

April 2007



International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy
ISFED

Strategic Plan

2007-2009

Content

1. HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION / ROLE OF ISFED IN GEORGIAN SOCIETY	3
2. DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES IN GEORGIA	5
3. NEW MISSION STATEMENT	7
4. EELBORATION OF ISFED’S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	7
A. PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP, PROTECTION OF POLITICAL RIGHTS	8
B. ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF GOVERNMENT	9
C. MONITORING AND IMPROVING ELECTORAL PROCESSES IN GEORGIA, PROTECTION OF ELECTORAL RIGHTS	10
D. INTEGRATION INTO INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND SUPPORTING ESTABLISHMENT OF PRINCIPLES RECOGNIZED BY RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS	11
5. STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIVITIES	11
A. PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP, PROTECTION OF POLITICAL RIGHTS	11
B. ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF GOVERNMENT	12
C. MONITORING AND IMPROVING ELECTORAL PROCESSES IN GEORGIA, PROTECTION OF ELECTORAL RIGHTS	14
D. INTEGRATION INTO INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND SUPPORTING ESTABLISHMENT OF PRINCIPLES RECOGNIZED BY RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS	16
6. POSSIBLE OBSTACLES AND EXPECTED RESULTS	17
7. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES	17
8. ISFED OUTLINED PROJECTS	18
PROGRAM A. PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP, PROTECTION OF POLITICAL RIGHTS	18
PROGRAM B. ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF GOVERNMENT	18
PROGRAM C. MONITORING AND IMPROVING ELECTORAL PROCESSES IN GEORGIA, PROTECTION OF ELECTORAL RIGHTS	19
PROGRAM D. INTEGRATION INTO INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND SUPPORTING ESTABLISHMENT OF PRINCIPLES RECOGNIZED BY RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS	19
PROGRAM E. ISFED ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	19
9. ISFED DONORS AND PARTNERS	20
10. SHORT TERM OPERATIONAL PLAN	21

1. HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION / ROLE OF ISFED IN GEORGIAN SOCIETY

The International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) is a non-governmental, non-partisan, non-profit and impartial NGO established in 1995 as a consortium of Georgian public activists collectively supporting free and fair elections and democratic developments in Georgia. Due to the organization's long-standing professional, transparent and trustworthy activities, ISFED was twice awarded the status of the Cavalier of 5 Silver Principles of the Code of Ethics of Non-governmental Organizations.

Over the past eleven years ISFED has grown into the largest and most recognized civil society organizations in Georgia. Since its founding, ISFED has established itself as the organization working to promote democratic principles and achieve a high level credibility within and outside the country. The organization has carried out numerous activities throughout Georgia. As the most trusted election monitoring organization and an acknowledged expert in election issues one of the most important and successful activities has been ISFED election-monitoring program. Within the framework of this program, during more than a decade of active civic engagement, ISFED has conducted nationwide monitoring of all elections and referenda in Georgia.

Namely, ISFED has conducted:

- Monitoring of the November 5th, 1995 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections;
- Monitoring of the November 1996 Plebiscite of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Abkhazia;
- Monitoring of the November 15th, 1998 Local Elections;
- Monitoring of the October 31st, 1999 Parliamentary Elections;
- Monitoring of the April 9th, 2000 Presidential Elections;
- Monitoring of the June 2nd, 2002 Local Self-government Elections;
- Monitoring of the November 2nd, 2003 Parliamentary Elections;
- Monitoring of the January 4th, 2004 Presidential Elections;
- Monitoring of the March 28th, 2004 Proportional Re-run Parliamentary Elections;
- Monitoring of the October 1st, 2005 Parliamentary By- and Re-run Elections;
- Monitoring of the October 5th, 2006 Local Self-government Elections.

Additionally, ISFED has monitored special elections, such as: repeat elections; repeat voting; the 2nd rounds of elections, repeated parliamentary elections in one-mandate election districts, the September 17th, 2005 primary elections held for the first time ever in Georgia, etc.

In almost all cases, the organization monitored the pre-election process including the composition of the electoral administration and respective administrative functions, verification and auditing of the unified voters' lists, the candidate (election subject) registration process, pre-electoral campaigns and all pre-electoral procedures. Election Day procedures included observation of the polling and counting of election results. Post-election procedures comprised proclamation of the official results and running an appeal process in the high level election administration and courts when necessary.

The latest success in ISFED election monitoring effort is conduction of Parallel Vote Tabulation¹ (PVT) for the last general elections including the November 2nd, 2003, January 4th and March

¹ Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) – a method used to project election results by gathering and processing election results from a number of statistically chosen polling stations

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY
STRATEGIC PLAN

28th, 2004 elections. Parallel Vote Tabulation was successfully conducted for the October 5th, 2006 Local Self-Government Elections as well.

PVT conducted by ISFED documented widespread irregularities and provided evidence to reformers that the official election results did not reflect the will of Georgian public for the November 2nd, 2003 Parliamentary Elections. Based on ISFED appeal submitted to the Supreme Court of Georgia and according to the reasonable facts provided by ISFED, the Parliamentary Election results were canceled. The public response to government leaders attempting to illegally take power caused an explosion that led to a comprehensive political transformation and thus culminated in the peaceful “Rose Revolution” in late autumn of 2003. By implementing impartial election monitoring and by conducting PVT, ISFED played an important role in creation of the new political environment, which has brought reforms along with new challenges. In responding to these needs, the organization took part in assistance with the development of the aftermath political processes.

Since its inception, ISFED has managed to build the largest network among Georgian NGOs. While implementing various observation missions, ISFED recruited and trained more than 14,000 volunteers from different ethnic, religious and other backgrounds who monitored elections as domestic and non-partisan observers.

