Assessing the Quality of Democracy

A Practical Guide
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Foreword: the state of democracy

Democracy is the predominant form of government in the world today. For the greater part of the world democracy has been a rare or recent phenomenon, but successive waves of democracy throughout the 20th century meant that by the new millennium more countries were governed through democratic than through non-democratic forms of rule. Various attempts to enumerate democracies in the world agree that more than 60 per cent of all countries today have in place at least some form of minimal democratic institutions and procedures. The Community of Democracies lists more than 100 countries while the United Nations International Conference on New or Restored Democracies (ICNRD) has grown in depth, breadth and importance since it was inaugurated in 1988 as a forum for global democratic development. Increasingly, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations emphasize that democracy is an end in itself, as well as an important means to other ends, such as economic development, poverty reduction and greater protection of internationally recognized human rights.

There have been many explanations for the remarkable growth, spread and pace of democratization. Internal explanations focus on major socio-economic transformations; mobilization by social movements and civil society organizations; class alliances, challenges and revolutions (‘coloured’ or otherwise); and elite agreements and concessions. External explanations focus on the defeat of an incumbent regime in war; the role of ‘contagion’ from democratization processes in neighbouring states; the diffusion of democratic values through processes of globalization and various forms of international intervention, including support for civil society groups and nascent political party organizations, state building, institutionalization, and the specification of criteria for appropriate and acceptable forms of democratic rule; and armed intervention to depose existing regimes and construct democracy by force.
A crucial element in mapping, explaining and encouraging this growth in democracy has been the need for valid, meaningful and reliable ways to measure and assess democratic progress and the quality of democracy itself. Scholars and practitioners have adopted a number of strategies to measure democracy, including categorical measures, scale measures, objective measures and hybrid measures of democratic practices, as well as perceptions of democracy based on mass public opinion surveys. In certain instances, measures have been developed for particular needs and then used for other purposes, while in other instances general measures of democracy have been developed for a wide range of applications by the academic and policy community. The quest for comparability and broad geographical and historical coverage, however, has meant a certain sacrifice of these measures’ ability to capture the context-specific features of democracy, while the turn to good governance, accountability and aid conditionality among leading international donors has created additional demand for measures of democracy that can be used for country, sector and programme-level assessments.

In response to these many developments and the proliferation of democracy measures, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) has developed an alternative framework for democracy assessment that moves away from country ranking and external judgement to comprehensive assessment based on national assessment teams led by governments or civil society and academic institutions. The framework combines a commitment to the fundamental principles of democracy, the mediating values that are related to these principles, and a range of questions about democratic performance. There is scope in the framework for using existing measures while at the same time incorporating much more context-specific information on the quality of democracy that can then be linked to domestic processes of democratic reform. Its use across new and old democracies as diverse as Mongolia and Italy, Bangladesh and Kenya, Peru and Australia has shown that it works, and demand continues for the framework to be applied in new and challenging contexts around the world.

After the successful application of its democracy assessment framework in over 20 countries, International IDEA, along with the UK-based Democratic Audit, the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex in the United Kingdom, and the larger ‘State of Democracy’ network, has drawn on the lessons, built further on the strengths of the framework, and incorporated these into the thoroughly revised framework contained here. Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical
Guide includes all the normative principles and practical elements of the framework, experiences from those countries that have used the framework, and the ways in which democracy assessment can be linked to the process of democratic reform.

The assessment framework outlined here upholds International IDEA’s fundamental principles in supporting democracy worldwide:

- Democratization is a process that requires time and patience.
- Democracy is not achieved through elections alone.
- Democratic practices can be compared but not prescribed.
- Democracy is built from within societies.
- Democracy cannot be imported, or exported, but supported (International IDEA 2005: 12).

This Guide provides a robust package of materials that are grounded in many years of experience and practical application in old and new democracies across the world. This volume is complemented by another, entitled Assessing the Quality of Democracy: An Overview, which provides an introduction to the framework, including its fundamental democratic principles, its mediating values, the assessment search questions, examples of its application around the world, the typical steps in carrying out an assessment, and its value as a tool for promoting democratic reform. Both volumes should prove highly attractive to grass roots democracy activists, civil society organizations, reform-minded actors in political society and in government, and those international donor agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that are committed to building democracy for the future.
Preface

Democracy has spread and taken root in many parts of the world in the past three decades. While the performance and quality of these democracies differ, more people than ever before are governed by elected representatives. The democratic form of government has thus achieved global dominance. Regimes that have so far failed to usher in a democratic dispensation lack legitimacy. Citizens in such countries continue to demonstrate their aspirations for freedom, dignity and the opportunity to elect governments of their choice through engagement in various forms of struggle – regardless of the risks they may encounter in doing so.

While ‘transitional moments’ such as the first democratic elections or the departure of an authoritarian government can be formative moments of democracy, historical evidence shows that the building of democracy and the consolidation of democratic institutions are long and complex processes. Along this road it becomes essential to assess the performance of democratic institutions and the quality of democratic processes.

Various institutions have developed and continue to develop measures and tools for gauging democratic performance and quality. Since 2000, International IDEA has contributed to this field through the development of the State of Democracy (SoD) assessment methodology outlined in this Guide. International IDEA is guided by the premise that democracy is a universal value and aspiration. However, it is also an inherently local political process that must be supported through context-sensitive approaches which are anchored on local leadership and local ownership of democracy-building processes. This principle underpins International IDEA’s approach to democracy building generally and to the SoD assessment methodology in particular.
In this guide we set out a democracy assessment methodology that puts the responsibility for evaluating the quality of democracy in the hands of citizens and others who reside in the country being assessed. Notwithstanding the invaluable role played by external actors in supporting democratization processes in various countries, it is our conviction that sustainable democracy can only be achieved if those who are affected by its daily practice are the people who ultimately pass judgement on its strengths and weaknesses, and that they are the ones who determine priority areas for reform. The SoD assessment methodology is a tool for citizens to use in undertaking these tasks. It is a global public good that presents an opportunity for citizens of countries with developing and developed economies, and of new and old democracies, to take charge of and contribute in meaningful ways to bettering the performance and quality of their democracies.

Since the methodology was launched in 2000, a network of its users has developed in different parts of the world. The lessons and experiences they shared with us have greatly enriched this Guide. Others seeking to undertake a democracy assessment using the methodology stand to benefit from lessons learned so far in the application of the methodology in different contexts. Importantly, they will be better informed about how to plan and implement SoD assessments in ways that maximize the possibility of the findings being used and linked to actual reform.

In putting together this guide, International IDEA seeks to provide a user-friendly knowledge resource for those seeking to improve the quality of their democracies. At a time when the debate on democracy and governance assessment is very much on the radar screen of development agencies, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and national actors, International IDEA offers a methodology for ‘self-assessment’ which has so far been applied in no fewer than 20 countries in different parts of the world. For those engaged in democracy assistance, the SoD methodology provides an opportunity for such assistance to be informed by locally defined priorities for democratic reform.

Vidar Helgesen
Secretary-General
International IDEA
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- The assessment framework

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- Democracy assessments: origins, funding and form
- Coordinating the assessments
- Putting the democratic messages across
- Dissemination
- Engaging the public
- Engaging with the public
- The lessons are clear

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<td>ACDA</td>
<td>Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (USA)</td>
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<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979</td>
</tr>
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<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
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<td>CSCE</td>
<td>Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
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<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee (OECD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUMAP</td>
<td>EU Monitoring and Advocacy Programme (OSI)</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>GATT</td>
<td>General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade</td>
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<td>ICAC</td>
<td>Independent Commission against Corruption (Hong Kong)</td>
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<td>ICCPR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966</td>
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<td>ICESCR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966</td>
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<td>IDASA</td>
<td>Institute for Democracy in South Africa</td>
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<td>International IDEA</td>
<td>International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance</td>
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<td>IIDH</td>
<td>Interamerican Institute for Human Rights (Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos)</td>
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<td>IKNOW</td>
<td>International Knowledge Network (of Women in Politics)</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>IMER</td>
<td>International Migration and Ethnic Relations (Bergen, Norway)</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>IPU</td>
<td>Inter-Parliamentary Union</td>
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<td>NDI</td>
<td>National Democratic Institute for International Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organization of African Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODIHR</td>
<td>Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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OHCHR  Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE  Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSF  Open Society Forum
OSI  Open Society Institute
SAARC  South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SADC  Southern African Development Community
SoD  State of Democracy (methodology)
TASC  Think Tank for Action on Social Change (Ireland)
UK  United Kingdom
UN  United Nations
UNCTAD  United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAW  United Nations, Division for the Advancement of Women
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
UNEP  United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCHR  United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNICEF  United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIFEM  United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNODC  United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNTS  United Nations Treaty Series
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
WHO  World Health Organization
Democracy assessment: explaining the method
Democracy assessment: explaining the method

[1] Every person is entitled to live their life in dignity and free from fear, with a fair share in their country’s resources and an equal say in how they are governed. Democracy is an attractive form of government because its principles embrace these human needs and desires and can often deliver them in reality. And the more experience people have of living in a democracy, as the democracy assessment in South Asia found (see Part 3), the more they support democracy.

[2] The democratic ideal in and of itself seeks to guarantee equality and basic freedoms; to empower ordinary people; to resolve disagreements through peaceful dialogue; to respect difference; and to bring about political and social renewal without convulsions. The principle of ‘popular rule’, or rule by popularly elected representatives, is at the heart of this ideal, but it also has different and overlapping meanings for different people within and between nations and regions. Broadly, for people around the world it means popular control over elected rulers, equal rights and liberties, political freedom and freedom from want, the rule of law, justice and security, but with differing emphases. Thus, in countries in South Asia, equality of outcomes and community rights are a significant aspect of what people want from democracy; in Western Europe, political freedom and the rule of law are valued, although social rights also figure largely.

[3] But these democratic ideals are easier to endorse in principle than to realize in practice. There is no such thing as a perfect democracy. Democracy is not an all-or-nothing affair, but rather a shifting continuum. Countries are more or less democratic overall, and more or less democratic in the various aspects of their political and social life.

[4] The International IDEA democracy assessment framework gives groups of people in any one country a mirror with which they can assess the quality of their democracy and which will help them answer, in brief,
the apparently simple questions ‘How democratic are our country and its government?’ and ‘What are the strengths of our democracy, and what are its weaknesses?’. Yet these questions in turn raise others. How do we know exactly what we should be assessing, and by what criteria should we judge it as democratic? To answer these questions, the framework offers a clear conception of representative democracy and its core principles, and an understanding of how these principles may be realized through institutional, political and social practices.

There is no such thing as a perfect democracy. Democracy is not an all-or-nothing affair, but rather a shifting continuum.

Since 2000, no fewer than 20 countries around the world – as different as Mongolia and Italy, Bangladesh and Kenya, Peru and Australia – have used the framework for democracy assessment to evaluate how well their democracies are working, to raise popular consciousness and to identify areas where they can be improved. Some assessments were pilot schemes promoted by International IDEA to test the viability of the assessment framework (Bangladesh, El Salvador, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, New Zealand, Peru, South Korea). Later ones have been initiated entirely from within the countries concerned, although by widely differing agencies – academic institutes, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and think tanks, and even governments themselves (Mongolia, the Netherlands). Some have been full assessments, as in the United Kingdom (UK), some a series of investigative reports, as in Australia, some a patient assembly of reports as funds become available, as in the Philippines; some have drawn heavily on extensive polling, as in the South Asia study of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Some assessment teams have sought to measure the changing strengths of their democracy over time. In the UK, Democratic Audit has carried out three assessments since 1998 and is committed to a further assessment in the next few years; Latvia will be conducting a smaller assessment exercise to monitor progress since its first in 2005.

There are striking differences between the countries in which assessments have taken place, which suggests that the methodology has a universal application. The countries range in size from India, the world’s largest democracy, to El Salvador, in experience of democracy from New Zealand to Mongolia, and in level of economic development from European nations such as the Netherlands to Malawi in sub-Saharan Africa. Mongolia is a sparsely populated land with a largely nomadic way of life; the Netherlands is a densely populated modern state. Aus-
tralia and India are federal states; the rest are unitary states. The modes of funding and costs of the 17 projects so far have varied enormously (see Part 3 for a detailed analysis). But all the assessment projects share a common core. They have all adhered to the basic proposition that the only people who can have legitimacy in assessing the quality of their country’s democracy are citizens of that country, and that country ownership of the assessment is necessary for it to be able to influence the course of democratic progress and reform.

The International IDEA democracy assessment methodology has a universal application.

In Annex A, ‘Other ways of assessing democracy’, we compare the IDEA framework with other methodologies for assessing democracy current in the world today and explain the essential differences in principle and practice between them. The International IDEA framework is, in brief, the only one to insist that only those who know a country’s culture, traditions and aspirations are properly qualified to assess its democracy. The purpose of International IDEA’s SoD assessment programme is to put the future of democracies around the world in the hands of their own citizens.

The main features of the International IDEA approach may be summarized as follows.

- Only citizens and others who live in the country being assessed should carry out a democracy assessment, since only they can know from experience how their country’s history and culture shape its approach to democratic principles.
- A democracy assessment by citizens and residents of a country may be mobilized by government or external agencies only under strict safeguards of the independence of the assessment.
- The prime purpose of democracy assessment is to contribute to public debate and consciousness raising, and the exercise ought to allow for the expression of popular understanding as well as any elite consensus.
- The assessment should assist in identifying priorities for reform and monitoring their progress.
- The criteria for assessment should be derived from clearly defined democratic principles and should embrace the widest range of democracy issues, while allowing assessors to choose priorities for examination according to local needs.
• The assessments should be qualitative judgements of strengths and weaknesses in each area, strengthened by quantitative measures where appropriate.
• The assessors should choose benchmarks or standards for assessment, based on the country’s history, regional practice and international norms, as they think appropriate.
• The assessment process should involve wide public consultation, including a national workshop to validate the findings.
• Old as well as new democracies can and should be subject to a similar framework of assessment.

Only those who know a country’s culture, traditions and aspirations are properly qualified to assess its democracy.

The assessment framework

[9] We stated above that the answer to the apparently simple question ‘How democratic are our country and its government?’ required first that we start with a clear conception of democracy and its core principles, and an understanding of how these principles may be embodied in institutional, political and social practices.

[10] First, then, what is democracy? If we examine the main currents of theorizing about democracy from the ancient Greeks onwards; if we pay attention to what those claiming to struggle for democracy have been struggling for; if, in particular, we have regard for the objections of opponents of democracy throughout the ages, then a relatively clear and consistent set of ideas emerges. Democracy is a political concept, concerning the collectively binding decisions about the rules and policies of a group, association or society. Such decision making can be said to be democratic to the extent that it is subject to the controlling influence of all members of the collectivity considered as equals.

[11] The key democratic principles are those of popular control and political equality. These principles define what democrats at all times and in all places have struggled for – to make popular control over public decision making both more effective and more inclusive; to remove an elite monopoly over decision making and its benefits; and to overcome obstacles such as those of gender, ethnicity, religion, language, class, wealth and so on to the equal exercise of citizenship rights.
These two principles are most fully realized in small groups or associations where everyone is guaranteed an effective equal right to speak and vote on rules and policies in person. In larger associations, and especially at the level of a whole society, practical considerations of time and space demand that collective decisions be taken by designated agents or representatives acting on behalf of the rest. For most people, then, democracy is realized in the first instance not as direct popular control over public decision making, but as control over the decision makers who act in their place. How effective that control is and how equally distributed it is between individual citizens, and between different groups of citizens, according to their numbers, are key criteria for determining how democratic a system of representative government actually is, whether at national, regional or local level.

Where does freedom or liberty fit into these two principles? It should be evident that there can be no ongoing popular control or influence over public decision making unless people are able to speak their minds freely, to debate openly with others, to associate freely with them, to receive and impart information without hindrance, and to have the means and the confidence to undertake and share in these activities. Popular liberties have been recognized as integral to the democratic principles of the recognized body politic since democracy's early days in ancient Athens. In this sense, therefore, liberty is entailed by the idea of democracy, and does not have to be ‘added on’ as something extra to it; nor is it even a uniquely modern political concept (although the growing emphasis in democratic ideals on economic, social and cultural rights is a modern concept).

The key democratic principles are those of popular control and political equality. For most people, democracy is realized in the first instance not as direct popular control over public decision making, but as control over the decision makers who act in their place.

These two principles, then, of popular control and political equality, form the guiding thread of a democracy assessment. The more they are present, the more democratic we can judge a system of public decision making to be. As they stand, however, these principles are too general to serve as a precise assessment tool.

In order to see how we get from them to the institutional procedures of representative government, and to a set of more precise criteria by
which they can be assessed, we need to consider how far these principles shape and inform the institutions and procedures of representative government. Here we define what we call the ‘mediating values’ through which people have sought to give effect to these principles in a country’s institutional arrangements and practice. These mediating values are set out in Table 1.1.

The first column of the table lists the main mediating values that derive from our two democratic principles. The second column sets out what is required for these values to be made effective in practice. The third column lists the typical institutions through which these requirements can be met in a system of representative government. Together they build up the main features of our democracy assessment framework.

