



IFES Quarterly Report: January 1 – March 31, 2005

Electoral Process Strengthening In Nepal
USAID Associate Cooperative Agreement No. 367-A-00-05-00011-00
Under Leader Cooperative Agreement No. DGC-A-00-01-00004-00

Project Period: December 15, 2004 to December 31, 2006
Total Budget: \$500,000 Expenses Recorded to Date:\$1,179

BACKGROUND

The objective of IFES' Electoral Process Strengthening in Nepal (EPSIN) project is to support the strengthening, independence and effectiveness of the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN).

IFES has proposed to meet this goal through: (1) on-site technical assistance to the Election Commission; (2) assistance to the ECN in reviewing the performance of its 1998-2003 5-year plan and developing a 2004-2009 strategic plan; (3) conducting an election security assessment to identify sociopolitical impediments to the conduct of violence-free elections in 2005 and generate related action plans for the ECN; (4) development, with the ECN and key stakeholders, of a civic and voter education plan for upcoming elections; and (5) working with the ECN to improve its public outreach capabilities.

ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

In this quarter, IFES conducted no onsite activities. However, IFES coordinated with the USAID mission in Nepal to discuss project start-up, the current political and operating environment in Nepal, current conditions and receptivity for assistance at the ECN and its secretariat, and prospects for future elections. IFES and USAID also discussed the order of priority for IFES' proposed work with the ECN, and the timetable for project start-up. Preliminary activities with the ECN will commence in May 2005.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES NEXT QUARTER

Activities next quarter will include the fielding of an election expert to work with the ECN on a five-year strategic plan, conducting a security assessment that would evaluate the current environment vis a vis elections, and helping to build the capacity of the ECN with regard to preparations for upcoming municipal elections.