ISFED members also participate in international observation missions and to date have observed elections in Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, the USA, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Albania and Norway. ISFED is the only Georgian monitoring organization with membership in the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO).

In order to improve the “Unified Election Code of Georgia” (UEC) ISFED has proposed a number of recommendations and legal proposals to the electoral legislation. Moreover, the organization actively participates in parliamentary committee hearings and as part of the working group on elections in Georgia. Over the past several years, ISFED has organized roundtables as platform for public discussions on various legislative or other important reforms.

Besides the election monitoring program, for more than a decade, ISFED has implemented a number of projects in civic education and local governance. Namely:

- Monitoring the accessibility of local government officials to the public;
- Monitoring local governments’ activities;
- Examining the transparency of local budgets;
- Monitoring the transparency of tax departments;
- Monitoring the activities of the state auto inspection, transportation and registration departments;
- Examining the transparency of the state consular and passport registration agencies;
- Protecting citizens political and social rights including youth and ethnic and other minorities;
- Monitoring the public information accessibility within self-governing bodies;
- Running an assessment of majoritarian MPs’ activities and their needs;
- Assisting majoritarian MPs in carrying out the activities of their local bureaus by providing internship program;
- Running an assessment of local self-government needs;
- Conducting advocacy workshops designed to equip citizens with advocacy tools and appropriate knowledge necessary to effectively advocate on issues of community concern and citizen interest;

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY
STRATEGIC PLAN

- Promoting dialogue and constructive cooperation between citizens and government as well increasing citizen involvement in decision and policy making processes through organizing town hall meetings (THMs);
- Conducting election educational workshops on local self-government issues and electoral procedures;
- Conducting “I vote for the first time” workshops for students of higher education institutions of at least 18 years old, who were eligible to participate in 2006 local elections for the first time, among them young representatives of ethnic minorities;
- Organizing public information kiosks addressing to disseminate voter educational and informational materials;
- Organizing and conducting radio talk shows for broadcasting nationwide;
- Preparing educational video and audio spots on electoral procedures;
- Supporting community development in the regions of Georgia heavily populated with ethnic minorities, etc

These were nationwide as well as local, community-based projects, which contributed to increase the capacity of the organization overall and enhance its image in society.

Parallel to the aforementioned, in March, 2005 ISFED conducted a phone public opinion poll among the citizens of Tbilisi on the issue of elections of the Mayor of Tbilisi. In 2006, ISFED conducted nationwide public opinion polling on important reforms throughout Georgia in regard to local self-governance as well election-related issues. The results of the surveys conducted with the citizens of Georgia were substantive basis for determining policy priorities based upon public input for the 2006 local self-government elections. Additionally in 2006, ISFED conducted an audit of the unified voters’ lists in all regions of Georgia excluding conflict zones based on multi-stage stratified sampling. As a result, according to its findings, ISFED determined existing problems and future direction for assisting the Georgian election administration to amend the voters’ list and include as many eligible voters as is possible to vote on future elections.

2. DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES IN GEORGIA

Since mid nineties, following a brief period of moderate democratic reform, Georgia descended into stagnation as political leadership did not take the steps needed to move the country through the transition period following the independence. Overwhelming corruption of government structures resulted in citizens’ distrust in government and lack of belief in the opportunity to ensure real progress towards a more open society. At the same time the country’s limited experience of democratic institutions put limits on the consolidation of liberal values. The country was facing more and more severe social problems. The government did not have a capacity or desire to regulate the existing situation. The gap between government authorities and the population widened, and the risk of political disintegration increased. In addition, protection of human rights was nearly impossible.

Having a sad experience with manipulated results and violence during the elections, pending the November 2nd, 2003 parliamentary elections international organizations and missions in Georgia put strong emphasis on the importance of conducting free and fair elections as a decisive effort that would shape the country’s international image and determine the future foreign support. International community was also supporting the domestic civil organizations, which were struggling for the protection of electoral rights and other basic human rights and freedoms in the country.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY
STRATEGIC PLAN

The public's response to government leaders' attempt to illegally take power caused an explosion that culminated in the peaceful "Rose Revolution" in 2003. This was the beginning of a new political era for Georgia.

As a result of all three elections that were conducted in 2004, the government's structure as well as the allocation of political forces changed and the political parties leading the "Rose Revolution" obtained vast majority and influence in legislative and executive branches of the government.

Georgia has entered the phase of post-rose revolution development and is optimistic in its prospects to transition to a more democratic state. The political changes brought fresh optimism to the society and the country's political agenda, and the political leadership appears to genuinely support democratic and market-oriented development. However, many problems that existed before the revolution are still observed and need to be solved.

The post-revolutionary period is usually marked both with advantages and disadvantages. One of the most important reasons of the mistakes of new Georgian authorities is the revolutionary euphoria that was an attribute of political life in Georgia for quite a long period. The examples of mistakes relate to failed attempt to quickly solve conflict in South Ossetia, cases of adopting decisions and laws without due and proper process and public discussion, frequent rotation of the members of the Cabinet and other state officials, ignoring the opinions of political opponents and civil society, decreased level of impartiality of judicial system, frequent cases of dispossession, etc.

The Georgian authorities have continued to demonstrate their firm commitment to proceed with institutional, legal and socio-economic reforms aiming at Georgia's transformation into a modern European democracy. The general priority areas continue to represent the main challenges for Georgia's democratic evolution: consolidation of democratic institutions, including those related to regionalism; reform of the judiciary system and law-enforcement agencies; the anti-corruption campaign and the fight against organized crime and protect of human rights. Respect for media pluralism, ethnic and other minorities' rights, and the professionalism and ethics of law-enforcement officers are issues which are also worth of proper or further attention by the Georgian authorities.

