

**Elections: Contributions to Work
From OSF Proposed Strategies 2014 - 2017**

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INTRODUCTION

OSF has long worked on elections through its local foundations including supporting a broad spectrum of activities implemented by local partners. This elections-focused concept seeks to catalogue and disseminate existing practice, create a roster of in-house experts and develop strategies for a more comprehensive approach, perhaps including the entire cycle (4 years) around selected elections in targeted countries. Mort Halperin recently organized in-house discussions with regional and programmatic colleagues to draft a paper for review by the Global Board during the recent meeting in Senegal. Background materials are available on the Elections file folder on the Souk. Next steps in this effort are underway. The following content consolidates elections-related work proposed in OSF unit strategies for 2014-2017.

ADVOCACY AND OPERATIONAL OFFICES

OSF-DC

From: IV. Concepts and Initiatives, Domestic Policy:

Building Our Democracy and Protecting the Right to Vote – New and expanding barriers to voting threaten our democracy and progress on many critical issues. OSF-DC is lobbying for policies protecting against racial and ethnic discrimination in **voting and to make voter registration less burdensome**. Two pending Supreme Court decisions will determine OSF-DC's next advocacy steps. Julie has unique expertise on voting rights, having held related senior positions in the Executive Branch and in partner organizations. She is supporting a coalition of advocates preparing a unified strategy to respond to the Supreme Court decisions.

From: IV. Concepts and Initiatives, International Issues:

Elections – **Independent domestic election monitors** have an essential role in maintaining confidence in elections, yet international monitors often crowd out their efforts. This insight is now approaching critical mass and we are working to leverage US policy and our relationships with major election monitoring groups (e.g., NDI, IRI, Carter Center, IFES) to empower rather than supplant domestic civil society efforts. OSF has a unique capacity in this area because we have foundations and partners at national levels, strong contacts with US officials and election groups, are not viewed as competing for funding and have convening power both internationally and domestically.

Nigeria – We will use our unique knowledge of human rights restrictions on US military assistance and strong relationships with US officials to press for an end to Nigerian Special Forces human rights violations. We will also leverage the significant US influence on Nigeria to **discourage electoral interference** and possibly seek a suspension of US military aid.

Burma – We will use OSF's expertise on the situation in Burma, strong relations with key US officials and members of Congress, grant making and OSF-DC's convening power to influence US

policy on the **2015 elections** and the rising anti-Muslim violence in Burma. We will seek to ensure that any US-Burma military relations are dependent on progress on accountability, rule of law and respect for human rights.

Afghanistan – OSF-DC recently helped OSF colleagues launch a “Friends of the Afghan People” campaign intended, among other things, to make US aid more efficient, transparent and responsive to Afghan needs and to help improve **the integrity of the upcoming Afghan elections**. OSF can play a unique role because of our Kabul foundation, strong grantees in Afghanistan, the expertise of the Regional Policy Initiative, George’s access to Secretary Kerry and USAID Administrator Shah, along with our knowledge of the US assistance process, convening power and ability to fund efforts in both Afghanistan and Washington.

From: V. Shared Frameworks

Elections – We have proposed and strongly support a Shared Framework on elections. Mort and Jerry are deeply involved in developing OSF's work in this area.

From: Addendum: Preliminary OSF-DC 2014 Work Plan

Domestic Policy: Voting Rights and Judges – Advance voting rights legislation as needed in response to Supreme Court decisions on Voting Rights Act and National Voter Registration Act; reduce federal judicial vacancies to 50 by the end of the Obama Administration.

International Issues: Elections – Engage on a number of national elections taking place in 2014 (e.g., Mali, Afghanistan) and work to develop new election monitoring norms which prioritize, empower and support the efforts of effective, independent local monitors.

OSEPI

From: 4. OSEPI'S OWN CONCEPTS AND INITIATIVES, IV. Counter xenophobia in the European elections and the 2014-19 term of the EU institutions

Opportunity: The 2014 European Parliament elections will be a big political moment which will raise the alarm about illiberal trends in European politics. Public anger and protest voting could result in a major increase in the number of xenophobic and anti-EU candidates who get elected. Vocally xenophobic candidates are already pushing mainstream parties to attack policies and institutions that OSF has worked for years to build up. An increase in hate speech and xenophobic attacks in parliamentary debates, particularly against Muslims and Roma, would also affect national political debates. Just at this moment, the Lisbon Treaty has given greater powers to the European Parliament, so extremist MEPs could change EU funding, legislation and key policies for the open society. The parliament also has the power to decide on who will be the new Commission president and block the appointment of new Commissioners.

Specific objectives:

- Reduce the vote for xenophobic and anti-EU parties in the 2014 elections for the European Parliament by working with OSIFE and local groups in nine countries of particular concern.
- Help grantees to counter racist claims and promote open society values during the election campaign.
- Promote a pledge for candidates to abstain from racist or prejudicial claims in the campaign.

- Develop new ideas, concepts and memes to connect our values with other concerns of majority populations in order to broaden the constituency for the open society.
- Counter racist claims against Roma and other minorities in parliamentary debates through enforcing debating procedures and internal campaigning during and after the election.
- Support the development of an effective cross-party parliamentary intergroup on anti-discrimination to mobilise MEPs to counter racist speech and support new legislation and initiatives after the election.

