

Guidebook on Strengthening the Representative Capacity of Legislatures

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“Strengthening the Legislature – Challenges and Techniques”
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Guidebook on Strengthening the Representative Capacity of Legislatures

I. REPRESENTATION AND LEGISLATURES

In many countries, weakness in the representative capacity of the legislature poses a significant threat to democratic advancement. For example, a recent regional opinion poll shows a sharp and broad-based decline in support for democracy within Latin America.¹ Although part of the decline is attributable to weakened economic conditions and a willingness to attribute poor economic performance to the type of regime, it is also clear that there is a growing lack of confidence in representative institutions. In the Latinobarometro poll, only roughly 25% of survey respondents had “a lot” or “some” confidence in the national legislature. Confidence in political parties was even lower, at less than 20%. The relative lack of confidence in the political institutions that act as intermediaries between citizen concerns and government policy – legislatures and political parties – suggest a strong disconnect between representative institutions and their constituents. Similar data and anecdotal evidence can be found in other regions.

Citizens in new democracies want to exercise democratic freedoms by engaging with elected representatives to improve the quality of life in their country. When opportunities for this engagement do not exist or are ineffective in changing government policy, support for democracy is eroded. In extreme cases, where individuals or groups within a society feel that governmental institutions do not represent them, there is the risk that these individuals or groups will resort to extra-legal mechanisms in order to have their voices heard.

This paper is intended as a practical guide for those designing programs to strengthen the representative capacity of legislatures in emerging democracies. It takes a broad, process-oriented approach to representation – viewing the representative capacity of a legislature in terms of the quality and quantity of the interactions between the citizens and their representatives.² This representation may take place in a variety of contexts. Often, representation involves the incorporation of public input into the law-making or oversight functions of legislature; “representative capacity” in this case refers to the capacity of legislatures to obtain quality public input and effectively incorporate this input into its legislative and oversight processes. However, representation also encompasses “constituent relations” and “constituency casework” that is not directly linked to legislative or oversight

¹“The Latinobarometro [Poll](#): An Alarm Call for Latin America’s Democrats,” [The Economist](#), July 26, 2001.

²The diversity of legislative systems is reflected in a diversity of nomenclature. Generally, the paper uses the term *representative* as a generic term intended to cover *members of parliament (MP)*, *legislators*, *deputies*, *members of Congress*, etc. Similarly, the term *legislature* is used as a generic term covering national representative institutions, including *parliaments*, *congresses* and *assemblies* in both parliamentary and presidential systems.

activities. Citizens often seek the assistance of their representatives in answering questions about government policy or programs, or in redressing perceived grievances against the government. Here, representative capacity refers to whether representatives have the incentives and the skills to resolve these issues appropriately, and whether citizens seek the involvement of representatives in appropriate cases. Representation also includes other activities that connect the representative with the people he or she represents – speaking at the dedication of a new building, presiding at a local festival, or attending the funeral of a prominent constituent. The quantity and quality of interaction between constituents and their representatives is also impacted by the degree to which the representatives reflect the demographic characteristics of their constituents, i.e., whether women and various ethnic groups are sufficiently represented as legislators.

Although the focus of representation is often on communication *from* citizens and civil society *to* their representatives, the reverse is equally important. Building a strong representative institution requires representatives to take an active role in advocating for democratic government. Representatives need to educate constituents about the democratic process, about the constraints on government policy, and about competing policy concerns that influence government action. Unless legislators explain to their constituencies why the legislature took the actions that it did, any divergence between an individual constituent's interests and a legislature's action may be seen by the constituent as a lack of representativeness – even if the legislature functioned effectively to balance competing societal interests.

Section II of this paper surveys the various program options that exist for strengthening the representative capacity of legislatures and discusses some of the practical issues associated with these options. This discussion is divided into three components: the capacity of representatives to engage constituents; the capacity of constituents to engage their representatives; and the legal and political framework within which this engagement takes place. It is important to consider the interaction and balance among these three components. If civil society's capacity to advocate for legislative action vastly exceeds the legislature's capacity to effectively absorb and balance this input and to communicate the rationale for its decision-making back to civil society and citizens, political instability may result. Similarly, if only certain segments of the population have the capacity to effectively interact with their representatives, the representativeness of the legislature will remain limited, regardless of the amount of outside assistance that is provided to strengthen the legislative institution. Finally, if constraints on representation are based in the legal and political framework, strengthening the internal representative capacity of the legislature is unlikely to improve representation until these constraints are addressed.

Section III focuses on the practical issues associated with implementing programming to strengthen representative capacity of legislatures, highlighting some of the most common issues encountered in these types of programs, such as executive resistance to enhancing the representative capacity of legislatures, allegations of political bias, and resource limitations and concerns about sustainability. Section IV examines issues relating to assessment, performance monitoring and evaluation. The paper contains several appendices, including a summary description of some of the main impacts of governance and electoral systems on

representation, an outline of questions to consider in assessing representative capacity and a list of additional resources.

Legislatures and the Subversion of Representation

Given the representative role that legislatures play in democracies, undemocratic regimes often use the legislative form to cloak undemocratic practices. The appearance of collective decision-making and voting lends an air of legitimacy, even if the parliament may be relegated to “rubber stamping” government policy with no real debate or review. To take an extreme case, in apartheid-era South Africa, the nationalist government in the 1970s created a third house of Parliament for certain citizens of color, while still prohibiting the vast majority of South Africans from political participation. Although this action gave certain people limited representation, its purpose was also to give greater legitimacy to a system that was still fundamentally undemocratic and unrepresentative. In many transitional democracies, the situation may be less clear. Often the executive’s control over the legislature is exercised subtly or sporadically, but is still strong enough to draw into question the democratic legitimacy of the institution. Obviously, donors need to carefully assess the provision of assistance to legislatures in these situations, considering not only whether the assistance is likely to have a meaningful impact, but also the fact that the mere provision of international assistance may give further legitimacy to an undemocratic institution.

This issue can be especially difficult when the democratic environment erodes significantly over the course of an on-going legislative strengthening program. At what point is continued assistance ineffective? The fallacy of sunk costs may make a donor or implementer reluctant to discontinue a project after having already invested significant resources in the legislature. There is a natural tendency for project standards and assumptions to erode along with the democratic environment. In countries where democratic backsliding may occur, it is often helpful to specify critical assumptions in the original program design, which would trigger a reevaluation of the program if they no longer continue to be met. It may also be appropriate to provide for more rigorous performance monitoring or evaluation in these situations, in order to ensure that continued expenditures on a program remain warranted.

II. PROGRAM OPTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING REPRESENTATION

This section of the paper covers various program options for strengthening the representative capacity of legislatures, which are outlined in the following table:

Table I: Options for Strengthening the Representative Capacity of Legislatures

Targeted Areas	Program Focus	Partners/Beneficiaries
The Legal and Political Framework	Constitutional or Electoral System Reform	Constitutional Commission, Electoral Commission, relevant legislative committees, interest groups and civil society organizations
	Public Integrity and Transparency	Legislature, political parties, interest groups, government ministries and agencies
Internal Capacity (The Capacity of the Representatives)	Committees and Public Hearings	Representatives (especially committee chairpersons), committee staff, public information staff
	Legislative Procedure	Presiding officers, rules committee, chief clerks, senior legislative staff
	Constituency Relations	Representatives, individual member staff, political party staff
	Public Information and Access	Leadership, representatives, public information staff
	Information Technology	Representatives, legislative staff, outside vendors, government agencies
	Political Parties and Caucuses	Representatives (especially party whips), political party staff, caucus staff
External Capacity (The Capacity of the Represented)	Civic Education and Citizen Participation	Citizens, Ministry of Education, legislative public information staff
	Civil Society Advocacy	Interest or pressure groups, trade associations, legislative watchdog groups, other civil society organizations
	Media Strengthening	Journalists, press associations, press offices of legislatures

A. The Legal and Political Framework

Representation occurs within a specific legal and political context, which can either encourage or constrain legislative representation. New democracies emerging from authoritarian regimes often inherit a legal structure that was not designed to encourage public involvement or participation in the legislative process. Although certain basic constitutional and electoral reforms typically occur as part of an initial transition to democracy, reform of other aspects of the legal framework governing representation may lag behind. Laws to promote transparency, such as freedom of information laws and sunshine laws, may not be the highest priority in the initial stage of a democratic transition. Other aspects of the legal and political framework governing representation continue to present challenges even in the most developed democracies – such as campaign finance and political party funding reform, or legal reforms to promote representation of women and minority groups.

Even where legal and political reform is not a focus of program activity, it is important to understand this framework in a given country because of its implications on strategy for increasing the representative capacity of the legislature. Governance and electoral systems clearly affect the mechanics of representation; these impacts are summarized, in very general terms, in Appendix I.

In electoral systems using proportional representation and a national list, there is less of a direct connection between a constituent and his or her representative than in proportional representation systems involving sub-national, multi-member districts or in single member majoritarian electoral systems. Representatives wishing to remain candidates on national party lists have strong incentives to satisfy internal party constituencies, rather than a particular geographic constituency. As a result, programs intended to strengthen representation in proportional representation systems often need to focus on strengthening internal party mechanisms to promote representation. In majoritarian electoral systems with distinct geographic constituencies, citizens and interest groups from a representative's "home" constituency often have a very strong influence on members.