The major development organizations still list improvements in the country's governance system as a priority. Strengthening the management of public expenditures, increasing institutional capacity, empowering local self-governments, advancing decentralization, supporting equality before the law, promoting freedom of speech, proceeding ethnic and other minorities integration, and promoting accountability and transparency are vital if the country is to retain international support.

Sustainable social development will become possible when basic values such as respect for human dignity and individual freedom, accountability and responsiveness of public institutions to citizens and communities, rule of law, protection of the rights of minorities and underprivileged groups, constitutional limits on government, social, economic and political pluralism are incorporated in the policies of the current political leadership.

In the coming years, Georgia will face tremendous challenges related to public administration, governance and citizen participation in decision and policy making processes. ISFED will play

an important role in supporting the country's necessary changes during this vital period for Georgia's democratic development.

3. NEW MISSION STATEMENT

ISFED supports the development of democratic institutions in Georgia through promoting active citizenship and involving citizens in decision and policy making processes. The organization conducts civic education campaigns to increase transparency of the government's activities and promote accountability. The organization enhances the accountability of government bodies not just through oversight and monitoring, but also by assisting them in finding better ways of incorporating citizen participation. ISFED facilitates the process of providing platform for constructive discussions and establishing real cooperation between public institutions and citizens. ISFED strives for protection of citizens' political rights. ISFED aims to support fairness of electoral procedures through qualitative election monitoring effort and protecting voters' electoral rights. Additionally, ISFED promotes integration into international democratic institutions and supports establishment of democratic principles recognized by those institutions.

4. ELABORATION OF ISFED'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Events over the past several years have placed Georgia at the forefront of democratic reform in the Eurasia region. Georgia's vibrant civil society remains supportive to further development of democratic advances. The strength of civil society organizations lies in their ability to adapt and contribute to new political environments and the changing needs of society. One of the pillars of democracy is to support free and fair elections and to oblige the government and elected officials to be accountable to people respecting the will and rights of those who elected them. Thus civil society organizations have a major role to play in this process.

Considering the aforementioned in April 2007, ISFED redefined and renewed its mission and determined its strategic directions for 2007-2009. As ISFED has always worked to promote free and fair elections and to conduct civic education campaigns aiming to increase accountability, responsiveness and transparency of the government's activities, the organization will continue to pursue similar goals in the upcoming period. In addition, for the next three years ISFED will forward significant effort to promote integration into international democratic institutions and support establishment of principles recognized by respective institutions.

The main priorities of ISFED's strategy are:

- Promoting active citizenship, protection of political rights;
- Enhancing transparency and accountability of government;
- Monitoring and improving electoral processes in Georgia, protection of electoral rights;
- Integration into international democratic institutions and supporting establishment of principles recognized by respective institutions.

Obstacles impeding Georgia's transition to democracy might be revealed and thus factors undermining ISFED's strategic plan might be observed. However, ISFED believes that its

objectives for the next three years are measurable and feasible and will be valuable to the democratic development of Georgia.

In order to comply the organization's activities with ISFED's strategic directions ISFED will maintain independency and safeguard organization's principles; will demonstrate free decision-making effort and will increase internal organizational development and professionalism.

A. Promoting active citizenship, protection of political rights

ISFED is well-placed at conducting voter education campaign, which effectively contributes to strengthening the democratic values in Georgia through encouraging and enabling citizens to become active in various political processes between elections.

ISFED's election monitoring campaigns helped the organization to gather valuable information on different segments of the general public. The results showed that citizens and particularly youth (up to 30 years old) including ethnic, religious and other minorities living mostly in mountainous regions and other areas densely inhabited by them are less active in democratic processes due to a lack of knowledge of their rights.

Besides, the findings of public opinion polling conducted by ISFED on important reforms throughout Georgia in regard to local self-governance as well election-related issues proved that youth's knowledge on respective issues is quite low.

Thus, apart from educating the general public on democracy, the emphasis will be focused on the following categories of citizens:

- One of the reasons resulting in low **youth** participation is the lack of interest and the belief that important political decisions are taken solely by the elder generation. Many young people are dissatisfied and feel excluded from the democratic process. ISFED will work with young people in order to support their activeness in nationwide as well in local political processes and to promote their rights and duties through the strategy specially designed for youth.
- **Ethnic and other minorities** often do not perceive themselves as equal citizens and do not feel themselves as part of the Georgian state. One of the reasons for this is their limited access to and participation in the country's social and political life. The government has not yet developed a mechanism or strategy for integration of the regions of the country that are heavily populated by citizens from ethnic and other minority groups. Tensions existing in these areas have been exacerbated in recent months for a number of reasons, including mistrust of central and local governments, physical isolation of some communities, language barriers, etc. Thus ISFED will continue to work on supporting more effective social and political integration of Georgian citizens from all ethnic and other minority groups in order to ensure the country's long-term stability. ISFED will encourage minorities' involvement in community development processes and will work on the promotion of rights of minorities among the general public and with members of minority groups themselves.
- **Remote areas** are also very isolated in terms of being provided with information and attention which results in a high level of nihilism and therefore low activism. By means of its nationwide network, ISFED will continue to work in remote areas to support the inclusion of marginalized groups in social and political life of the country.

ISFED will promote the knowledge of civic, social and political rights, support tolerance education among the general public, and enhance the image of active citizens who have certain rights and duties towards the society and country. ISFED assumes that through its public awareness and citizen outreach activities informed citizens will understand the importance of active citizenship and thus will perceive essential necessity to contribute to the democratic development of the country.

B. Enhancing transparency and accountability of government

In order to support public participation in political processes through proceeding citizen involvement in decision and policy making activities ISFED will focus on both central and local governments.