To consider how far the principles of popular control and political equality shape and inform the institutions and procedures of representative government, we need to define what are here called the ‘mediating values’ through which people have sought to give effect to these principles in a country’s institutional arrangements and practice.
### Table 1.1. Democratic principles and mediating values

**Basic principles:**
- *popular control* over public decision making and decision makers
- *equality* of respect and voice between citizens in the exercise of that control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediating values</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Institutional means of realization</th>
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| **Participation** | • Rights to participate  
• Capacities/resources to participate  
• Agencies for participation  
• Participatory culture | • Civil and political rights system  
• Economic, social and cultural rights  
• Elections, parties, NGOs  
• Education for citizenship |
| **Authorization** | • Validation of constitution  
• Choice of office holders/programmes  
• Control of elected over non-elected executive personnel | • Referendums  
• Free and fair elections  
• Systems of subordination to elected officials |
| **Representation** | • Legislature representative of main currents of popular opinion  
• All public institutions representative of social composition of electorate | • Electoral and party system  
• Anti-discrimination laws  
• Affirmative action policies |
| **Accountability** | • Clear lines of accountability, legal, financial, political, to ensure effective and honest performance; civil service and judicial integrity | • Rule of law, separation of powers  
• Independent auditing process  
• Legally enforceable standards  
• Strong powers for scrutinizing legislation |
| **Transparency** | • Government open to legislative and public scrutiny and debate | • Parliament as a forum for national debate  
• Freedom of information laws  
• Independent media |
| **Responsiveness** | • Accessibility of government to electors and different sections of public opinion in policy formation, implementation and service delivery | • Systematic, open and accessible procedures and channels of public consultation  
• Effective legal redress  
• Local government close to people |
| **Solidarity** | • Tolerance of diversity at home  
• Support for democratic governments and popular struggles for democracy abroad | • Civic and human rights education  
• International human rights law  
• UN and other agencies  
• International NGOs |
Mediating values

[16] The list of mediating values is largely self-explanatory.

• Without citizen participation and the rights, the freedoms and the means to participate, the principle of popular control over government cannot begin to be realized.

• The starting point of participation is to authorize public representatives or officials through free and fair electoral choice, and in a manner which produces a legislature that is representative of the different tendencies of public opinion.

• If different groups of citizens are treated on an equal footing, according to their numbers, then the main public institutions will also be socially representative of the citizen body as a whole.

• The accountability of all officials, both to the public directly, and through the mediating institutions of parliament, the courts, the ombudsman and other watchdog agencies, is crucial if officials are to act as agents or servants of the people rather than as their masters.

• Without openness or transparency in government, no effective accountability is possible.

• Responsiveness to public needs, through a variety of institutions through which those needs can be articulated, is a key indication of the level of controlling influence which people have over government.

• Finally, while equality runs as a principle through all the mediating values, it finds particular expression in the solidarity which citizens of democracies show to those who differ from themselves at home, and towards popular struggles for democracy abroad.

[17] Much more could be said about each of these mediating values. Perhaps it will be sufficient here to clarify the distinction between the ideas of accountability and responsiveness, since they are frequently confused. Accountability involves office holders being required to account for actions they have taken after they have taken them (ex post), with the realistic prospect of appropriate sanctions being applied in the event of misconduct, negligence or failure. Responsiveness, on the other hand, involves having systematic procedures for consulting public opinion and relevant interests before policy or legislation is decided (ex ante), so that its content will reflect the views of those affected by it. Both responsiveness and accountability are necessary for effective popular control over government.

Democratic institutions

[18] The third column of Table 1.1 then sets out the institutions that provide the means to realize these mediating values. The list in this
column presents examples and is not exhaustive. And it will be observed that some institutions serve, or may serve, to realize more than one value. Thus the electoral process serves to realize the values of participation, authorization, representation and accountability simultaneously, and it is therefore against all these criteria that it can be judged. Similarly, the associational life of what is called ‘civil society’, including political parties, NGOs and other associations, contributes to a number of different values, and again it is consequently against a number of different criteria that it can be assessed. From the other side, a value such as participation also underpins the accountability and responsiveness of the process of government, and so ensures the interconnectedness of different elements in the assessment framework. If these complexities are understood, as well as the basic logic of the progression from key principles, through mediating values and their requirements, to institutional processes, then the account of the assessment framework that follows below should be readily understood. Our aim is to construct the assessment framework around a coherent narrative of democracy, rather than as a random set of items put together without explanation.

Democracy, then, begins with a set of principles or ‘regulative ideals’, and only then come the institutional arrangements and procedures through which these principles are realized. Although these arrangements and procedures form the subject of our assessment, as in the framework set out below, the criteria against which they are to be assessed are the core principles themselves, and the mediating values of accountability, representativeness, responsiveness and so on. It is these that determine how democratic we should judge our institutional arrangements to be.

What the framework assesses

The full assessment framework is set out in Part 2 of this guide, which contains first the criteria (or search questions) that are used to systematize the assessment process, and then the full four-pillar framework itself. Here we describe and explain the framework (see Table 1.2).
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.1. Nationhood and citizenship</strong>&lt;br&gt;Is there public agreement on a common citizenship without discrimination?</td>
<td><strong>2.1. Free and fair elections</strong>&lt;br&gt;Do elections give the people control over governments and their policies?</td>
<td><strong>3.1. The media in a democratic society</strong>&lt;br&gt;Do the media operate in a way that sustains democratic values?</td>
<td><strong>4.1. External influences on the country’s democracy</strong>&lt;br&gt;Is the impact of external influences broadly supportive of the country’s democracy?</td>
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<td><strong>1.2. The rule of law and access to justice</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are state and society consistently subject to the law?</td>
<td><strong>2.2. The democratic role of political parties</strong>&lt;br&gt;Does the party system assist the working of democracy?</td>
<td><strong>3.2. Political participation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Is there full citizen participation in public life?</td>
<td><strong>4.2. The country’s democratic impact abroad</strong>&lt;br&gt;Do the country’s international policies contribute to strengthening global democracy?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.3. Civil and political rights</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are civil and political rights equally guaranteed for all?</td>
<td><strong>2.3. Effective and responsive government</strong>&lt;br&gt;Is government effective in serving the public and responsive to its concerns?</td>
<td><strong>3.3. Decentralization</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are decisions taken at the level of government which is most appropriate for the people affected?</td>
<td>&lt;br&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4. Economic and social rights</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are economic and social rights equally guaranteed for all?</td>
<td><strong>2.4. The democratic effectiveness of parliament</strong>&lt;br&gt;Does the parliament or legislature contribute effectively to the democratic process?</td>
<td><strong>3.4.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2.5. Civilian control of the military and police</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are the military and police forces under civilian control?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2.6. Integrity in public life</strong>&lt;br&gt;Is integrity in the conduct of public life assured?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Citizenship, law and rights

Democracy starts with the citizen, and the subject of the first pillar of the framework is the rights of the citizen and the ability of the state to guarantee equal rights of citizenship to all through its constitutional and legal processes. This starting point is made more complex in a globalized world by the presence in many countries of non-citizens – migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers and so on – whose rights are often severely restricted or denied. The guarantee of civil and political rights needs no special justification in a democracy assessment, since these rights are manifestly necessary for participation in the political process in association with others. To include economic and social rights, however, is more contestable (and especially so in the case of non-citizens). Many political scientists take the view that democracy is about the processes of public decision making, rather than its outcomes, and that the delivery of economic and social rights is only one possible outcome of government, which is contested between different political parties in their policy programmes. Our view, in contrast, is that the inclusion of an economic and social rights audit is justifiable in terms of both process and outcome. As regards process, it is a necessary condition for the exercise of civil and political rights that people should be alive to exercise them and should have the capacities and resources to do so effectively. At the same time, people do – rightly – judge the quality of a democracy in terms of its ability to secure them the basic economic and social rights on which a minimally decent human life depends. If democracy cannot deliver better outcomes in this respect than authoritarianism, why should they support it? Such considerations have been especially strongly urged by our partners in the South in discussions about the content of the assessment framework.

Representative and accountable government

If the first pillar of democracy is the guarantee of basic human rights to citizens and non-citizens, the second comprises the institutions of representative and accountable government. The sections here in-
clude the familiar agenda of the electoral process, the political party
system, the role of the parliament or legislature and other institutions
in securing the integrity and accountability of government officials,
and civilian control over the military and police forces. A separate
section is devoted to integrity in public life, on the ground that the
trustworthiness of public officials is an issue of central concern to all
democracies and their citizens.

**Civil society and popular participation**

[23] The third pillar of our assessment framework is devoted to what is
conventionally called ‘civil society’. Democratic institutions depend
for their effective functioning both on guaranteed rights upheld by
the legal process and on an alert and active citizen body. Key elements
contributing to the latter are independent and pluralistic media of
communication, and a vigorous network of voluntary associations of
all kinds, through which citizens can act to manage their own affairs
and influence public policy. The vigour of associational life is in turn
an important condition for securing the responsiveness of govern-
ment policy, and ensuring that the delivery of public services meets
the needs of the population, especially at the most local level.

**Democracy beyond the state**

[24] The fourth pillar concerns the international dimensions of democ-
racy. Its rationale is that countries do not form isolated units but
are mutually interdependent, especially in their degree of democratic
progress. So it is entirely relevant to consider how far the external pro-
file of a country’s policy is supportive of democracy abroad. Ideally, in
any global survey of democracy, the democratic character of the key
international institutions, such as the World Bank and the United
Nations (UN), should also be the subject of assessment, alongside
that of individual countries. For reasons of space this cannot be un-
dertaken here. However, we have included considerations of how far
a country’s internal policy is determined by unaccountable external
powers in our assessment framework at this point. Again, this has
been especially urged in contributions from experts in the South.

[25] In federal systems of government, these international aspects may be
more clearly relevant at the federal than the level of the individual
state. Any assessment of countries with a federal structure will de-
pend on the precise distribution of functions and powers between the
different levels. Although assessing such countries, whether at federal
or state level, or some combination of the two, will be more compli-
In countries with a federal structure, the International IDEA framework is applicable to both the federal and the state levels, and it can readily be adjusted to the circumstances of the particular country.

The complete framework, with the full list of assessment questions for each section, is contained in Part 2 of the guide. Even a cursory glance will reveal that it constitutes a substantial agenda of enquiry, which may be quite discouraging to undertake. Various possibilities are open to minimize the difficulty. One is to enlist a team of assessors with different types of expertise, as the assessment team in Latvia did, and to arrange an appropriate division of labour between them. Another is to go for a ‘broad but shallow’ approach which will address the full agenda but in a more impressionistic manner. A third is to select particular sections for assessment, in view of their significance in terms of current debate or priority of concern, or even in the light of the resources available, as the Philippines assessment has done. These and other strategies will be discussed more fully in the section on the assessment process below. But it is worth pointing out here that in the Philippines Edna Estefania Co was able to establish her rolling programme of assessments by taking advantage of the fact that individual sections of the framework have been constructed so that they form self-contained units of assessment (albeit in such a way that their location within an overall account of democracy and its components can be readily identified and understood).

This assessment framework, in conclusion, is one that can be used for both old and new democracies alike. This conclusion is based on the belief that democracy is a universal value that, as we have seen, incorporates a variety of perspectives and values within and between different nations and regions. However, many of the institutions and procedures created in the West over many generations of democratic struggle to subject the modern state to popular control, and to make that control more equal and inclusive, have a value for the new democracies as well, while the assessment process is enriched by the distinctive experience and perspectives of those engaged in establishing systems of democratic government for the first time. We hope that these perspectives are sufficiently reflected in our assessment
framework. In any case the framework is open to further modification to suit local conditions. We all need to learn from each other’s experience. As democrats, we confront similar problems wherever we are, and similar resistances to making government representative, accountable or responsive, even if these are more acute in some places than others. And we are all engaged in processes of democratization, whether these are understood as an original institutionalization and consolidation of democratic procedures, or as their necessary reassertion and renewal in the face of decline.

The framework is flexible. It can be used for old and new democracies alike, and reflects the experiences of both. Individual sections have been constructed so that they form self-contained units of assessment, and it is open to modification to suit local conditions.

The different elements of assessment

[28] The process of democracy assessment should begin with a full account of those cultural, political and economic aspects of the country and its history that have to be taken into account in order to provide an intelligible context for understanding the character of its democratic condition. We have not provided a checklist of these contextual aspects, as they will vary enormously from one country to the next. But assessors could well begin by asking themselves ‘what is the basic information about the country that is necessary for a reader to make sense of our answers to the assessment questions?’. This introduction will also provide an opportunity to answer the question ‘why are we conducting an assessment, and why now?’.

[29] Once this introductory task has been accomplished, we move to the main work of addressing each section of the assessment framework. The framework in Part 2 is divided into four different analytical components or rows: (a) the assessment questions; (b) what to look for; (c) generalized sources; and (d) standards of good practice. The four sections in Table 1.3 provide an example of these distinctive elements at work. They need to be distinguished, as they represent analytically separate elements of the assessment process. Each of these is explained in turn below.
Table 1.3. The assessment framework: four elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.1.1. How inclusive is the political nation and state citizenship of all who live within the territory?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for (criteria questions)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Laws</strong>: examine laws governing citizenship, eligibility, methods and timescale for acquiring it; any distinctions between partial and full citizenship, between men and women in the acquisition of citizenship.</td>
<td>2) <strong>Practice</strong>: examine how fairly and impartially the laws are applied in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) <strong>Negative indicators</strong>: investigate data on exclusions, second-class citizenship, discrimination in the acquisition of citizenship, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generalized sources</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global sources</strong></td>
<td><strong>Africa and the Middle East</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Rights group, <a href="http://civilrights.org/">http://civilrights.org/</a></td>
<td><strong>Americas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Political Science, University of Kansas, <em>Kansas Event Data System</em>, <a href="http://web.ku.edu/keds/index.html">http://web.ku.edu/keds/index.html</a></td>
<td><strong>Asia</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, UK Department for International Development (DFID), Database on social exclusion, <a href="http://www.gsdrc.org">http://www.gsdrc.org</a> (cont’d)</td>
<td><strong>Europe</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adum, Resources on protection of minority languages in EU countries, <a href="http://www.adum.info/adum/">http://www.adum.info/adum/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balkan Human Rights web pages, <a href="http://cm.greekhelsinki.gr">http://cm.greekhelsinki.gr</a> (cont’d)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Standards of good practice

Criteria questions 1) and 2) have the following suggested standards:

For 1): UN Conventions on Refugees and Statelessness:

- UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness*, December 1975; *Declaration on Territorial Asylum*, December 1967

(continued)

For 1) and 2): UN Conventions on Minorities:

- *Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation*, 1966;
- *Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice*, November 1978

(continued)

Indigenous peoples

International standards

- UN, *Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 1994

(continued)

Regional standards


The assessment questions

[30] The first element comprises the questions that drive the assessment process and determine what we should be looking for. As is indicated above, these are set out separately at the start of Part 2 of the guide for ease of reference. The search questions share four distinctive features.

[31] The first is that they are all quite broadly framed so as to provide room for all relevant issues, some of which cannot be precisely identified in a general framework. We recommend that assessors consider each search question in the light of row 2 (what to look for) to ensure that a particular issue of concern to their assessment is appropriately placed.

[32] Second, the assessment questions are phrased in the comparative mode: how inclusive…? how equal…? how representative…? how impartial…? how accountable…? how effective…? and so on. This is because democracy is not an all-or-nothing affair, which a country either has or does not have. Rather it is a matter of degree – of
the extent to which the democratic principles and mediating values are realized in practice. What counts as ‘to a good degree’, and the concept of an appropriate comparator, are considered below. For the moment it is sufficient to emphasize that democracy is a continuum, and that the questions for assessment are phrased comparatively.

The democracy assessment questions are phrased in the comparative mode: how inclusive…? how equal…? how representative…? how impartial…? how accountable…? how effective…? They entail a judgement about what is better or worse in democratic terms.

A third feature of the assessment questions is that they each address a different aspect of the thematic area, or a different mediating value in respect of which it can be assessed. It follows that a country may perform better in some areas than in others, or better in some respects than in others. Not all the democratic values or practices necessarily fit neatly together. An electoral system may produce a highly representative legislature, but one that is also less clearly accountable to its electorate. A legislature may have strong checking powers over the executive, but the executive may have difficulty in achieving the policy programme on which it was elected. Government may be highly responsive to the public, but some sections of the public may have disproportionate influence over it. And so on. The form of the questions enables such distinctions to be readily drawn, and so encourages more complex or nuanced judgements to be made.

Fourth, the questions are all phrased in such a way that a more positive answer would indicate a better outcome from a democratic point of view. In other words, they all ‘point in the same direction’ along the democratic continuum. As such, they also entail a judgement about what is better or worse in democratic terms. Such judgements have already been justified explicitly by reference to the key principles and mediating values outlined earlier. One advantage of this directional uniformity is that the framework can easily be constructed as a questionnaire for preliminary use for training or educational purposes. A sample section is set out in questionnaire form in Annex B.
What to look for

The second row in the framework has sometimes been overlooked by assessors, but it plays a flexible and important part in complementing the search questions by indicating the types of issue that they cover and outlining the kinds of data that are needed to help answer the questions. Typically, they are structured in terms, first, of the legal position; then of how effectively the law is implemented in practice; then of any positive or negative indicators which are relevant to the question. So, for example, in answering a question about the freedom of assembly, we would need to know what rights are guaranteed in the country’s laws and constitution, and any legal restrictions on their exercise. We would then need to know how effectively these rights are upheld in practice, and how any restrictions are interpreted, and at whose discretion. Finally, we would need to examine data on meetings or assemblies refused permission, or disrupted officially or unofficially, on levels of violence, injuries or deaths incurred, and so on, and to assess their incidence and significance in relation to those that have been allowed and held peacefully. A regrettably common feature of many countries is that rights that look perfectly secure in legal or constitutional terms are not upheld in practice. In other words, there is a significant gap between the de jure protection and de facto realization of such rights. The list of data suggested in the second section enables the assessment process to probe systematically behind the formal legal or constitutional position, and to examine how government is actually experienced in the everyday life of the citizens.

Generalized sources

The third section provides a list of suggested sources for the data required in the second section. At this point it is important to register the first of many caveats about our framework. The most useful sources for each question are likely to be those compiled in the country concerned – government statistics, opinion surveys, NGO investigations, academic analyses, and so on. To list all of these for every country in the world would be an impossible undertaking. We have itemized those sources that contain information either on most countries in a region, or globally. Although these require continual updating, they can provide a useful reference point. However, we do not pretend that they are a substitute for in-country sources, or that they are necessarily the most reliable, even when they come from a prestigious institution. Most have their own biases, which may well be Western ones, and they should therefore be treated with some caution. Most assessors in practice will want to use sources of data that are already in the public
domain, and judging their reliability is an important part of the assessment process, and important for its legitimacy.

