



المفوضية العليا المستقلة للإنتخابات في العراق
كۆمیسونی بالای سه ربه خۆی هه لێژارد نه كان له عێراق

The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) of Iraq

International Electoral Assistance Team (IEAT)

Election Fact Sheet

Civil society organizations and opinion leaders working hand in hand to better inform citizens of Kurdistan

The **Electoral Education Campaign (EEC)** is a project funded by the UNDG / Iraqi trust Fund and implemented by UNOPS with the support of UNAMI, in close coordination with the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq (IHEC). It aims at bringing together the IHEC, Iraqi civil society and Iraqi opinion leaders, at both the national and governorate levels, to improve the awareness of the Iraqi citizens about the electoral process.

The Electoral Education Campaign has played an important role in raising awareness of Iraqi citizens during the preparation of the provincial elections of this year. It has therefore been decided to extend the Electoral Education Campaign in order to support IHEC's outreach efforts for the preparation of the Kurdish National Assembly's elections of the 25 July 2009.

A special package of electoral education activities for KNA elections has been developed, and will be implemented in the run up to KNA Election Day. The following three set of activities will be implemented:

1. **Opinion Leader Symposiums (OLS)**

To be a complete success, any electoral process needs to be supported by those who contribute to citizens' opinions.

Three symposiums will therefore be implemented in each of the governorates participating in the KNA elections, in order to familiarize local opinion leaders with the electoral process. All the political entities involved in the KNA elections, the tribal and religious leaders as well as the representatives of minorities and of local civil society organizations, will be invited to attend these symposiums, which will each gather 100 participants.

All in all, **900 Opinion Leaders will gain knowledge of the electoral process, and will be able to explain to their communities the importance of exercising their democratic rights and voting.**

2. **First-Time Voter Sessions (FVS)**

Both because the new generation represents the future of Iraq and because they often lack information as to how and why they should vote, First-Time Voters are a priority.

UNOPS will therefore organize, in each of the three concerned governorates, a First-Time Voter Session, in which 500 students from the main public universities and evening schools of the governorate will be invited to participate.

All in all, **1,500 First-Time Voters will be given information they need in order to exercise their right to vote.**

3. **Neighborhood Electoral Education Workshops (NEEW)**

To be efficient, an electoral education strategy must reach out citizens in the area where they live, to bring the electoral process to them and to encourage them to vote.

To do so, and in order to communicate with citizens living in remote areas, micro-grants have been allocated to 9 Kurdish civil society organizations, to implement Neighborhood Electoral Education Workshops, in each of the 99 sub-districts of the Kurdistan Regional Government. Each workshop will target 60 participants.

All in all, **the workshops will reach 5,500 citizens of Kurdistan educating them as to how to vote and why they should exercise their democratic rights. They can then convey this information to their families.**

Gender balance and non discriminatory criteria will be systematically applied, in order to ensure a fair participation of female citizens and minorities in the activities.

For further information on the EEC:

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