- As Georgia is on its transition to become democratic country **central government** intends to conduct various major reforms in many directions. In some cases, changes will be difficult and will create fears and resistance in various segments of society that could endanger the process of national consolidation and successful implementation of the reforms.
ISFED considers its role as assisting the government to educate citizens about nationwide and local reforms, monitoring the implementation of reforms, and making sure that the reforms are conducted according to requirements prescribed under the respective legislation.
- The public perceives the Legislative body – **the Parliament of Georgia** as one of the fundamental institutions of the state, which defines the country's development orientation. As the parliament is elected by the citizens of the country the respective body should put on the agenda the issues mostly concerning the citizens and thus draft the laws defending public interests. The parliament should feel itself responsible to public needs. It is vital to reinforce the achievements of the parliament and further consolidate its democratic culture. Nowadays the parliament still faces challenges in sustaining strong communication and building confidence with society. The public is eager to maintain contact with its elected representatives in parliament and contribute to its activities. Accordingly, at the central level, ISFED will focus on cooperating with the Parliament, especially after the 2008 Parliamentary Elections and providing a link between legislative body and the public, so that citizens can bring their voices to the parliament and members of parliament can maintain correlations with their constituents.
- **Local self-government** is responsible to be the closest to citizens and to deliver valuable service to the public. Considering the results of the ISFED 2006 public opinion polling the quality and quantity of information among citizens of Georgia on the issues regarding local self-government is quite low. Also noteworthy is the citizens' estimation (approximately 40%) that local self-government officials' activities are not transparent. Thus in order to advance transparency and accountability of local self-governments ISFED will support local self-governments on how to use local resources more efficiently, how to meet good governance principles, how to find joint solutions to various local problems and how to incorporate public participation mechanisms. In addition, ISFED will work and cooperate with local self-governing bodies to help them in establishment of an effective system of checks and balances.

C. Monitoring and improving electoral processes in Georgia, protection of electoral rights:

Pending the simultaneous 2008 Presidential, Parliamentary and Adjara Supreme Council Elections ISFED deems that the valuable experience accumulated by the organization in the field of elections needs to be further sharpened and used more efficiently and strategically. Accordingly, ISFED will strengthen its active engagement in ensuring transparent and effective administration of elections and will develop and update approaches in this direction.

- In order to support democratic elections in Georgia ISFED intends to increase its advocacy directing to improve **electoral legislation**. The main goal is to bring the Georgian elections on all levels in accordance with internationally recognized standards and commitments.
- In Georgia accuracy of the **voters' lists** is the major problem of the electoral administration and constitutes a threat for the fairness of elections. In particular it was one of the most central and substantial problem of the elections held during the last decade. The number of voters' in the unified voters' lists was constantly changing from one to the other election. The voters' lists, as a crucial basis for holding fair elections, were updated according to distinct strategy and methodology at the different stages of electoral processes. Thus ISFED intends to conduct the audit of the voters' lists and therefore help to ensure that the maximum number of eligible Georgian voters will have access to the ballot box on Election Day.
- For the purpose of supporting democratic elections in Georgia ISFED seeks a necessity to carry out nationwide **voter education campaign** addressing to educate citizens of the country on their electoral rights and election-related issues further motivating them to cast their ballots on Election Day. ISFED assumes that through its public awareness and voter outreach activities, informed voters will understand the importance of each vote and their role in political processes. Through implementation of ISFED election monitoring campaign, Georgian voters and the public at large will be provided with concise and objective information regarding pre-election, E-Day and post-election developments as well as specific results of elections. Additionally, ISFED will focus its attention on conduction of educational trainings for such target groups as political parties and media. Trainings will be conducted on electoral procedures and their rights and duties related to electoral process.
- In a spirit of promoting and embodying democratic values within the society, it is crucial to overall increase electoral culture and to understand that fair elections should be equally practiced in different public institutions. Reforms in the field of education have been taken place in Georgia and are intended to have an ongoing character in the future. **The education institutes** like schools, universities, institutes, etc are driven to strengthen independency and democracy of these institutions, which implies that a number of positions or units will be elected. Furthermore, an ongoing reform in Educational System as one of the most important reform for Georgia includes stages of further development. To this end, ISFED assumes to support the transparency and improvement of these processes through monitoring all respective issues.

- ISFED will further elaborate its election monitoring profile and develop an updated monitoring approach for future elections. Creation of a professional and non-partisan standing election administration was a priority according to the April 22, 2005 amendments to the Unified Election Code. The legislation envisaged certification of electoral officials, as this was one of the criteria for assessing the commission members' professionalism. In order to verify professionalism, the certification of election officials is considered a crucial requirement for election commission members at various levels. ISFED will continue to monitor election administration staffing and election officials' certification procedures. Professional election administration will on its side pressure **election-monitoring organizations** to become more proficient and targeted. For the next three years ISFED intends to improve professionalism of its volunteer network and increase the election monitoring capacity of the organization.
- For the purpose to build the confidence between different stakeholders and Georgian election administration ISFED will monitor the activities of **election administration** and will closely cooperate with electoral commissions at all levels thus ensuring proper and effective implementation of electoral procedures and transparency of election administrations' activities.
- During more than a decade of active civic engagement, ISFED has conducted nationwide monitoring of all the elections and referenda in Georgia and therefore has gained valuable experience in this field. The experience and knowledge collected by the organization could be very relevant for **similar organizations** operating in neighboring countries or other post-Soviet republics. In that context, ISFED will play an important role in increasing capacities of these groups through an exchange of knowledge and practice. ISFED will continue to participate in international election monitoring missions in order to increase its proficiency in election monitoring.

D. Integration into international democratic institutions and supporting establishment of principles recognized by respective institutions

Considering the country's tendency and government's significant effort to promote integration of Georgia into international democratic institutions thus providing guarantee for Georgia's territorial integrity, safety and its democratic development ISFED will focus on this direction. Additionally ISFED plans to forward a considerable effort to support establishment of principles recognized by respective institutions and therefore contribute to further democratic advances of the country.

5. STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

A. Promoting active citizenship, protection of political rights

In democratic societies, citizens are active not only during elections, but in other political processes as well. The major strategic goal is to increase citizens' understanding of democratic principles and enable them to take more active role in society.

The following objectives have been set:

Objectives

- Increased participation in democratic processes among youth;
- Better understanding of democratic principles among the general public, especially in remote areas;
- Increased level of citizens involvement in decision and policy making processes concentrating on special target groups such as teachers, parents, media representatives, local NGOs, students etc;
- Improved knowledge and understanding of citizens on structure, authorities and responsibilities of governments;
- Increased level of citizens' knowledge on their political rights and freedoms;
- Enhanced integration of ethnic and other minorities into social and political life of the country;
- Increased public awareness of the principles of equity and equal rights despite ethnic or other differences.

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- educate youth on their rights and responsibilities;
- conduct trainings and seminars in high schools and other education institutes on civic values, political rights, advocacy and tolerance;
- promote the principles of active citizenship;
- conduct advocacy workshops aiming to promote active citizenship by informing citizens about their rights and responsibilities and providing the tools and knowledge necessary to advocate their interests more efficiently;
- train target groups and assist them with conducting advocacy campaigns;
- organize public events and actions;
- outline examples of good practices in public participation and advocacy;
- conduct special trainings for representatives of ethnic minorities on how to advocate their interests and how to support community development thus ensuring their integration into social and political processes;
- organize media campaigns and specially designed forums through national and local media promoting civic values, tolerance education and political rights;
- disseminate objective and impartial information through various methods.

B. Enhancing transparency and accountability of government

The major strategic goal is to improve the relationship between government and the public by providing a platform for constructive dialogue and ensuring citizen involvement in decision and policy making processes.

The following objectives have been set:

Objective I

Proper implementation of nationwide and local reforms and increased awareness of citizens on respective reforms

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- collect information on preferred reforms taking place within the country;
- disseminate information on reforms in order to increase understanding of and commitment to changes among the general public and targeted groups;
- monitor the implementation of reforms;
- disseminate objective information on ISFED monitoring findings to the public.

Objective II

ISFED intends to cooperate with the Parliament of Georgia in order to increase the interaction between the members of parliament and citizens. Less number, 150 Members of Georgian parliament elected in 2008 (50 majoritarian MPs and 100 MPs by proportional system) will exercise accountability towards the electorate by bringing their voices to the parliament.

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- Cooperate with MPs concerning legislative issues;
- assist majoritarian MPs and the work of their constituency offices with the help of qualified interns;
- inform society about the activities of majoritarian MPs' constituency offices;
- encourage MPs to hold regular meetings with the electorate and to follow legal requirements;
- hold public discussions on draft laws and other issues of concern of citizens and ensure that public concerns are properly channeled and advocated by MPs;
- run a quarterly questionnaire about the work of MPs in their constituencies and inform the public about it.

Objective III

Local self-governing bodies incorporate citizen participation mechanisms resulting in increased citizen involvement in decision and policy making processes

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- conduct training for local self-government officials on public participation mechanisms;
- assist local self-governments in establishing transparent systems as well as effective system of checks and balances;
- assist local self-governments in establishing and maintaining regular communication with citizens;
- organize and facilitate town hall meetings aiming to increase and strengthen citizens' cooperation with local self-governments for solving problematic issues concerning public interest;
- train citizens on Public Information Accessibility and advocacy skills by means of which ISFED will initiate creation of the active groups of citizens, who will participate in drafting the relevant local self-government budget for the next year and in execution of the current budget and relevant activities through requesting public information;
- conduct public discussions on the initiatives of local self-governments;
- initiate and organize public discussions on current issues and problems of public concern;
- increase human resource capacities of local agencies by providing trained volunteer interns.

Objective IV

Increased responsiveness, accountability and transparency of local self-governments towards the public

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- monitor the meetings of local self-government (Sakrebulo) throughout Georgia by attending local self-government meetings and report on their compliance with relevant legislation;
- monitor the activities of the executive branches of the local self-government and their relationship with local residents;
- monitor the activities of local self-governments through requesting the budget and relevant public information of the respective municipality/district/city and through monitoring proper execution of budget;
- train local self-government representatives on the duties and responsibilities of local officials in providing public information to citizens and thus being responsive to the public's request;
- monitor implementation of the reforms nationwide and local at the local level.

C. Monitoring and improving electoral processes in Georgia, protection of electoral rights;

The major strategic goal is to further support free and fair elections in Georgia through improving electoral legislation and ensuring transparent and effective administration of elections at all levels.

The following objectives have been set:

Objective I

Improved legal and administrative environment as a guarantee for conduction of democratic elections at all levels

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- draft legislative proposals and advocate for relevant legal amendments;
- organize roundtable discussions on issues of great electoral importance;
- participate in election working group's discussions, present initiatives and provide recommendations;
- monitor the elaboration of the Central Election Commission's strategy concerning verification and updating of the unified voters' lists;
- conduct the audit of the unified voters' lists in order to provide each eligible voter to exercise his/her electoral right to vote.

Objective II

Increased awareness of citizens on their electoral rights and election-related issues resulting in augmentation of the level of electoral culture in Georgia

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- conduct election educational workshops aiming to educate citizens of the country on their electoral rights and election-related issues;

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY
STRATEGIC PLAN

- conduct special trainings for freshmen voters including representatives of ethnic minorities on the importance of one vote and respective issues thus encouraging them to vote;
- conduct educational trainings for political parties and media on electoral procedures and their rights and duties related to electoral process;
- elaborate and issue on-line series of ISFED Election Updates on a regular basis;
- develop and distribute voter educational materials including flyers, posters, brochures and newsletters among the citizens of Georgia;
- organize public kiosks for distribution of election educational and informational materials;
- organize and conduct radio talk shows directing to discuss electoral issues with the citizens of Georgia;
- prepare and run video and audio spots on electoral procedures;
- disseminate objective information regarding pre-election, E-Day and post election developments as well as election results to the public.