The level of party discipline – typically stronger in parliamentary systems than presidential systems – also affects how and where representatives "represent" their constituencies. Because of the difficulty of voting against the party in parliamentary systems, it becomes more important for representatives to represent their constituents within the party, as the party formulates its policy positions. In presidential systems, where party discipline is generally weaker than in parliamentary systems, legislative representatives have more latitude to directly represent constituent interests in their voting behavior in committee and plenary sessions.

Constitutional and Electoral System Reform

In countries undergoing constitutional or electoral reform, it may be appropriate to provide civic education on how particular reforms may impact the representative capacity of the legislature. Even where a constitutional or electoral reform process is not underway, this type of assistance may also be appropriate in countries where constitutional or electoral law serves as a significant constraint to strengthened representation. Some potential partners include constitutional reform or electoral commissions, legislative committees with a constitutional or electoral reform mandate, political parties, or civil society groups interested in reform:

- Promotion of Informed Debate. Support programs can take advantage of lessons learned around the globe by promoting access to comparative experiences through study missions, exchanges and international comparative information or research.
- Support for Grassroots Participation. Popular ownership of the constitutional reform process helps strengthen democratic culture and encourages representative processes over the long-term. Support for civic education, public hearings and other participation-related activities helps to build a sense of public ownership of the reform process.
- Provision of Technical Assistance. Constitutional experts from established democracies as well as countries with recent reform experience can offer guidance and assist in drafting, reviewing or recommending amendments.
- Collaborations Between Government and Civil Society. Joint initiatives between government and civil society help create a perception of transparency and openness around any constitutional review project.

In addition to providing assistance to infuse the constitutional or electoral reform process with information on the representational implications of different governance and electoral systems, there are a number of specific constitutional and electoral issues that are particularly relevant to increasing legislative representational capacity:

- Protections for Political Expression. Obviously, in order for a legislature to effectively represent its constituents, there must be basic minimum protections for citizens to engage in political expression – guarantees for freedom of the press, and freedoms of speech, association and assembly. Often, constitutions will include additional protections for the political expression of legislators by providing legislative immunity for statements made in the course of their duties as a member of the legislature. In countries where political expression is severely constrained, other programs to strengthen legislative representative capacity may be limited until these threshold issues are addressed.

- The Use of Group Representation Constituencies. Many countries have special provisions in the constitution or in electoral laws that promote representation of historically underrepresented groups or where there are strong religious or ethnic differences. For example, in Singapore, the constitution allows for *group representation constituencies* to “ensure the representation in Parliament of Members of the Malay, Indian and other minority communities.” Of the 24 constituencies in Singapore’s current unicameral parliament, 15 are group representation constituencies. The Palestinian Legislative Council has a number of seats allocated to the Christian minority. However, the promotion of these types of mechanisms should be carefully considered, so that the provisions do not further entrench ethnic or religious divisions.
- Parity Laws and Quotas for Women Candidates. Worldwide, percentages of women elected to office continue to lag far behind their representation in the general population. A number of countries have adopted laws to require a specified percentage of women on party lists. For example, France, which has traditionally had the lowest percentage of women in the parliament among the countries of the European Union, has adopted a parity law that, subject to a number of exceptions and qualifications, generally requires 50% women on electoral lists for certain local and parliamentary elections. The Ugandan Constitution requires that at least one woman be elected from every electoral district.

Public Integrity and Transparency

Effective representation must take place in an environment that ensures transparency and accountability. Corruption, whether by individual representatives or their political parties, distorts representation by providing incentives for representatives to act other than on the basis of legitimately expressed constituent concerns and erodes confidence in the political system. When citizens believe that the legislative process lacks integrity, they are less motivated to engage their representatives through legitimate mechanisms, believing that these mechanisms are unlikely to affect policy outcomes.

Before engaging in a more traditional program to strengthen the representational capacity of a legislature, it is important to assess both real and perceived levels of corruption in the legislature, and/or whether there is political will to address it. In countries where the legislature lacks integrity and there is a lack of political will by leadership to address the situation, programming to build the internal capacity of the legislature (public outreach, committee hearings, etc.) is often ineffective. Worse, such programming may provide representatives and staff with skills to hide corrupt practices under a veneer of formal mechanisms that give the appearance of representation.

Where there appears to be genuine political will for reform, technical assistance on legislative codes of conduct may be appropriate. Where this political will does not exist, a focus on the external mechanisms for strengthened representation is generally more effective. Often, a focus on legislative advocacy on public integrity issues can not only lead to improvements in the legal and political framework, but also to the increased capacity of civil society to engage political leaders on policy issues.

The following common program options can significantly strengthen the representative capacity of legislatures:

- Legislative Codes of Ethics. Where corruption is not widely tolerated but is a problem with certain individual representatives, technical assistance for the development of a legislative code of ethics may be extremely appropriate. Codes typically govern issues such as conflict of interest, financial disclosure, post-employment restrictions and acceptance of gifts. Support for the development of ethical requirements for staff may include, depending on the position, requirements for nonpartisanship and confidentiality.

Where corruption is widely tolerated and potential mechanisms for enforcement are limited, support for work on codes of ethics may have limited value. It may instead make sense to focus initially on public awareness and on civil society advocacy. If a code of ethics has already been enacted, but is not consistently enforced, program options may include: support for the administrative enforcement structures; training for members and staff regarding the ethics provisions; developing a system to obtain confidential advice regarding ethics issues; support for establishing a legislative ethics or disciplinary committee, support for outside watchdog groups; and technical assistance in amending these laws to facilitate enforcement.

- Political Party Reform. Often, distortions in representation occur not as a result of sporadic corruption by individual MPs, but rather through institutionalized patterns of influence buying within political party structures. Program options include support for reforming the legal framework that governs political party or campaign finance, often including greater public funding of political parties in return for enactment of enforceable limitations on spending or contributions. Other program options include work directly with political parties to support internal party reform. One of the key issues affecting representation is the transparency and democracy of the party candidate selection process; if parties select candidates for legislative office through processes that lack transparency and internal democracy, the legislature's representative capacity is likely to remain limited.
- Legislative Access and Transparency. Freedom of information and open meetings laws are important components of a transparent legal framework that encourages strong representation. It is important to note that there are legitimate reasons for limiting transparency of certain aspects of the legislative process. In a number of developed democracies, legislative committees are closed to the public in order to provide a private forum that encourages representatives from different political parties to negotiate and compromise. Similarly, in presidential systems where individual

representatives often originate legislation, initial drafts of legislation may be exempt from freedom of information laws, in order to allow legislators the opportunity to develop innovative and creative political compromises in private. However, limitations need to be narrowly crafted, without limiting the accountability of members to their constituents for particular votes or actions. Often, the sharing of comparative experience is helpful in striking the appropriate balance.

B. Internal Capacity (The Capacity of the Representatives)

Although a well-conceived legal and political framework can encourage effective representation, legislatures also need the human and financial resources necessary to support the representative function. In legislatures lacking traditions of effective representation, new representatives often require training and skills development on constituent and media relations in order to effectively represent their constituents. Where citizens are actively engaged in the legislative process, even the most skilled members are unlikely to be able to respond to all constituent needs without additional staff to support their efforts. In order to meet the needs of constituencies outside of the capital, legislatures may need to support significant travel allowances for members. They may also need to support a district office structure to assist members in conducting constituent service. In addition to the individual member staff, centralized staff is needed to support general public information and legislative outreach activities. Caucus and party staff are needed to translate constituent concerns into a party platform, and to translate this party platform into a legislative agenda.

In addition, procedural mechanisms are needed to provide opportunities for public input and comment on legislation – typically through committee structures. Plenary sessions should provide opportunities for representatives to express issues of particular concern to their constituencies. In terms of physical infrastructure, legislatures must provide members and staff with basic office and communications support in order to effectively produce letters to constituents, press releases, public information documents, etc. Increasingly, legislatures maintain websites to disseminate information about legislative initiatives to civil society and citizens who have access to the internet.

Too often, developing legislatures do not have these resources or this infrastructure to support representation; assistance is often needed in the following program areas:

Committees and Public Hearings

Legislative committees, particularly those that make use of public hearings, are perhaps the most important channel of representation inside a legislature. Committees offer specialized attention to legislation and policy and this specialization allows legislatures to address a broader range of issues that are important to constituents. The more informal settings of committees tend to allow for policy exchanges and debate in an atmosphere less constrained by party discipline.

Public Hearing Training in Ghana

In response to Ghanaian legislators' interest in improving their ability to research, draft, and amend legislation and to be more responsive to their constituents, a three-day workshop was held on obtaining public input for legislation. The training was conducted outside of the capital to minimize distractions and interruptions, and involved members of parliament from Ireland and South Africa, a former member of the U.S. Congress, and a U.S. state legislative bill drafter. In addition to more traditional presentations and question and answer periods, the training involved simulated hearings on a mock bill on solid waste disposal, an issue of considerable concern in Ghana.

The simulated hearing sought to orient members to the use of the committee hearing as a means for information gathering from their constituents and to build skills in preparing for hearings, questioning witnesses, and seeking relevant information. All participants were provided with an abbreviated version of the mock bill, and the group was divided into committee members, NGO and civil society witnesses, and informal observers and advisors. The trainers helped the "committee members" develop questions for witnesses and focus on material needed for the simulated hearing. "Witnesses" were provided with short prepared statements that highlighted the positions of Ghanaian NGOs. "Committee members" asked pointed and relevant questions covering the multifaceted policy implications of the bill and "witnesses" successfully challenged the committee to take their views into account with concise and persuasive testimony. The simulated hearing was effective on a number of levels – it allowed members to apply the concepts discussed and presented during the plenary sessions and in the general discussion. Simulations do, however, require a great deal of advance preparation, and participants must be well briefed on both the material to be covered in the simulations, as well as the purpose of the simulation.

