

Zeinab Abdelkarim, IFES Regional Director, Middle East and North Africa Programs



Zeinab Abdelkarim provides technical and programmatic guidance to the International Foundation for Electoral Systems' (IFES) operations in the region. She has more than two decades of experience as a legal practitioner in the field of democratization and elections management and extensive experience working with Iraqi election leaders. As Regional Director for MENA Programs, she supported CEPPS/IFES' USAID-funded Elections Support Project in Iraq from 2011-15. As the lead expert for IFES on Middle East affairs, Abdelkarim has served as part of IFES needs assessment missions across the region to assess the prospects for open, competitive and credible elections based on input from a wide spectrum of local stakeholders. She led assessment missions to Yemen, Egypt, Libya and Tunisia in 2011. She has also authored and contributed to numerous briefing papers, publications and papers related to the electoral legal framework in the Middle East and North Africa. Abdelkarim previously served as Deputy Chief of Party for IFES' program in Yemen from 2004-2007 and as the Deputy Director for IFES' Middle East programs from 2007-2009 overseeing programmatic activities in Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Yemen and the Maghreb. Prior to IFES, Abdelkarim practiced law in Khartoum, Sudan.