*Standards of good practice*

[37] The final row concerns standards of good practice. Here, an even stronger reservation is in order. The issue of what are appropriate standards against which a given country’s performance should be assessed is a contestable one, and must be a matter for decision by assessors in the country concerned. What counts as a good standard of performance in respect of each item for assessment? Who should we be comparing ourselves with to determine this? Is it some point in our country’s own past, or the level attained by comparable countries in our situation, or some international standard beyond both? In this row we have made the best compilation we can of possible international standards and examples of good practice to serve as a point of reference. However, we do not want it to pre-empt discussion of which comparators are most appropriate for any given country assessment. To assist this discussion we have set out a full range of possible comparators in Table 1.4, with the rationale for each indicated, and also some of their methodological difficulties. A brief review of these will be useful at this point.

What are appropriate standards against which a given country’s performance should be assessed? This must be a matter for decision by assessors in the country concerned. What counts as a good standard of performance in respect of each item for assessment? Who should we be comparing ourselves with to determine this? Is it some point in our country’s own past, or the level attained by comparable countries in our situation, or some international standard beyond both?

[38] First are *internally generated* standards. These have the great merit of local legitimacy. They can either look back, to some point in the country’s recent past, from which progress (or regression) can be charted. Or they can be determined on the basis of popular expectations about the standards of democratic performance, for which there may be evidence from survey data, from participatory poverty analyses, or from scenario-based planning surveys. Or the government’s own targets for the delivery of its policies or services may be used as a reference point. Or there can be a combination of all three.
### Table 1.4. Possible comparators for standard setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparator</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Methodological difficulties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Internally generated benchmarks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The country’s past</td>
<td>It is important to chart a country’s capacity to progress, or the dangers of regression.</td>
<td>Which point in a country’s past to select as a benchmark and why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular expectations of performance</td>
<td>In a democracy, the people provide the appropriate measure of what should be expected from government.</td>
<td>How to determine popular expectations. The possibility of depressed expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government-set targets</td>
<td>Governments should be assessed against their own performance claims.</td>
<td>Governments have an interest in setting low targets that are easily attainable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Externally derived standards</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparator countries</td>
<td>Comparison with other countries can provide a useful measure of performance, and guide good practice especially where:</td>
<td>Inadequately standardized data collection and differences of context may make comparison between countries unreliable. Such comparisons may carry little legitimacy internally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>they are close neighbours or culturally similar;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic ranking</td>
<td>they are at similar levels of economic development;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time since democratic transition</td>
<td>similar periods of time have elapsed since the end of authoritarian rule;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size/diversity</td>
<td>they experience similar problems or opportunities of size or diversity;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good practice</td>
<td>they show examples of good practice that works.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International standards</td>
<td>Bodies such as the UN possess widespread legitimacy and have long experience of authoritative standard setting in many fields.</td>
<td>Not all international bodies carry the same authority, nor are all international standards equally recognized.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*External standards* can be derived through comparison with similarly placed countries, whether regionally, economically, or in terms of size.
or of the timing of the democratic transition. Or the assessment can refer to international standards of good practice as these are set out in United Nations and other international treaties, or as developed by authoritative bodies such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). It is the international standards that we have brought together in our fourth row, because they are the only ones that can be generalized; but we would emphasize that they are only one of a number of different possible bases for standard setting.

Assessors may in fact choose to use a number of different assessment standards, or to employ different ones for different sections of the framework. Thus using government-set targets may be appropriate in the field of economic and social rights, while allowing popular expectations of performance to set the standard for access to justice or the conduct of elected representatives. This must be a matter for country-based decision. Two general points are worth making, however.

**Assessors choose to use a number of different assessment standards or to employ different ones for different sections of the democracy assessment framework.**

The first is that the purpose of the assessment is to identify strengths as well as weaknesses, and to chart progress as well as to identify what most needs improving. An unrelieved diet of bad news is simply debilitating. So a combination of looking back to a reference point in the past, from which improvement can be charted, with a future-oriented standard or benchmark which helps identify what still has to be done, may well have merit. Like athletes in training who use past performance to measure their progress as well as a national or international standard to provide a target to aim for, a democracy assessment can also employ benchmarks of both kinds.

The second point to make is that we cannot avoid taking a position on relevant standards or benchmarks if we are engaged in a democracy assessment. What position we take will determine both what data we look for in answering a given question and how we present it. ‘Letting the facts speak for themselves’ does not relieve us from making a judgement, even if this is only done by implication. So, for example, if our question is about public access to government information, then the examples of government non-disclosure that
we draw attention to in any findings will depend on a prior conception we have of what count as legitimate exceptions from the norm of disclosure (to protect privacy, say, or national security, or commercial confidentiality), and what do not – as well as, of course, whether the government manipulates such categories to withhold information which could properly be released.

We cannot avoid taking a position on relevant standards or benchmarks if we are engaged in a democracy assessment.

Charting the process of the assessment

[43] The purpose of this section is to explore the assessment process itself and to identify the kinds of choices that have to be made in each of its stages. The basic assumptions guiding our account are that the primary, though by no means the only, purpose of a democracy assessment is to contribute to public debate and consciousness raising, and that the appropriate people to undertake an assessment are the citizens of the country concerned.

Legitimizing the assessment

[44] The starting point should be the coming together of a group of people committed to the idea of a democracy assessment in their country, some of whom may become involved in the assessment process itself. We could call this group the 'steering group’, which will take responsibility for raising funds for the project and overseeing its execution. At two key points at least, this group will need to call in the help of a much larger body of people, which is representative of civil society in its different aspects, and may also include sympathetic individuals from government and the public sector. These people are required first, at the start of the project, to discuss the issues that will serve to guide the focus and direction of the assessment, and to help launch the enterprise; and, second, towards the end, to discuss the preliminary findings of the assessment, to suggest improvements, and to prepare the ground for it to be disseminated as widely as possible. The more representative this wider body is, the greater the legitimacy the resulting assessment will have, and the greater will be the chance of its influencing public debate and the policy process itself. Key mem-
bers of this body might be identified and brought in from the first meeting to act as a standing advisory group available for consultation throughout the assessment process.

The initiators of democracy assessment will need the help of a much larger body of people that is representative of civil society in its different aspects, and may include sympathetic individuals from government and the public sector. These people are required to discuss the issues that will guide the focus and direction of the assessment, help launch the enterprise, discuss the preliminary findings, suggest improvements and prepare the ground for the assessment to be disseminated as widely as possible. The more representative this wider body is, the greater the legitimacy the resulting assessment will have, and the greater will be the chance of it influencing public debate and the policy process itself.

It is worth giving further consideration to the issue of how to enhance the legitimacy of a democracy assessment. Since conducting such an assessment necessarily entails assessing, or making judgements (even if the judgements are positive as well as critical), a common question asked is ‘By what or whose authority are you doing this?’. Anyone who is likely to be offended by critical aspects of the assessment will be inclined to question the credentials of the assessors by claiming that they have ‘axes to grind’ or that they are identified with a narrow group of disaffected or oppositional elements in the country’s politics. Alternatively, if the assessment is thought to be too soft on known deficiencies, the assessors run the risk of being typecast as ‘loyalists’ or supporters of the government. Their legitimacy is thus an important issue.

Two different ways of increasing the legitimacy of the assessment can be distinguished, both of which are required.

The legitimacy of the assessors is an important issue. Anyone who is likely to be offended by critical aspects of the assessment will be inclined to question the credentials of the assessors, or they run the risk of being typecast as ‘loyalists’ or supporters of the government. It is essential to choose assessors whose professionalism and objectivity are beyond question, and the assessment should have a broad social and political base.
The first is *professional*: the enterprise should be systematic, rigorous, and conducted according to the highest possible standards in terms of the quality of data used, the verification of sources, and so on. In this context it is essential to choose assessors whose professionalism and objectivity are beyond question. A comparative knowledge of good and bad practice in the different aspects of democratic government is also important. It is here that external or international experts with experience of conducting such assessments elsewhere can make a positive contribution, by giving added professional legitimacy to the work.

The second form of legitimacy is *political*: the assessment should have a broad social and political base, through the wider consultative body, which should be referred to for advice on potentially contentious issues around the focus, priorities and benchmarks of the assessment, and for comment on its findings. This body should be as widely representative as possible, and some care may be required in selecting members to make up a body that is representative of potential stakeholders without being too unwieldy. A consultative body should be socially representative, in terms of gender, ethnicity and so on, as well as representative of different political viewpoints. People who are publicly recognized as having independent voices will prove particularly valuable in such a context, as they will help to ensure the objectivity of the assessment process.

A key point to make is that every group of assessors, however well qualified, should involve the public and other interested parties as fully as possible in their inquiries and deliberations from the very beginning, and conduct the assessment in a wholly transparent way. A number of benefits derive from the early adoption of an inclusive and transparent process. One is that constant public involvement and scrutiny should broaden the sweep of issues and information that the group takes into account and lessen the dangers of bias and accusations of bias. A second is that public involvement and knowledge will broaden the ‘ownership’ of the project beyond the immediate group of assessors. Finally, the earlier the process of information and consultation begins, the more effective will be the final dissemination of the findings, and the greater the readiness to take them seriously.

*Every group of assessors, however well qualified, should involve the public and other interested parties as fully as possible. Public involvement and scrutiny should broaden the sweep of issues and information, lessen the dangers of bias and accusations of bias, and broaden the ‘ownership’ of the project.*
Focus groups, consultative workshops or deliberative polls are all means by which a wider public can become included in the project. Focus groups are especially useful for soliciting the views and experience of identifiable groups or minorities within wider society, as well as for obtaining views on specific issues. The South Asia study made extensive use of opinion polling in the five nations it assessed, as well as dialogues and case studies (see Box 1.1). In the UK, Democratic Audit has also collaborated closely in a regular series of polls on democracy issues commissioned by a major trust, framing and interpreting the majority of the questions asked. In Ireland a survey of public attitudes to democracy and the rule of law was undertaken at the outset of the assessment process, and its remarkable findings provided considerable publicity for the launch of the assessment. Such initiatives, if they can be afforded, can do much to legitimize and sharpen the conclusions of democracy assessments. It is also possible to make use of existing polls, but care should be taken about the built-in assumptions of the pollsters, any potential bias in the framing of questions, the sample size and similar questions.

Key stages of the assessment process

It is now time to turn to the assessment process itself, and explore more fully what is involved. In what follows we have selected three key stages of the process for analysis in turn: (a) the initial decisions which will set the direction for the assessment as a whole, and which might form the agenda for a consultative workshop; (b) the process of data collection, analysis and organization, which forms the core of the assessment; and (c) the convening of a national workshop to consider the report and its provisional findings.

Preliminary decisions for the assessment process

A programme of issues to be discussed and decisions to be taken at an early stage of the assessment process, say at an orientation workshop with a consultative group, is set out in Figure 1.1. Many of the issues are in practice interconnected, such that decisions on one will constrain or complement choices on others. Most obviously, if financial resources are modest and there is little chance of additional sources of income being available for the project, this will have implications throughout the decisional process. For purposes of analytical clarity, however, we have separated the issues into discrete decisions, and arranged them into a logical sequence, or ‘decision tree’, to serve as a guide. We discuss each issue briefly in turn below.
The State of Democracy in South Asia study deliberately chose a strategy of using a plurality of methods. This was not only because what was being attempted was a comparative study of five democracies – Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – at various stages of democratic development and contending with different internal forces, but also because of the firm belief that a single method would only give a partial picture and, a limited reading of a complex reality. A single method is bound to be deficient.

The epistemic starting point of the study was the assumption that we must simultaneously use both qualitative and quantitative approaches to give a more comprehensive account of the working of democracy in South Asia. The challenge would be to integrate the findings of the different approaches and present a coherent story. This was done with some difficulty. The study adopted four research pathways: (a) a cross-section attitudinal survey; (b) dialogues; (c) qualitative assessments similar to the State of Democracy framework; and (d) case studies, because each gave us an insight into a different slice of political reality.

The cross-sectional survey of citizen’s attitudes on issues of politics in South Asia, which was the principal pathway, sought to investigate citizens’ views on a range of issues such as the meaning of democracy, trust in institutions, levels of activity, human security, etc. This produced a huge data set of the attitudes and perceptions of different sections of the population on democracy in South Asia.

The dialogues sought to elicit the views of people from civil society organizations and political movements on the working of democracy in South Asia. Since such activists have to continuously campaign and mobilize they have a different view of accountable power and popular control. These views are necessary to complement the aggregate picture emerging from the cross-sectional survey. The dialogues give a more cynical reading of the working of democracy (see the quotations in Box 3.1).

The qualitative assessment was based on the template developed by International IDEA whereby experts were asked to respond to questions that were given to them. The same methodology of the democracy assessment of the State of Democracy framework was followed.

The case studies commissioned were intended to give an in-depth account of some aspects of the working of democracy in South Asia, particularly those considered as ‘inconvenient facts’. These refer to the puzzles and paradoxes that emerge as each country tries both to domesticate and to become domesticated by democracy. These intensive studies serve as theoretical challenges – hence the ‘inconvenient facts’ – to global debates on democracy since it is not quite clear whether they constitute an advance towards or a retreat from the process of deepening democracy.
Figure 1.1. Preliminary decisions for the assessment

- **Purpose of the assessment**
  - Consciousness-raising
  - Influencing public debate
  - Agenda-setting for reform
  - Programme evaluation

- **Content and priorities of the assessment**
  - Whole framework/selected sections
  - Additional issues

- **Benchmarks/comparators to guide the process**
  - Past-/future-oriented
  - In country/external

- **Selection of assessors and division of labour**
  - Academia and research institutes
  - NGOs, lawyers, journalists, etc.
  - Government officials, ministers, national human rights institutes, etc.
  - Preliminary desk study

- **Range of sources to be used**
  - Established sources/new data generation
    - Quantitative data e.g. mass and elite interviews, socio-economic & administrative statistics
    - Qualitative data e.g. focus groups Case studies
  - Governmental/non-governmental
    - In-country/external

- **Consultative arrangements with stakeholders**
  - Continuous/towards beginning and end of project

- **Mode(s) of publication of findings**
  - Choice of language medium
    - Printed publication/website
  - Use of executive summaries and appendices

- **Promotional strategy**
  - Choice of different options (table 1.5)

- **Integration into a reform process**
  - Single report/rolling programme
  - Event-led/work-led time frame

- **Time frame of the project**
  - Budget-led determination of tasks/task-led search for appropriate resources

- **Budgetary resources and constraints**
(a) The Purpose of the assessment

The options set out here are not mutually exclusive, as it is perfectly possible to incorporate an agenda-setting or programme-evaluation dimension into a wider goal of influencing public debate about the state of democracy in the country. However, it is important at the outset to come to a clear and agreed understanding of the main aims of the assessment, as this will help justify it to a wider public, including possible funding bodies. Decisions here will also help shape much of what follows. In particular, the timescale of the project is likely to depend on its precise purpose. Thus the broader purpose of influencing public debate about the country’s democracy might well suggest orienting publication of the results to the election calendar or other significant national occasion to which the assessment can contribute. A more specific reform purpose might require focusing the assessment more narrowly on a constitutional reform process with a timetable already established for public consultation. And evaluating reforms that are already under way might involve adapting to a review timetable which has already been officially set.

These examples are only suggestive. What is important is to recognize the integral link between the purpose of the assessment, its possible content, and its mode and timetable of publication. A further point to make here is that, as regards a possible reform agenda, it is better to use a democracy assessment to identify priorities for reform, or to clarify the principles to guide such reform, than to set out precise proposals or blueprints for change. The disadvantage of the latter is that the assessment process as a whole may become discredited in the eyes of those who do not agree with specific proposals for reform being made, even if otherwise they would be sympathetic to its larger purpose. So, for example, an assessment might well draw attention to the deficiencies of a First Past The Post (FPTP) electoral system, from a democratic point of view, in the context of a given country. But it should stop short of recommending some specific alternative which might prove much more contentious, not least because all electoral systems have some disadvantages. Specific reform proposals could form a supplementary agenda for research, but should be kept separate from the assessment itself (see the section ‘from assessment to reform’ below, paras 110–11).

(b) The content and priorities of the assessment

We have already acknowledged that the assessment framework we have developed is very extensive, and may seem discouragingly large at first sight. Its advantage lies precisely in its completeness, and in the way in which the different aspects of a country’s democratic life
can be located in the context of the whole. It may well be that the expertise and information required to answer the questions already exist in the country, and that the main problem lies in identifying it and bringing it together. Thus a legal expert might well be able to access the data relevant to the section on the rule of law quite readily, a human rights lawyer the section on civil and political rights, an electoral analyst the section on free and fair elections, and so on. So what appears a formidable task at first sight becomes more manageable once it is broken down into its component sections, as the Advanced Social and Political Research Institute (ASPRI) found for its assessment of Latvia. But it remains a large and complex task to pull it all together.

The experience that International IDEA has developed through piloting the assessment framework with in-country experts suggests that a group of three or four people, each with different expertise, and working with research assistance, requires a minimum of six months to complete a preliminary assessment that covers the whole framework. However, this involves using existing data and sources, and means that some questions can be answered more fully than others. Generating new data, say, through opinion surveys, or through consultative benchmarking with consumer groups, or through other forms of research, would extend the time and cost considerably. Much depends, therefore, on the depth to which the issues are to be investigated.

A group of three or four people, each with different expertise, and working with research assistance, requires a minimum of six months to complete a preliminary assessment that covers the whole framework. Generating new data by means of consultative benchmarking with consumer groups or other forms of research would extend the time and cost considerably.