Objective III

The culture and practice of fair elections successfully implemented in education institutions and other public bodies

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- provide consultancy for election preparation and administration;
- monitor the polling process;
- based on monitoring results will publish respective recommendations.

Objective IV

Improved organizational proficiency in election monitoring

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- update and further develop the election monitoring approach;
- maintain and update its volunteer network and increase the election monitoring capacity of the organization;
- Concentrate on professionalism of observational network, conduct relevant trainings and testing;
- conduct large-scale election-monitoring campaigns addressing to ensure transparency of elections;
- prevent electoral fraud by conducting parallel vote tabulation (PVT) and Election Day monitoring, and appeal electoral irregularities to relevant authorities;
- provide post-election recommendations to relevant institutions aimed towards long-term improvement of Georgian electoral process.

Objective V

Enhanced confidence between different stakeholders and Georgian election administration and improved and transparent implementation of electoral procedures by electoral administration

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- monitor the implementation of an action plan for the improvement of election administration (composition of election administration staffing, certification of election officials, etc.)
- monitor the activities of election administration;
- run an assessment of election commissions' needs;
- cooperate with electoral commissions at all levels aiming to ensure proper and effective implementation of electoral procedures and transparency of their activities.

Objective VI

Increased cooperation with similar organizations from other neighboring countries and/or other post-Soviet republics

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- establish and maintain contacts and relations;
- organize experience-sharing workshops and meetings;
- participate in international election monitoring missions.

D. Integration into international democratic institutions and supporting establishment of principles recognized by respective institutions

The major strategic goal is to promote integration of Georgia into international democratic institutions and support establishment of principles recognized by respective institutions and therefore contribute to further democratic development of the country.

The following objectives have been set:

Objectives

- Increased level of citizens' awareness on international democratic institutions;
- Better understanding of citizens on the importance of integrating Georgia into international democratic institutions like NATO and Union of Europe;
- Improved Georgian legislation through establishing and embodying internationally recognized principles;
- Increased usefulness and efficiency of international conventions and treaties.

For this purpose, ISFED will:

- conduct trainings for the general public including youth, schoolchildren, representatives of ethnic and other minorities on international democratic institutions;
- cooperate with the public institutions working on the issues concerning integration into the democratic institutions;
- provide Georgian legislation with the relevant recommendations based on recognized democratic principals;
- monitor implementation of the internationally recognized conventions and treaties thus contributing to further democratic development of the country.

6. POSSIBLE OBSTACLES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

In spite of Georgian government's efforts to support and promote democracy in Georgia and thus ensure the country's political and economical development, many obstacles are still observed; for example, one third of the country is still governed by separatist forces leaving room for further conflicts; there are many Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); the level of poverty is noticeably high; political, electoral and legal culture is unavailable especially at district levels; high level of unemployment is noticed; the extent of corruption decreased but the problems concerning the monitoring of corruption is still observable at high level of government; some elected officials are unaccountable and irresponsible to the public., many citizens express nihilism and passiveness; the factor of fear is strengthened within society; ineffective system of ethnic minorities' integration in the rest of the Georgian state is available, small and middle business development is not stimulated and supported, high level of migration and low level of citizens' trust towards judicial system is observed, frequent cases of dispossess and violation of human rights are still noticeable.

Considering the complexity of the above mentioned problems ISFED believes that the measures begun by the government to solve these problems will show significant results in the upcoming period.

Along with the general obstacles which might impede and have reflect on ISFED's goals and activities the organization may face other difficulties including funding, incompetent and unprofessional ISFED new district coordinators and political power's effort to persuade ISFED monitoring network to act in their support. The biggest obstacle to the organization's future work will be its image as an election-monitoring organization. SFED believes that it will be able to change this image as a result of its new projects, just as similar organizations in Southeastern Europe managed to do. Credibility of the organization should become a serious subject of ISFED's constant attention.

Even more realizing the obstacles listed above ISFED intends to contribute to the country's overall development in conjunction with other well-respected domestic NGOs and international community by developing efficient and detailed projects based on qualitative and quantitative analyses in the proposed areas and by ensuring measurable results directing to support strengthening of democracy in Georgia.

7. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

ISFED currently operates through a central office and four regional offices, where the central office staff and regional coordinators work on a daily basis. These four regional offices are responsible for the work of 75 district coordinators and 28 trainers. Overall ISFED operates through the workforce consisting of 16 employees at the central and regional offices and 75 district coordinators. The work of the organization is also supported by a network of volunteers. ISFED volunteers are the citizens from different ethnic, religious and other backgrounds; they participate in implementation of the organization's activities, especially in the organization's election monitoring missions.

ISFED has well-educated, professional and experienced employees. However, in order to accomplish the proposed goals, a set of key actions must be taken to ensure the organization's further development and sustainability.

In regard to improving human resources management field ISFED elaborated Human Resources Manual. All full-time and part-time employees should meet the requirements prescribed under HR manual. ISFED HR manual ensures efficient management and appropriate working environment aiming to result in effectiveness of organizational strategic objectives and relevant activities.

For the purpose to increase professional skills and knowledge of employees they will be involved in various training sessions, seminars and conferences as in Georgia as well abroad. In order to ensure effective and proper implementation of projects internal organizational communication will be progressed and cooperation with possible partners in strategic directions will be further developed. In a spirit of informing the public about ISFED's future role in society, the public relations component of the organization will be significantly strengthened.