Insight and capacity: OSEPI will team up with OSIFE to run a two-level strategy to reduce the number of opponents of the open society who get elected. While OSIFE works on local campaigns to turn out the vote, OSEPI will engage pan-European parties to influence their manifestos and campaigning tactics. Many EU countries have electoral lists for European elections, so a small increase in turnout can reduce dramatically the representation that extremist parties win. Through its Foresight Program, OSEPI has created compelling data and analysis that is waking politicians and campaign managers of liberal parties from complacency. We will highlight dangers in key constituencies; use our research network to develop social media tools to support election campaigning in favour of pluralism and diversity; show politicians and officials how to frame open society concerns in ways that majority populations can identify with; and work with other OSF programs (particularly OSIFE and RIO) to make these tools available to grantees. After the 2014 election, we will caucus MEPs and officials to limit the ability of xenophobic and anti-system parties to use the Parliament to attack open society infrastructure.

5. Shared Frameworks:

OSEPI will contribute to shared frameworks (SFs) where EU policy, funding, laws or public stances can significantly affect the outcome. OSEPI's contribution to developing and implementing SFs will depend on how large the EU component is and how much content the SF will produce that would influence policy. Some of the objectives listed above will evolve as SFs advance: for example, the 'data for equality' own concept could become part of a justice SF; the possible SF on corporate accountability is likely to have a significant EU component; **and OSEPI is engaged on the working group on standards and methods for elections.** OSEPI expects to shape significantly the EU dimension of the 'Jekhutno' shared framework on Roma.

From: ANNEX 1: PRELIMINARY WORK PLAN FOR 2014, OSEPI's Own Concepts and Initiatives

Counter xenophobia in the European elections and throughout the 2014-19 term of the EU institutions: Reduce the vote for xenophobic candidates in the 2014 elections by working with OSIFE to mobilise voters and supporters of the open society, and through research, communications seminars and training on how to use online campaigning tools. Use insights from recent research to reframe open society issues (starting with Roma) for wider constituencies and majority populations. Awareness of Roma policies in parliament increases through OSEPI efforts to raise visibility and recognition of Roma policies during the campaigns. (Ellen, Nadja, Martin)

GEOGRAPHIC PROGRAMS AND FOUNDATIONS

AfRO

From: 5. External Fields:

- i. **Electoral effectiveness and political participation;**
- ii. Anti-corruption work;
- iii. Natural resource governance;
- iv. International justice.

Elections and political participation¹

Recent years have seen a remarkable improvement in the quality of electoral processes in Africa, but elections conducted with integrity and the full participation of marginalised groups - critical for effective democratic governance - remain rare in Africa. They can be and often are a flashpoint for incipient tensions to be expressed. Electoral support needs to address the full electoral cycle and start early, through pressure on all actors to do thorough, transparent preparation, maintain independence and monitor processes. Continental and regional institutions and international governments and NGOs often play an influential but sometimes negative role, provoking the need for AfRO advocacy.

AfRO staff (formerly AfriMAP) have been particularly important in *providing evidence-based research for advocacy on electoral standard-setting* at the national, regional and continental levels in Africa that complemented and leveraged the work of the foundations. They have also played a key role in *advocating for free and fair elections at the sub-regional, continental and international levels* in support of the foundations' country level activities. AfRO also supports OSIEA, OSISA and OSIWA advocacy at a technical level, where requested, through training or occasional in-country back-up for implementation of the Situation Room model. To do this, our advocacy and research team will make pre-election site visits and build sustained working relationships with partners on the ground in collaboration with the foundations.

In the 2014-17 strategy cycle, AfRO will support efforts to get the African Union and, jointly with the Africa foundations, Regional Economic Communities (RECS) to set new standards in election management and monitoring in Africa. Opportunities at the regional and continental levels are provided by ECOWAS and the EAC developing regional electoral engagement strategies and the African Union's focus on developing criteria for electoral management bodies (EMBs). At the national level, elections are due in several of OSF Africa's priority countries; research at the national level and advocacy at the continental and international level can impact their conduct.

In 2014, AfRO will support efforts to engage the AUC's continental electoral management bodies (EMB) criteria exercise, as well as carry out research into EMBs in Eastern and Southern Africa. There will be an emphasis on marginalised groups, especially women. At the national level, AfRO will support OSISA's focus on the 2014 Malawi elections, building on its recent electoral research

¹ **Regional and continental partners and targets:** the African Union (AU); Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS); Southern Africa Development Community (SADC); East African Community Forum of Electoral Commissions; West Africa Network of Electoral Commissions (ECONEC); SADC Electoral Commissioners' Forum; SADC Parliamentary Forum; West Africa Civil Society Forum (WACSOF); East Africa Civil Society Forum (EACSOF); SADC NGO Forum; and the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA). **International partners and targets:** United Nations; European Union (plus key member states); US government; key international election-focused NGOs (Carter Center; IDEA; IRI; IFES; NDI; and WFD).

report with advocacy on its recommendations towards key African countries to prepare to mobilise international engagement as needed.

From: 7. Contributions to Shared Frameworks

With regard to other shared frameworks, AfRO is likely to participate in an elections-focused shared framework if one is launched.

OSF Albania

From: Fealty to Fields: Empowering Civil Society in Election Monitoring: Albania is the only country in its region with an EU perspective that has never held a free, fair and uncontested election. The implications of this are profound. Confidence in the democratic system has plummeted while political polarization has skyrocketed. The impartiality and integrity of the OSCE/ODIHR—the perceived adjudicator of Albania’s election standards—have come into serious question after it repeatedly underplayed election fraud. The country’s EU perspective has diminished with each problematic election. Two of the foundation’s partners are working to break this cycle.

