

SUNY Center for International Development

Governance Information Bulletin 7

Governance, Democracy Assistance, and Public Sector Performance

The Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC) just released an excellent new gateway guide to monitoring and evaluation. It is designed to point readers to the most useful, credible and up-to-date internet resources on monitoring and evaluation in a development context. You can access it [here](#).

Born, H., Fluri, P. and Johnson, A. (2003) ["Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Principles, Mechanisms and Practices,"](#) Inter-Parliamentary Union and Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces

Why is parliamentary oversight of the security sector necessary? What is the role of parliament and how is it best performed? This handbook by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) provides a comprehensive picture of current security issues and deals exhaustively with all aspects of parliamentary oversight of the security sector.

Eberlei, W. and Henn, H. (2003) ["Parliaments in Sub-Saharan Africa: Actors in Poverty Reduction?"](#) GTZ

How have Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) processes affected the status of parliaments in national policy making? This report by GTZ explores a claim that the implementation of PRS has further contributed to the erosion of parliamentary authority through international development cooperation: As the traditional focus of Technical Cooperation are national, regional and local governments and its agencies (later joined by non-state actors, NGOs and community-based organisations), parliaments have only in exceptional circumstances been the centre of TC measures. It looks for methods and instruments that could be used to improve international and, more specifically, donor-related framework conditions for parliaments. It investigates the role played by parliaments during PRS implementation in 28 African states. It recommends that donors address the legal and political conditions of legislatures, the functional capacity of parliaments, their interaction with other actors, and the international donor policy environment.

GSDRC, (2008) "[Gender Equality in Parliamentary Strengthening and Electoral Support](#)," Helpdesk Research Report, GSDRC

This report presents a useful survey of the literature on gender equality in parliamentary strengthening and electoral support. It examines gender in electoral support through a survey of: the legal framework, electoral management bodies, political parties, voter registration, civic education, electoral campaigns, polling, counting and monitoring. It notes that women make up only 17.2 per cent of MPs in national legislatures and reviews the following common obstacles: lack of political party support, lack of support networks between women MPs and other public organizations, persistent dominance of male-oriented norms and structures, insufficient media support, absence of leadership training and education for women, electoral system not conducive to women's participation and absence of quota reservations.

"[The Political Economy of Policy Reform: Issues and Implications for Policy Dialogue and Development Operations](#)." Social Development Department, The World Bank. June 2008.

This study addresses the political economy of sector reforms through the analysis of case studies of World Bank engagement in two areas: agricultural marketing, and water supply and sanitation. Sustainable reform processes which improve equity, efficiency and effectiveness in key economic and social sectors are often important elements of national poverty reduction strategies in low and middle-income countries. For international development agencies wishing to engage in these processes, understanding the significance of power relations within the sector, vested interests, and the links to national political processes can be critical to being an effective actor in policy dialogue. It explores stakeholder interests, incentives, institutions, risks, opportunities, and processes from a social analysis perspective; and goes on to illustrate "what works, why and how" for a better understanding and management of political economy issues in the design and implementation of reforms and development operations. It is based on a combination of document-based case studies, literature review, interviews with key informants among World Bank task team leaders and sector specialists, and public consultations with representatives of the public and private sector, research organizations, and multilateral and bilateral development agencies.

O'Neill, T., Foresti, M. and Hudson, A. (2007) "[Evaluation of Citizens' Voice and Accountability: Review of the Literature and Donor Approaches](#)." DFID.

How can the effectiveness of voice and accountability interventions be assessed? This paper from the Department for International Development (DFID) reviews the strategy and policy documents of seven DAC donors in order to contribute to the design of a V&A evaluation framework. Donors need to give higher priority to evaluation research and

the development of performance measures to generate more systematic evidence about the effectiveness of their activities. Enhancing citizen voice and accountability has become increasingly important for donors since the 1990s and will remain part of donor strategies for the foreseeable future. However, donors have not yet fully grappled with their understanding of the underlying causes of poor governance in different countries or with different trajectories of change. This paper argues that there has been little progress with establishing frameworks that relate voice and accountability to context and explains why.

Leftwich, A. (2007) "[The Political Approach to Institutional Formation, Maintenance and Change: A Literature Review Essay](#)", Research Consortium on Improving Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth

What are the political circumstances, power dynamics, and institutional conditions that promote pro-poor growth? This literature review for the Research Consortium on Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth argues that politics, rather than economics, are the primary factors in shaping state institutions. Because donors are sensitive to political issues, they are reluctant to bring politics into policy debate. Economists have dominated policy-making and political scientists have until recently been more concerned with macro issues as opposed to institutions. There has been little research to date on the application of institutional theory to the politics of development in developing countries. However, there are strong arguments and evidence that political factors determine state and institutional behavior and, therefore, development and pro-poor outcomes. Recently, governments in Botswana, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand have demonstrated that building the institutions that constitute an effective state is a political rather than a technical exercise. This review summarizes the key factors in the formation of pro-growth state institutions in each of these countries.

Hyden, G. "[After the Paris Declaration: Taking on the Issue of Power](#)" *Development Policy Review*, 2008, 26 (3): 259-274

The new approach to assisting developing countries inspired by the Paris Declaration emphasizes greater recipient control over the funds provided, thus confining donors' influence to upstream points in the policy process, where political aspects of development co-operation become more important. A better understanding of the role that power plays in the aid relationship is critical to the implementation of the Declaration. This article shows how literature from political science can inform this set of issues, and in understanding challenges in transforming relations between donors and recipient governments as well as between governments and civil society organizations.

