts in the Royal Audit Authority between 1987 and 2005, and has served one year in National Service before joining the Civil Services. He enjoys travelling.



Dr. Ahmet Santic

**Member, Central Election Commission of
Bosnia-Herzegovina**
Ph. D. University Džemal Bijedic of
Mostar

Dr. Santic has been involved with the elections in BiH from as early as 1996 as a Member of polling station committee and as the President of polling station committee. He was elected as the Member of the Municipal Election Commission Mostar Old Town, and during the period from 2004 to Feb. 2012, he was the Member of the City Election Commission of Mostar City. He was also the appointed President of BiH CEC from 31 Mar., 2015 to 31 Dec. 2016.

Last fifteen years of his career he has actively dedicated to the implementation of elections not neglecting theoretical aspect of this significant area of constitutional system. He has authored a book '**Electoral right – experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European countries**' adapted to all who are interested in election process and has published extremely informative articles in the magazine '**Legal thought**'.



Dr. Suad Arnautović

**Member,
Central Election Commission of
Bosnia-Herzegovina**
Ph. D

Dr. Suad Arnautović has a vast experience as a faculty as well as a member of the BiH Central Election Commission. He has published more than 20 scientific and expert papers in various scientific and professional magazines in BiH and abroad, as well as several author articles, reviews, comments in dailies and weekly printed media.

During the period between 1995 and 2000, he was guest lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine and the High School of Health Care in Sarajevo. During 1994 and 1995 he was Editor-in-Chief (freelance) of the independent political journal for promotion of civic society and democratic culture 'STYLE'. In 1996 he launched and edited the special 'Elections' service of the independent news agency 'ONASA' in Sarajevo.

In June 2004, the House of Representatives of BiH Parliamentary Assembly appointed Dr. Arnautović as member of the BiH Central Election Commission. After expiry of the seven years' mandate, he was re-appointed as the member of the BiH CEC on

September 22, 2011. In the period January 2008- May 2009, Dr. Arnautović was President of the BiH Central Election Commission.

Prof. Dr. Arnautovic also works as Faculty Associate at Faculty of political sciences of the Sarajevo University.



Mohammed Saneem

**Supervisor of Elections,
Fijian Elections Office**

Professional Diploma in Legal Practice
and Bachelor of Law from

the University of the South Pacific

Mr. Mohammed Saneem has extensive experience in various aspects related to elections and he is currently the Supervisor of Elections for the Fijian Elections Office. Prior to his appointment as Supervisor of Elections, Mr. Saneem has previously served as the acting Permanent Secretary responsible for Elections and Registrar of Political Parties, the Acting Permanent Secretary for Justice, Anti- Corruption and Communications, the Chairperson of the Land Transport Industry Review Committee, and acting Chief Registrar for the High Court of Fiji, a Magistrate and a Commissioner for Legal Aid Commission. He is also currently the Chairperson of the National Anti-Money Laundering Council.

He also serves as a representative to the Steering Committee of the Commonwealth Electoral Network and the Melanesian Rep to the PIANZEA Advisory Group. Following the 2014 General Election, Mr. Saneem has led the Fijian Elections Office to become a regional leader in advocating electoral best practices.

Samar Haj Hasan

Commissioner, Independent Election Commission of Jordan

Bachelor in International Business Administration and Marketing from American University Switzerland.

Samar Hasan contest for the Parliament Elections in 2007 and while she didn't procure the seat, she won the highest number of votes a woman gets in the Amman Governorate and the third highest amongst all the women in Jordan during that particular election. Additionally, she was recognized for conducting the most professional election campaign. In 2008, Hasan was elected as a board member at the Young Entrepreneurs Association where she monitored the programs for young entrepreneurs and volunteered with a regional NGO to empower youth. In 2011, she was appointed by His Majesty the King (Iran) for a two

year term as a member of the senate in the Jordanian Parliament. In 2014, she was appointed by the king as a Commissioner in the Independent Election Commission and her appointment was renewed in April 2016.