OSFA supports the Domestic Observer Coalition and the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections. These are the two strongest coalitions in a field of some 40 local organizations involved in election monitoring. During the 2011 local elections, OSFA’s partners flagged irregularities at polling and ballot-counting stations, and undemocratic procedures at the Central Election Commission. They distributed widely-read bulletins critiquing the election campaigns and they developed a manual for local election observers. But this wasn’t enough.

The two coalitions now plan to establish an “Election Situation Room”, inspired partly by successful OSF interventions in West Africa. The Situation Room will—for the first time—empower a collaborative of those Albanian organizations active in election monitoring that meet certain criteria (e.g. non partisan, technically capable). Too often these disparate groups have undertaken fragmented interventions that have produced fragmented results. Under this new approach, the participating organizations will work in concert to set up an alternative election monitoring processes. This model will allow groups to achieve the benefits of synergy while continuing their individual efforts. It will enable them to provide authoritative analysis in real time—using integrated IT/software/new media—and respond rapidly to events.

By equipping nonpartisan and capable local actors, the foundation expects that election reports will detail in stark language the true state of affairs, and will put additional pressure on political actors to conduct elections with greater integrity. Situation Room reporting will also be used to influence OSCE/ODIHR, EU and US reactions to Albanian elections. The Situation Room will remain active throughout election cycles, including to review electoral legislation, to tap into global expertise on monitoring, and to conduct advocacy with international actors in non-election years.

The first authoritative test run of the Situation Room will be local elections in 2015. By the time national elections are held in 2017 the foundation anticipates the Situation Room being a highly credible and unified force that will be able to influence the organization and management of elections, the integrity of polling day, and the way in which the OSCE and other international

organizations report on Albanian elections. Because the Situation Room brings together such an array of specialized organizations, it will also be able to coordinate niche aspects of election monitoring, such as media coverage, voting barriers for persons with disabilities, compliance with gender quotas, and others.

Through its support to this field OSFA hopes to learn two things: *methodologically*, whether up to 40 organizations can effectively collaborate around an issue of such pressing importance, and; *substantively*, whether the collective voice of these organizations can ultimately influence political party behavior.

OSFA will support the Situation Room partners with grants and by tapping them into OSF expertise on this topic in West Africa. In addition to OSFA, USAID has traditionally been the paramount sponsor of election monitoring in Albania, and it has informally endorsed, and is interested in co-financing, aspects of the Situation Room approach.

Contributions to Shared Frameworks

Given the scope of this strategy, OSFA is not putting forth any Shared Framework ideas to lead. However, the foundation is in talks with OSF colleagues on Shared Frameworks topics related to **elections** and **Roma**. OSFA will determine whether or not to subscribe to those initiatives as they materialize.

OSF Armenia

From: FEALTY TO FIELDS

Concept 1: Leading the Transformation towards an Issue-based Society²

With this concept, we aim to harness the momentum of the unique situation in which Armenia finds itself after the 2013 presidential elections, and **transform it into a force for positive change in the run-up to the 2016-2018 elections cycle. The unexpected empowerment of the electorate** indicates an opening for consolidating already existing sentiment into an organized, intentional and strategic effort that can expose the deeper issues of a lack of accountability and justice.

The Foundation will expand public discourse on these important issues beyond the capital and the coalition of civil society organizations, and closer to the active groups of citizens enabling a multiplicity of public spaces throughout the country and encouraging partners to be more mobile. Our work in this concept will cluster in three dimensions - empowering civil society to expand thematically and be able to engage with active groups on socio-economic, education, and local

² This Concept provides an overarching framework for the Strategy: to change the discourse and bring in the justice and accountability narratives and, hence, to lead the transformation, it “feeds” from the fields and other concepts. Yet, it furthers all other objectives by complementing the top-down approach of our policy and advocacy work.

governance issues; expanding debate geographically to wider constituencies through the use of new public spaces, including new media; and transforming the current vacuous political discourse into one based on concrete issues prior to local and national elections. The Foundation will use tools such as grant-making, capacity building, strategic litigation, policy research, public discussions, investigative journalism, and TV debate.

For years the Foundation has substantially contributed to the growth of this momentum supporting and strengthening a network of civic groups safeguarding the integrity of democracy and having developed tools for media outreach, policy work, collective advocacy, and work with youth. The local capacities we shall use are demonstrated graphically in the Annex 1. Within OSF, our partners are the HRI, Media Program and Brussels office.

Goal: Transform the positive post-election energy in broad segments of the population and civil society into a change of political and social processes in the run-up to the next election cycles – local government (2016), parliamentary (2017), and presidential (2018)

Outcomes:

- Civil society groups prioritize socio-economic issues and transform the dominant narratives in such key areas as labor rights, corruption in education, and local government accountability
- Civil society builds its audience in the regions by reaching out to wider constituencies and advancing new public spaces on the ground
- Civil society organizations and groups of active citizens in Yerevan and the regions work together to articulate a human rights and social justice agenda
- Alternative policy discussions effectively challenge the mainstream political discourse and the current elite interests-driven model of policy making

Assessment: *Civil society in partnership with active groups on the ground is judged to be successful in setting the policy agenda at the local and national levels; the process of policymaking, implementation is responsive to the local priorities and community needs; grassroots activists are integrated into civil society networks acting on the shared agenda of justice and accountability.*

SHARED FRAMEWORKS

The Foundation will engage in the Inclusive Education, Criminal Justice, and Elections shared frameworks once they are initiated. In the area of Inclusive Education we expect to enrich our work by both gaining access to experiences across the network and also by providing visibility for the existing problems in Armenia. Simultaneously, our work in monitoring the rights of children in special residential care institutions can be of common interest. Participating in the Criminal Justice shared framework, we hope to draw on the professional capacity of OSJI and HRI for the legislative work we plan in our work in closed institutions. We will contribute with monitoring and policy capacity. In the framework of Elections we will participate around the objectives set in the First Concept.