Committee development is a common component of many legislative strengthening programs. Program options that are particularly important for increasing representational capacity include the following:

- Support for Public Hearings. In some countries, there may be procedural limitations on the use of public hearings; in these cases, assistance may need to focus on the provision of comparative information on public hearings and on support for legislative rule reform. In other countries, the limited use of public hearings may be a result of a lack of experience. Where a legislature's experience with public hearings has been limited, study tours for committee members can be extremely useful in helping members develop a mental image of how public hearings should work. Even where a legislature has had experience in holding public hearings, representatives and staff members are likely to benefit from additional training in organizing and managing hearings, and in following up on hearing testimony. Information on public hearings may need to be built into orientation programs for new members and staff. As experience with public hearings grows, assistance may also include the development of staff manuals or guides to help institutionalize the use of hearings.

- Strengthening Linkages Between Committees and Relevant Civil Society Organizations. Committees in developing legislatures may lack the depth of in-house policy expertise needed to conduct a detailed review of proposed legislation. Although civil society organizations, especially universities and professional associations, can help provide this missing expertise, committees and committee staff may lack tools for accessing these civil society groups. In certain countries, high levels of distrust between civil society groups and the legislature limit the degree of interaction. Programming options can include working with committee staff to improve methods of communication with relevant civil society organizations. In some countries, a simple database of civil society organizations and contacts, combined with broadcast fax capability, has been helpful in bridging the gap. This capacity can be used to regularly fax hearing notices and committee reports to relevant civil society groups.
- Site Visits and Committee Meetings Outside the Capital. If citizens are to engage their representatives and the legislature as an institution, it is important that the institution be viewed as accessible. Too often, representation is weakest between the legislature and rural areas. Meetings outside the capital can significantly increase citizen perceptions about legislative accessibility. When legislation has a disproportionate impact on a particular region, it may be appropriate for the committee to travel to that region for a public hearing. When a committee is engaged in oversight involving a project located outside the capital, it may be appropriate for the committee to organize a site visit to the project. Assistance may include limited financial support to cover the travel costs, assistance in building these recurrent costs into the legislature's budget, and staff training to do the necessary logistical and advance work for the meetings.

Legislative Procedure

Standing orders and legislative rules of procedure provide the detailed structure for the legislative process. They also define – either directly or indirectly – the specific mechanisms that can be used to voice citizen concerns within the legislature and to incorporate citizen input into the legislative process. In general, legislative procedural reform is most likely to be useful where the basic legal and political framework governing representation is fundamentally sound, but the legislative rules lack practical mechanisms for voicing constituent concerns in the legislative process. Procedural reform is also useful where there are specific procedural obstacles that limit representation. Legislative rules allocate power among internal actors in the legislative process – the more centralized and opaque the process, the fewer opportunities that there are for representation. In addition to general reforms to make the legislative process more permeable, there are several specific areas where procedural reform can strengthen representative capacity:

- Requirements for Public Input or Hearings. In systems where public hearings are often used, it may be appropriate to institutionalize the practice by requiring hearings on certain types of draft legislation. Assistance may include comparative information on these requirements and on the types of drafts that are often exempt from hearing requirements, such as emergency and minor or routine drafts that are highly technical. In parliamentary systems, where public input on draft legislation is more centered in the government, legislative procedures might be amended to require, with the introduction of the bill, a description of the process used by the government to obtain public input and of the nature of the public input received. This allows the legislature to assess the adequacy of the government's public consultations, and may help the parliament determine when additional public input may be necessary.
- Scheduling and Plenary Sessions. Where the power of scheduling is centralized in legislative leadership, it may be difficult for backbenchers or opposition groups to raise an issue of constituent concern on the floor. Although there are obvious trade-offs between decentralizing control and maintaining an efficient legislative process, often opportunities can be built into the legislative process to allow minority perspectives to be presented in the plenary (through the use of private member bills, presentation of opposition and backbencher viewpoints on proposed government legislation, and through opportunities to read statements into the legislative record) – without necessarily threatening leadership control over outcomes or sacrificing legislative efficiency. Even though these statements may have limited impact on final legislative outcomes, presenting the issues in a legislative forum may help in raising awareness of minority perspectives, may help minority groups to feel a connection to the institution, and may increase the willingness of these groups to engage their representatives on other issues.
- Issue-based Caucuses or Legislative Groups. Vehicles for the alignment of interests across party lines may also strengthen representation of groups. Support to women's caucuses or minority caucuses in some cases have helped to give a greater voice to traditionally underrepresented voices.

Constituency Relations

Improving constituency relations is an important but often very challenging program area. As outlined in Appendix I, the incentive structures surrounding constituency relations are heavily influenced by the electoral and governance systems. In a majoritarian electoral system with single-member districts, the direct linkage between constituents and legislators may provide greater incentives for constituency relations than in a proportional representation system. However, it may also encourage representation to be viewed largely in terms of the representative's ability to win resources for his or her particular geographic constituency.

Another danger is that often representation is viewed in terms of a patronage model. In certain countries, a legislator from a particular clan or region may be expected to assist in securing jobs or other benefits for other members of the group. In other countries, a legislator who has

received substantial contributions from a particular industry or interest group may be expected to secure benefits for that industry or group through their position as legislator. In trying to move from a patronage-based to a policy- or interest-based model of representation, it is often appropriate to incorporate an ethics or public integrity component into support for constituency relations or constituency casework activities.

Common activities to strengthen constituency relations and casework include:

- Support for Increased Meetings with Constituents. Citizens generally want to see as much of their elected representatives as possible. Town hall meetings, end-of-session “report-backs” by representatives and participation in other community events are very popular with constituents. Assistance may include support for planning these meetings, financial support for travel expenses (either directly or helping to build a mechanism into the government or legislative budget process), and training in techniques for responding to constituent concerns and questions.
- Constituency Relations Training and Manuals. When members have individual staff to support constituency relations or when members have strong political incentives to reach out to a constituency, broad-based constituency relations training may be appropriate. Constituency relations manuals or toolkits can provide practical reference materials for representatives; they may include things like checklists for organizing meetings, form correspondence to respond to common constituent concerns, tips for speech writing, general advice on media relations, etc.

Constituency Handbook for Malawi Legislators

Legislators in Malawi have expressed concern that they lack the resources and tools needed to do their jobs effectively; in particular, in meeting the expectations of their constituents. A program was developed to respond to this situation with by assisting members on constituency relations. The Speaker and political party leaders created a working group of interested legislators, the Constituency Outreach Supervisory Committee, which served as the core body to guide the program. The committee included a mix of nationally prominent figures and relatively obscure backbench members who spend most of their time at home in their villages. The input from the supervisory committee was critical to program success.

The committee readily identified two major constraints: lack of district offices and lack of information. To meet the need for district offices, the group drafted a proposal for government-funded constituency offices. They actively lobbied fellow members, ministers, and parliamentary committees for the funding. For the second need, information, the committee guided the development of a Constituent Handbook. The committee outlined the elements of what they thought should be included in the handbook and a draft was created for their review. From the beginning, the handbook was designed to be a very practical tool – programs are often most successful when members are able to see an immediate, practical use for a particular document or tool. The handbook is introduced with a concise one-page essay “Why Should I Work in My Constituency?” that is followed by such basic information as a definition of casework and how members can gauge public opinion. The bulk of the book contains names of contacts at the national level, as well as places for local contact information to be added.

- Newsletters, Radio and TV Communications. In large districts, greater reliance needs to be placed on mass communication with constituents, through newsletters, radio, TV or through individual legislator websites. Obviously, the choice of media is strongly influenced by local conditions and cost. Assistance may typically involve skills training on the production of newsletters, training on radio or TV interview skills, and training for party or legislative staff to support individual legislator websites.
- Establishment and Development of District Offices. Where electoral districts are far from the capital or where travel is difficult, effective representation may require representatives to have an established office in their district. Assistance can take a variety of forms, including provision of technical assistance on the design, feasibility and management of district office systems; procurement of initial office space and equipment; training for district staff; and the development of guidelines regarding the proper use of district office facilities.
- Casework. Constituency casework – where representatives use their good offices, whether in the legislature or district, to help constituents untangle government bureaucracy or appeal unfair decisions – is human-resource intensive. Assistance may include provision of staff training on the receipt and resolution of complaints, public outreach to citizens on constituency casework, systems and form letters for representatives to use in resolving common complaints, training on ethics issues in conducting constituency casework, and methods of tracking correspondence and constituent contacts.

Public Information and Access

In order for citizens to seek to engage their representatives on issues, they must have information about the legislative process. Many legislatures dedicate non-partisan staff to provide information about the legislative process and, more generally, to make the legislature more accessible to the public. Some of the most common programming options include:

- Legislative Guidebooks and Hotlines. Many legislatures publish a guidebook listing the names of all of the legislators, their backgrounds, their districts, their committee assignments and their contact information. Legislative guidebooks may include a host of other information about the legislative process, legislative procedure, legislative history, legislative leadership and key legislative staff. Some legislatures have established toll-free numbers that constituents may call to find out information about the status of legislation, the name of their representative or representatives, and committee and plenary session schedules.
- Visitor's Galleries and Open Houses. In many new democracies, citizens are unaccustomed to visiting government buildings. Legislatures can take many steps to welcome the public and promote a sense of public ownership of the building. Primary among these steps is opening access for citizens to observe legislative proceedings. The building itself can be made accessible with an obvious entrance, an information desk at the door with friendly staff and public venues such as cafeterias and gift shops.