Additionally ISFED intends to update the strategy to work with members and volunteers during the interim election period. To this end, in May 2007 ISFED updated and modernized ISFED membership database.

In term of management field, ISFED management system will be improved and strengthened. In April-May, 2007 ISFED amended its organizational documents including ISFED Charter, ISFED principles, organizational regulations, etc. However, in case of the necessity the structure of the organization will be evaluated and adjusted to new realities by amending different organizational governing documents.

8. ISFED OUTLINED PROJECTS

Program A. Promoting active citizenship, protection of political rights

Projects:

- Promoting citizens' political rights
- Advocate for your interests
- Supporting community mobilization and development in the regions densely populated with ethnic and other minorities
- Promoting active citizenship nationwide
- Education for democracy and tolerance
- Active Youth: action for reaction
- Supporting capacity building of civil society groups

Program B. Enhancing transparency and accountability of government

Projects:

- Citizen involvement in transparency of local public institutions
- Enhancing transparency of local public institutions
- Advocate for your interests
- Promoting constructive dialogue between citizens and local self-government officials
- Supporting capacity building to increase transparency and accountability in local self-governments
- Internship programs for local governments
- Supporting the work of majority MPs with their electorate

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY
STRATEGIC PLAN

- Internship programs for majority MP's with their constituencies
- Parliament and public: general public and expert debates
- Supporting and monitoring reform implementation in Georgia

Program C. Monitoring and improving electoral processes in Georgia, protection of electoral rights;

Projects:

- Building confidence in election process: voters' lists audit
- Free and fair elections: capacity building of domestic, non-partisan observers
- Monitoring 2008 parliamentary, presidential and Adjara Supreme Council elections
- Voter education supporting free and fair 2008 elections in Georgia
- Active and informed voter contributing to objective and legitimate 2008 elections/ Encouraging and increasing voters' turnout
- "I Vote for the First Time Workshops" for freshmen voters
- Informed political parties ensuring fair electoral procedures
- Educated media supporting objective and professional broadcasting of 2008 elections
- Bringing election legislation and administration in accordance with international standards
- Assisting with democratic elections at education and other public institutions
- Sharing experience with regional partners

Program D. Integration into international democratic institutions and supporting establishment of principles recognized by respective institutions

Projects:

- Educating general public on international democratic institutions
- Promoting cooperation with public institutions engaged in the issues concerning integration into the democratic institutions
- Supporting establishment of internationally recognized principles in the country's legislation
- Monitoring implementation of the internationally recognized conventions and treaties

Program E. ISFED organizational development

Projects:

- Enhancing ISFED capacity to effectively implement the updated strategy
- Supporting ISFED institutional development
- Developing and establishing effective communication, management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation systems

9. ISFED DONORS AND PARTNERS

The following donors have provided financial support to ISFED:

- Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);
- European Delegation to Georgia (EC);
- The United States Agency for International Development (USAID);
- National Endowment for Democracy (NED);
- British Embassy;
- The US Embassy in Georgia;
- Urban Institute;
- Eurasia Foundation;
- British Council;
- European Center for Minority Issues (ECMI) and Danish Government;
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC);
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Partner organizations are:

- National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)
- Action Contre la Faim - Espagne (ACF-E)

According to this strategic plan and the detailed projects to be developed, ISFED expects to receive donor support in the future. Currently, the organization is supported by National Endowment for Democracy (NED) through partnership with NDI, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the European Commission through partnership with Action Contre la Faim - Espagne (ACF-E).

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY
STRATEGIC PLAN

10. SHORT TERM OPERATIONAL PLAN

Donors	Partners	Project Name	Project Activities	Tentative budget	Planned date
NED/USAID	NDI	Informed citizens on Georgian legal framework, electoral process and new initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizing two Round Tables; 2. Developing and issuing 3 Newspapers; 3. Organizing public informational discussions in 75 districts; 4. Organizing radio live discussion on the most crucial issues 	40,000.00 USD	July 1, 2007 - December 31, -2007
NED	NDI	Promoting Citizens' Political Rights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conducting 60 "I Vote for the First Time" Workshops 2. Organizing and facilitating 73 Town Hall Meetings (THMs) 	70,816.00 USD	June 1, 2007 December 31, 2007
NED	NDI	I Vote for the First Time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conducting 60 "I Vote for the First Time" workshops for first and second-year students; 2. Developing and distributing "I Vote" brochures; 3. Printing and distribution of one issue of newsletter including recent election updates, electoral rights and other crucial issues 	25,000.00 USD	September 1, 2007 December 31, 2007
NED	NDI	Citizens Involvement in Transparency of Local Public Institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring the sessions of Sakrebulo in all 61 municipalities and five city districts; 2. Monitoring local governments' activities; 3. conducting 30 Public Institution Transparency Trainings (PITs); 4. Monitoring Public information Accessibility; 5. Organizing 57 Town Hall Meetings (THMs); 6. Developing and disseminating brochures "Freedom of Information" among local officials and citizens throughout Georgia; 7. Issuing and distributing ISFED newsletter comprising the monitoring results of Sakrebulo's sessions – newsletter to be distributed throughout the country 	44,855.50 USD	March 1, 2007 - June 15, 2007
UNDP		Promoting Transparency of	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring activities of local self-governments through attending Sakrebulo's sessions; 	40,000.00 USD	July 1, 2007 - November