Burma

5. CONTRIBUTIONS TO SHARED FRAMEWORKS

BP does not have specific plans to work immediately within any of the current shared frameworks. However, in discussions with our grantees and relevant actors, we are considering the ways in which we might support shared frameworks going forward. Food security, for example, is of particular importance to Burma and of interest to BP. As an agricultural economy that is threatened on several fronts by land grabbing, industrial agriculture, and perverse incentives for farmers to grow crops that do not provide food security to the Burmese people, Burma requires urgent attention to this issue.

Cross-cutting topics mentioned thus far in Souk discussions that BP will consider engaging with include the following:

- Abuse of Eminent Domain and State Abuse of Expropriation
- **Elections**
- Women's Rights & Gender Equality Integration

OSIFE

4. Securing the Future of Europe

OSIFE's Concepts and Ideas

One of the starkest indicators of the current crisis in democracy and in European values is the drop of citizens' trust in political institutions. The management of the Eurocrisis has deepened the feeling amongst citizens that they have lost the final say in their own national politics: even Prime Ministers with solid parliamentary majorities have been replaced as a result of the pressure of EU institutions and powerful governments. Politics without real policy alternatives seem set to become the norm, resulting in strong anti-establishment sentiment, in particular from those who suffer the most (the unemployed, the working poor, young people, embattled sections of the dwindling middle class). While too many debates are simplified as clashes between national sovereignties or characters, ideological alternatives are overlooked or suppressed. And the European project becomes a relatively closed one, afraid of any criticism and quick to label any dissent as 'Euroscepticism.'

The very future of Europe as a democratic project is at stake. A crucial test will take place in **May 2014 when all EU citizens vote for the European Parliament**. That landmark election will be the cornerstone and key priority for OSIFE's strategy. After those elections it is highly likely that the strategy will need to be reviewed in light of the results. However, there are two more concepts that are related, but stand as initiatives in their own right. One is that of democratic politics beyond borders, where not only the intensity and quality of those transnational politics, but also its contents will be of concern; the other concept is that of engaging a new generation of activists emerging across Europe in the current context of crisis in European politics.

Game Changer: European Elections 2014

Direct elections to the European Parliament started in 1979 and, since then, turnout has declined steadily, with only 43% turnout in 2009. In many countries these elections have been used by voters to punish the existing government – many could opt this time to use them to punish all of the mainstream parties and vote for radical options. This may favour some minority parties that are close to the values of open society, such as liberals and greens, but the ones that are most likely to capitalise on the deep discontent are national-populist and even racist parties. As the European Parliament has gained powers and the results of the election may for the first time determine who will be the President of the European Commission, we could end up with a sizeable anti-EU contingent at the very core of the EU institutions.

From 2013 and in 2014 OSIFE will focus its efforts in this landmark election. The work will address three interrelated objectives:

1. Preventing racist candidates from getting (re)elected
2. Countering racism in election campaigns and in the European Parliament
3. Getting EU citizens who live in other EU countries to vote in their countries of residence

The work will be carried out in close cooperation with other OSF programmes such as the Youth Initiative, the Open Society European Institute and the Roma Initiative, all of which are planning to get involved in the campaign. OSIFE will liaise with other initiatives by civil society organizations and donors. It will treat countries in a differentiated manner according to the additional political repercussions and possible simultaneous elections. The activities will include research and target selection in 2013, grant making and some additional activities (such as convening) for the campaign and a full post-election strategy to mitigate some of the worst possible outcomes. Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK have provisionally been identified as countries of concern, but this list will be refined after the research is carried out.

TIFA

From: 3. ADVANCING CONCEPTS AND INITIATIVES AND IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR PARTNERS IN THE FIELDS

3.1 Strengthening Civic Engagement

Despite being lauded as particularly successful in holding three consecutive free and fair elections, **Indonesia's electoral democracy is actually under threat, which comes from growing apathy and nostalgia for orderly days of authoritarianism.** This is evident from **steady decline in voters' turnout during national and local elections**, and the continued low level of awareness on the necessity of engagement, both among the public and the elected officials. Indonesia's channels and mechanism for public engagement remain largely undeveloped.

TIFA will support the effort to find ways and means civic engagement can be developed in Indonesia. TIFA's experience on social audit during the past few years will be a point of reference in this effort. It will also seek to expand partnership with other civil society and government actors through the government, development partners, and academic initiative of Center for Civic Education, which will be set up at the national and local level. This government-funded center has secured funding from the state budget and TIFA's involvement will be technical and as a conduit with the civil society. From the civil society side, we expect to engage *JPPR* (People's Voter Education Network) with its wide-ranging network of local civil society around the country and years of experience on voters/civic education. Special focus will be applied for youth. Indonesia will have around 40 million new voters in 2014 election, and they will form a tantalizing target group for political parties. Young voters therefore need to be informed and educated of their rights and responsibilities in civic engagement.