In addition, the legislature can pro-actively seek to bring groups into the building through such activities such as “open days”, tours, art exhibits and student field trips. Support for increased access may include financing for physical improvements, training for legislative staff and technical assistance in planning programs.

- Legislative Internship Programs. Although legislative internships can be a way of providing low-cost staff to understaffed legislatures, they are also often designed to provide opportunities for young people who have an interest in politics or public service to gain first hand knowledge of legislative operations. It is often useful to include in an internship program a component that involves education on comparative legislative institutions and legislative reform.

Information Technology

Access to information is often one of the greatest obstacles to meaningful participation and representation in government. Information technology, with its ability to share large quantities of information with huge audiences cheaply and quickly, has been used to strengthen representation in many countries. Even when large segments of the population do not have access to the internet, the internet can often be useful in strengthening links between the legislature and civil society organizations and party offices in the district.

Democracy at the Click of a Mouse

In 1995, a second house of Parliament was created in South Africa. The National Council of Provinces (NCOP) comprises permanent delegates and rotating delegations from the nine provincial legislatures. The NCOP legislative process is intended to take place within a cycle of 4-6 weeks. After the NCOP's first two years, delegates reported frequent confusion and wasted resources, with provincial legislators receiving multiple copies of bills and notices via fax and courier. Often they would arrive in Cape Town for a sitting, only to find they had reviewed an outdated version of the bill, or that the time of the hearing had changed. To address this problem, the NCOP, with support from the donor community and private sector, began to build an internet-based information technology system consisting of a website, internet-based database and pro-active email service that would automatically send bills, notices and other parliamentary documents to legislators and parliamentary staff. The system, called NCOP Online!, immediately helped national and provincial legislators and staff prepare for the consideration of legislation. Not only were bills available, research briefs, committee testimony and public submissions from the national parliament and provincial legislatures were accessible online. The system was of immediate use to leaders throughout government, as well as NGOs and the business community. The system included features that allowed citizens to direct comments to MPs or committees. The project showed immediate results because it dramatically streamlined communication processes and put huge quantities of parliamentary information into the public domain. An evaluation after one year showed that NCOP Online! helped elected leaders represent their constituents better and allowed citizens to participate more directly. At the onset of the project, technology was deemed to be an ideal solution because of South Africa's size and the availability of internet access in all provincial capitals. However, some raised objections about whether the significant numbers of citizens without access to technology would be further marginalized from political participation and representation. Ultimately, political leaders decided that the inaccessibility of technology should not hold the initiative back; rather, efforts should be stepped up to made the technology widely available. NCOP Online! can be accessed at www.parliament.gov.za/ncop

While in some cases, technology initiatives may involve large, internet-based communication systems or legislature-wide communication networks, small programs can also have an impact. For example, in Namibia, one aspect of a technology program in parliament included an inexpensive fax broadcast system to send bill summaries to hundreds of people across the country. These low-cost projects can also be very effective in strengthening the flow of information between citizens and those who represent them. It is crucial to scale the information technology program appropriately, considering, among other things, the institution's ability to absorb and retain the necessary training and staff to ensure that the system is sustainable.

Political Parties and Parliamentary Party Groups

Parties and parliamentary party groups (or political party caucuses) play key roles in strengthening the representative capacity of the legislature. Where party discipline is strong, representatives need to have effective methods of representing constituents within the party. Parties will often express differing degrees of willingness to work with donors on issues of internal governance, yet donors often need to attempt to provide assistance equally across the political spectrum to avoid perceptions of bias. When implementing programming with multiple political parties, a high degree of trust is required; political party counterparts may be reluctant to share the level of information necessary for program success, if they fear that there is a risk that the information might be shared with other political parties. These implementation issues are discussed in greater detail in Section III of this paper.

Possible programming activities include the following:

- Constituent Outreach. How are party positions formulated? If decision-making is not based on information regarding the preferences of the party's constituents, donors may be able to assist political parties in developing the capacity to gather this information through the use of focus groups, polling, or other surveys. In national list systems, assistance can also include advice on methods for allocating responsibility for constituent outreach among party members, either based on geographic areas or based on issues (e.g., through the use of a shadow cabinet structure by an opposition party).
- Promotion of Internal Democracy within Political Parties. If decision-making within the political party is predominantly top-down and directed by a few political party leaders, the diversity of perspectives represented by junior party members (who would typically represent a broader range of constituencies and are likely to include more women and minorities) are lost. Moreover, a more representative decision-making process is likely to result in a more cohesive and disciplined approach to issues. Support may include working with key political leaders on reform of political party governance, including more effective use of party congresses and improved methods for ensuring greater input in party decisions by the rank-and-file membership and more junior political leadership.

- Transparency of Political Party Candidate Selection Processes. How are political party candidates selected? Where the process is opaque and directed by political party leaders, loyalties of the candidates run solely to these leaders. If the process is transparent and the constituencies represented by the party have an opportunity to participate in this process, the loyalties of the candidates run to this broader based constituency, and the representativeness of the legislature is likely to increase.
- Training of Candidates from Underrepresented Groups. Political parties who have demonstrated a commitment to fielding a more representative slate of candidates may desire assistance in providing additional training to women candidates or candidates from underrepresented groups. Campaign skills training for women leaders has helped to increase the percentage of women in many legislatures around the world.
- Party Platforms and Legislative Agendas. If voting decisions are based solely on personalities and charisma of party leadership rather than on clearly articulated policy positions, representation in the legislature is likely to suffer. Similarly, if political party platforms bear little relationship to action of the party group or caucus in the legislature, representation is also weakened. Assistance to political parties to articulate, and later implement, party platforms can also greatly improve the representative capacity of the legislature.
- Strengthening Party Groups and Caucuses. In non-election periods, it is common for the party caucus or group to become the public face of a political party. Whether in government or opposition, a well-organized party caucus group can help to increase communication with constituents regarding a party's position on issues facing the legislature. Assistance in building party groups and caucuses can include work on group organization and rules, staff training and communication strategy.
- Inter-Party Relations and Coalition Building. In multi-party legislatures, inter-party relations are critical in representing citizen concerns – both within governing coalitions and among opposition parties. Smaller parties, which by definition tend to represent minority interests, must have strong negotiation and coalition building skills if they are to be able to participate effectively in the political process and to obtain wider political backing for their positions. Support may include working with parties on the principles of negotiating and maintaining coalitions, as well as developing communication mechanisms for explaining coalition-building measures to grassroots members.

A variety of mechanisms can be employed to deliver this assistance, including the use of expert consultants, study tours, assembly and distribution of comparative information, and financial support. Political party leaders, whose parties have seen electoral gains resulting from successfully implemented internal political party reforms, are often extremely effective in assisting similar parties in other countries to consider and implement political party reform.

C. **External Capacity (The Capacity of the Represented)**

Actors outside the legislature must have sufficient information about how they can provide input and about how to advocate for and monitor the representativeness of the process. Weak external capacity for legislative representation can be an issue even in countries with a vibrant civil society and press. In emerging democracies, civil society may have had years of experience in acting as a watchdog or critic of an authoritarian regime, but may lack the capacity to effectively advocate for changes in policy through the legislature and their representatives. Moreover, the mechanisms by which civil society and the press exercise a watchdog role also change with the emergence of a more democratic regime. Finally, it is important for participation in the legislative institution to extend down to individual citizens.

Civic Education and Citizen Participation

A legislature's capacity for representation is ultimately dependent upon the ability of those being represented – individual citizens – to express their preferences through legislative elections and by advocating to their elected representatives. A strongly representative legislature requires that citizens have certain knowledge (on the role of the legislature, parties, their representatives, etc.), certain skills (information gathering and analysis, advocacy, etc.) and certain values (respect for the democratic process, civic responsibility, tolerance, compromise, etc.). In some cases, citizens may have basic information about the legislature, but may lack the skills to advocate based on this information, or may not value civic participation sufficiently to devote energy to engaging their representatives. In other countries, citizens may have a strong desire to engage their representatives and may have basic advocacy skills, but may lack an understanding of the role of their legislative representatives – mistakenly viewing their representative's role more as a manager of local economic development projects than as a representative of their concerns in the formulation and oversight of national policy.

Programs to promote citizen participation are extremely varied and a review of program options for strengthening civic participation is beyond the scope of this paper. A few illustrative program options merit brief mention:

- **Model Legislature Programs.** Model legislature programs have been used in a range of countries to build the knowledge, skills and values that young people need for effective future participation in the legislative process by having them engage in an extended role-play as representatives. Programs might include a “new member orientation” for the student representatives on parliamentary procedure, candidate speeches and elections for legislative officers, committee meetings on bills prepared in advance by participants, and a mock plenary session discussing the merits of the proposed legislation. The involvement of actual representatives in the program allows an opportunity for participants to learn about the legislative process from their elected representatives.