If the cost in time and resources of undertaking the whole assessment proves prohibitive, then a number of possibilities suggest themselves, all involving selection of some kind. One is to select those issues or sections that are most salient to public concern and political debate, and to concentrate on those. If this approach is adopted, it is important that the selection be made explicitly, and in the context of the framework as a whole, so that it is possible to see how the assessment is to be
located within the overall context of the country’s democratic life. If this sense of overall context is lost, there is a danger that any resulting assessment will appear partial and one-sided. It should also be remembered that one purpose of a democracy assessment may be to raise the profile of issues which have so far escaped public attention.

A second strategy is that of the ‘rolling programme’, with different issues and sections undertaken successively as time and resources permit. This was the approach adopted by the first Democratic Audit of the UK and in the Philippines. In the UK, Democratic Audit began by investigating the state of citizens’ rights, before proceeding to an audit of the country’s central political institutions, with the findings of each published in separate volumes. These large studies were complemented by the interim publication of original research papers on more specific issues with a reform focus, which helped bring the auditing process to public attention before the fuller studies were completed. In the Philippines, the assessment received piecemeal funding to carry out assessments on each of the four main pillars of the framework, thereby allowing a complete assessment to be carried out over a longer period of time.

In Australia, the assessment has been built up with a series of research projects on issues judged particularly salient for the country’s democracy, including political finance, the representation of minorities, how well Australian democracy serves women, and many others.

**If the cost in time and resources of undertaking the whole assessment is prohibitive, it is possible to concentrate on those issues or sections that are most salient in public concern and political debate, or to undertake different sections of the framework successively.**

Whichever of these approaches is adopted, the important thing is that any selection that is required should be consonant with the identified purpose, proposed timescale and anticipated impact of the assessment. These goals will naturally depend on country-specific considerations, for which generalizations are difficult to make. By the same token, there may well be some distinctive issues or questions that call for investigation, which are not fully covered in our assessment framework. Adding questions or adapting them to the conditions or
priorities of the individual country must be a matter for local discretion, although the advantage of maintaining comparability with assessments being conducted elsewhere should also be recognized.

Some country-specific considerations or questions, which are not fully covered in our assessment framework, may call for additional investigation. Adding or adapting questions to the conditions or priorities of the country must be a matter for local discretion.

(c) Benchmarks or comparators to guide the process

The importance of being clear about possible benchmarks or comparators against which a country’s level of democracy might appropriately be assessed has been discussed above, and the different possibilities are set out and explained in Table 1.4. We have also emphasized the advantage of combining both a backward-looking frame of reference, to chart possible progress, and a present- or future-oriented standard, to identify levels of attainment. Here we discuss possible practical difficulties associated with the different choices.

The purpose of selecting a reference point in the country’s past is to provide a sense of historical perspective to what is otherwise a contemporary snapshot without any context, as well as to assess possible progress. Two practical problems present themselves. The first is how to select an appropriate time-point for reference; the second, how to make an effective comparison in the absence of any systematic assessment having been conducted for the earlier period in question. These problems are much less acute for the new democracies: the point of transition from a previous authoritarian regime provides an obvious reference point. There is also likely to be considerable public agreement on what the defects of that regime were, to provide a basis for assessing change. Finally, there will probably already be a programme of constitutional and public sector reform under way, and there may be ample material for assessing its effectiveness. For longer-established democracies, the selection of a past reference point may be somewhat arbitrary, and its logic therefore less compelling, unless there has been a clear moment of substantial political or constitutional change in the recent past.
Benchmarks or comparators have to be selected against which a country’s level of democracy can appropriately be assessed. These may be a reference point in the country’s past, or other internal or external target standards.

The selection of target standards as the comparator often proves more controversial. As is suggested above, domestic benchmarks are likely to have greater legitimacy than external ones, especially for newly established democracies. Using popular expectations of government performance would seem an entirely appropriate standard for a democracy assessment, but there are some practical difficulties. One is that clear evidence of such expectations may not exist in the public domain, and the cost in time and resources of collecting new survey data, conducting focus group discussions or other participatory exercises, is high. When collected, the evidence from public opinion may be ambiguous or uncertain, especially on issues such as the inner workings of government, say, as compared with the delivery of public services. However, the collection of evidence about popular expectations of government in appropriate areas could form a very useful product of a democracy assessment, especially when coupled with people’s own assessment of the extent to which their expectations are actually met in practice.

A complementary strategy to the above, which is also much cheaper, is to identify official targets for areas of public life, which can be used as possible benchmarks. Most constitutions contain statements of rights and responsibilities, and it is entirely appropriate to investigate how far these are realized in practice. Governments themselves set standards or targets for many areas of public life – standards for the conduct of public officials, or for the practice of open government; future targets for the improvement of health and education or the reduction of poverty; citizens’ charters for the delivery of public services; goals and mission statements of all kinds. Again, identifying these and relating them systematically to the assessment framework can itself be a useful part of the assessment process. Moreover, no benchmark can have greater legitimacy than assessing institutions against their own self-proclaimed standards, even if these are merely intended for declamatory or public-relations effect.

The usefulness of externally derived standards, by contrast, depends very much on how far these are likely to be endorsed by domestic public opinion. If there are natural regional or other comparators, to
which a country’s people will usually relate, then their comparative attainment in different areas could be used to establish a standard of good practice for domestic assessment. Where neighbours are regarded with hostility, on the other hand, such a course may simply prove counterproductive. A familiar practical difficulty with comparative tables is that of standardization: data may be collected in quite different ways in different countries, and differences of context and significance may render them less truly comparable.

Similar qualifications apply to the international standards and examples of good practice that we have collected in row 4 of our assessment framework. Not all of these have been developed by official international or regional bodies of which the country being assessed may be a member. Nor do such standards necessarily command legitimacy in the country itself. However, where the standards are long-established and are widely recognized internationally or regionally they constitute a valuable resource. What is needed is a sensitive application of them that acknowledges such contextual circumstances as the time frame of the country’s democratic evolution and its level of economic development. A useful starting point is to identify which of the main international or regional conventions identified in our fourth row a country has signed up to, and with what reservations or qualifications. This process will at least establish where the country stands officially with regard to the standards that the respective conventions seek to uphold.

As is explained above, there are more firmly accepted international standards for some sections of our framework than others, for example, covering human rights in all their aspects, refugees and asylum seekers, social and environmental targets, and some others. Agreement on standards for political institutions is mostly a long way off, although many states’ legislatures have signed up to the IPU’s declaration of standards for free and fair elections. However, it is a distinctive feature of the current international scene that all kinds of bodies, international, regional and national, both official and civil society-based, are engaged in developing standards for all aspects of public life; and it can be expected that some of these will gain increasing international acceptance over the coming years.

**Internal target standards are likely to have greater legitimacy than external ones. They include popular expectations of government performance (if evidence exists), statements of rights and responsibilities contained in the constitution, and official targets.**
In conclusion, and in the light of what we might describe as an uneven patchwork of different kinds of benchmarks or standards, we would expect that agreement on these will evolve over the course of the assessment, and be clearer for some sections and issues than others. The important thing at the outset, however, is to be aware of the range of options available, and their respective implications, as a matter for early discussion.

(d) Selection of assessors and division of labour

As already discussed, a democracy assessment will need to call on a variety of different kinds of expertise to cover the different sections of the framework. Between them the assessors will need to cover human rights, legal affairs, social and labour issues, the media and public opinion, as well as the more institutional aspects of politics and public participation. The team of assessors ought to be an interdisciplinary group, which might include lawyers, journalists and academics working in the social sciences.

Listing all the desirable qualities of assessors runs the risk of postulating some super-heroic norm for our prospective group! It goes without saying that they will need professional experience in data collection and analysis. At the same time, conducting a democracy assessment is different from producing a standard academic or journalistic article, and involves a readiness to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the country’s democratic life within an explicitly evaluative framework, and to do so with sufficient detachment and impartiality to avoid charges of bias and with sufficient writing skills to make the report accessible.

The usefulness of externally derived standards will depend very much on how far these are likely to be endorsed by domestic public opinion. Not all internal standards command legitimacy in the country itself; a country may not have signed the relevant conventions; and in general agreement on standards for political institutions is a long way off. The international standards in some sections of the International IDEA framework are more generally accepted than those in other sections.

The process adopted by International IDEA for some of its pilot assessments was to use researchers experienced in its methodology to
undertake a preliminary desk assessment using country-based as well as international sources, so as to provide a starting point for the in-country experts. Desk studies were also prepared for the Mongolian assessment. They helped to identify gaps in information on the country that needed to be addressed and complemented the full range of outputs for the assessment project (see Part 3). It is important to note that as a preliminary sifting device desk studies have generally proved useful to the in-country assessors, but they are not a substitute for their own judgement and expertise. Dividing the assessment into two stages in this way is neither necessary nor always desirable.

(e) The use of sources

[72] The use of sources is discussed more fully in the next section (see paras 78–88). Here it is sufficient to note a couple of issues that merit preliminary discussion within a consultative group. The first is whether the resources available will permit new research into public opinion of the kind that is typically quite expensive, whether involving opinion surveys, consultative forums or other research. The usefulness of these to the assessment, both for identifying public expectations and for gauging popular assessment of government or regime performance in specific areas, has already been indicated. A preliminary review of what is already available in the public domain would make a useful contribution to such a discussion.

[73] A further contribution that a consultative group could make to the discussion of possible sources would be to identify from their own contacts and experience those agencies, organizations or individuals already engaged in data collection and analysis in areas relevant to the democracy assessment. It may well be the case that there are campaigning groups or organizations based in the country which already keep systematic data on human rights violations, prison conditions, the incidence of corruption, the harassment of journalists and so on which could provide an invaluable source of information alongside official statistics and academic investigations. Identifying such organizations and linking them where appropriate to the assessment process would offer an additional resource to the project.

(f) Consultative arrangements with stakeholders

[74] The importance of involving a wider consultative group of stakeholders at the beginning of the assessment process, and benefiting from their comments on a draft of the report and its conclusions towards the end, has already been stressed. Whether this group, or some of
its members, should have a standing advisory role throughout must be a matter of judgement, according to the expected timescale of the project, and whether significant decisions affecting focus, content or funding are likely to have to be made as the work progresses.

(g) Publication and promotion

[75] The issues to be considered under this heading are reviewed in paragraphs 96–108. The essential point to make here is that it pays to give careful consideration at the outset of the project to the questions of who the target readership or readerships of the assessment may be, what form or forms of publication are appropriate for this anticipated readership, whether translation will be required, and so on. Choice of publisher or publishing outlet and a promotional strategy can then also be planned at an early stage. As well as publishing the report in hard copy, modern dissemination strategies also involve publication on a website (with links as far as possible), email distribution, and brief popular summaries in hard copy and electronic form. Such strategies require forward planning.

(h) Timescale and financial resources

[76] The decision on a timescale for the project will largely depend on decisions already made on a number of the issues identified above. Even if the assessment is not directed towards a clearly defined future moment in the country’s constitutional or political evolution, potential funding sources will expect a realistic deadline for completion of the programme of work. And the resources obtained will in turn condition the extent or coverage of the assessment, or the depth to which it can probe. An initial exploration of these resourcing considerations may well have to be undertaken prior to a wider consultative meeting. Indeed, the programme of decisions to be taken in the formative stage of the project may better be understood as an evolving or iterative process, in view of their interconnectedness, rather than as the agenda for a single meeting. However, it is important that all the issues should be subject to consultation and made the focus of a workshop with potential stakeholders in the project, so that the project can benefit from their experience and contacts, and the issues can be tested against the widest possible range of viewpoints.
This section concerns the core process of a democracy assessment, and offers guidance on data collection and analysis. Most assessors will develop their own method of working, and there is no one correct method for proceeding in what is inevitably a time-consuming and sometimes laborious activity. However, Figure 1.2 itemizes the stages and tasks that we have found useful in conducting an assessment. Again, each stage is discussed briefly in turn.

(a) Constructing a bibliography

The simplest way of constructing a bibliography is to take each section of the framework in turn, using standard bibliographical searches and other information to hand about likely sources. Academic books and articles are useful for their quality of analysis. Online sources from government departments, official statistical services, polling
organizations, NGOs, news reports, and so on, tend to be more up to date. Our experience is that most sources will be specific to one section of the framework, although they will most likely be relevant to more than one question within it. So it makes good sense to construct the bibliography on a sectional basis, with coding for specific questions where appropriate. Cross-referencing to other sections or questions is a relatively straightforward matter. When the exercise has been completed once, it will become clear which sections or questions are less well covered, and where a more concentrated further round of searching may be required. Adding further items to the bibliography is likely to be an ongoing process throughout the assessment.

Two features of our assessment framework will be of assistance in this stage. Row 2 of the framework sets out the typical data required for answering each question, and thus provides pointers to possible sources. So, for example, many begin with the state of the law, which suggests that the country’s constitution, its bill of rights and more specific legal codes will be necessary sources. Investigating how the law is implemented in practice, on the other hand, is likely to require the use of less official sources of information, such as NGO reports or academic studies. Sometimes an official report, say, from the legislature or ombudsman’s office, on implementation of the law can throw light on whole areas of government practice.

Row 3 of the framework identifies international or regional sources covering more than one country, organized by section and question. They are the ones we have ourselves found useful, and they are organized in a way that is precisely geared to the assessment process and its requirements. Many tend to be written from a Western perspective, however, and in any case they are no substitute for country-specific sources, to which they should be seen as a potentially valuable complement, rather than as an alternative.

Assessing the reliability of different sources is obviously an important task, but depends on local knowledge and experience, and it is impossible to generalize about it. The value of official sources, for example, may well depend on whether the statistical office is genuinely independent of government or is merely another arm of the government’s propaganda machine. Past experience will be an essential guide in this context.

(b) Identifying and sorting data

This stage comprises the painstaking work of reading and, identifying relevant data or evidence and filing or recording it under the
appropriate question. Again it makes sense to proceed on a section-by-section basis, since most of the sources will contain material that is relevant to more than one question (although rarely to more than one section). An important point to bear in mind is that few, if any, of the sources used will be structured towards answering the assessment questions, since they will have been compiled or written for quite different purposes. So the data will need to be ‘dug out’ from the sources, and a lot of irrelevant material either ignored or discarded.

[83] In identifying what is relevant, the main search questions of row 1 of the assessment framework obviously provide the chief guide, supplemented by two further search tools. Row 2 of the framework provides a systematic account of the data relevant to answering each question, and is particularly helpful at this point. Any decisions already taken about benchmarks, whether past attainments, present standards or future targets, provide what can be described as the fine-tuning for the search process.

[84] What sort of data will the assessor be looking for? Anything which throws light on the general condition of the body politic in the relevant area, or which is symptomatic of its condition, is germane. This may be a brief summary by an authoritative expert, the findings of a report, official or unofficial, a statistical table, a legal judgement, an opinion survey, a newspaper or media investigation, some key event or series of events or experiences which typifies a more general condition, or any combination of these. At this stage the more kinds of evidence that can be collected, the better.

[85] It is clear, and has been so from the various experiences in using the framework around the world, that a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data should be collected and analysed. Historical, legal and contextual information provides important background for establishing a baseline assessment of democracy. Qualitative data on people’s experiences of democracy, their perceptions, and areas in need of reform can be collected through a variety of means, including in-depth interviews, participant observation, focus groups, national reflective workshops and conferences. Quantitative data collection and analysis can complement the qualitative work, where numerous indicators across the rows of the framework can be collected to provide a descriptive mapping of democracy. These can be used for ‘second order’ analysis that seeks to identify explanatory factors that account for the patterns observed in the descriptive analysis. If the data are available, such analysis can identify the broad contours in the democratic experience as well as examine significant differences in that experience.
A mixture of qualitative and quantitative data should be collected and analysed.

[86] The goal of combining qualitative and quantitative methods is to provide as rich and robust a portrait of the democratic experience as possible within the resource constraints of any one assessment project. It is also possible that carefully selected quantitative data can provide a ‘snapshot’ to illuminate a whole area of public life. For example, figures of the size of the prison population compared with the supposed prison capacity, of the proportion of prisoners awaiting trial, of the average time taken to bring a case to court – all these can give a rapid insight into the state of a country’s criminal justice system.

[87] Two pieces of cautionary advice are worth giving here. First, avoid making a judgement about the answer to a given question before looking for the data and in this way predetermining the selection of data. Most answers will involve evidence that points to a mixed state of affairs, neither wholly good nor wholly bad, and assessors should try to keep an open mind until the bulk of the relevant data has been collected. The second caution is more elementary: make sure that all verbatim extracts from other sources are placed within quotation marks, so that they do not end up in a finished draft as if they are an original text.

[88] The product of this stage of the assessment might thus be a substantial list of items collected under each question, of very different kinds, with the sources of each identified, and cross-referenced to other questions to which they might also be relevant. They may well be in no particular order and contain much overlap and duplication. But better more than less at this stage. By now it should also be clear where substantial gaps in the record occur, and where new research might be commissioned for the most urgent issues, if funding permits.
(c) Arranging and prioritizing the items

This is the stage of arranging the material collected so that it provides a clear picture, or tells a coherent story, even if it is a complex one. It is a good idea at this point to go back to the original question and re-mind yourself what would count as a relevant answer to it. Then it is a matter of arranging the items in an appropriate order, whether it be of thematic type, order of significance, or historical priority, according to what seems best for the particular question and in the light of the overall focus of the assessment. This stage may well overlap with the start of writing a draft text, since arranging material in order is itself part of the process of ‘telling a story’ which will link the discrete items of data or evidence together. One way of thinking of an answer to the assessment questions is as a brief summarizing judgement, with the evidence arranged so that it supports, expands or explains the judgement in a systematic way.

Two issues are likely to emerge at this stage, if not before. The first is that there may well be inconsistencies, as well as duplication, between the different sources from which data have been collected, and further investigation will be needed to resolve any possible contradiction. A second issue concerns continuing gaps in the evidence, for which further sources may still need to be identified.