Central and South Asia

International Crisis Group, [“Afghanistan’s Election Challenges,”](#) International Crisis Group, June 2009

Afghanistan’s forthcoming elections for president and provincial councils on 20 August 2009, and for the National Assembly and districts scheduled for 2010, present a formidable challenge if they are to produce widely accepted and credible results. The weakness of state institutions, the deteriorating security situation and the fractured political scene are all highlighted by – and will likely have a dramatic effect on – the electoral process. The years since the last poll saw the Afghan government and international community fail to embed a robust electoral framework and drive democratization at all levels. This has made holding truly meaningful elections much more difficult. Rather than once again running the polls merely as distinct events, the enormous resources and attention focused on the elections should be channeled into strengthening political and electoral institutions, as a key part of the state-building efforts required to produce a stable country. This recently-released Crisis Group report analyses the challenges facing Afghanistan in the upcoming election and makes recommendations to all stake-holders.

Eastern Europe

Anes Alic, [“The OHR's Valentin Inzko abolishes a Bosnian Serb declaration and the curtains begin to draw on the country’s EU bid,”](#) ISN Security Watch, June 2009

After more than three years, the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted a tough stance against Bosnian nationalist leaders by using its sweeping powers to intervene and overrule a Bosnian Serb parliamentary declaration that challenged its authority. This short piece summarizes the different approaches of previous High Representatives and their effectiveness as a means of understanding why current High Representative Valentin Inzko may, based on his decision to use the Bonn Powers in June of 2009 to overrule a declaration of the RS Assembly, be a more assertive High Representative than his two immediate predecessors. The piece argues that; “For now, it’s a stalemate, especially in terms of Bosnia’s bid to join the EU. It is clear that Bosnia cannot hope to join the EU with the OHR running the all major reforms in the country. But the sad fact is, without the international community’s arm twisting, and decisions like Inzko’s, local politicians would lead the country into further regress and the EU would remain a very distant goal.”

Africa

Fagnäs, S. and Roberts, J., 2004, ["Fiscal Impact of Aid: A Survey of Issues and Synthesis of Country Studies of Malawi, Uganda and Zambia,"](#) Working Paper 11, Economics and Statistics Analysis Unit, Overseas Development Institute

What is the fiscal impact of aid? This working paper from the Overseas Development Institutes Economic and Statistics Analysis Unit (ESAU) considers aid effectiveness and the absorption of aid into the economies of recipient countries. It is based on fiscal impact case studies of Malawi, Uganda and Zambia, and a review of the literature on the fiscal impact of aid. There are conclusions about the contribution of aid to development, the budget processes through which aid is absorbed and the methodologies used in fiscal impact studies.

Rakner, L., Mukubvu, L., Ngwira, N., and Smiddy, K., 2004, ["The Budget as Theatre- The Formal and Informal Institutional Makings of the Budget Process in Malawi"](#) Paper presented to Centre for Aid and Public Expenditure Seminar, Overseas Development Institute. Available through the Chr. Michelson Institute.

What can explain the apparent lack of political will to formulate, implement and monitor the budget process and public financial management in accordance with the overall goals of the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy? The authors carried out interviews with sixty-two stakeholders in the budget process from government, civil society and the donor community in March 2004. The study addresses the process of planning and formulation of the budget through its implementation and oversight, and finds that the budget process in Malawi develops no realistic estimate of revenue or spending and is a Geertzian process of theatre that masks real distribution and spending.

Castijello, C. (2009) ["Women's Political Participation and Influence in Sierra Leone,"](#) Working Paper, FRIDE

Sierra Leone presents an interesting case of both the opportunities and challenges in strengthening women's political participation in contexts of state building. This Working Paper explores the extent to which women in post-conflict Sierra Leone are able to participate in politics, the barriers that they face in doing this, and the outcomes of increased female political participation. It examines the policy framework and international support for women's participation and makes recommendations on how Sierra Leone's donors can more effectively support women's involvement in politics.

PREMNote 121: ["Information Access, Governance, and Service Delivery in Key Sectors: Themes and Lessons from Kenya and Ethiopia."](#) PREM Notes on Governance & Public Sector Reform. The World Bank. July 2008.

This short and useful note explores how access to information affects public service delivery in four sectors: health, education, water, and sanitation in Ethiopia and Kenya. The authors find that governing officials' control information, a lack of trust or

social capital between service providers and recipients, and technical issues related to the inability of citizens to gain or understand information related to services. It concludes with recommendations on how to improve information access to service recipients.

Middle East and North Africa

Stefan Lindemann. "[Addressing the need for water service delivery in fragile states: The case of German donor involvement in Yemen.](#)" Presented at the November 2006 Berlin Conference on the Human Dimension of Global Environmental Change. Commissioned by GTZ.

This paper searches for lessons in service delivery through an examination of German development efforts in improving access to water in Yemen. It documents the creation of a multi-level strategy in support of service sector reform at the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels of governance and service delivery. It sums up lessons learned by returning to a focus on context, participation, the importance of meeting local expectations and priorities, and donor coordination.

Aftandilian, G. (2009) "[Looking Forward: An Integrated Strategy for Supporting Human Rights and Democracy in Egypt,](#)" POMED

This paper from the Project on Middle East Democracy [POMED] was meant to greet the incoming Obama administration. POMED convened a series of roundtable discussions in Washington among leading American, Egyptian, and European policy experts, advocates, and analysts to explore ideas for a new policy approach to Egypt. It proposed a strategy for supporting Egyptian democracy through a variety of policy instruments.