- Legislature “Days”. The Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) holds a “Democracy Day” event each year, involving a range of activities throughout the West Bank and Gaza to support the development of democratic culture and awareness of the role of the PLC. Other legislatures have hosted “Legislative Back-to-School Days” on which, instead of holding session, all legislators spend a day in schools, answering questions about the legislature and their role as representatives.
- Guides for Testifying at Public Hearings. In countries where legislatures are expanding the use of public legislative hearings, resources may need to be prepared for citizens on how to testify at hearings and how to prepare written submissions to committees on draft legislation.
- Adult Civic Education: Civic Forums. The Civic Forum adult education program, developed by the National Democratic Institute, has been used in a range of countries to bridge the gap between short-term, generic civic education activities that rely on posters, pamphlets and media announcements, and long-term, formal efforts carried out in school classrooms for young people. Civic Forum is a grassroots, interactive initiative that has led directly to popular political participation in countries where citizens have been previously disenfranchised or oppressed. Locally recruited facilitators organize community-based discussion groups that typically meet on a biweekly basis, allowing for the expression of diverse opinions in a "protected environment." The discussion groups then move through a progression of facilitated educational discussions that lead into community problem-solving and active political participation. More information on the program methodology can be found at http://www.ndi.org/NDI/library/1204_citpart_demedcivforum.pdf

Civil Society Advocacy

Civil society organizations can play an important role in shaping and articulating societal policy preferences and in relaying these policy preferences to legislatures. Organizations in developing democracies face a number of challenges in fulfilling this role, including lack of resources or capacity and a history of mistrust between themselves and the legislature. In some cases, civil society organizations simply lack experience in dealing with the legislature as traditionally their advocacy efforts have focused on policy-making at the government/executive level.

Program options for supporting civil society and legislative representation tend to fall into two categories:

- Legislative Advocacy. Program options to strengthen capacity for legislative advocacy may include training on topics such as framing advocacy issues, conducting policy research, assessing public opinions and issue awareness, designing advocacy campaigns, developing a communications strategy and publicly identifying legislative allies and opponents, etc. Training may also address specific advocacy campaign

techniques (canvassing, petitions, letter writing campaigns, phone trees, newsletters, leaflets, brochures, advertisements, etc.). Advocacy training is most effective with groups that already have a certain level of organizational capacity. In some cases training may be combined with or follow broader assistance on organizational issues such as membership development, volunteer recruitment and fundraising. Legislative advocacy training is often the most successful when training workshops are combined with on-going support and advice on specific advocacy campaigns designed by civil society partners.

- Monitoring Legislative Representation. There may be a large disconnect between campaign promises of a party and the party's actual voting behavior. Some parties in the Ukraine, for example, have been referred to as "virtual parties" – where a "virtual" public party image or platform is consciously developed in order to gain immediate electoral success, even though it may be fundamentally at odds with intended voting behavior. Parties avoid accountability for this due to citizens' lack of information on voting behavior and by reorganizing and forming new parties before every election. Civil society organizations can play a very useful role in monitoring voting records and in rating parties or individual representatives on specific sets of issues, and providing this information to voters during election periods. Watchdog organizations can trace the movement of the political leaders and party financial contributors. Where financial disclosure laws exist, civil society organizations can publicize linkages between financial contributions and voting behavior. Grants to organizations fulfilling this watchdog role can be coupled with technical assistance on monitoring and investigative techniques.

Building Trust in Democracy

Pro-Democracy Association (APD), a Romanian NGO, works to strengthen that country's democracy through increased civic participation. APD learned the importance of legislative advocacy following its establishment in 1990, as an election bill prohibiting domestic observers threatened its plans to observe elections. The NGO succeeded in lobbying for amendments to the bill, to permit domestic election observers. APD then organized and trained some 6,000 volunteers across the country to observe elections. Since that time, APD has retained that grassroots network, using it as a channel to distribute civic education materials. Acting as a bridge, APD has catalyzed two-way communication between parliament and citizens by both raising citizen awareness of the legislature and helping representatives to conduct regular town meetings in their constituencies. In the process, APD has been able to promote its own good governance agenda related to access to information and transparent campaign finance.

Media Strengthening

The media's role in mediating the interaction and communication between legislators and the public is crucial to improving representation in the legislature. The media may be the primary source of information about legislative proceedings for individuals and civil society; however, bias in the media can distort the effectiveness of legislative representation. In several countries, representatives report the need to pay the press for interviews and coverage. In other countries, sensationalist coverage of the legislature can undercut the credibility of the institution. Where legislatures lack credibility, citizens are likely to be unwilling to invest time in seeking to influence policy. Legislative efforts at constituent outreach often require the cooperation of the press to be effective.

Some popular program options in this area include:

- Improved Facilities for the Press in the Legislature. The press requires facilities in the legislature to effectively cover proceedings; in addition to a press gallery to cover the plenary session, many legislatures provide office space for journalists, including specialized print, radio or television facilities. Legislative staff may be assigned the task of responding to information requests from the media and to pro-actively provide information about legislation and the legislature. Often there is a relationship between the physical facilities provided by the legislature and the rules governing press coverage. In countries where the legislature does not supply a fixed video feed for television journalists, journalists with roving cameras have been allowed onto the plenary floor. In some cases, this has often undermined legislative decorum and credibility by focusing not on the issue that is under debate, but on the one representative who may be dozing. Programming may involve facilitating discussions between legislative leadership and the press regarding the infrastructure the press needs to cover the legislature; funding this infrastructure, and technical assistance regarding the functioning of legislative press offices.
- Journalist Training on Covering Legislatures. Training for the press may be needed to understand the role of various legislative actors (e.g., who schedules the bill for debate, who prepares amendments to bills, etc.), the significance of various procedural motions (the effect of a second reading, the re-referral of a bill to committee, or the ability of an opposition group to filibuster) and the existence of various resources available to them (the transcript or "Hansard" of the legislative proceedings, committee reports, or bill summaries). Journalists may also benefit from training on the ethics provisions that govern representatives and techniques for investigating violations, as well as training on their own ethical responsibilities in covering the legislative process. Assistance may involve building local training capacity within the legislative press office or press associations.
- Call-In Television or Radio Programming on Legislative Issues. Television or radio provides forums for representatives to discuss issues being considered by the legislature. Formats for such shows may include weekly summaries of legislative activity, opportunities to highlight key issues under debate by a facilitated discussion

among the various legislative players, and opportunities for members of the public to call in to express opinions. Donors might also provide start-up grants or funding to pilot this type of programming. However, protections need to be built into the program design to ensure independence and political balance in the programming, as well as to insulate donors from the specific political opinions expressed in the programming.

III. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

“For any important project to take off, you must be prepared for in-flight correction.”

-- The Speaker of the Namibian Parliament, Dr. Mose Tjitendero

Political and social factors may have an unanticipated impact on program implementation and program outcomes in any governance program. Programs aimed to enhance the credibility and stature of the legislature can be perceived by the executive to be threatening. Likewise, in view of the direct relationship between legislative representation and elections, ruling political leaders may attempt to dominate such programs to enhance their political party's constituent relations, at the expense of other political actors. Although these political challenges are likely to be among the most significant in implementation, programs to strengthen the representative capacity of legislatures also raise specific issues relating to sustainability and donor coordination. These are detailed below:

A. Executive Resistance

Successful legislative strengthening programs enhance public confidence in the legislature. This success may be perceived as being at the expense of the executive branch. Legislative leaders who successfully reach out to citizens, civil society and the media often become potential rivals for executive leadership. Moreover, greater participation in the legislative process may reduce the speed with which the executive can get legislation enacted, annoying executive leadership accustomed to a rubber-stamp legislature.

Common strategies for dealing with this issue include:

- Obtain Advance Agreement on Program Objectives. If agreement is obtained in advance on program objectives, it becomes difficult for parties to later object to their implementation. To muster support for a multi-year strengthening initiative, parliamentary leaders in Namibia assembled a team of local and international experts, including key executive politicians, to research, debate and agree on the scope of the project. The team produced a detailed report, “Agenda for Change,” which was released to the media and formally approved in parliament. From that point, the parliamentary development projects in Namibia were “mandated.” At times when the executive was reluctant to give political or fiscal backing, parliamentary leaders could refer to the report.
- Involve the Executive and Build in Benefits For the Executive. Some of the program options identified for improving the representative capacity of legislatures can also be used to strengthen representation within government or the executive branch. For example, the “Democracy Day” campaign of the Palestinian Legislative Council was originally conceived as a “Day of the Legislature.” However, to minimize executive

branch resistance, the name was changed to focus on the democratic process rather than the legislature. The program goals and activities remained unchanged, except to allow the government to add activities to increase its own citizen outreach activities.

A nationwide “Model Legislature Program” may invite an executive branch official to present a mock address from the Prime Minister or President to the legislature, allowing the executive branch to gain some positive publicity for the program. A citizen guidebook with information on legislators and the legislative process may include a brief section containing contact information for ministries and administrative agencies; the government may also find the publication a useful resource in managing legislative relations.

B. Political Bias

Democracy programs can easily become bogged down in party rivalries. This is particularly true of programs to promote greater legislative representative capacity, given the close ties between this type of programming and elections. Even when the program does not tackle issues directly related to the electoral process, many program options involve skills or reforms that are directly useful in political campaigns. For example, constituency relations skills are easily translated into campaign skills; internal party reforms to promote representation should also attract more members to the party. Given this relationship, allegations of bias are likely to increase in the politicized atmosphere of an election. For example, many international democracy organizations operating in Zimbabwe around the 2000 elections were deemed “biased” by the national government; some were forced to leave the country.