(d) Writing a draft report

If the above stages have all been carried out, writing the report should not prove unduly onerous. Presumably by now a decision will have been taken on the form and length of a finished draft, although both may need to be modified in the light of the material assembled. It makes for easier reading to avoid long unbroken chunks of text, which may be varied with tables, summaries, quotations, exemplary events or experiences, and so on, to complement a more discursive account.

(e) Setting the report in context

It will be important at this point to consider the kind of introduction the report will need. How will you explain and justify the assessment process to the potential reader? What information is needed to make the assessment intelligible in the context of the country’s distinctive character and present condition? This information will almost certainly include a discursive summary of the country’s recent process of democratic development, and of any features in the country’s politi-
cal traditions and culture that may have given the process its distinctive trajectory and help explain its current condition. An introductory narrative of this kind will also help provide a justification for conducting a democracy assessment at this particular juncture.

[93] Other items that might be included in an introduction to the report are basic facts about the country’s current political system, and leading socio-economic and human development indicators, if these are not already included in the relevant sections of the assessment.

**Convening a national workshop**

[94] A key point in the assessment process is the convening of a national workshop to discuss the draft report and its provisional findings in order to improve its content and presentation. Although this event could be confined to professional and academic experts, it will have much more impact if it is widened to include leading public figures, government and party officials, and representatives of human rights and other campaigning organizations, as well as media personnel and sympathetic figures from neighbouring countries. A wider body of this kind, representative of political society as a whole, will subject the findings to a more searching test and improve the analysis and its presentation, and also enable the findings to reach a much wider audience and give them much greater legitimacy.

[95] Workshops undertaken by International IDEA in countries selected for our pilot study have included in their membership such figures as the chairmen of the official and unofficial constitutional review bodies (Kenya); party delegates and leading diplomats (Malawi); senior representatives from the police and human rights organizations (El Salvador); the clerk of Parliament and the chief electoral commissioner (New Zealand); and a regional prosecutor and a senior journalist (Italy). The two international conferences organized by the Mongolians included a variety of international and national stakeholders who provided reflection and advice on the design, implementation and follow-up activities of the assessment. The proceedings of the workshops for the pilot studies as well as those in Mongolia aroused substantial public interest and were widely reported in the national
press. In many cases the quality of comment and discussion by participants led to significant revision and improvement of the assessment report. For an example of a successful workshop, see Box 1.2.

**Box 1.2.**
**Report on the Kenya Democracy Workshop**

The workshop, opened by the Swedish ambassador to Kenya, Ms Inga Björk-Klevby, was attended by about 45 people, including members of Parliament, academics, lawyers, representatives of national NGOs, local representatives of government and international organizations.

The first session was devoted to a debate on the constitutional reform process, at which leading representatives of the two alternative review bodies – the civil society-based Ufungamano, and the official parliamentary forum – presented the arguments for their respective organizations. The rest of the seminar was taken up with an audiovisual presentation of the key findings of the report, and a discussion organized around nine key questions advanced by Professor Njuguna Ng’ethe, the report’s principal investigator:

- What conception of democracy is implied or implicit in this particular comparative framework of democracy assessment?
- Is this conception useful for the Kenyan situation?
- Is this conception legalistic, institutional, political, economic, and social, and how are these different aspects weighted in the framework?
- Can the framework capture the dynamics of change or can it only take a static snapshot of the ‘state of democracy’?
- Does the comparative framework adequately balance the elements within the democratic process?
- How are these components of the democratic process implicitly or subsequently weighted, and what is the resulting utility of this ranking?
- What is the nature of the epistemology underlying this framework? E.g., would an ‘ordinary’ citizen generate the same democratic ‘menu’, or a more utilitarian one?
- Is it useful to be comparative?
- What are the real determinants of democratization and are these captured by the framework?

The workshop was fully reported in the next day’s press, and the organizers gave interviews for both radio and television. A key issue discussed at the conclusion of was how to disseminate the findings more widely, including linkages with existing civic education projects.

The Workshop was organized by the Series on Alternative Research in East Africa Trust (SAREAT) and International IDEA and held at the Norfolk Hotel, Nairobi, on 22 June 2000.
Democratic Audit in the UK held a workshop on a recent report on the country’s counter-terrorism laws and strategy which benefited from a wide-ranging and diverse composition, including a former senior judge, a high-ranking intelligence official, human rights lawyers, leading politicians from the three largest parties, defence lawyers, representatives of relevant NGOs and national journalists.

**Strategies for making democracy assessments public**

[96] The ultimate aim of a democracy assessment is to give a country’s society a thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of its democratic arrangements for people to consider and (if possible) act on. So the final report has to be widely disseminated and promoted to ensure that its findings are fully debated. One of the major benefits of adopting the transparent and inclusive strategy that we recommend above for the process of democracy assessment is that it provides a public platform from which to disseminate and promote these findings. The earlier the process of information and consultation begins, the more effective will be the final dissemination of the findings. The interested parties and the wider public will be better prepared to understand, assimilate and, as necessary, act on the findings if they have already been informed and involved in shaping them.

[97] The job of disseminating information on a subject like democracy is often a difficult one for groups to undertake. Moreover, almost any group undertaking a democracy analysis is likely to be constrained by limited resources. None has the kind of promotional resources that a major commercial company can mobilize. The assessors’ own circumstances and resources will vary considerably, as will the conditions in the countries they are assessing. Many groups of assessors will be attached to academic institutions without practical experience of promotional campaigns and with only very limited opportunities for direct access to the public or to NGOs, which may well have more promotional experience.

[98] In many countries, state control of the media deliberately constrains coverage. Consequently, public interest in analysis of a political system is rarely strong, except where tyranny, misrule, persecution of minorities and corruption have inspired desire for change towards a more democratic polity. Then it can emerge, even where state control of the media is very strong and intimidation of journalists is common.

[99] The difficulties of communication in poorer countries with largely rural and illiterate populations, usually with no or limited access to
the print or electronic media, are frequently – and rightly – stressed. But there are also immense difficulties in more developed societies with more educated populations and diverse media sources. In such countries, attempts to raise questions of the quality of democracy, human rights abuse, discrimination and so on tend to be drowned out in the clamour of commercial and entertainment matter on most media. Moreover, modern media tend to be interested in politics only at the level of the major political figures and their activities rather than at that of detailed analysis of political arrangements. This trend is intensified by the emphasis on ‘personalities’ in the commercial and entertainment worlds. Across the spectrum of countries, the state and major interests are usually able to dominate communications and block or downplay messages which they find unpalatable.

In many countries, even where the media are free and communications are good, the job of disseminating information on a subject like democracy is often difficult. No assessment group has the kind of promotional resources that a major commercial company can mobilize. The state and major interests are usually able to dominate communications and block or downplay messages which they find unpalatable. It is essential for assessment groups to adopt realistic strategies for getting their messages across.

It is therefore essential for assessment groups to adopt realistic strategies for getting their messages across. As we argue above, the earlier they seek to inform and involve outsiders in their processes and the more transparent these processes are, the stronger their hold on public interest will be. The wider the range of those who are involved, the more likely it is that people will regard their findings as broadly representative and relevant. They can begin by issuing information on the assessment task that they are undertaking and inviting comments on and contributions to their work through press releases, leaflets, conferences (not necessarily their own) and, if possible, an interactive website of their own. It is useful at an early stage to try to establish a constructive relationship with journalists from the most sympathetic media outlets. An example of how to do this, and of a practical media strategy more generally, is provided from the experience of the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), an organization which aims to promote democracy in South Africa (see Box 1.3).
These first stages will not make a very wide impact. The aim should be to inform and involve interested parties – scholars, journalists, lawyers, public officials, politicians and other people of influence – with the underlying purpose of using them, in turn, to pass the information on and raise wider interest. This kind of ‘ripple effect’ is usually the most any group could hope for, and the IDASA media strategy is a model for this way of operating. It targets the media that are most appropriate for the groups it is aiming at and the messages it wants to get across.
The most likely weaknesses for any assessment group attempting to promote its work and findings are, as is stated above, the limited resources at hand and its inexperience in using the media. If it is possible to recruit an experienced journalist or public relations officer, this should be done, even in a voluntary capacity. However, the great strength of a group will generally lie in its collective expertise and knowledge. Issuing individual reports, briefing journalists and submitting articles for publication are all ways of building up a reputation for expertise in the media.

During its work the group should therefore seek to develop and sustain interest and involvement by publishing reports of preliminary inquiries or findings; holding seminars or conferences; submitting articles to journals, newspapers and magazines; publishing and updating information on its findings, if this is available; and encouraging others to contribute. Table 1.5 summarizes the different forms of product, means of dissemination and potential audiences for the democracy assessment.

**Publication and media strategies**

Publication and media strategies are interconnected and should be considered and planned for together – the main aim being to reach as wide an audience as possible through the media and the distribution of a book or report, with a significant secondary aim of influencing policy makers and opinion leaders. The more relevant and policy-oriented an assessment is, the easier it will be to attract attention. To begin with, it is usually possible to engage political and academic circles in a country. With the pilot IDEA studies, for example, we were able to ensure that the initial findings of the assessment teams were subjected to scrutiny and comment by informed outsiders at a specially convened seminar and were revealed to the public gaze, if only to a limited degree, through the Internet. The final assessments were then published as printed reports and the body of information and argument on which these reports were based was placed on the Internet.

**Engaging the media**

It is important to plan well in advance for the release of the final report. All manner of media events can be organized around the report. The national workshops mentioned above are only one means of disseminating the findings. Another may well be a speech by a single highly-respected individual, or a simple press conference. If a commercial publisher is involved, it will usually have some resources for publicity and experience of book launches. The report should be written with some thought as to its reception. Above all, the report should
be written in simple and accessible terms. It should not be too long. Its contents and direction should bear in mind popular preoccupations and interests. Democracy is vital to most people’s well-being, but is often discussed or argued over in a relatively abstract way. Make sure that any democracy assessment addresses popular concerns and shows how democratic advance is relevant to those concerns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Content/format</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full report, hard copy</td>
<td>Full assessment</td>
<td>Publication in English and in-country language/s</td>
<td>Elite: opinion formers in government and the media, political parties and experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full report, electronic copy</td>
<td>Full assessment plus linkages and data archive</td>
<td>World Wide Web: significant portals and listings</td>
<td>Elite Internet users, international interested parties and opinion formers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive summary/press release</td>
<td>Aggregated executive summaries (all sections)</td>
<td>Press conference</td>
<td>Urban, literate, journalists and government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic conference and conference documents</td>
<td>Full assessment as background paper, conference report papers from participants</td>
<td>Conference pack and online postings and papers</td>
<td>Academics, policy makers and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracts by section (specialist interest)</td>
<td>Executive summaries and specific sections</td>
<td>Sector- and interest-specific journals and in-house magazines; specialists</td>
<td>Interest-specific, such as educators, health workers, media, local government officials etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracts by section, (popular issues)</td>
<td>Derivative popular texts around current affairs</td>
<td>Popular magazines and newspapers</td>
<td>Literate, educated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires, civic education summaries, classroom kits</td>
<td>Cartoon, non-textual or basic language, video or audio</td>
<td>Community voluntary organizations, churches, NGOs, schools, community centres, libraries (gatekeepers)</td>
<td>General, including the illiterate or poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews and features by radio and TV personnel</td>
<td>Verbal and visual summaries</td>
<td>Radio and TV</td>
<td>General, including the illiterate and poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important to issue a media notice of the report that bears these issues in mind. A media notice or press release should go to all the media, print and broadcast. It should be brief and to the point. Do not try to summarize the whole report, except perhaps as a final paragraph. Instead, go for the key points or most controversial or surprising findings and highlight these. If there is strong public interest in a particular political issue, relate the findings to that issue. Furthermore, it is no good just sending out press releases. Think first about the best day of the week to release the information and which of the media that day will be likely to follow up the notice. Decide which are the best media outlets for reaching the audience that you want. If possible, prepare certain journalists in advance. Try to obtain the fax numbers or email addresses that get to the right people. Always follow up a press release with a polite telephone inquiry to ask whether it has been received and noticed; too often, it will otherwise simply go unread and unnoticed, or rejected. Such an inquiry gives you the chance to ‘sell the story’. We have frequently found that a polite reminder can gain media attention that the initial press release has failed to engender.

The natural course is to go for a ‘big bang’ release of a report or document, but it is possible to vary this approach considerably. A democracy assessment will usually raise a variety of key issues, and each of these can be raised independently during the course of the work and after the release of the final document, for example, in interim reports, articles in specialist magazines, television or radio current affairs programmes or interviews, evidence to official bodies, evidence to political parties, attendance at other seminars and conferences, and leaflets addressed to a variety of audiences. All these and other means can be used to promote and disseminate the findings of a democracy assessment. It is also important to think carefully about the media chosen. Who reads this or that newspaper? Is television tightly controlled? Are radio stations the rural population’s main source of information? Is that or this columnist, reporter or radio producer more sympathetic and interested than others? Examples of the different dissemination strategies used by a variety of country assessment teams are given in Part 3 (see paras 146–9). The experience of the UK Democratic Audit can be summarized here by way of example (see Box 1.4).
distribution network is at getting the report to a wide audience; what languages it will be published in, and so on. It may in certain circumstances be better to choose self-publication. Third, if you can persuade prominent politicians, journalists and others to debate your findings, you will almost certainly generate publicity. Finally, most newspapers publish reviews of books, so it is worth targeting the books editors to ask for a review. Depending on resources, groups can seek to consult the public through opinion surveys, conferences, media interviews and articles. Even consulting other experts on aspects of its continuing work is a valuable, if small-scale, way towards dissemination.

Box 1.4. Dissemination experience from the UK Democratic Audit

Democratic Audit has published three national assessments of UK democracy: ‘audits’ of political and civil rights and governing arrangements, in 1998 and 1999, and a third full assessment using the IDEA framework in 2002. The first two were published as academic books and were bound by the conventions and economics of publishing, resulting in costly books. The publisher put hardly any resources into their dissemination, and that was targeted to the academic community and not the wider public. However, Democratic Audit did publish and invite debate on the criteria by which the assessors were to proceed through the broadsheet press and current-affairs television executives. The very idea of a ‘democratic audit’ was enough to arouse interest, and the fact that this was an academic enterprise with a university base gave it sufficient legitimacy in journalists’ eyes. The 2002 assessment, in contrast, was more popularly produced and published, with a provocative cover and catchy title, and the first print run of 2,000 copies sold out. For all three assessments the audit also undertook its own dissemination strategy, and was able to obtain a high level of exposure on BBC and other radio programmes.

As the audit had continuous funding from a UK trust, the assessors have also had the means to publish interim reports on particular issues – notably on the accountability of parastatal agencies, the UK electoral system, far-right political parties, and counter-terrorism legislation – as well as a book on economic and social rights. These activities have bolstered its profile in the media and with an interested but limited public. The reports were all promoted with press releases and media appearances. The reports on parastatal agencies attracted a great deal of interest from the print and electronic media – so much so that the audit cooperated with a commercial television channel to produce a special documentary on such agencies. Learning from this experience, Democratic Audit now publishes brief popular summaries of its books and reports for circulation to MPs and other influential groups, and holds expert seminars to discuss and disseminate the findings. It also places PDFs on its own and other websites to give further exposure to its work.
A group of assessors will need to adopt a media strategy very early on to ensure that it is able to disseminate its findings effectively. The media, imperfect though they may be, are the principal means by which all actors in civil society can inform and influence public opinion. However, no group can hope to reach all sections of society through one medium on its own – the national press, a television station or a specialist journal. Usually, only governments and major commercial organizations can achieve a wide dissemination of information to a country’s population. Groups should therefore identify their main targets for particular aspects of their findings and cultivate and employ the specific media most likely to reach those groups. For the most part, they should aim for opinion formers, interest groups and other active elements. Their greatest weaknesses are likely to be limited resources and inexperience in dealing with the media. Their greatest strength will be the knowledge base that they can assemble through their work and its objectivity and relevance to the concerns of their society and country.

From assessment to reform

Throughout this account we have stressed that a democracy assessment is not an end in itself but a means to assist a democratic reform process by providing the systematic evidence, argument and comparative data on which reforms might be based. The influence of an assessment, whether in whole or part, whether as a full assessment or as thematic research projects, may work directly, through its influence on relevant government ministers and officials, or indirectly, by strengthening the pressure from campaigning groups and key organizations. Or the influence may be more diffuse, through its broader informational and educational effect on a wider public.
This means that publication of the assessment findings should not necessarily be regarded as a final step. The assessment will usually remain relevant to a country’s politics for some time to come, and be an ongoing point of reference for campaigning. Moreover, it could well form the basis for a further and separate stage, which is that of working up specific reform proposals, perhaps in association with relevant campaigning groups and experts in key areas identified by the assessment. Part 4 of the guide examines this further stage in more detail, using experience from assessments carried out to date.
Part 2

The framework
The framework

Part 1 has shown that the assessment framework is based on the two core principles of popular control over public decision making and decision makers, and equality of respect and voice between citizens in the exercise of that control. It is from these two core principles that our seven mediating values, requirements for those values and the institutional means for their realization are derived (see Table 1.1). This combination of core principles, values, requirements and means has in turn been used to generate the list of general overarching questions and more specific search questions that ought to be answered when carrying out a democracy assessment.

This part of the Guide outlines the elements of the framework as they relate to the search questions by providing guidance on relevant data, generalized sources and standards of good practice.

The search questions are framed in such a way that they elicit answers measuring and assessing the relative degree to which the values and principles of democracy have been realized and the degree to which the institutional means have contributed to that realization. For example, the search questions ask:

• How far…?
• To what extent…?
• How inclusive…?
• How much…?
• What measures have been taken…?
• How free…?

These questions are phrased in ways that allow the assessment team to examine the variation in democratic features, institutions, practices and perceptions in ways that are broken down according to the columns and rows of the framework. They ask for the assessment to
provide a sense of the degree of realization, which can vary from very little to highly significant.