As a part of strengthening the civil society and communities on civic engagement, TIFA will seek to engage in various forms of track-recording of candidates and elected officials. This is an important way to educate the public on what they can expect from the political candidates based on what they have done in the past. It is also expected to provide the public with a platform to engage the candidates during the campaign period and later to continue the engagement in reviewing what they actually do in office. We propose to engage *Formappi* (People's Forum on Parliament Watch) to work with elected officials in parliament, and DEMOS with its Democracy Working Groups at the local level.

The other area of civic engagement in electoral processes is campaign and political party financing. Democracy is not a cost-effective business in Indonesia. With more than 500 administrative districts in the country, each with its own elected executive and parliament, political parties need to amass a huge amount of money in order to function effectively. Weak regulatory environment on campaign financing has resulted in corruption charges involving almost all of the major parties. TIFA will seek to launch advocacy to reform the campaign and political party financing provision and later to watch over its implementation. In this program, we will seek to engage *ICW* (Indonesian Corruption Watch) with its years of experience in being a watchdog over corruption issues among public and elected officials in Indonesia.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO SHARED FRAMEWORKS

One of TIFA's main objectives in 2014-2017 is to advance the abovementioned concepts through closer collaboration with programs and other foundations in the OSF family. While this is not new to TIFA and to the programs, it is expected that under the new way of programming in OSF, greater alignment will be achieved by different parts of the OSF complex, including TIFA.

TIFA would like to become part of as many shared frameworks relevant for our objectives as we can, but in particular there are a number of shared frameworks that TIFA seeks to become an active member of. Creating Rights-Respecting Justice System is relevant for TIFA, as we have been working on justice reform for a good number of years in tandem with both OSJI and Human Rights Initiative, and would like to continue to do so. **Election** is an area of interest for TIFA and we have also been working on this area practically since we were established. Due to Indonesia's challenges, TIFA's electoral support, however, will be geared towards how citizens' engagement in the political mechanism can be enhanced and towards how gender equity can be achieved in elected offices. Relatedly, TIFA would also like to become part of the Women's Rights and Gender Equality initiative in the shared frameworks. TIFA has also been engaged in the education sector, especially

for its human rights program. As noted above, one of the emphases of our human rights program will be on educating the younger generation of the importance of human rights and constitutionalism. Therefore, we would also like to participate in the Inclusive Education shared framework.

Related to that, TIFA would also like to initiate a shared framework on Uniformity and Diversity. We are currently in conversation with OSF Turkey and East-East Beyond Borders to initiate this framework. This initiative initially came out of sharing of experiences between OSF Turkey and TIFA, in which we identify common thread between the two countries as the majority Muslim countries that traditionally had been seen as plural and tolerant, but more recently have been under threat from elements that wishes to see uniformity in religious practices and in general issues of social development. It is understood that this phenomenon is not exclusively happening in Muslim countries, but also in varying degrees can be found in non-Muslim countries in other regions.

Mongolia

5. Contributions to Shared Frameworks

The Forum has not proposed any new Shared Frameworks yet. But we are eager to cooperate on any frameworks which directly concern our priorities, or where Mongolian participation would strengthen a network wide initiative. We have identified two possible frameworks for further consideration (currently being discussed): *Creating Rights-Respecting Justice Systems* and **Elections**. Both these frameworks are areas of the Forum's interest and expertise. We have successfully built and maintained an NGO Coalition for Free and Fair Election since 2004 through 3 major elections in addition to being active voice in policy dialogues and debates in electoral processes and procedures, many proposals having been adopted as a part of the new Election Law in 2011. Justice sector reform is our ongoing priority, which encompasses – since 2004 until now- such initiative as establishment of national legal aid system, judicial reform and now justice sector as a whole.

Nepal-Bhutan Initiative

From: 1. Summary

We will also focus on the upcoming (expected) elections at national and local levels. We will advocate for free and fearless polls, and set up a mechanism for efficient citizen monitoring. The tools will be again networking, and at a more technical level, the satellite-based radio network that we have helped develop.

Among the emerging shared frameworks, we would be interested in **electoral integrity**, especially in connecting local monitoring efforts with international advocacy.

Four years from now, we would like to see a Nepal where political violence gives way to due process, rule of law and peaceful, democratic political competition. Impunity should be checked and future elections free and fair.

From: 4. Program/Foundation Concepts and Initiative

4.1 Nepal

4.1.2.2 Campaign for electoral integrity

The last general elections in 2008 were tainted by many irregularities, which were mostly left undocumented, and unchallenged. The next rounds of elections, national and local, have to be different. Instead of superficial, election-day monitoring, a comprehensive system for long-term domestic monitoring needs to be devised. Reports of irregularities need to be publicized, and comprehensive reports compiled for the purposes of domestic and international advocacy.

In the near future, we will be working with the radio network, and with the ASD, on developing a citizen monitoring system for the upcoming general elections, believed now to be held in November, but possibly not before next year. The same mechanism could then be employed in the future for the long-overdue local elections. Simultaneously, a campaign for fair and fearless elections will be led by the ASD through the mobilization of its existing networks.

4.1.2.2.1 Rationale

While technology-enabled citizen monitoring is not new, previous efforts suffered from a substantial drawback - the incoming reports from remote localities could not be easily verified, and followed upon to determine the relative importance of the reported incidents. This has been in some cases (Russia 2012) seized upon to discredit the monitoring effort by inserting blatantly fake reports. The Ujyaalo Network is, however, in a good position to provide instant verification and follow-up through its extensive network of reporters affiliated with member stations across the country. In combination with ASD's capacity for social mobilization through its local and national network, we stand a good chance of making a difference.