Programs may wish to consider the following strategies to prevent and address allegations of partisan bias:

- Carefully Plan Around Elections. Certain types of programs are not appropriate in advance of elections. Training on constituency relations during a campaign season may rightly be accused of assisting incumbents in advance of elections. Other activities dealing with representation are often tied to the electoral calendar, e.g., candidate training or campaigns against vote-buying. Still other activities, such as civic education or support for political parties, are traditionally heavily supported by donors around elections, but – from the perspective of sustainability and long-term development – require on-going assistance.
- Use Multi-Party Advisory Committees. A multi-party advisory committee can help in several ways. Allegations of bias may originate from groups who have been excluded from receiving information at the same time, or in the same way, as other actors. An advisory committee structure provides information on program activities equally and regularly to committee members, and allows for seeking members’ input on equal terms. The political balance of this committee is crucial and it is important to designate clear limits of its authority. It is often most useful to keep the committee advisory in nature and to limit its decision-making and approval authority. If the committee does have approval authority and if representation on the committee is

proportional to parliamentary representation, there is a risk of program “capture” by the parliamentary majority. This can be problematic in the context of a program seeking to expand the voice of underrepresented groups. Requirements for a supermajority or for consensus decision-making can resolve this issue, but can result in program gridlock. By leaving flexibility in the structure and having the committee as advisory, rather than supervisory, the provider of assistance can use good judgment in determining where input is helpful and how it should be sought.

Multi-Party Program Advisory Committees in Mozambique and Niger

Multi-party program advisory committees have been used in a number of UNDP legislative strengthening programs; the nature of these groups and the authority given to them has also varied. In UNDP's program to strengthen the National Assembly of Mozambique, it worked with the Commission for Modernization of the National Assembly (COMAR) to execute the program. COMAR served as the principal contact for UNDP on the project and the chairperson of COMAR had overall responsibility for implementation of the project. COMAR was also responsible for full coordination with other projects designed to support the Assembly. In the UNDP legislative strengthening program in Niger, the Comité d'Organisation du Projet (COP) is used to obtain multi-party input on program direction, but this body lacks decision-making authority.

Although the use of multi-party program advisory groups can be very useful in avoiding actual or perceived partisan bias, the structure of these advisory groups must be carefully considered. There are a number of very practical issues that are likely to arise in working with such committees. Because COMAR was made up of parliamentarians, day-to-day project operations (including administrative tasks of approving and authorizing, etc.) were often held up during legislative sessions. Difficulties also arose when administrative issues became politicized. In Niger, the fact that COP lacks decision-making authority has avoided some of the implementation issues encountered with COMAR, even though, in practice, the advice of COP has been very closely followed in program implementation.

The optimal structure and role of a multi-party committee will depend on a number of factors, including: Is there an existing multi-party group that can serve as an advisory committee or does a new entity need to be created? If there is an existing committee, do the representatives on the committee have authority to speak for their parties or the interests that they represent? If so, are they too senior to be able to devote the amount of time needed to fully participate in such a committee? What level of political will is there to engage in political reform and does this political will exist across party lines? How politically sensitive is the nature of the legislative strengthening project? In all cases, it is important for the expectations and roles of the committee to be made clear upfront.

- Apply Transparent Guidelines For Program and Funding Decisions. How are decisions made regarding which particular party or parties participate in program activities? Who participates from each party in candidate training workshops? Where there are no clear answers to these questions, political bias can be imputed as a motive. It is often helpful to have clear principles for evaluating requests for assistance or training, e.g., assigning workshop slots based on date of application, basing assistance to parties on formal requests that are evaluated according to written standards, etc.
- Adopt and Enforce Guidelines for Local Staff (and Program Implementers) on Political Participation. Sometimes critics will seek to discredit a program by attacking program staff members. It is important to have clear, transparent guidelines for local staff on what political conduct is permitted and what is prohibited. In all cases, it is

important to treat allegations of bias seriously, to carefully evaluate the merits of these allegations and to take appropriate disciplinary action ~~where appropriate~~.

- Build Long-Term, Relations of Trust with Political Leadership. Strong political relationships with parliamentary leadership, the executive and opposition parties are critical. Strong support from leadership can protect the program from political manipulation or undue pressure and can help protect the program from unjust allegations. Obviously, it is important for these relationships to be balanced across party lines. Long-term relationships, which survive changes in political fortunes of the political parties, add credibility to the impartiality of the organization.

C. Resource Limitations and Sustainability

In most developing countries, resources for maintaining constituency offices, conducting town hall meetings, supporting district offices, or paying for legislators to travel and participate in events, are scarce. Programs must be designed to take into account the financial ability of legislatures to sustain mechanisms for representation that will be established by the program. Often, in implementing programs, there will be a pressure to divert program resources to programs that are perceived to have higher priority – often away from technical assistance and toward more concrete expenditures on things like infrastructure or travel costs. Strategies for addressing this issue include:

- Obtain Advance Commitments for Future Funding at Program Outset. A plan for long-term sustainability of program results must exist from the outset. It may take several years to increase the legislative budget to cover a particular expense, and this process needs to start at the very beginning of the project, when donor leverage is greatest.
- Consider Cost-Sharing Arrangements. Cost-sharing can be an important method of ensuring the commitment of legislative partners to project goals. However, it is important that the respective obligations for costs be laid out carefully, as well as guidelines for dealing with situations when these obligations are not met. Often, requirements for cost-sharing from the legislature may increase over the life of the project. For example, a project may cover 100% of the costs of the first round of town hall meetings, but may require that the legislature cover 25% of the costs for a second round, 50% during the third round, etc.
- Provide Assistance on Financing Increased Representation. Certain reforms to promote increased representative capacity within legislatures are extremely costly, such as the addition of individual staff or the development of district offices. Technical assistance in costing out alternative proposals can help to ensure that additional resources for representation are used in a cost-effective manner. Such studies can also be useful, particularly when developed in close partnership with legislative counterparts, in building broader political support for the additional expenditures. They can also help identify where existing resources are not being used effectively and how they can be redirected to support representation.

- **Build in Incentives for Further Increases in Representation.** In countries where political will and resources for increased representation are limited, it is necessary to be creative in developing programs that build in incentives for continued support. Temporary provision of a service can sometimes create demand for its continued provision. In some countries, temporary support of a pilot project to fund call-in talk shows on legislative issues may generate enough support among politicians seeking a platform and enough viewer or listener interest to guarantee continuation of that format, either by the original provider or by competitors. Similarly, competition between parties can also be leveraged to create incentives for continued reform. For example, if initially only one party is interested in participating in a program targeting internal party reform or campaign training for women candidates and if that party receives increased public support as a result of this assistance, pressure is put on other political parties to examine similar programming and reform.

D. Coordination with Donor and Civil Society Programs

Improving the representative capacity of legislatures touches on all policy issues considered by the legislature; issues of coordination may arise both with respect to other donors and with respect to local civil society programs. For example, support for the environment committee to begin holding public hearings may involve coordination with a number of local civil society environmental organizations, as well as with donor-funded law reform and legislative drafting programs. Support for legislative rule reform that creates a new committee with jurisdiction over issues involving women and underrepresented groups may benefit from coordination with multiple donors and civil society organizations working with those groups more generally. Often program resources can be leveraged by helping other groups to support improved legislative representation in the context of their existing sectoral programs, i.e., assisting these groups to build in town hall meetings, civic education, legislative advocacy or public hearings components into their programs.

Programs designed to promote greater representation and citizen participation should model good practice by seeking participation and involvement in program design and implementation. The methods of obtaining this participation will, of course, depend on the type of project; however, options may include holding periodic open houses or public meetings to discuss project activities, posting information on a website that offers opportunities for comment and input; regular participation at donor coordination meetings; and broader representation on project advisory committees.

IV. ASSESSMENT, PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In designing a program to improve legislative representation, the first step is often a broad-based assessment of the legislature's current capacity. Appendix II provides a broad overview of the types of questions that should be considered in such an initial assessment – surveying the legal and political framework within which representation occurs, as well as internal and external capacity. An assessment that focuses solely on internal legislative capacity may identify weakness in member constituent relations skills as a constraint on improved representation. However, these weak constituent relations skills may be caused by larger problems in the legal and political framework, such as widespread corruption in the political system or limited political incentives for representatives to engage in constituent relations.

It is essential that a variety of perspectives be represented in preparing this initial assessment. The assessment should include: consultations with a representative cross-section of the legislature (including all major parties), with the executive branch and with civil society, including the media. The assessment may also benefit from focus groups involving a regional cross-section of civil society and citizens. Given the political nature of representation, the assessment should carefully consider the level of political will across parties and the commitment of partners to the program. Although it may be possible to do the initial assessment during an election period, the representational environment may be different during campaign and non-campaign periods. It is especially important to assess opportunities for possible synergies with the work of domestic NGOs, international NGOs and other donors on representation.

Once the broad program parameters have been established and a rough program design developed, it may be appropriate to expand portions of the initial assessment to produce a more detailed baseline assessment of the particular components of representation that will be addressed by the program. This will also allow for a more thorough evaluation of program results. For example, if, after conducting a broad initial assessment, a decision is taken to focus on improved public information publications, it may be helpful to produce a detailed baseline assessment of public information capacity. This baseline assessment could include: information about the skill levels of the legislative staff members engaged in public information, a review of the equipment available for producing public information documents, an assessment of the quality of the public information documents currently being produced, information about the methods of distributing public information, the number of copies of various publications that have been disseminated, and the level of public awareness of specific areas of legislative operations (via surveys or focus groups).