For example, in section 1.3, the overarching question asks,

‘Are civil and political rights equally guaranteed for all?’

The first search question asks

‘1.3.1. How free are all people from physical violation of their person, and from fear of it?’

The relevant data for this particular search question may include indicators in the de jure protection of personal integrity rights, including relevant international (e.g. the ratification of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ICCPR) and national (e.g. the national constitution) legal documents, and the de facto realization of such rights, including the implementation of rights protections, events data on actual incidences of personal integrity rights violations over time, interval scale data on the protection of personal integrity rights, crime statistics, and survey data on perceptions of personal integrity protections in the country.

Examples of the relevant sources for these types of data include the annual reports on human rights published by governmental and non-governmental organizations (e.g. the US State Department, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch), and academic databases of violations of personal integrity rights (e.g. the ‘Political Terror Scale’ or <http://www.humanrightdata.com>). Examples of good practice include particular articles from international human rights treaties, such as the ICCPR, the first and second optional protocols to the ICCPR, and the 1984 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Using the different rows of the framework, the assessment team can move from the overarching question to the ‘row one’ search question, ‘row two’ relevant data, ‘row three’ generalized sources, and ‘row four’ standards of good practice. In this way, each search question is supported by data gathered from sources that reflect standards of good practice, and each search question generates a robust profile that is linked to the mediating values and underlying principles of the framework.

This part of the Guide provides the complete list of overarching and search questions and the complete framework.
The search questions

1. Citizenship, law and rights

1.1. Nationhood and citizenship

*Overarching question: Is there public agreement on a common citizenship without discrimination?*

1.1.1. How inclusive is the political nation and state citizenship of all who live within the territory?

1.1.2. How far are cultural differences acknowledged, and how well are minorities and vulnerable social groups protected?

1.1.3. How much consensus is there on state boundaries and constitutional arrangements?

1.1.4. How far do constitutional and political arrangements enable major societal divisions to be moderated or reconciled?

1.1.5. How impartial and inclusive are the procedures for amending the constitution?

1.1.6. How far does the government respect its international obligations in its treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, and how free from arbitrary discrimination is its immigration policy?

1.2. Rule of law and access to justice

*Overarching question: Are state and society consistently subject to the law?*

1.2.1. How far is the rule of law operative throughout the territory?

1.2.2. To what extent are all public officials subject to the rule of law and to transparent rules in the performance of their functions?

1.2.3. How independent are the courts and the judiciary from the executive, and how free are they from all kinds of interference?

1.2.4. How equal and secure is the access of citizens to justice, to due process and to redress in the event of maladministration?

1.2.5. How far do the criminal justice and penal systems observe due rules of impartial and equitable treatment in their operations?

1.2.6. How much confidence do people have in the legal system to deliver fair and effective justice?

1.3. Civil and political rights

*Overarching question: Are civil and political rights equally guaranteed for all?*

1.3.1. How free are all people from physical violation of their person, and from fear of it?
1.3.2. How effective and equal is the protection of the freedoms of movement, expression, association and assembly?

1.3.3. How secure is the freedom for all to practise their own religion, language or culture?

1.3.4. How free from harassment and intimidation are individuals and groups working to improve human rights?

1.4. Economic and social rights

*Overarching question: Are economic and social rights equally guaranteed for all?*

1.4.1. How far is access to work or social security available to all, without discrimination?

1.4.2. How effectively are the basic necessities of life guaranteed, including adequate food, shelter and clean water?

1.4.3. To what extent is the health of the population protected, in all spheres and stages of life?

1.4.4. How extensive and inclusive is the right to education, including education in the rights and responsibilities of citizenship?

1.4.5. How free are trade unions and other work-related associations to organize and represent their members’ interests?

1.4.6. How rigorous and transparent are the rules on corporate governance, and how effectively are corporations regulated in the public interest?

2. Representative and accountable government

2.1. Free and fair elections

*Overarching question: Do elections give the people control over governments and their policies?*

2.1.1. How far is appointment to governmental and legislative office determined by popular competitive election, and how frequently do elections lead to change in the governing parties or personnel?

2.1.2. How inclusive and accessible for all citizens are the registration and voting procedures, how independent are they of government and party control, and how free from intimidation and abuse?

2.1.3. How fair are the procedures for the registration of candidates and parties, and how far is there fair access for them to the media and other means of communication with the voters?

2.1.4. How effective a range of choice does the electoral and party system allow the voters, how equally do their votes count, and how closely does the composition of the legislature and the selection of the executive reflect the choices they make?
2.1.5. How far does the legislature reflect the social composition of the electorate?

2.1.6. What proportion of the electorate votes, and how far are the election results accepted by all political forces in the country and outside?

2.2. The democratic role of political parties

*Overarching question: Does the party system assist the working of democracy?*

2.2.1. How freely are parties able to form and recruit members, engage with the public and campaign for office?

2.2.2. How effective is the party system in forming and sustaining governments in office?

2.2.3. How far are parties effective membership organizations, and how far are members able to influence party policy and candidate selection?

2.2.4. How far does the system of party financing prevent the subordination of parties to special interests?

2.2.5. To what extent do parties cross ethnic, religious and linguistic divisions?

2.3. Effective and responsive government

*Overarching question: Is government effective in serving the public and responsive to its concerns?*

2.3.1. How far is the elected government able to influence or control those matters that are important to the lives of its people, and how well is it informed, organized and resourced to do so?

2.3.2. How effective and open to scrutiny is the control exercised by elected leaders and their ministers over their administrative staff and other executive agencies?

2.3.3. How open and systematic are the procedures for public consultation on government policy and legislation, and how equal is the access for relevant interests to government?

2.3.4. How accessible and reliable are public services for those who need them, and how systematic is consultation with users over service delivery?

2.3.5. How comprehensive and effective is the right of access for citizens to government information under the constitution or other laws?

2.3.6. How much confidence do people have in the ability of government to solve the main problems confronting society, and in their own ability to influence it?
2.4. The democratic effectiveness of parliament

Overarching question: Does the parliament or legislature contribute effectively to the democratic process?

2.4.1. How independent is the parliament or legislature of the executive, and how freely are its members able to express their opinions?
2.4.2. How extensive and effective are the powers of the parliament or legislature to initiate, scrutinize and amend legislation?
2.4.3. How extensive and effective are the powers of the parliament or legislature to oversee the executive and hold it to account?
2.4.4. How rigorous are the procedures for approval and supervision of taxation and public expenditure?
2.4.5. How freely are all parties and groups able to organize within the parliament or legislature and contribute to its work?
2.4.6. How extensive are the procedures of the parliament or legislature for consulting the public and relevant interests across the range of its work?
2.4.7. How accessible are elected representatives to their constituents?
2.4.8. How well does the parliament or legislature provide a forum for deliberation and debate on issues of public concern?

2.5. Civilian control of the military and police

Overarching question: Are the military and police forces under civilian control?

2.5.1. How effective is civilian control over the armed forces, and how free is political life from military involvement?
2.5.2. How publicly accountable are the police and security services for their activities?
2.5.3. How far does the composition of the army, police and security services reflect the social composition of society at large?
2.5.4. How free is the country from the operation of paramilitary units, private armies, warlordism and criminal mafias?

2.6. Integrity in public life

Overarching question: Is the integrity of conduct in public life assured?

2.6.1. How effective is the separation of public office from the personal business and family interests of office holders?
2.6.2. How effective are the arrangements for protecting office holders and the public from involvement in bribery?
2.6.3. How far do the rules and procedures for financing elections, candidates and elected representatives prevent their subordination to sectional interests?
2.6.4. How far is the influence of powerful corporations and business interests over public policy kept in check, and how free are they from involvement in corruption, including overseas?

2.6.5. How much confidence do people have that public officials and public services are free from corruption?

3. Civil society and popular participation

3.1. The media in a democratic society

Overarching question: Do the media operate in a way that sustains democratic values?

3.1.1. How independent are the media from government, how pluralistic is their ownership, and how free are they from subordination to foreign governments or multinational companies?

3.1.2. How representative are the media of different opinions and how accessible are they to different sections of society?

3.1.3. How effective are the media and other independent bodies in investigating government and powerful corporations?

3.1.4. How free are journalists from restrictive laws, harassment and intimidation?

3.1.5. How free are private citizens from intrusion and harassment by the media?

3.2. Political participation

Overarching question: Is there full citizen participation in public life?

3.2.1. How extensive is the range of voluntary associations, citizen groups, social movements etc. and how independent are they from government?

3.2.2. How extensive is citizen participation in voluntary associations and self-management organizations, and in other voluntary public activity?

3.2.3. How far do women participate in political life and public office at all levels?

3.2.4. How equal is access for all social groups to public office, and how fairly are they represented?

3.3. Decentralization

Overarching question: Are decisions taken at the level of government that is most appropriate for the people affected?

3.3.1. How independent are the sub-central tiers of government from the centre, and how far do they have the powers and resources to carry out their responsibilities?
3.3.2. How far are these levels of government subject to free and fair electoral authorization, and to the criteria of openness, accountability and responsiveness in their operation?

3.3.3. How extensive is the cooperation of government at the most local level with relevant partners, associations and communities in the formation and implementation of policy, and in service provision?

4. Democracy beyond the state

4.1. External influences on the country’s democracy

Overarching question: Is the impact of external influences broadly supportive of the country’s democracy?

4.1.1. How free is the country from external influences which undermine or compromise its democratic process or national interests?

4.1.2. How equitable is the degree of influence exercised by the government within the bilateral, regional and international organizations to whose decisions it may be subject?

4.1.3. How far are the government’s negotiating positions and subsequent commitments within these organizations subject to effective legislative oversight and public debate?

4.2. The country’s democratic impact abroad

Overarching question: Do the country’s international policies contribute to strengthening global democracy?

4.2.1. How consistent is the government in its support for, and protection of, human rights and democracy abroad?

4.2.2. How far does the government support the UN and agencies of international cooperation, and respect the rule of law internationally?

4.2.3. How extensive and consistent is the government’s contribution to international development?

4.2.4. How far is the government’s international policy subject to effective parliamentary oversight and public influence?
The assessment framework

1. Citizenship, law and rights

1.1. Nationhood and citizenship

Overarching question: Is there public agreement on a common citizenship without discrimination?

Assessment question

1.1.1. How inclusive is the political nation and state citizenship of all who live within the territory?

What to look for (criteria questions)

1) Laws: examine laws governing citizenship, eligibility, methods and timescale for acquiring it; any distinctions between partial and full citizenship, between men and women in the acquisition of citizenship.

2) Practice: examine how fairly and impartially the laws are applied in practice.

3) Negative indicators: investigate data on exclusions, second-class citizenship, discrimination in the acquisition of citizenship, etc.

Generalized sources

Global sources

Civil Rights group, <http://civilrights.org/>
Country reports to the UN Human Rights Committee and Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, <http://www.ohchr.org>
Department of Political Science, University of Kansas, Kansas Event Data System, <http://web.ku.edu/keds/index.html>

Africa and the Middle East

Middle East Network Information Center site (MENIC)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies; International Journal on Minority and Group Rights; Nationalism and Ethnic Politics</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minorities at Risk Project, 1999 <em>Dataset and Codebook</em> (profiles the rights and prospects of 260 major ethnic groups),</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/">http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Reports of the United Nations Working Group on Minorities; State party reports; Reports of the UN Commission on Human Rights Committees and on Human Rights Working on the human rights of migrants;</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schulze, K. E. et al. (eds), <em>Nationalism, Minorities and Diasporas: Identities and Rights in the Middle East</em></td>
<td>(London: Tauris, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa Research and Development Centre,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sardc.net/sd/sd_info.htm">http://www.sardc.net/sd/sd_info.htm</a></td>
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<td>Americas</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas,</td>
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<td>Center for World Indigenous Studies,</td>
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<td>Inter-American Commission on Women,</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingua Món, Casa de Les Llengües (House of Languages),</td>
<td><a href="http://www10.gencat.net/www.linguamon.cat/">http://www10.gencat.net/www.linguamon.cat/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nativeweb,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nativeweb.org">http://www.nativeweb.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of American States (OAS), Inter-American Commission on Human Rights,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cidh.oas.org">http://www.cidh.oas.org</a>;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Reports of the Special Rapporteurship on Migrant Workers and their Families, Inter-American</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reports of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples;
Reports of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons;


United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), <http://www.unifem.org>


Asia

Alliance for Reform and Democracy in Asia, <http://www.asiademocracy.org/>


Asian Legal Resource Centre, <http://www.alrc.net/>

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), <http://www.aseansec.org/>

Howitt, R. et al. (eds), Resources, Nations and Indigenous Peoples: Case Studies from Australasia, Melanesia and Southeast Asia (Melbourne and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996)


Europe

Adum, Resources on protection of minority languages in EU countries, <http://www.adum.info/adum/>


The Chronicle (UK), <http://www.chronicleworld.org>

European Centre for Minority Issues, <http://www.ecmi.de>
European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations, [http://www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html](http://www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html)

European Roma Rights Center, [http://errc.org](http://errc.org)

Forced Migration Projects, 1999 (initiative of the Soros Institute), [http://www2.soros.org/fmp2/index.html](http://www2.soros.org/fmp2/index.html)


Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), [http://www.osce.org](http://www.osce.org)


University of Warwick, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, [http://www.warwick.ac.uk/CRER/research.html](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/CRER/research.html)

Weinberg, M., *Schutz der deutschen Minderheit in Polen nach den Weltkriegen: ein Vergleich unter Berücksichtigung der aktuellen Rechtslage* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1997)
Standards of good practice

Criteria questions 1) and 2) have the following suggested standards:

For 1): UN Conventions on Refugees and Statelessness:
UN Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, April 1954
UN General Assembly, Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, December 1975; Declaration on Territorial Asylum, December 1967

For 1) and 2): UN Conventions on Minorities:
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity 2001; Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation, 1966; Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, November 1978

Indigenous peoples

International standards

International Labour Organization (ILO), Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, No. 169, 1991
UN, Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 1994


UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, General Comment No. 23. Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 1997


Agenda 21, chapter 26, A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. III), 1992, Recognizing and Strengthening the Role of Indigenous People and Their Communities

### Assessment question
1.1.2. How far are cultural differences acknowledged, and how well are minorities and vulnerable social groups protected?

### What to look for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) Laws: examine laws governing recognition and rights of minorities, including indigenous peoples; if the government has signed the UN and regional declarations on minorities, whether legislation conforms to their standards.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) Practice: examine the effectiveness of procedures for protecting minority rights in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Negative indicators: investigate data on systematic discrimination in different areas of public life; on electoral support for political parties or programmes which deny common citizenship or advocate racial or cultural supremacy; on intra-communal conflict or violence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Generalized sources

#### Global sources

- See 1.1 above and
- Country reports to the UN Human Rights Committee, UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, <http://www.ohchr.org>
- Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on older persons, children and young people, women and other vulnerable groups, <http://www.eldis.org/>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International IDEA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>démocratique, (English, French and Spanish), <a href="http://www.ichrdd.ca">http://www.ichrdd.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interamerican Institute for Human Rights (IIDH) (English and Spanish), <a href="http://www.iidh.ed.cr">http://www.iidh.ed.cr</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, <a href="http://www.indigenista.org">http://www.indigenista.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-American Commission on Women, <a href="http://www.oas.org/cim/default.htm">http://www.oas.org/cim/default.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies; International Journal on Minority and Group Rights; Nationalism and Ethnic Politics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional sources

Adum, Resources on protection of minority languages in EU countries, 
<http://www.adum.info/adum/>

Open Society Justice Initiative, Africa Citizenship and Discrimination Audit, 
<http://www.justiceinitiative.org>

Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>

Lingua Món, Casa de Les Llengües, 
<http://www10.gencat.net/www.linguamon.cat/>

Mediterranean Development Forum, thematic programme on considering gender in institutional reform, 


Reports of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, 
<http://www.osce.org/hcnm/>

Schulze, K. E. et al. (eds), Nationalism, Minorities and Diasporas: Identities and Rights in the Middle East (London: Tauris, 1996)

University of Warwick, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, <http://www.warwick.ac.uk/CRER/research.html>

Reports of the Special Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 
<http://www.cidh.oas.org/women/Default.eng.htm>

Union Interafriacaine des Droits de l’Homme, 
<http://membres.lycos.fr/uidh/>

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, 
<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/index.html>

<http://www.state.gov>


See also 1.3 and 1.4.

