

SUNY Center for International Development

Governance Information Bulletin 11

Governance, Democracy Assistance, and Public Sector Performance

Chene, M. and Hodess, R. (2009), [“U4 Expert Answer: The African Peer Review Mechanism,”](#) Transparency International and the Chr. Michelson Institute

This CMI-Transparency International helpdesk brief answers the following questions about the African Peer Review Mechanism:

1. How does the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) operate?
2. Can civil society be involved in the APRM?
3. What is published?
4. What is the process of review and how much are NGOs involved?
5. Are country visits involved?
6. How is it funded?

Kyed, H. M. and Engberg-Pedersen, L. (2008), [“Local Governance in Fragile States,”](#) Danish Institute of International Studies

Comprehensive local government reform is unrealistic in fragile states. This paper, published by the Danish Institute for International Studies, recommends using local service delivery as a point of departure for local governance reform. Strengthening local service delivery will slowly build sound local governance practices that can plant the seeds for future democratic decentralization. Ignoring non-state authorities can considerably undermine any effort to reform local governance, whereas exclusive reliance on non-state authorities in service delivery can undermine efforts to strengthen state capacity locally. Existing local governance situations include those exhibiting strong state control and those with extensive formal democratic decentralization, civil society organizations and de facto state control. There are also situations where non-state actors provide service delivery and security and where state institutions are present, but detached from, state regulations. These situations require a variety of strategies to meet the longer-term democratic local government objectives. One reform position focuses on building central state institutions as the exclusive entry point for support in fragile states. Another focuses on civil society and parallel service delivery and ignores first-phase local government institutional support. Neither directly

addresses de facto local governance situations. Emphasis on local service delivery that relies in part on non-state actors would apply to all local governance situations and establish sound reform procedures and practices.

Jackson, P. and Scott, Z. (2008), ["Local Government in Post-Conflict Environments,"](#) paper commissioned for the Workshop on Local Government in Post-Conflict Situations: Challenges for Improving Local Decision Making and Service Delivery Capacities, Oslo, Norway, 28-29 November 2007, UNDP

What role does local government (LG) play in post-conflict reconstruction? What are the key issues for LG in post-conflict contexts? This paper, published by the UNDP, argues that further research is required on the role of LG in conflict prevention, particularly on the contextual factors that enable LG to mitigate conflict. Donors should recognize the significance of LG and undertake political economy analysis to ensure that they engage with LG appropriately. LG has the potential to play either a positive or a negative role in both post-conflict reconstruction and preventing conflict. LGs can help to re-establish the presence of the state in the regions and respond more effectively to local conditions. LG is particularly important in post-conflict contexts, as peace often comes unevenly to different regions of a country. LG can help prevent conflict by managing inter-group tensions, increasing representation and participation, and improving service delivery. Conversely, it can also exacerbate conflict, since ineffective, corrupt and partisan local political institutions cause frustration, resentment and feelings of exclusion. Donors should not focus exclusively on central government in post-conflict contexts. While working with LG presents additional challenges, the strength of the central and the local are interdependent.

Lopez-Pintor, R. (2009) ["Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance,"](#) UNDP

Electoral systems are the primary vehicle for choice and representational governance, the basic foundation for democratization. These systems must provide opportunities for all, including the most disadvantaged, to participate in and influence government policy and practice. Effective management of electoral systems requires institutions that are inclusive, sustainable, just and independent– which includes in particular electoral management bodies that have the legitimacy to enforce rules and assure fairness with the cooperation of political parties and citizens. This paper focuses on the institutional dimensions of strengthening electoral systems, and addresses issues related to electoral management bodies as institutions of governance. Through a taxonomy that classifies 148 countries according to the type of electoral administration, it argues that electoral management bodies worldwide are increasingly both permanent and independent of the executive and this type of structure proves more cost-effective than *ad hoc* or temporary electoral bodies. Special attention is placed on the role and challenges of electoral management bodies in "third wave" democracies *vis a vis* the experience in older and more established democracies. As the study points out, electoral

management is a relatively new field of study, especially as it relates to democratization in new, post-conflict, and emerging democracies. This study aims to make a positive contribution toward the impressive ongoing work of specialized electoral organizations, national commissions, civil society, and development partners.

ICT for Development and Governance - *New Section!*

Heeks, R. (2009), [“The ICT4D 2.0 Manifesto: Where Next for ICTs and International Development?”](#) Center for Development Policy and Management at the University of Manchester

ICT4D – the application of information and communication technologies for international development – is moving to a new phase. This will require new technologies, new approaches to innovation and implementation, new intellectual perspectives and, above all, a new view of the world's poor. All these must be understood if we are to harness digital technologies in the service of some of our world's most pressing problems. This paper explains the phase change – from "ICT4D 1.0" to "ICT4D 2.0" – and its implications. The background to these phases is reviewed, charting the logic and chronology of applying ICTs in developing countries. The implications of the phase change are then analyzed; first, in terms of new technology and application priorities; then in relation to new models of innovation we may need to embrace: from laboratory to collaborative to grassroots innovation; and finally, in relation to new implementation models for funding, managing, and applying digital technology. The paper looks at necessary new worldviews to guide our thinking and our policies in this field; integrating perspectives from computer science, information systems and development studies. Additional commentaries and models provide a further set of rich insights into the future of ICT4D.

