

### Kenya Program Summary

Kenya's ongoing national debate regarding reforms to its constitution will address basic issues of central versus local government authority. With a push towards decentralization, it is important that government at the local levels, the municipal and county councils have the capacity to take on a larger share of responsibility for government service delivery to citizens.

Consequentially, the International Republican Institute (IRI) assists elected municipal councilors in meeting local needs and strengthening the democratic social contract between themselves and those they represent. To achieve this goal, the Institute provides Kenyan municipal councilors and employees with skills that will support democratic governance policies, practices and initiatives, increasing the level of citizen participation in decision-making processes at the local level and strengthening communication between municipal government and the public. Following success of the project in Mombasa, the Institute will replicate the activities in other municipal wards throughout Kenya.

### Democratic Governance

IRI's democratic governance program helps strengthen the skills of elected local leaders, who currently only receive a brief, three-day orientation upon being elected. To supplement elected leaders' job training, IRI has partnered with one of the nation's leading educational institutions, the Kenyan Institute of Management, to develop a 12-week course to enhance the skills of councilors, their staff and civil society. The course will cover a variety of topics – such as local government finance and accounting, local economic development and planning, and administrative law – and a certificate of completion will be awarded. IRI will also help councilors improve their constituency services and communication skills, to ensure the needs of their community are met.

Following the training sessions, IRI will conduct polling research to help councilors better gauge the needs and priorities of the community. Using scientific research methods in all four wards, the Institute will provide this information to the councilors, town clerk, and mayor's office. IRI will also provide assistance and training to local officials to develop policy priorities and strategic plans.

IRI has worked in Kenya since 1992, focusing on party agent training, polling, and strengthening parties' ability to implement legislative agendas. Since 2005, IRI has also sought to increase the participation of young members of parliament through its support for the Kenya Young Parliamentarians' Association.