Hasan is the founder and manager of 'Mahara'- a professional consultancy in development which was the first consultancy that provides comprehensive services in the field of social and human development. She has also worked as a senior consultant for several national and international organizations such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women, The Office of Her Majesty- the Queen, UNICEF, UNFPA, and the World Bank to name a few.

Hasan has participated in several national committees such as the National Committee for the Development of the Youth Strategy, the Social Network Committee of the National Agenda for Jordan and the Management Team of the National Project for Family Protection. At a regional level, she has worked closely with the Arab League as a member of the regional advisory committee to develop the Arab Strategy for the family. She is also a member at international organizations such as ISPCAN and has participated in several international conferences on women and child protection.



Ahmed Sulaiman

**Chairman Elections Commission of
Maldives**

Ahmed Sulaiman is the Chairman of the Elections Commission of Maldives, where he has devoted his time since his appointment as a Member of the Elections Commission of Maldives on 03rd December 2014.

He completed his higher education from Al Azhar University of Egypt. Then he went on to complete his Bachelor's Degree in Dhivehi Language from the Faculty of Management and Computing at the National University of Maldives. He recently completed his Master's Degree in Islamic Shariya from Villa College Maldives.

He began his career in the early days as a Director at the Maldives College for Higher Education. Then he moved on to serve as a member of the Extra-ordinary Parliament assembled to overhaul the constitution of the Maldives to introduce democracy to the Maldives between 2006 and 2008. After that, he became the

Chair of the Atoll Council for the Meemu Atoll Council. Since his term ended at the atoll council, he began his current undertakings as the Chairman of the Elections Commission of Maldives.

At his current position, he has attended several trainings and seminars. Naming a few; Seminar for the improvement of electoral laws and system at Korea 2015, 6th forum of elections management bodies of South Asia at Sri Lanka 2015, South Asia conference on the use of money in politics and effects on peoples representation in 2015 and also was an observer at the Sri Lankan Elections primary in 2015.



Dr. Ayodhee Prasad Yadav

Chief Election Commissioner of Nepal

Masters in Economics (Gold Medalist)

and PhD degree.

Dr. Ayodhee Yadav Prasad is the Chief Election Commissioner of Nepal since 2007 with various experiences in Election Observations in countries like Cambodia (2007), Bangladesh (2008), USA (2012) and the Philippines (2016). He has also participated in various study tours in countries like Lesotho (2008), Indonesia (2009), South Korea (2011), Kenya (2012), Ethiopia (2015) and even Pakistan (2015).

He is a retired Associate Professor of Economics at Tribhuvan University and served as the Executive Director of Rural Studies Centre in Nepal from 2001 to 2006. He has specifically authored some books on Elections such as 'Voter Registration System in Nepal' (2012), 'Election Cost in Nepal' (2010), 'A Brief Account of Electoral System' (2014) and the 'Constituent Assembly Election 2008: At a Glance' (2012).

Dr. Prasad has also received various honours and awards such as the Siksha Puskar (1995), Ambassador for Peace by Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (IIFWP) (2004) and the Prasadha Prabal Janeswari 2071 by the Honourable President of Nepal.



Wagude Warunasiri Mahinda Deshapriya

Sri Lankan Administrative Services(Retired)

Post-Graduation Diploma from IMI, New Delhi, India in collaboration with IMI, Geneva, Switzerland & McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

Mahinda Deshapriya entered the Sri Lanka Administrative Services in 1982 after he was placed second in the island ranking at the recruitment examination for the Sri Lanka Administrative Service held in 1981/ 1982. He began by serving as the Assistant Commissioner of Elections to the Department of Elections. In 1998, he served as the District Returning Officer of the Local Authorities Elections of Jaffna District in 1998. He was appointed as the Deputy Commissioner of Elections in 2006 and then to the Additional Commissioner of Elections in 2010. In March, 2011, Deshapriya retired from service.

With teaching experiences in Chemistry and Mathematics at his alma mater university- University of Peradeniya, and having served as a United Nations Volunteer in the Popular Consultation (UNAMET) in East Timor in 1999, Deshapriya serves as the first Chairman of the Election Commission established under the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.