4.1.2.2.2 Opponents and risks

Previous elections marred by wide-spread intimidation; likely to happen again. Monitors will face physical threats from party activists and militants.

4.1.3.3 Campaign for electoral integrity

After the demise of the CA, new elections have been announced, but the mechanism and the date remain unclear. Local elections haven't been held in more than a decade; they will eventually have to be called. ASD is preparing a campaign for fair electoral process that will learn from the shortcomings of the last elections. The upcoming elections will also be an important test of the integrity and viability of rule-based processes and non-violent mobilization versus intimidation and violence.

4.1.3.3.1 Rationale

Same as 4.1.2.3.1

5. Contributions to Shared Frameworks

In preliminary discussions after our Strategy Alignment meeting in Kathmandu last year, some partners in the OSF network were interested in jointly exploring the possibility to propose opposition to violence as a new shared framework. While the topic is certainly relevant beyond Nepal, we will need to prepare a deeper assessment of the viability of such an initiative. Among the emerging frameworks, we would be interested in **electoral integrity**, and specifically in **connecting local monitoring on the ground with international advocacy and emerging initiatives** like Kofi Annan's *Global Commission on Elections, Democracy & Security*.

Southeast Asia Initiative

6. Contributions to Shared Frameworks

SEAI intends to participate in the shared frameworks process through engaging the program's boards to contribute ideas for the Souk and participating as a program when the strategy proposal has relevance to countries in Southeast Asia....The proposed topic of **election integrity** is of interest in the region; in 2013 there were general elections in Cambodia and Malaysia, there will be elections in Indonesia in 2014 and Burma in 2015. In early 2013 the program collaborated with the Beyond Borders Program to test ideas within Asia and with Africa in preparation for contribution to this Souk. SEAI is interested in participating in a future Souk addressing issues of diversity.

IRF- International Renaissance Fund

From: 3. Fealty to Fields and Places:

Field I: Promoting Standards of Good Governance, Transparency and Accountability: The overall **goal** of this field - to strengthen the impact of civil society on achieving standards of good governance, transparency and accountability - is pursued through three interlinked objectives: (a) improving the quality of democratic processes; (b) strengthening society's demand for transparency and accountability and putting them on a public policy agenda; and (c) leveraging existing commitments vis-à-vis the EU and the future Association Agreement to push domestic reforms in key areas.

(a) Improving the quality of democratic processes

IRF has been a shaper and supporter of civic activism aimed at making democracy work in Ukraine. Our leading partners, nation-wide networks - Opora, Chesno, New Citizen, Maidan Monitoring - **engage citizens in promoting democratic election standards and voters' rights.**

Their advocacy for balanced information in the media and independent exit polling played a central role in recent elections. Between elections, they have screened politicians' and civil servants' performance and initiated an integrity campaign that all major political forces have responded to substantively. To enhance their advocacy, the NGOs will engage leading think tanks in assessing the quality of leading parliamentary parties' platforms and compliance with European good governance standards. Independent assessment of political processes and platforms will enable conscious voter choices in the 2015 and 2017 elections, bringing more transparency and accountability into the public sector.

c) Using the leverage of Ukraine's legally binding commitments vis-a-vis the EU to push domestic reforms in the key areas

European integration, as a Ukrainian strategic goal, provides a tool kit for democratic domestic reforms, with Ukrainian society a player in the international policy context. IRF's key NGO partners are the National Platform of Civil Society Forum of Eastern Partnership (a unique form of civil society engagement with both the EU institutions and the Ukrainian government), the Civic Expert Council, the Institute of Euro-Atlantic Cooperation, the Laboratory of Legislative Initiatives.

Existent and perspective commitments, namely the Association Agreement (AA, to be signed in November 2013), the Visa Liberalization Action Plan (VLAP, 2010), and the European Energy Community Treaty (2011) - coupled with political and people-to-people relations between Ukraine and the EU create strong leverage for key reforms. IRF will support the strongest civic advocates and think tanks. The European Integration Index for the Eastern Partnership (EaP), initiated by IRF and OSEPI and now in official assessments of EaP countries' progress, will serve as a unique evaluation, advocacy and communication instrument. IRF will collaborate closely with its long-term partners: OSEPI, OSF National Foundations in EaP countries. We will continue donor coordination of support to these NGOs with the European Commission, Member States' embassies, and SIDA.

By the end of 2014, the National Platform of the EaP Civil Society Forum and participating NGOs will produce a series of independent reports on progress on Ukraine's existing commitments vis-à-vis the EU whereas Europe without Barriers initiative will monitor VLAP and relevant reforms, and lobby to liberalize visa policy towards Ukraine. Parallel reports on OGP and EITI progress will be produced. **A coalition for free and fair elections will be in place.** Monitoring of integrity and performance of civil servants will become a regular practice, receiving substantive response from key political forces and initiating improvements in the work of public bodies. An NGO oversight system in public procurement and medicines distribution will also be in place. At least two patient and community boards to oversee funding transparency at health facilities will become operational. **By the end of 2017, two successful political awareness and voter education campaigns will be run to ensure conscious choice and protection of voters' rights.** Patient and community oversight boards will be created at 20 health facilities. Anti-corruption monitoring at universities will be performed by student and educators' bodies. Annual assessments on transparency in public finance, public procurement, energy, education, and healthcare will be presented and formally used by the government and other stakeholders for measuring progress in those areas.