Eastern Europe

O’Brian, J. (2009) [“A New Agenda for Bosnia and Herzegovina,”](#) United States Institute of Peace, August 2009

As concerns grow about Bosnia's post-war recovery, USIP presents its fourth report on recent developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and various options the U.S. government, Europe and Bosnia could pursue to prevent a return to violence there. In his paper, author Jim O'Brien, who served as the presidential envoy for the Balkans in the 1990s, cautions against taking a big initiative in Bosnia to head off a future crisis, but rather advocates taking on many, smaller battles that will ultimately align Bosnia closer to the European Union. He proposes a two-part strategy: first, Bosnia should strip political parties of their ethnic, nationalist appeal, and second, the international community should speed up the European Union accession process for the Balkans region overall.

Southern Africa

Williams G., Duncan A., Landell-Mills P., Unsworth, S., and Sheehy, T. (2009), [“Carrying out a Joint Governance Assessment: Lessons from Rwanda,”](#) The Policy Practice

A Joint Governance Assessment (JGA) aims to bring government and development partners together to review governance performance based on commonly agreed indicators. This brief from The Policy Practice recommends that such an assessment can prove to be helpful to advancing dialogue, but is likely to be a long-term and difficult process that is only suited to particular circumstances where the process can address joint concerns of government and donors. The model of a joint governance assessment has attracted interest as an alternative to conventional practice where donors have undertaken separate assessments with little or no government involvement. The Rwanda JGA has been recognized as an improvement on previous processes for governance dialogue and assessment, despite challenges. A JGA can set out a common framework for analysis, provide a forum for the discussion of the evidence base, bring about a meeting of minds on difficult issues, and establish a framework for ongoing monitoring. Appropriate goals include; reducing duplication of effort, fragmentation of knowledge, uncoordinated action and high transactions costs (consistent with Paris Declaration principles); testing the evidence basis for assessments, identifying and resolving misunderstandings and misinformation, and promoting better understanding of country specific considerations; reducing donor-induced reform overload, and facilitating greater realism about the possible scope and pace of change; identifying areas of overlap between the interests of donors and government; providing a formal channel for communication through which governance issues can be collectively raised by donors; and building mutual accountability around a joint framework for performance assessment as a means to increase aid predictability and reduce aid volatility

South and Central Asia

Wadsworth, A. (2007) [“A Matter of Interests: Gender and the Politics of Presence in Afghanistan’s Wolesi Jirga,”](#) Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit

This paper contends that, in spite of women’s sizable presence in Afghanistan’s *Wolesi Jirga*, the representation of women’s gender interests remains minimal. This is not to say that their political influence has not increased over the last eighteen months, but instead that women have not generally used this newfound influence to promote their gendered interests. This report addresses the reasons why this is the case, and suggests ways in which these interests might be more substantively raised in the future.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Peñailillo López, M.A. (2009) "[How prepared are we to assess real implementation of anti corruption conventions? Lessons from the Americas,](#)" U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre

This U4 Issue paper analyses the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (IACAC) review mechanism and identifies strengths and weaknesses in generating legal and performance related information about the implementation of the convention. Special emphasis is given to the development of an indicator map to assess some key areas of IACAC implementation in Guatemala. The paper argues that strengthening national information systems and information management capacities can generate more objective knowledge about the progress of anti-corruption reforms. Performance indicators, in particular, are necessary for meaningful assessments of, and debates about, the status of a convention's implementation within a particular country.

Middle East and North Africa

Saleh, I. (2009), "[The Trauma of Civil Society in the Middle East and Africa,](#)" *International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law*, August 2009

Civil Society in the Middle East and North Africa is strictly constrained by government policies and practices that restrict freedom of expression. The government often controls the media to avoid political dissent, which means that discussions and initiatives leading to a policy reform are rare. An effective civil society is important in the process of democratization in the Middle East and Northern Africa. Veteran political activists and NGOs in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) express concern over the future of civil liberties. There is consensus that the region is currently witnessing a genuine crisis as a result of recent government efforts to crush political dissent in Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Tunisia, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Iran. Many in the development field believe that civil society is the key to effective defense of civil liberties, and they are disheartened by civil society in the MENA countries because it seems to be characterized by only weak and uncoordinated NGOs. However, occasional outbursts of public opposition to oppression and the increasing strength of radical religious organizations demonstrate that civil society in the MENA countries has deep potential for promoting change. The potential of civil society is strictly constrained by government policies and practices that restrict expression and alienate Arab publics from government, the media, the international community, and each other. To resolve the crisis and prevent violent responses to government oppression, governments will need legal reform that enables expression in the media and the public.

Interesting Development Blogs

[The Discomfort Zone](#)

The Discomfort Zone is a magazine-style blog presenting critical opinion and analysis on issues pertinent to the developing world and to international development. It brings forth a global perspective to question the policy and practice of development.