He was also the Chairman of the Forum of Election Management Bodies of South Asia for 2015-2016 and has been the head of delegation of conferences and workshops conducted by the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA), Association of World Election Bodies (A- Web), Forum of Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA) et al.

Mahinda Deshapriya was awarded the 'Sri Lankan of the Year' by Lanka Market Digest in 2015 and the 'Public Servant of the Year' in 2016 by Derana- a TV channel for his unstinted commitment to public services.



Dr. Mohamed Chafik Sarsar

President, Independent High Authority for Elections

Ph.D. in Public Law

Dr. Mohamed Chafik SARSAR is a law expert and has extensive knowledge on electoral systems. Prior to his appointment as President of Independent High Authority for Elections, he has held many positions of high importance like Professor of Public Law at the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences of Tunis (Tunis El Manar University), Director of the Department of Political Science at the Faculty of Law of Tunis (2011-2014), Member of the Committee of Experts in the High Commission for the Achievement of the Revolution,

Political Reform and Democratic Transition (2011), member of the Commission of Inquiry into the events Place Mohamed Ali (December 2012), Secretary General of the Association of Research on Democratic Transition (ARTD 2013), founding member of the Arab Association of Constitutional Law.

He was a lecturer at the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences of Tunis, Higher Judicial Institute. He has published several publications and contributions in constitutional law, and electoral systems. He also participated as an expert in meetings of the Venice Commission, UNDP, IDEA, the Arab Institute for Human Rights, Arab Foundation for Democracy, and the Independent High Authority for the Elections.



Kim, Yong-Hi

Secretary General

Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)

Master's Degree in Public Administration, Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration

Mr. Kim Yong-Hi is the Director General of Elections at the National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea since 2005. He has extensive management experience in many roles including Task Force Head of Electronic Voting Systems, Director General of the Political Party Bureau, Chief Election Officer, Deputy Secretary General (Vice Minister), Executive Secretary of AAEA (Association of Asian Election Authorities), Secretary General (Minister) and Secretary General of Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB). He is currently also a member of the International Advisory Council of the International Republican Institute (IRI).



William (Bill) Sweeney

President/CEO, International Foundation for Electoral Systems

Bachelor in Political Science from American University, USA.

William Sweeney is the current President and CEO of International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), with decadal experiences in election assistance

and democracy support. Prior to his appointment as President at IFES in June 2009, he served on the IFES Board of Directors from 1993 to 2001. Sweeney was the Vice President for Global Government Affairs for EDS from 2000 to 2009 and managed relations with governments and policy organizations across the globe. He has also served as an Official Elections Observer with the Philippines (1986), Russia (1994), Nicaragua (1996) and Jamaica (1997).

Sweeney is the founding president of Washington Resources and Strategy Inc.- a public affairs management company. He is also the founder and director of the Campaign Management Institute (his alma mater) where he received awards for service and teaching. Awarded an honorary order of the British Empire for his service to the British Embassy in 2009, he also serves on the board of directors of the National Foreign Trade Council Foundation.

Currently, William Sweeney serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Centre for Congressional and Presidential Studies.

Karamjit Singh

Trustee, Malaysian Commonwealth Studies Centre

CBE

Karamjit Singh is a Trustee of the Malaysian Commonwealth Studies Centre and has been involved with the Electoral Democracy programme since its inception in 2001. He was an Electoral Commissioner with the UK Electoral Commission for almost 10 years (2001-2010) and is currently the chairman of a large NHS hospital trust employing 14,500 staff and annual budget of £ 900 million. Previously, he has been appointed to cover investigation of complaints against the police, suspected miscarriages of justice, the appointment of senior civil servants, appointments of senior lawyers as Queens Counsel (QC), Ombudsman for judicial appointments and the regulation of financial services. He was awarded the CBE in 2000 by the Queen for his services to the administration of justice.



No Voter To Be Left Behind



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