4. IRF Concepts and Initiatives

The proposed Concepts are either innovative ideas that respond to the civil society dynamics, or further exploration of pioneering initiatives undertaken by IRF and its partners before. Implementation of these Concepts will make a difference in the areas where IRF has either strong impact (democratic transition, public policy, anticorruption), or unique involvement (access to justice for the vulnerable and marginalised, Roma empowerment, and drug policy). Our Concepts take into account the ability and will of our partners - NGOs and think tanks, governmental counterparts, and other donors - to uphold proposed ideas and join IRF in their implementation. Anticipated collaboration with our OSF partners played an important role in formulating the Concepts. Our country's international commitments reduce resistance to our initiatives by the authorities. This will help institutionalize the results we plan to achieve in 2014 and by 2017 as new legislation, dissemination of best practices nation-wide, and a positive attitude of the state authorities all come on line.

Concept I. Making Elections and Politics Competitive: Policy Change Scorecard

Ukraine is stuck in transition in major part due to the lack of a consistent vision of the future. Key political forces do not see eye to eye on necessary reforms, national identity, and the national agenda. Politics in Ukraine is personality-driven and leader-focused. Politicians play the "East-West identity divide card", giving people an artificial "choice" between a paternalistic society represented by Russia and the Soviet past, or an open society based on the standards of Western democracies. Various civic movements seek to fill the value and content vacuum with hollow appeals and romantic concepts yet offer no clear vision of the public policy process that would guide their version of a transition. The politicians' and the government's failure to deliver on their election pledges causes civic protests and pressure on the government. We see this as an opportunity to make the government responsive to demands from civil society.

Our **goal** is to give momentum to the transition by engaging key stakeholders in developing a shared public policy agenda for Ukraine. We will practise this goal through mutually enhancing **objectives**: (a) to launch regular public debates across Ukraine on issues of democratisation, key social and economic reforms; (b) to engage NGOs, the business community, the authorities, academia, and the media in shaping a vision for the country; and (c) to strengthen the quality of public policy by developing and promoting standards of policy relevant research. Our specific tools will be regular position papers on the issues of transition, produced by think tanks, and the Policy Change Scorecard. The Scorecard will be a trusted set of benchmarks for regular progress assessment, focusing on the quality of democracy and political process, government accountability, fundamental freedoms and non-discrimination, justice reform; education and health. The Scorecard will differ from numerous other Indexes: it will embrace complex data that are indicative of change on IRF's strategic priorities and will serve as a recognized advocacy tool for NGOs. IRF will further explore opportunities to collaborate with OSF National Foundations in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and other transition countries to on a shared tool for assessing and advocating post-Communist transition.

IRF is well positioned to lead this initiative, as it builds on its high standing in the expert community, its political independence and experience of two nation-wide projects of 2009 and 2011, when IRF united over 40 leading experts and NGOs to conduct evaluation, national and

regional public debates, and recommendations, many of which were used by opposition political forces in their agendas. IRF will further build interaction between NGOs and think tanks, and the authorities, through expertise and consultation platforms and boards, including the cross-fraction Civic Parliamentary Platform and the Coordination Council on Civil Society at the President of Ukraine. A consortium of think tanks and NGO networks will form to develop a system of indicators and on-going evaluation of the quality of political process in IRF strategic areas. IRF will work with the OSF's Think Tank Fund, SIDA and USAID to enhance policy research and join the think tanks in their work on the Scorecard.

We anticipate the initiative's peak activity before the Presidential (2015) and Parliamentary (2017) elections. It will be based on a variety of methodologies in which IRF is particularly strong: expert panels, regular opinion polls, monitoring and analysis of laws, institutionalized practices, international commitments. Between elections the Scorecard will be a tool for civil society organizations to counter political populism by bringing content to political debate and demanding accountability. Work on and debate of the Scorecard will consolidate NGOs around the strategic priorities. The success of this initiative will be assessed by polling information on the Scorecard as the instrument for shaping the public policy agenda, and the impact of issue debates on voter preferences. Quality and relevance of policy research will be assessed through the frequency of its use by decision-makers and civic campaigns. Another indicator will be the number of think tanks funded by OSF TTF and other donors. The success of the Policy Change Scorecard will be measured by frequency of re-use of its indicators and findings.

By the end of 2014, IRF will have developed the scope and methodologies for the position papers and the Scorecard; gathered a consortium of NGOs and think tanks; developed and introduced, in collaboration with TTF, a set of standards of policy relevant research. The position papers and a pilot edition of the Scorecard will be produced and used to inform a series of policy debates. By the end of 2017, the Scorecard will be used as an international tool for assessing transition. Standards of policy research will strengthen capacity and impact of think tanks. The civil society's agenda and the Public Policy Scorecard will create a framework for substantive debates on policy alternatives, enable citizens to make conscious choices, and affect government-civil society interaction to implement necessary reforms at all levels of decision-making.

Opponents of this initiative will likely include the state authorities and leading political forces with their own agendas that disregard open society priorities. The risks include highly paternalistic attitudes among much of the public, which undermine and simplify demands made on the politicians; a possibility that the government creates parallel pro-governmental NGOs to imitate a genuine platform ahead of the elections; and insufficient policy capacity of think tanks and their inability to transform the language of research into a format that stimulates public debate.