Standards of good practice

International standards


Regional standards


International IDEA


ILO Convention No. 118. Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962

UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights, General Comment No. 23. Article 27 (Rights of Minorities), 1994

The Protection of Minorities as a Global Issue and a Prerequisite for Stability, Security and Peace, Resolution by the 95th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, 1996

12th Seminar of the International Association for the Development of Intercultural Communication, Recife, Brazil, Declaration 1987


Council of Europe, Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Rome, 4.XI.1950; Convention of the Council of Ministers of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, 1992;

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, 1992;


Revised European Social Charter, 1996;

Framework Convention and Minority Languages Charter 1998;

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 1995;

Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, 2005

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism For Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, 2001, articles 40–43


African Union, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, 2004


Santiago de Compostela Declaration of the International PEN Club

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Social Charter, 2004, articles 6 and 7

Southern African Development Community (SADC), Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport, 2000, articles 9–15
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.1.3. How much consensus is there on state boundaries and constitutional arrangements?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td><strong>1) Positive indicators:</strong> examine survey data on satisfaction with existing territorial boundaries and constitutional arrangements. <strong>2) Negative indicators:</strong> examine data on incidence of dissent over territory or constitution; on support for separatist or autonomy-seeking parties; on conflict or violence relating to the same.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

**Global sources**

- *Border and Territorial Disputes*, 3rd edn (Harlow: Longman, 1992)
- Center for Systemic Peace 2000 (extensive online resources covering political violence and armed conflict), <http://members.aol.com/CSPmgm/cspframe.htm>
- Demilitarization for Democracy, <http://www.dfd.net/>
- Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, Department of Political Science, University of Heidelberg,<http://www.hiik.de/start/index.html.en>
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/>
- International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER), Bergen, Norway, <http://www.svf.uib.no/sfu/imer/>
- International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU), University of Durham, <http://www.dur.ac.uk/ibru/;>

**Regional sources**

- Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), <http://www.bicc.de/>
- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- Euromonitor, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, New Democracies Barometers (surveys), <http://www.cspp.strath.ac.uk> (includes Eurobarometers and Latino Barometers)
- *Jane’s* military database, <http://www2.janes.com>
- Shamir, J. and Shamir, M., *The Dynamics of Israeli Public Opinion on Peace and the Territories* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research, 1993)
Boundaries and Security Bulletin, University of Durham, Geography Department (serial)


International IDEA, *Democracy and Deep-rooted Conflict: Options for Negotiators* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 1998);


International Peace Academy, <http://www.ipacademy.org>

International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, <http://www.prio.no>


Henry L. Stimson Center (peacekeeping, arms control, foreign policy), <http://www.stimson.org/newpubs.cfm>

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), <http://www.sipri.org/>; for comprehensive data on military expenditure see <http://first.sipri.org>

University of Ulster, Conflict Archive on the Internet: Initiative on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity (CAIN: INCORE), *Conflict Data Service*, <http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk>
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards of good practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>International standards</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Co-operation for World and Regional Security and Stability, as well as for Respect for all Forms of the Sovereignty and Independence of States</em>, Resolution by the 97th Inter-Parliamentary Conference (Seoul, 14 April 1997)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, *Conflict Data Project* (database), <http://www.pcr.uu.se/database/index.php>

US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers* (annual); and various country-specific studies, <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/acda/>


*World Reference Atlas* (London and New York: Dorling Kindersley, various edns), country entries
(cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.1.4. How far do constitutional and political arrangements enable major societal divisions to be moderated or reconciled?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> examine any special constitutional, electoral or other arrangements encouraging cross-community cooperation, power-sharing, etc. <strong>2) Practice:</strong> examine the effectiveness of their working in practice. <strong>3) Negative indicators:</strong> see 1.1.2 and 1.1.3 above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Generalized sources

**General sources**

- Committee documents of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, [http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Committee/PACECommitteesInfoListing_E.asp](http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Committee/PACECommitteesInfoListing_E.asp)
- Institute for European and Latin American Relations
- International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (IKNOW Politics), [http://www.iknowpolitics.org/](http://www.iknowpolitics.org/)
- Nordic Council, [http://www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org)
- OAS, [http://www.oas.org](http://www.oas.org)
- Przeworski, A., Alvarez, M. E., Cheibub, J. A. and Limongi, F., *Democracy and*

**Public databases**

- Adum, Resources on protection of minority languages in EU countries, [http://www.adum.info/adum/](http://www.adum.info/adum/)
- Centre for the Comparative Study of Culture, Development and the Environment (CDE), [http://www.sussex.ac.uk/development/](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/development/)
- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, [http://pdba.georgetown.edu/](http://pdba.georgetown.edu/)
- Center for World Indigenous Studies Fourth World Documentation Project (FWDP), [http://www.cwis.org/fwdp/](http://www.cwis.org/fwdp/)
- Internet Centre Anti-Racism Europe (I CARE). The site features two useful and easy-to-
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)


**Reports of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons**, <http://www.ohchr.org>

**World Bank, documents on governance, civil society and participation**, <http://www.worldbank.org>

### Regional sources

European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations, <http://www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html>

Hurights Osaka, <http://www.hurights.or.jp/>


Inter-American Commission on Women, <http://www.oas.org/cim/default.htm>


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Search databases: (1) the United Database (1,500 addresses of anti-racism, migrant and refugee organizations in Europe), <http://www.united.non-profit.nl/>; and (2) Crosspoint (over 1,500 links to websites of anti-racist organizations in over 100 countries), <http://www.icare.to/frames-crosspoint.html>

IPU online databases, <http://www.ipu.org>


Political Resources: more links to constitutions from <http://www.politicalresources.net>.

University of Richmond, Constitution Finder, <http://confinder.richmond.edu/>
### Standards of good practice

#### International standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Document/Convention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>Convention No. 118. Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Committee</td>
<td>The Contribution of Parliaments to the Peaceful Coexistence of Ethnic, Cultural</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>and Religious Minorities, including Migrant Populations, within one State, Marked</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>by Tolerance and the Full Respect for their Human Rights, Resolution adopted by</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the 102nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference (Berlin, 15 October 1999)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Regional standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Document/Convention</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council of Europe</td>
<td>Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Rome, 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, 1992;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Declaration on National Minorities, 1993;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 1994;</td>
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<td>Revised European Social Charter, 1996;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, 2005</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 1969;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Charter for Africa, 1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>American Convention on Human Rights, OAS Treaty Series No. 36, 1144 UNTS 123, July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1978; Declaration of La Paz on Decentralization and on Strengthening Regional and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Municipal Administrations and Participation of Civil Society, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assembly of</td>
<td>European Stateless Nations (CONSEU), Universal Declaration of the Collective Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference of</td>
<td>of Peoples, Barcelona, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth</td>
<td>Parliamentary Association, Role of Parliament in Conflict-affected Countries, 2004,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.1.5. How impartial and inclusive are the procedures for amending the constitution?

What to look for

1) **Laws:** examine legal procedures for amending the constitution, including consultative, legislative and voting arrangements.

2) **Practice:** examine their operation over the recent past, including the number of constitutional amendments.

### Generalized sources

**Country-specific sources to be used**

- Agence de la Francophonie, Délégation Générale à la Coopération Juridique et Judiciaire, [http://www.francophonie.org](http://www.francophonie.org)
- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, [http://pdba.georgetown.edu/](http://pdba.georgetown.edu/)
- Constitutional Amendments Initiative, Constitution Project, [http://www.constitutionproject.org](http://www.constitutionproject.org)
- Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), [http://www.icpsr.umich.edu](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu)
- National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), Program on Constitutional Reform, [http://www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org)

### 1.1.6. How far does the government respect its international obligations in its treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, and how free from arbitrary discrimination is its immigration policy?

What to look for

1) **Laws:** examine legislation on immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and its conformity to relevant treaty standards, including rights of appeal.

2) **Practice:** examine whether procedures for the treatment of applicants are fair, impartial and independent, and whether practice conforms to international obligations.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate incidence of discriminatory treatment of immigrants or refugees on grounds of race, gender or other non-relevant characteristics; of detention without due process; of maltreatment; of other denial of human rights, including of the children of affected persons.
### Generalized sources


Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>

*Country reports* to the UN Human Rights Committee, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and Committee on Migrant Workers, <http://www.ohchr.org>

Forced Migration Projects, 1999 (initiative of the Soros Institute), <http://www2.soros.org/fmp2/index.html>

Human Rights Watch, country reports on refugee treatment and status; *Uncertain Refuge: International Failures to Protect Refugees*, HRW, 9/1 (1997)

International Crisis Group, country reports, <http://www.crisisweb.org>

IMER (Bergen, Norway), <http://www.svf.uib.no/sfu/imer/>


International Committee of the Red Cross, <http://www.icrc.org>


*Reports* of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons;


UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *RefWorld*, information on refugees worldwide, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/;>


### Standards of good practice

UN General Assembly, *Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951;

*Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness*, December 1975;

*International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families*, 1990;

*Declaration on Territorial Asylum*, December 1967;

*Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, December 1950


*Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, June 1960

UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *General Comment No. 22. Article 5 on Refugees and Displaced Persons*, 1996
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

(cont.)

**ILO Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers, June 1975**


**Support of Parliaments for the Rights of Refugees and Persons Displaced by War and Occupation, and Assistance with a view to their Repatriation, and for International Cooperation to Develop and Implement Strategies to Combat the Criminal Activity of People-Smuggling, Resolution of the 103rd Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Amman, 5 May 2000**

**OAU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 1969**

### 1.2. Rule of law and access to justice

*Overarching question: Are state and society consistently subject to the law?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.2.1. How far is the rule of law operative throughout the territory?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) **Laws:** examine legal arrangements governing the adjudication and enforcement of the law throughout the territory, including customary law where relevant.

2) **Practice:** examine the effectiveness of the procedures and personnel responsible for law adjudication and enforcement.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate evidence of areas, groups or individuals (a) above or beyond the law (territorial enclaves, mafia, drugs cartels), and (b) outside its protection (vulnerable sections of the population).

#### Generalized sources

**General sources**


Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>


**Drugs**


**Economic**

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum 21 Pacific Rim countries, <http://www.apec.org/>
Country reports to the UN Human Rights Committee, [http://www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)


Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, UK DFID, database on justice, [http://www.gsdrc.org](http://www.gsdrc.org)

Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, Department of Political Science, University of Heidelberg, [http://www.hiik.de/start/index.html.en](http://www.hiik.de/start/index.html.en)

Institute for Security Studies based in South Africa, [http://www.iss.co.za](http://www.iss.co.za)

Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Caucasus Reporting Service, [http://iwpr.net](http://iwpr.net)


International Crisis Group, Crisiswatch database, [http://www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)


Jane's military database, [http://www2.janes.com](http://www2.janes.com)


OAS Permanent Council, Special Committee on Transnational Organised Crime, <http://www.oas.org>


Henry L. Stimson Center (peacekeeping, arms control, foreign policy), <http://www.stimson.org/newpubs.cfm>

Terrorism Research Center, <http://www.terrorism.com/>

UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/crime_prevention.html>

United Nations Integrated Regional Intelligence Network (IRIN), <http://www.irinnews.org/>


Reports of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, <http://www.unhchr.ch>

ACDA, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers* (annual); and various country-specific studies

World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on rule of law, <http://www.wmd.org/>

### Standards of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century, 2000; Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>World Intellectual Property Organization (various conventions covering rights to industrial and artistic property), <a href="http://www.wipo.org">http://www.wipo.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC), International Accounting Standards (IAS) and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), <a href="http://www.iasb.org">http://www.iasb.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), International Standards on Auditing (ISA), <a href="http://www.ifac.org/Guidance/">http://www.ifac.org/Guidance/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action to Combat the Consumption and Illicit Trafficking of Drugs and Organised Crime, Resolution unanimously adopted by the 100th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Moscow, 11 September 1998</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting Terrorism, an International Phenomenon which Threatens Democracy and Human Rights as well as International Peace and Security and which hampers Development; Measures needed on the National and International Levels to Prevent Acts of Terrorism, Resolution by the 95th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Istanbul, 19 April 1996</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacture and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives and Other Related Materials; Model Regulations for the Control of the International Movement of Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition, 1997</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Principles of Corporate Governance, 2004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC, Protocol on Combating Illicit Drugs, August 1996</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Assessment question

1.2.2. To what extent are all public officials subject to the rule of law and to transparent rules in the performance of their functions?

### What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine rules, codes of conduct etc. governing the performance of public officials, elected and non-elected; and their transparency.

2) **Practice**: examine the independence and effectiveness of procedures for their enforcement in practice, including successful prosecutions.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data on exclusions, loopholes, impunities, etc.; on executive use of exceptional or emergency powers; on personal relations systematically determining decisional outcomes.

### Generalized sources

**Global sources**

- International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy (Canada), <http://www.icclr.law.ubc.ca/>
- IPU, <http://www.ipu.org>

**Regional sources**

- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- Commonwealth Law Ministers’ Meeting, Independence of the Judiciary Working Group, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, April 1996 (data on procedures for judicial appointment in the Commonwealth states surveyed)
Human Rights First, <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org>
United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on ethics, transparency and accountability, public finance and public resources, and governance systems and institutions, <http://www.unpan.org>
World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transitional justice and rule of law, <http://www.wmd.org/>

For all other corruption-related sources see section 2.5.

Standards of good practice

**International standards**

- UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights, *General Comment No. 13. Article 14 (Administration of Justice)*, 1984
- UN Crime Prevention and Control Division, *Draft International Code of Conduct for Public Officials*

**Regional standards**

- *Charter for the Public Service in Africa*, 2001
- OAS, *Inter-American Convention against Corruption*, 1996
### Parliamentary Action to Fight Corruption and the Need for International Co-operation in this Field

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Australian Department of the Premier and Cabinet, ‘South Australia Code of Conduct for Ministers’, extract from the Cabinet Handbook, 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda Law Reform Commission, National Integrity System Workshop, Mukono, Uganda, Mukono Integrity Declaration, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK House of Commons, Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan Committee), First Report, 2 vols, Cm 2850 I and II (London: HMSO, May 1995)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assessment question

1.2.3. How independent are the courts and the judiciary from the executive, and how free are they from all kinds of interference?

### What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine rules governing the appointment, tenure and operation of the judiciary, magistrature, etc.

2) **Practice**: examine the effectiveness of procedures governing judicial independence in practice.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data on executive manipulation of, interference with or disregard of the judicial process.

### Generalized sources

*Use general sources as in section 1.1 and above.*

**Global sources**

Centre for the Independence of Judges and Lawyers (CIJL), CIJL Yearbook,

**Regional sources**


*Country reports* to the UN Human Rights Committee, <http://www.ohchr.org>


Open Society Justice Initiative, Program on Anticorruption; Program on Criminal Justice and Public Security; Program on Legal Capacity Development, all at <http://www.justiceinitiative.org>

UN list of International Human Rights Instruments, including those on judicial process, <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/>

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on ethics, transparency and accountability, and public finance and public resources, <http://www.unpan.org>


Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>

Commonwealth Law Ministers’ Meeting, Independence of the Judiciary Working Group, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, April 1996 (data on procedures for judicial appointment in surveyed Commonwealth states)

EUMAP, programme on ‘judicial capacity’, <http://www.eumap.org/>

### Assessment question

1.2.4. How equal and secure is the access of citizens to justice, to due process and to redress in the event of maladministration?

### What to look for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1) Laws:</strong></th>
<th><strong>2) Practice:</strong></th>
<th><strong>3) Negative indicators:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>examine laws governing (a) due process and fair trial; and (b) redress in the event of maladministration or official breaches of the law. If the government has ratified the</td>
<td>examine the effectiveness of their operation in practice; ease of access by all social groups to legal representation, legal aid, ombudsman or equivalent;</td>
<td>investigate evidence of: systematic discrimination or inequalities in legal protection; failures or miscarriages of justice; use of secret or special</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Standards of good practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>International standards</strong></th>
<th><strong>Regional standards</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constitution Unit, <em>Constitutional Watchdogs</em>, Briefing Paper, Department of Political Science, University College, London, March 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Declaration of Principles of Judicial Independence Issued by the Chief Justices of the Australian States and Territories</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
relevant UN and regional conventions, examine whether the laws conform to their standards.

| speed of bringing cases to trial and completion. | tribunals; detentions without trial; abuse or torture in detention; oppressive or inhuman punishments; death rates in custody, disproportionate social composition of prison population, etc. |

### Generalized sources

#### Global sources

- Amnesty International, *Annual Reports*, appendices VI and VII: ratification, signatures to international (VI) and regional (VII) principle Human Rights Treaties (listed in ‘possible standards’)
- Also separate country audits in *Annual Reports* for incidence of violations, <http://www.amnesty.org>
- UNIFEM, <http://www.unifem.org>
- US State Department *Country Reports*, <http://www.state.gov>

#### Regional sources

- Human Rights Watch, country reports and summaries in annual reports, <http://www.hrw.org/>
- Inter-American Commission on Women, <http://www.oas.org/cim/default.htm>
- *Reports* of the Special Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights,
World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transitional justice and rule of law, <http://www.wmd.org/>


**Standards of good practice**

**International standards**

- UN, *ICCPR*, articles 7, 9(1), 9(3) and 14(3);
- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, articles 10 and 11(1);
- *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*, 1990;
- *Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials*, 1979;
- *Body of Principles for the Protection of all Persons under any form of Detention or Imprisonment*, 1988;
- *Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors*, 1990;

**Regional standards**

- *Resolution on the Right to Fair Trial and Legal Aid in Africa*, 1996;


- *African Union, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa*, 2004

Assessment question | 1.2.5. How far do the criminal justice and penal systems observe due rules of impartial and equitable treatment in their operations?

What to look for

1) **Practice**: assess the effectiveness and accountability of both formal and informal or non-state legal processes and procedures.

2) **Negative indicators**: assess incidence of abuse of prisoners by gender, ethnic or class category. Deaths and injury in custody, breaches of due process.
## Generalized sources

### Global sources
- *Country reports* to the UN Human Rights Committee and Committee on the Rights of the Child, [http://www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)
- *Reports* of the UN Commission on Human Rights Committee of Civil and Political Rights; together with submissions to the Committee by NGOs;

### Regional sources
- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, [http://pdba.georgetown.edu/](http://pdba.georgetown.edu/)
- Derechos – Human Rights, [http://www.derechos.org](http://www.derechos.org/)
- Open Society Justice Initiative, Program on Legal Assistance for Indigent Persons; Program on Legal Capacity Development, [http://www.justiceinitiative.org](http://www.justiceinitiative.org)
- SPACE (Annual Penal Statistics of the Council of Europe), Council of Europe, *Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics*, various years, SPACE/Council of Europe (Strasbourg)

## Standards of good practice

### International standards
- UN, *Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners*, December 1990, resolution 45/111;

### Regional standards
Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, resolution 43/173, 9 December 1988;  
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1987;  
Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1975;  
Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 1997;  
Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, December 1990;  
UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, General Comment No. 31. General Recommendation XXXI on the Prevention of Racial Discrimination in the Administration and Functioning of the Criminal Justice System, 2005  
UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 10. Children’s Rights in Juvenile Justice, 2007  
Resolution on the Respect and the Strengthening of the Independence of the Judiciary, 1996;  
Resolution on the Right to Fair Trial and Legal Aid in Africa, 1996;  
Resolution on the Right to Recourse and Fair Trial, 1992;  
Resolution on Prisons in Africa, 1995  
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, 2004  
SADC, Protocol on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, October 2002
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.2.6. How much confidence do people have in the legal system to deliver fair and effective justice?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Positive and negative indicators:** assess public opinion surveys and evidence of confidence in the legal and penal systems.