Often it will make sense to supplement the baseline assessment with a number of specific indicators, which can be monitored periodically over the course of the program to assess ongoing performance. (Please refer to the paper prepared by UNDP, “Indicators for Legislative Development”, October 2001.) Following are some questions and issues to consider when designing, measuring and evaluating a program:

- Measure Perceptions and Attitudes. In addition to measuring outputs and behavioral change, it is also important to measure perceptions about the representative nature of the legislature. These perceptions are important in and of themselves. Do specific groups feel that their legislature represents them? Do they feel that their input can make a difference? Surveys, opinion polls and focus groups can measure these shifts in attitudes and perceptions.
- Disaggregate Evaluation Data. Which groups feel represented and which groups feel excluded? How does representation differ based on education level, geographic area, ethnic identity and gender? More than most program areas, it is important for indicators and evaluations to look at who is being represented and who isn't. For example, with respect to the dissemination of public information, are certain groups more likely to receive the information? What strategies can be useful in targeting the other groups?
- Measure Immediate Outcomes and Results. The representative nature of a legislature is affected by a wide range of factors and intervening variables. It isn't enough to measure program outcomes, i.e., the number of public information publications produced, since, due to other factors, this may ultimately have little impact on improved representation. Similarly, it is also insufficient to measure progress on high-level goals, i.e., perceptions about the representative nature of the institution, since it may be impossible to tie these changes to any specific program activities. A variety of indicators to measure progress at the activity, output, objective and goal levels can help in determining the causal effect between program outputs and improved representation.
- Focus on Evaluating Improvements in Process. Representation is about process – the process of interaction between citizens and their representatives. As a result, in evaluating representation, it is often more important to focus on the process used to produce particular outcomes, rather than the outcomes themselves. For example, in evaluating programs to support expanded use of public hearings, the increase in the number of public hearings is often less relevant than process changes. How were decisions taken by committees to hold hearings? What was the process used to select or invite witnesses? How were objections from the ministry about holding a public hearing handled? These process changes determine whether sustainable progress has been made in increasing representation.
- Involve Program Partners in Monitoring and Evaluation. The evaluation process can be used to build the capacity of program partners, particularly where there is political will to improve legislative representation. Inclusion of legislative partners in designing and implementing a performance monitoring plan strengthens legislative capacity to identify problems in legislative representation and design and implement reforms to address these problems.

If there has been a well-designed system to monitor ongoing performance, end-of-project evaluation of program results should not need to be particularly elaborate. Ongoing

performance monitoring should provide a good indication of program successes and failures. However, it is generally appropriate to revisit the baseline assessment done at the beginning of the program to provide a more complete view of changes during the life of the program. If significant progress has been made in the targeted program area, or after significant political, social or economic change (a regime changes, constitutional or electoral reform, a period of conflict, significant economic development or backsliding, etc), it is also appropriate to revisit the initial broad-based assessment of legislative representation to determine whether the targeted program areas are still appropriate.

APPENDIX I: The Impact of Governance and Electoral Systems on Representation

Governance and electoral systems impact the dynamics of legislative representation and, as a consequence, the strategies used to strengthen the representative capacity of legislatures. There is no ideal governance or electoral system. Factors, such as the degree of participation of political competitors and voters, degree of stability of government and degree of representativeness, contend with each other in various ways. The proper balance among them and other factors differs according to a variety of national conditions and even changes at times within a country. Reform of the governance and electoral system is best accomplished through a process that includes broad popular consultation and broad political agreement.

In order to highlight differences among governance and electoral systems, a degree of oversimplification is required. It is important to note that there are often important exceptions to many of the generalities presented in the following charts:

Governance Systems¹	
<u>Parliamentary System</u>	<u>Presidential System</u>
MPs tend to place first loyalty with their political party; dominant constituencies within the party may have the greatest influence.	Legislators tend to place first loyalty with constituents from their voting district; their interests may take priority over the “common” interest.
MPs may have little incentive for direct citizen contact outside of election season.	Legislators must devote resources and time to constituency contact.
Political parties and party discipline are stronger, dictating how MPs vote.	Party discipline is weaker, giving legislators room to decide how they vote.
Backbenchers and opposition parties have fewer opportunities to win passage of or influence bills. Party coalitions may force factions to compromise on policy positions to preserve unity.	Opposition members can forge partnerships with majority party members on legislation. Public opinion can sway individual legislators.
The executive branch usually drafts and introduces legislation; private members’ bills are not likely to pass. Parliament may have limited amendment power, making it difficult to include citizen concerns in legislation.	Legislation tends to be generated by individual members or groups of members, allowing legislators to represent citizen concerns directly in legislation. However, an abundance of bills of competing interests can clog the system.

¹Governance systems include three arrangements: presidential, parliamentary and hybrid. In presidential systems, executive and legislative branches are elected separately and have distinct memberships. In parliamentary systems, elections for both branches are held together and members of the executive also participate in the legislature. Some systems are considered hybrid; in these systems, presidential candidates typically stand-alone for election and a prime minister and cabinet are appointed from a party list.

Governance Systems (cont.)	
Committee systems may or may not play an important role in passing legislation and overseeing government performance. This likely reduces opportunity for citizen participation at the parliamentary level.	Committees act as the center of legislative action, where bills are debated, amended and negotiated by parties. Committees tend to manage oversight processes. Generally, more opportunities exist for public hearings.
Interest groups may concentrate lobbying on the executive so as to influence legislation at its inception, ignoring parliament.	Interest groups may place undue pressure on individual members.

In order to simplify and highlight differences, the following chart reflects tendencies of a plurality (first-past-the-post), single-member district majority system and proportional systems with a single national election district and a party list ballot that does not allow the expression of voter preferences for candidates on the list (i.e., a closed list).

Electoral Systems²	
<u>Majority Systems</u>	<u>Proportional Systems</u>
Systems tend to limit award of legislative seats to a few large political parties (or electoral alliances) and to produce more stable governments, with a limited need for coalitions; however, they can result in award of a disproportionately large number of seats to a party compared to its share of votes won nationally.	Systems tend to promote more legislative representation of smaller or dispersed interests, representing more accurately the country's political spectrum, which may create a need for coalition governments; that can introduce a degree of political instability for governing and give disproportionate bargaining power to small political parties.
Systems tend to produce a more of a sense of accountability between representatives and constituents in their districts; they tend to weaken political party discipline and the need to develop loyalty of intra-party constituencies to gain a candidacy.	Systems tend to produce less of a sense of accountability of representatives to citizens; they tend to produce more political party discipline and development of loyalty among intra-party constituencies needed to gain a candidacy and a favorable position on the party's candidate list.

²**Majority/Plurality Representation Systems:** What are often called "majority" (or majoritarian) representation systems often operate on a plurality/simple majority basis (also called first-past-the-post), where the candidate who obtains the most votes wins the seat, no matter how small that number of votes may be. Majority systems also can operate on an absolute majority basis, where a candidate must gain over 50 percent of the votes to win a seat, sometimes requiring a second-round/runoff election. This tends to encourage a multiplicity of parties in the first round, as they aim for bargaining positions in electoral agreements for runoff elections. Legislative elections conducted under a majority system usually employ single member districts, but multi-member districts are sometimes employed in majority systems, which can incorporate some of the advantages and disadvantages of proportional systems.

Proportional Representation Systems: Proportional systems can use the entire country as a single, unified election district. This allows for the largest possible number of political parties to gain representation, unless a minimum percentage of the national vote (threshold) is required to win a seat. The higher the threshold, the more large parties are favored. The system for calculating seats based on the proportion of votes gained also can be designed to favor or disfavor either smaller or larger parties. Candidates for office are selected by political parties and ranked for award of legislative seats based on their position on a national party list. This ranking may be modified if the ballot system allows voters to indicate a preference for specific candidates. Proportional systems also can divide the country into a number of multi-member districts. The smaller the number of members in a multi-member district, the more advantages and disadvantages of the majority system are incorporated into the proportional format.

Mixed Representation Systems: There is a significant trend for countries in democratic transitions to employ mixed proportional-majority election systems, which, depending on the relative mix, can balance the advantages and disadvantages of each system. Single-transferable and single non-transferable voting are semi-proportional systems employing a constituency base.

Electoral Systems (cont.)

<u>Majority Systems</u>	<u>Proportional Systems</u>
Small political parties have difficulty winning any seats unless they are geographically concentrated (which can magnify regional differences in some instances); this tends to discourage the fragmentation of large parties and to encourage intra-party negotiation and compromise among differing elements within parties.	Small political parties have more chance of winning seats, depending on voting thresholds and systems for determining seat allocation; this tends to encourage fragmentation of parties and to limit incentives for negotiation and compromise among differing elements within parties.
Minority interests have difficulty winning seats unless they are geographically concentrated.	Minority interests have more chance of gaining seats, depending on whether they are a large enough portion of the national population and depending on thresholds and systems for determining seat allocation.
Campaign success is often more directly related to individual candidates than to political parties.	Campaign success tends to be based more on party strength than on personality or qualifications of individual candidates.
Candidates often must raise substantial campaign funds on their own initiative in addition to support from their political party.	Candidates often receive campaign funding through their political party.
Chances for women to gain party candidacies are restricted by political traditions in their parties and in their electoral districts, which are exacerbated by the need to raise campaign funds; in some countries women candidates have concentrated on obtaining campaign skill training, and networks have been built to assist campaign fundraising for women candidates.	Chances for women to gain party candidacies are restricted by political traditions within their parties and in the nation but not by the need to raise campaign funds; in some countries parties have adopted policies of placing women high on their candidate lists or on regular, small intervals on the list, thus increasing representation by women.
Voting and counting systems tend to be relatively simple, causing voters to be more certain of how results are determined.	Voting and counting systems tend to be complex, causing voters to be less certain of how results are determined.
Voters tend to decide more directly which political party (or alliance) will form the government.	Government more often is formed by negotiation among parties after elections.