US Programs

From: III. Goals And Priorities – Strategy Overview, A. Core Efforts: Democracy, Equality & Justice, A1. Democratic Practice

In our elections work, we've taken a more 'blended' field-foundation-led concepts approach. While our elections priorities have long been implemented by a complementary field of civil rights, good government and civic engagement organizations, we at times intervene to collectively focus them on "foundation-led concepts." For example, in 2011, after sweeping midterm election victories, state Republican legislators swiftly moved to curb voting rights, and networks of private actors began developing plans to suppress the vote in the forthcoming national elections. The field became fully absorbed in defensive fights, and couldn't pay attention to a deteriorating narrative or the long-term need for affirmative reform, which we thought were equally crucial. The extent of the attacks meant the field's capacity was already strained, and public opinion research and messaging on these issues was stale. We added Reserve Funds to previously programmed funds to develop a strategic communications campaign that changed the media narrative and influenced a string of court victories and the outcome of ballot initiatives.

From: C. Operational Approaches, C3. Shared Frameworks

Elections: Given our work on voting rights, elections systems reforms, and the undue influence of money in politics, we participated in discussion of the Foundation's elections-related activities and contributed to a memo documenting these activities and recommending next steps in the area. Some in the group are interested in emulating the "Situation Room" model pioneered in Africa; U.S. Programs is sharing with this subgroup its experience supporting Election Protection, a multi-faceted structure to monitor U.S. elections.

OSIWA

From 4. PROGRAM CONCEPTS AND INITIATIVES:

A. DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

Transform governance institutions and build the capacity of civil society to effectively participate in decision-making processes and hold governments accountable.

Among other things, a well-functioning democratic system cannot do without credible elections and meaningful citizen participation. OSIWA will work to not only create an environment where **credible elections** are the norm and executive checks and balances are in place, but one where **civic education and participation** are increased and the capacity of civil society is built to effectively participate in decision-making processes and **demand transparency and accountability**. In order to ensure that citizens' will and voices/concerns are accounted for and build on the democracy wave within the sub-region and existing regional mechanisms on democracy and good governance, OSIWA will work to:

a) Improve the quality and conduct of elections.

Elections continue to be a reason for contention and instability in the sub-region. Those charged with managing them are often ill-equipped and insufficiently prepared for the task. Those seeking to be elected – often with weak campaign platforms – toe party lines and exacerbate tensions by urging supporters to vote along ethnic lines. OSIWA will improve the quality and conduct of elections in West Africa through the following:

- **Increase the effectiveness of the region's Elections Management Bodies:** Identify the needs and challenges of National Elections Commissions and, in collaboration with the Commissions and civil society, devise appropriate ways to address them.
- **Increase citizens' engagement in the electoral processes:** Support interventions aimed at increasing citizens' awareness and knowledge of the electoral process (i.e. how it works, who the candidates are, what their platforms are, how to participate, why participate, etc).
- **(Contribute to) resolve some of the major threats on elections management in the sub-region.** These include, but are not limited to, electoral dispute resolution, security forces' roles and responsibility in electoral management, and the inclusion of vulnerable groups (women, differently-abled persons, etc.). OSIWA will work with political parties to improve its internal democracy recognizing its important role in the democratic process.

Main Activities for 2014: Set up and operationalize Citizen Situation Room in Nigeria ahead of 2015 elections; introduce concept of Citizen Situation Room in Cote d'Ivoire; Work with ECONEC and ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Unit to engage with national electoral commission on inter alia preventing and responding to post-election violence and support efforts such as Mackymeter that allow citizens to monitor the electoral promises.

Progress will be assessed through increased innovations in elections management processes; the reduction in elections-related violence; the successful resolution of electoral disputes in courts; the increase in issue-based campaigning; and the increase in citizens' participation in electoral processes.

THEMATIC PROGRAMS

Think Tank Fund

V. SHARED FRAMEWORKS

As a small program with modest resources, TTF can contribute to shared frameworks³⁵ by putting forward two broad ideas and eventually leading a framework. The first pertains to analyzing and tackling the phenomenon of state capture in different regions. The second is to design and support policy responses to rising nationalism in specific national and regional settings.³⁶

When it comes to joining other potential frameworks, we are considering taking part in developing two ideas currently under discussion. The first is "Jekhutno - the integration of Roma populations," where TTF can provide a unique perspective on how to engage majorities on minority issues, using think tanks to that end. The second idea explores **how OSF can contribute to democratic elections**. In this area TTF can offer its rich field experience on analyzing public polling standards and designing interventions to improve them.

As a program that works with mainstream organizations, TTF can provide a number of contributions to potential shared frameworks: a) designing quality standards for policy analysis, b) developing evidence-based policy responses, c) elaborating joint advocacy approaches between

mainstream organizations as messengers to majority populations and civic/activist movements that work with vulnerable groups and have a hard time spreading their message beyond them.

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35 The Fund's internal criteria for participating in such initiatives are to only engage when: (a) there is a problem we would like to address but for which we do not have adequate resources; (b) the nature of a problem is so big and complex that TTF can tackle it only in partnership with one or more OSF programs; (c) TTF has the needed technical and/or thematic expertise to make meaningful contribution to the overall framework design and implementation.

36 This is not to explore nationalism *per se*, given that this is widely covered in academic and practitioner circles. However, in many environments where nationalism endangers open society, resolute and competitive policy responses to nationalism are glaringly missing. This is what interests us most.