

## IFES

### Youth Civic Education is Crucial to Democratic Health

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. 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. This essay explores various methods for effective engagement with young people including formal and non-formal education, as well as application of practical skills in public life.