APPENDIX II: Assessing Representative Capacity

<p>The Legal and Political Framework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What is the constitutional basis for legislative representation?▪ What is the electoral system? What is the model used by the electoral system in promoting representation (political party based vs. individual member based)? Are there ties between candidates and geographic constituencies??▪ Does the electoral system produce a legislature that reflects the diversity of the population?▪ How are political parties structured? How many parties? Are they divided along ethnic lines? Are there clear policy differences between parties? How are these articulated and communicated?▪ What is the level of party discipline? If this is extremely strong, it implies that the focus has to be on strengthening representational mechanisms within parties.▪ Does the legislature have powers (and the internal capacity) to introduce legislation? To amend legislation? To amend the budget? (This affects the content of the issues that the legislature can represent constituents on.)▪ Are laws in place to assure open and free access to government information? Are voting records made public so that constituents know how their legislators are voting on issues?▪ What systems are in place to hold legislators accountable for their actions, both in the legislature and within political parties?▪ What is the structure of the media? What is the level of coverage of the legislature? What is their degree of knowledge of about legislative processes? To what extent is the press controlled by political parties? How widespread is the practice of paying for coverage?▪ What public integrity systems are in place? Are formal requirements complied with?▪ How are political parties financed? Is this transparent? To what extent does organized crime influence the political process and limit representation?
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<p style="text-align: center;">Internal Capacity (The Capacity of the Representatives)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How active are committees? Do committees or the legislature meet outside of the capital? ▪ Are there requirements for hearings? Do they happen in practice? How often? What is the level and depth of participation? What type of advance notice is given? ▪ What level of press coverage is there of plenary sessions? Is there a visitor's gallery for the public to attend plenary sessions? Are there organized tours or school visits? ▪ How do political parties influence legislative work? If there are multi-member districts or national lists, do parties assign specific constituent relations responsibility to legislators? Is there a clear policy platform; how is this translated into a legislative agenda? How developed is the capacity of parties to develop and implement a communications strategy? How often are press releases issued? ▪ How does the infrastructure of the legislature facilitate representation? Is there an internet site? Are there facilities for the press? Is there a Hansard system? Is the Hansard utilized by the press or others? Are there staff members responsible for public outreach? Is there a hotline or information desk where the public can find out the status of legislation? ▪ How regularly do members receive communications from constituents? How are these communications processed? Do members have offices in the legislature? Do these offices have needed equipment such as phone lines, computers, and fax capability? Is this infrastructure utilized? Do members have staff to conduct constituent casework? ▪ How much time do legislators spend in their constituencies? Do they have budgets to travel to their constituencies? Are there district offices? District office staff? If not, are party branch offices used effectively? In a nationwide list system, do parties have internal mechanisms for assigning individual MPs geographic responsibilities for constituent representation ▪ How does the legislature deal with complaints from citizens? Is there a formal mechanism? An ombudsman's office? ▪ How do orientation and training programs within the legislature address representation issues? ▪ Do members have good media-relations skills? How often do individual members give interviews, issue press releases, and appear on talk shows or radio call in shows?
<p style="text-align: center;">External Capacity (The Capacity of the Represented)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do civil society groups feel that the legislature represents them? That their MP represents them? What is the level of civil society knowledge of parliamentary procedures? Their level of access? ▪ Do civil society groups look only to the executive branch/government for representation or also to the legislative branch/parliament? ▪ Do citizens feel the legislature represents them? That their representative represents them? What is the level of civic knowledge of the legislature? ▪ Is civic education a part of school curricula? ▪ How does the private sector seek to influence legislation? ▪ Do non-governmental actors, including the private sector, unions, NGOs, think tanks, grassroots organizations and others seek to engage and influence government generally, and the legislature in particular? ▪ To what extent do non-governmental actors have resources (i.e., time, interest, money, people) to invest in influencing legislatures? Do they have capacity? ▪ Do civil society groups and individuals volunteer or otherwise contribute to campaigns? ▪ What capacity does the press have to cover the legislature? Does the press effectively communicate the actions of the legislature? ▪ Does the press report on party and individual voting behavior? On town hall meetings of representatives, committee hearings, etc.?

APPENDIX III: Selected Additional Resources

Articles and Publications

Communication Between Representatives and their Constituents, Karl Kurtz, the National Council of State Legislators, Washington, 1997. (available at www.ncsl.org)

Conducting a Democracy and Governance Assessment: A Framework for Strategic Development, Technical Publication Series, US Agency for International Development's Center for Democracy and Governance, Washington, 2000. (available at www.usaid.gov)

The Legislature and Constituency Relations, John Johnson, for the United Nations Development Program, New York, 2001.

Making Democracy Work for the Elimination of Poverty, the Department For International Development, London, 2001. (available at www.dfid.gov.uk/publications)

USAID Handbook on Legislative Strengthening, Center for Democracy and Governance, US Agency for International Development, Washington, 2000. (available at www.usaid.gov/democracy/pubsindex.htm)

Books

The Case for Representative Democracy: What Americans Should Know about their Legislatures, Alan Rosenthal, Karl Kurtz, John Hibbing and Burdett Loomis, National Council of State Legislatures, Denver, 2001.

Does Parliament Matter?, Philip Norton, Harvester Wheatsheaf, (London) 1993.

The Legislative Connection: The Politics of Representation in Kenya, Korea and Turkey, Chong Lim Kim, Joel D. Barkan, Ilter Turan and Malcolm E. Jewell, a publication of the Consortium for Comparative Legislative Studies, Duke University Press (North Carolina) 1984.

Parliament and Governments in the Next Millenium, Priyane Wijesekira and Diana Reynolds, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (London) 2001.

Parliamentary Representation. The Case of the Norwegian Storting, Donald R. Matthews and Henry Valen, Ohio State University Press (Columbus, Ohio) 1999.

Representatives of the People? Parliaments and Constituents in Western Democracies, a collection of articles, edited by Vernon Bogdanor, Gower (Aldershot, UK) 1985.

Useful Websites

www.aceproject.org

An online collection of research and opinions on the administration and cost of elections, with reference to issues such as minority representation, quotas and political party building. The Ace Project is a collaborative effort of the Institute for Electoral Systems, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and the United Nations Development Program.

www.britcoun.org/governance/index.htm

A website for the British Council, with project reports, working papers and related information on governance programs throughout the world.

www.comparlhq.uk

A website for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, with access to information about developments in parliaments around the world, as well as the CPA's monthly magazine, *The Parliamentarian*.

www.csd.bg

A website for the Center for the Study of Democracy, a Bulgarian think tank that promotes public policy debate and civil society involvement in government. The site offers perspective on civil society programs in developing democracies.

www.fes.de

A website for the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, a German foundation associated with the Social Democratic Party that supports democracy building and conflict resolution around the world. The site provides access to publications, project reports and other information related to the Foundation's efforts globally.

www.idasa.org.za

A website for the Institute for Democracy in South Africa, a South African NGO active in democracy-strengthening activities in the southern African region. The site provides detailed information on civil society advocacy and watchdog efforts, as well as a searchable database of scholarly articles and research on developing democracies.

www.idea.int

A website for the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Systems, an international democracy strengthening organization based in Stockholm, Sweden. The site provides access to reports, discussion documents and research papers on activities in various countries, including an interactive Democracy Assessment Questionnaire.

www.ifes.org

A website for the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, an international democracy strengthening organization based in Washington, DC. The site provides access to project reports, research and articles, particularly on elections.

www.iri.org

A website for the International Republican Institute, an international democracy strengthening organization based in Washington, DC. The site provides information on IRI's programs around the world.

www.ipu.org

A website for the Inter Parliamentary Union, with access to information and links to parliaments around the world. The site provides access to its quarterly review, *World of Parliaments*, and three comprehensive databases covering parliaments, literature on parliaments and women in parliaments. Information about the meetings and resolutions of the IPU are also available.

www.ned.org

A website for the National Endowment for Democracy, a US based organization that provides funding for democracy building efforts around the globe. The site provides access to the Journal of Democracy, a joint publication of the NED and the John Hopkins University Press.

www.ndi.org

A website for the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, an international democracy strengthening organization based in Washington, DC. NDI's site provides a portal to its Access Democracy database, which includes full-text versions of hundreds of program reports, research studies and country studies dating back to the Institute's creation in 1985, as well as links to relevant sites in developing democracies.

www.osce.org/odjhr

A website for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The site provides access to research, program reports and other information related to member countries, particularly in the area of anti-corruption.

www.parlcent.parl.gc.ca

A website for the Parliamentary Center, a democracy support organization based in Ottawa, Canada. The site provides useful information about its programs to support democracy globally, as well as democracy developments in Canada.

www.usaid.gov

A website for the US Agency for International Development, the US government's development arm. The site provides access to numerous reports, guides and discussion documents based on its democracy support around the world. The Center for Democracy and Governance and the Center for Development Information and Evaluation are particularly relevant.

www.worldbank.org/wbi

A website for the World Bank Institute, the educational arm of the World Bank Group. The site provides access to hundreds of country reports and discussion papers related to governance worldwide, with particular emphasis on corruption