		Local Public Institutions	2. Organizing and facilitating 70 town hall meetings (THMs) 3. conducting 25 Public Information Accessibility trainings for local self-government officials		30, 2007
US Embassy		Advocate Your Interests	1. Conducting 75 Advocacy Workshops; 2. Creating citizens' initiative groups; 3. Conducting 12 Advocacy Campaigns based on the regional centers	70, 000.00 USD	July 1, 2007 - December 31, 2007
OSCE		Building Confidence in Election Process: Voters' Lists monitoring and Audit	1. Monitoring the activities carried out by the CEC/DECs/PECs regarding voter' lists updating; Monitoring the electoral administration's door-to-door campaign	50 000. 00 USD	September 1, 2007 - December 31, 2007
		<i>II rounds</i>	2. Auditing the voters' lists throughout the country based on people-to-list and list-to-people methods	60, 000.00 EUR	March 1, 2008 - June 30, 2008
British Petroleum		Supporting capacity building of civil society groups, Promoting constructive dialogue between citizens and local self-government representatives	1. Conducting educational advocacy workshops for civil society groups in the seven districts BP operates; 2. Conducting trainings for local self-government officials on good governance and their legal responsibilities; 3. Conducting active citizenship workshops for 11 th form pupils; 4. Conducting educational workshops for local NGOs aiming to strengthen their capacity building; 5. Organizing public discussions / THMs; 6. Carrying out civic educational activities; including dissemination of flyers and brochures 7. organizing public informational kiosks, running audio clips and conducting various public actions	100,000.00 USD	July 1, 2007 - March 1, 2008
Euro		Free and Fair	1. Observers' recruitment and trainings for	50,000.00	October 1,

Commission (EC)		Elections: Capacity Building of Domestic, Non-Partisan Observers	election monitoring including LTOs and STOs	EUR	2006 - October 1, 2008
Urban Institute (UI)		Promoting citizens involvement in transparency of public institutions and decision and policy making	1. Training local residents on Public Information Accessibility and on the basis of advocacy, 2. Initiating creation of active groups of citizens, who will participate in drafting the relevant local self-government budget for 2008 and in execution of the current 2007 budget through requesting public information; 3. Developing and printing brochure including information on PI accessibility, advocacy, on techniques and methods for issue-based interaction between citizens and local officials such as town hall meetings, public hearings, office hours, telephone hotlines, citizen task forces, suggestion boxes, etc.	80,000.00 USD	August 1, 2007 - April 30, 2008
Dutch Embassy		Advocate For Your Interests (for ethnic minorities)	1. Conducting 10 advocacy workshops; 2. Supporting conduction of 10 advocacy campaigns in the areas populated with ethnic minorities (selected districts of Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo-Kartli and Adjara regions)	30 000.00 USD	September 1 - 2007 February 29, 2008
European Commission (EC)	Action Contre la Faim – Espagne (ACF-E)	Community mobilization and development in ethnic minorities region (in Tsalka and Dmanisi of Kvemo-Kartli region)	1. Developing 20 communities; 2. Conducting 80 trainings on project proposal, project management, financial management and advocacy	85,537.00 USD	March 1, 2007 October 31, 2008
OSGF		Increasing efficiency of local	1. Running assessment of local self-government officials' needs through questionnaires;	50,000.00 USD	October 1, 2007 - June

		self-government	Questionnaire results will be used for proposing recommendations to the relevant institutions for considering them while developing amendments to different Laws on Local Self-Government; 2. Based on questionnaire/assessment needs to conduct internship program for local self-government bodies		1, 2008
British Embassy		I vote for the first time (higher educational institutions)	1. Conducting 150 "I vote" workshops for freshmen students 2. Developing and distributing "I Vote" brochures; 3. Printing and distributing 2 issues of Newsletter	70 000.00 USD	January 1, 2008 - October 1, 2008
NED/USAID/ OSCE		Voter education supporting Free and Fair 2008 Elections in Georgia	1. Conducting 225 Election Educational Workshops (3 per district); 2. Developing and distributing bilingual EEW brochures; 3. Developing and disseminating 30 000 voter education flyers; 4. Developing and distributing 45 000 voter education brochures; 5. Running election education audio spots;	80, 000.00 USD	February 1, 2008 - September 1, 2008
EC		Monitoring 2008 Parliamentary and Presidential and Adjara Supreme Council elections	1. Conducting election observation mission including pre-election period, Election Day and post-election activities; 2. Conducting PVT trainings 3. Covering Georgia with PVT	110,000.00 EUR	July 1, 2008 - December 31, 2008
USAID		Active and informed voter supporting objective and legitimate conduction of 2008	1. Organizing public actions stressing the importance of one vote; 2. Conducting election educational workshops in 75 election districts; 3. Organizing 50 public stands (Twice per district with the relevant printed election educational	80,000.00 USD	June 1, 2008 - October 31, 2008

		elections (encouraging and increasing voters' turnout)	materials); 4. Organizing 10 Radio Talk Shows; 5. Running 2 Audio Clips; 6. Developing 2 Video Clips		
Canadian Embassy		Political parties ensuring fair electoral procedures	1. Conducting 75 election procedural trainings for representatives of political parties in all election districts; (Mixed groups of different political party representatives will be trained on election procedures based on non-partial principles)	20,000.00 USD	July 1, 2008 - September 1, 2008
OSGF		Educated media supporting objective and professional broadcasting of 2008 elections	1. Conducting 25 election educational trainings including education on their rights for the local media representatives covering all election districts; 2. Conducting 25 follow-up interactive workshops for educating media representatives how to determine the most crucial electoral procedures to be paid attention on; 3. Organizing seminar-workshop in Tbilisi for central media about their rights, electoral procedures and election-related main aspects	60,000.00 USD	April 1, 2008 - August 1, 2008
USAID		ISFED institutional development of for the upcoming 2008 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections	1. Conducting ISFED 2008 General Assembly; 2. Holding monthly Board Meetings; 3. Conducting internal organizational trainings/workshops; 4. Conducting ISFED capacity building seminars	35,000.00 USD	October 1, 2007 - March 31, 2008