**Generalized sources**

Requires local data and opinion polling.
- East Asia Barometer, <http://eacsurvey.law.ntu.edu.tw/>
- Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Aberdeen, <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cspp/>
- Développement Institutions & Analyses de Long terme (DIAL), Household surveys on democracy and human rights, <http://www.dial.prd.fr/>

**Indirect testimonies at:**
- UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights and Special Rapporteur reports, listed at <http://www.ohchr.org>
1.3. **Civil and political rights**

*Overarching question: Are civil and political rights equally guaranteed for all?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.3.1. How free are all people from physical violation of their person, and from fear of it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Laws:</strong> examine laws governing (a) the official use of the means of violence; (b) violence between civil persons; (c) physical abuse within the home. If the government has ratified relevant conventions, examine whether the laws conform to their standards (and throughout sections 1.3 and 1.4).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) <strong>Practice:</strong> examine how effectively the laws are enforced in practice; procedures for redress or compensation; effectiveness of systems for protecting women and children against violence, including provision of refuges, etc.; existence, independence and effectiveness of a Human Rights Commission (and throughout sections 1.3 and 1.4).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) <strong>Negative indicators:</strong> investigate data on incidence of official or officially condoned violence; of civil murder, assault, rape, and the physical abuse of women and children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

**Global sources**

- American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Science and Human Rights Program, [http://shr.aaas.org/aaashran/](http://shr.aaas.org/aaashran/)
- Carter Center, [http://www.cartercenter.org](http://www.cartercenter.org)
- Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Data Project, [http://www.humanrightsdata.org](http://www.humanrightsdata.org)

**Regional sources**

- Alliance for Reform and Democracy in Asia, [http://www.asiademocracy.org/](http://www.asiademocracy.org/)
- Balkan Human Rights web pages, [http://cm.greekhelsinki.gr](http://cm.greekhelsinki.gr)
- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, [http://pdba.georgetown.edu/](http://pdba.georgetown.edu/)
- Droits et Démocratie, Centre international des droits de la personne et du développement démocratique (English, French and Spanish), [http://www.ichrdd.ca](http://www.ichrdd.ca)
- Equality Now, [http://www.equalitynow.org](http://www.equalitynow.org)
- European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations, [http://www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html](http://www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html)


Country reports to the UN Human Rights Committee and Committee against Torture, and Committee on Migrant Workers, <http://www.ohchr.org>


Human Rights Internet, <http://www.hri.ca>


Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/>


IPU, World Directory of Parliamentary Human Rights Bodies, IPU Secretariat, 2004


Inter-American Commission on Women, <http://www.oas.org/cim/default.htm>


Red Solidaria por los Derechos Humanos (REDH), <http://www.redh.org>

Reports of the Special Rapporteur on Extra-judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions in Africa, African Commission on Human and People’s Rights


South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre, <http://www.hri.ca/partners/sahrdc/>


Reports of the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions;
Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography;
Working Group on Arbitrary Detention;
Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances;
Reports of the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance;
Reports of the Special Rapporteur on Torture, and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
Reports of the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking of Persons, Especially in Women and Children;

UNIFEM, <http://www.unifem.org>

UNHCHR, National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Fact Sheet No. 19, <http://www.unhchr.ch>


United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on public social and economic policies and public finance and resources, <http://www.unpan.org>
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide


Witness, promoting use of online and video technologies to track human rights violations, <http://www.witness.org/>


### Standards of good practice

#### International standards

- UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights, *General Comment No. 8. Article 9 (Right to Liberty and Security of Persons)*, 1982

#### Regional standards

General Comment No. 14. Article 6 (Right to Life), 1984;
General Comment No. 18. Non-discrimination, 1989;
General Comment No. 20. Article 7 (Prohibition of Torture or Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment), 1992;
General Comment No. 21. Article 10 (Humane Treatment of Persons Deprived of Liberty), 1992;
General Comment No. 24. Reservations to the Covenant or Optional Protocols or Declarations under Article 41 of the Covenant, 1994;
General Comment No. 28. Article 3 (Equality of Rights Between Men and Women), 2000;
General Comment No. 29. Article 4 (Derogations During a State Emergency), 2001;
General Comment No. 31. The Nature of the General Legal Obligation Imposed on State Parties, 2004

General Recommendation No. 19. Violence against Women, 1992
General Recommendation No. 20. Reservations, 1992

UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, General Comment No. 17. Establishment of National Institutions to Facilitate Implementation of the Convention, 1993

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 2. The Role of National Human Rights Institutions, 2002;
General Comment No. 8. The Right of the Child to Protection from Corporal Punishment and Other Cruel and Degrading Forms of Punishment, 2006


African Union, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, 2004


Commonwealth Secretariat, National Human Rights Institutions: Best Practice, 2001


And several regional documents mentioned above in 1.2
(cont.)

Promoting Greater Respect and Protection of Human Rights in General and in Particular for Women and Children, Resolution by the 96th Inter-Parliamentary Conference (Beijing, 20 September 1996);

Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing Platform for Action, September 1995, Strategic Objectives and Actions on Violence against Women and on Human Rights of Women


Assessment question | 1.3.2. How effective and equal is the protection of the freedoms of movement, expression, association and assembly?

What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine the legislation securing these freedoms, including the extent of any limitations, exceptions, derogations, etc.

2) **Practice**: examine the effectiveness and impartiality of the procedures for securing these freedoms in practice, especially for unpopular or minority groups or opinions, or those involved in lawful opposition to the government.

3) **Negative indicators**: examine the effectiveness and impartiality of the procedures for securing these freedoms in practice, especially for unpopular or minority groups or opinions, or those involved in lawful opposition to the government.

Generalized sources

*In addition to civil and political rights sources already mentioned:*

- Global Internet Liberty Campaign, <http://www.gilc.org>
- Institute for Global Communications, <http://www.igc.org>


Reports of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, [http://www.osce.org/hcnm/](http://www.osce.org/hcnm/)

Reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression;


UnionWeb, [http://www.unionwebservices.com/resources](http://www.unionwebservices.com/resources)

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on ethics, transparency and accountability, [http://www.unpan.org](http://www.unpan.org)


World Press Freedom Committee (WPFC), USA, [http://www.wpfc.org](http://www.wpfc.org)

For freedom of information sources see criteria code 2.3.5. For media sources in general see section 3.1.

### Standards of good practice


UN, ICCPR, articles 19, 21 and 22;

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 13(1) and 13(2)

On freedom of expression: ICCPR, article 19

As they relate to groups:

ILO Convention No. 29. Forced Labour, 1930;

ILO Convention No 105. Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957;

ILO Convention No. 135. Workers’ Representatives Convention, 1973

ILO Convention No. 141. Rural Workers’ Organisations, 1975;

ILO Convention No. 151. Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1981

UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights, General Comment No. 10, Article 19 (Freedom of Opinion), 1983

### Regional standards


Resolution on Freedom of Expression, 2001;

Resolution on the Right to Freedom of Association, 1992

Council of Europe, European Social Charter, 1961 (article 5, Right of Assembly);

European Convention on Human Rights, 1950, articles 10, 11 and 12

ECOWAS, Protocol A/P.15/79 Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment, 1979

OAU, African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, 1986, articles 9, 10, 11, and 12;

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990, articles 7, 8, and 9
Joint Declaration by the UN, OAS and OSCE Mandates on Freedom of Expression, 2005; Joint Declaration by the UN, OAS, OSCE and ACHPR Special Mandates on Freedom of Expression, 2006, [http://www.article19.org](http://www.article19.org)


On movement
UN General Assembly, Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers, 1990;

International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 1990

UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights, General Comment No. 27. Article 12 (Freedom of Movement), 1999

On association and assembly


OAS, Inter-American Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression, approved by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights during its 108th regular session, 2002

SADC, Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons, August 2005

European Parliament, Resolution, 8 February 1994, on Recognition of Same Sex Couples
### Assessment question

1.3.3. How secure is the freedom for all to practise their own religion, language or culture?

### What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine laws governing religious observance, language use and other forms of cultural expression or activity; if there is an official religion or dominant language, the status of other religions, languages, etc.

2) **Practice**: examine the impartiality of legal implementation in practice.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate evidence of compulsory religious membership; of lack of availability of schooling in the mother tongue; of exclusions or discrimination on the grounds of religion, language, etc.

### Generalized sources

#### Global sources
- Centre for the Comparative Study of Culture, Development and the Environment (CDE), [http://www.sussex.ac.uk/development/](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/development/)
- Center for World Indigenous Studies, [http://www.cwis.org](http://www.cwis.org)
- I CARE; Internet Centre Anti-Racism partnership between United for Intercultural Action, the Magenta Foundation and Duo A, [http://www.icare.to](http://www.icare.to). The site features two useful and easy-to-search databases: (1) the United Database (1,500 addresses of anti-racism, migrant and refugee organizations in Europe); and (2) Crosspoint (over 1,500 links to websites of anti-racism organizations in over 100 countries).

#### Regional sources
- Adum, Resources on protection of minority languages in EU countries, [http://www.adum.info/adum/](http://www.adum.info/adum/)
- Balkan Human Rights web pages, [http://cm.greekhelsinki.gr](http://cm.greekhelsinki.gr)
- European Centre for Minority Issues, [http://www.ecmi.de](http://www.ecmi.de)
- European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations, [http://www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html](http://www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html)
- Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, [http://www.indigenista.org](http://www.indigenista.org)
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, *Reports* of the Special Rapporteurship on

Reports of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief; Reports of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons; Reports of the Independent Expert on Minority Issues, [http://www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)

Universal Black Pages, [http://www.ubp.com](http://www.ubp.com)

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, [http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/index.html](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/index.html)

Standards of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights, General Comment No. 22. Article 18 (Freedom of Thought, Conscience or Religion), 1993</td>
<td>Council of Europe, European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, 1992; European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1950, article 9 and associated Protocol; Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAS, Inter-American Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression, approved by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights during its 108th regular session, 2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.3.4. How free from harassment and intimidation are individuals and groups working to improve human rights?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> see under 1.3.2.</td>
<td>2) <strong>Positive indicators:</strong> investigate number of and support for human rights NGOs; and whether NGOs have contributed to the reporting processes under human rights conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) <strong>Negative indicators:</strong> investigate data on incidence of harassment and intimidation of human rights workers and NGOs, especially women’s and minority groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

- Country reports to the UN Human Rights Committee, <http://www.ohchr.org>
- Reports of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Human Rights Defenders, <http://www.ohchr.org>
For cultural autonomy see sources in 1.1.2.
As above plus:
Human Rights Watch, Annual Reports, country section reports on harassment and violence against rights activists, <http://www.hrw.org>
Hurights Osaka, <http://www.hurights.or.jp/>

Standards of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAS General Assembly, Human Rights Defenders in the Americas: Support for the Individuals, Groups and Organizations of Civil Society working to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Americas, 2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4. Economic and social rights

Overarching question: Are economic and social rights equally guaranteed for all?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.4.1. How far is access to work or social security available to all, without discrimination?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What to look for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) **Laws:** examine legal protection of the right to earn a living in a chosen occupation without discrimination, and the right to social security in the absence of such an occupation.

2) **Practice:** examine effectiveness of policies for employment; for access to land or other means of livelihood; for equal opportunities and equal pay; for security of employment and minimum wage; for vocational guidance; for preventing forced labour or servitude.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate data on unemployment; on discrimination in access to work and at the place of work; on the incidence of forced labour or servitude, including of children.

Generalized sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global sources</th>
<th>Regional sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


Human Rights for Workers (special emphasis on China, Vietnam and other Asian countries), <http://www.senser.com/index.htm>

IGCNET (incl. Womens Net), <http://www.igc.org>

Institute of Social Studies (labour relations), <http://www.iss.nl/>


ILO, *Yearbook of Labour Statistics* (annual);

ILO conventions also available at <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties>

In addition to ILO conventions (which provide only the text of an agreement), look at CEARC recommendations (body charged with overseeing implementation): see ILOLEX via <http://www.ilo.org>


LabourNet, <http://www.labournet.net/>

Institute for Employment Studies (IES), <http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/>

Overseas Development Institute, Research on social protection, <http://www.odi.org.uk>

International IDEA

Reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants,
<http://www.ohchr.org>


UNIFEM, <http://www.unifem.org>

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on public social and economic policies,
<http://www.unpan.org>

World Bank, documents on labour and income,
<http://www.worldbank.org>

World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on promoting labour rights,
<http://www.wmd.org/>

Links to national trade unions from:
Canadian International Labour Network (with international links), <http://labour.ciln.mcmaster.ca>
Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), <http://www.cihi.com/>
Centre for Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector (IRIS), <http://www.iris.umd.edu/>
International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, <http://www.icftu.org/>; and Free Labour World, Brussels (serial)
International Monetary Fund (IMF), Debt Initiative for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC): Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs are a requirement for countries applying to the IMF for debt relief), <http://www.imf.org/external/np/prsp/prsp.asp>
Political Resources.net, Labour and trade union organizations links to web pages,
<http://www.politicalresources.net>
World Bank, World Development Sources, <http://www-wds.worldbank.org>, for good practice on poverty reduction, e.g. Tanzania, Bolivia, Mozambique
### Standards of good practice

#### International standards

- UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*, 1966, articles 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11;
- *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, 1979, articles 10, 11, and 14;
- *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989, articles 26, 27 and 32;
- *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2006, article 27;
- *Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers*, 1990
- *ILO Convention No. 29. Forced Labour*, 1930;
- *ILO Convention No. 100. Equal Remuneration Convention*, 1951;
- *ILO Convention No. 131. Minimum Wage Fixing with Special Reference to Developing Countries*, 1972;
- *ILO Convention No. 156. Workers with Family responsibilities Convention*, 1981;
- *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up*, adopted by the

#### Regional standards

- *African Union, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa*, 2004
- *Council of Europe, European Code of Social Security (Revised)*, 1990;
- *European Convention on Human Rights*, 1950, article 4, prohibition of forced or compulsory labour;
- *European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers*, 1977;
- *European Convention on Social Security*, 1972;
- *European Union, Memorandum of Understanding for European SMEs, Open Access to Electronic Commerce*, <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ecommerce/MoU/>
- *Declaration of Margarita, CIDI, High-level Meeting on Poverty and Social Inclusion*, 2003
- *OAU, Constitution of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations*, 1974;


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Assessment question | 1.4.2. How effectively are the basic necessities of life guaranteed, including adequate food, shelter and clean water?

What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine legal entitlements to social security, housing, sanitation and clean water, and the corresponding duties of provision.

2) **Practice**: examine the adequacy of procedures and resources to provide the above rights.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data on undernourishment, homelessness, mortality, etc., especially among vulnerable groups among the population.

### Generalized sources

**General sources**
- British Library for Development Studies (BLDS) Bibliographic Database, searchable web version of the BLDS depository library of the UN, South Pacific Commission and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), <http://blds.ids.ac.uk/blds/>
- Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP), <http://www.crop.org/>
- Country reports to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against

**Regional sources**
- AfriMAP, database on public services, <http://www.afrimap.org>
- Alliance for Reform and Democracy in Asia, <http://www.asiademocracy.org/>

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on food security and on the Millennium Development Goals, <a href="http://www.eldis.org/">http://www.eldis.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>International Budget Project, Research theme on applied budget analysis and economic, social and cultural rights, <a href="http://www.internationalbudget.org">http://www.internationalbudget.org</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development (rural poverty knowledgebase), <a href="http://www.ifad.org/">http://www.ifad.org/</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Multilaterals Project, <a href="http://fletcher.tufts.edu/multilaterals.html">http://fletcher.tufts.edu/multilaterals.html</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Centre for World and Indigenous Studies, <a href="http://www.cwis.org/">http://www.cwis.org/</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOVAS, social and economic indicators, <a href="http://www.ecostat.org/">http://www.ecostat.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Groupe d’Études et de Recherches sur la Démocratie et le Développement Economique et Social (Research Group on the Democratic, Economic and Social Development of Africa) (GERDDES), <a href="http://www.gerddes.org/">http://www.gerddes.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, <a href="http://www.indigenista.org">http://www.indigenista.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre, <a href="http://www.sardc.net/">http://www.sardc.net/</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), <a href="http://www.unescap.org">http://www.unescap.org</a></td>
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<th>Source</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overseas Development Institute, Research on water resources and related issues,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.odi.org.uk">http://www.odi.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN, <em>Update on the Nutrition Situation</em> (Geneva: UN, various years);</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), <a href="http://apps.fao.org">http://apps.fao.org</a>;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO, <em>Statistical Yearbook</em>;</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN Habitat, <a href="http://www.unhabitat.org">http://www.unhabitat.org</a>;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living; Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ohchr.org">http://www.ohchr.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID Famine Early Warning System,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fews.net/">http://www.fews.net/</a>;</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Bank, documents on water supply and sanitation;</td>
<td></td>
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WHO, *World Health Statistics* (annual)


### Standards of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General standards</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bangalore Declaration and Plan of Action, 2000</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Compilation of General Comments and General Recommendations Adopted by Human Rights Treaty Bodies, UN document HRI\GEN\1\ Rev. 1 at 53, 1994</strong></td>
<td><strong>Compilation of General Comments and General Recommendations Adopted by Human Rights Treaty Bodies, UN document HRI\GEN\1\ Rev. 1 at 53, 1994</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.4.3. To what extent is the health of the population protected, in all spheres and stages of life?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What to look for</td>
<td>1) <strong>Laws</strong>: examine legislation protecting the health and safety of people as workers, consumers, residents and travellers; the extent of the right to health and other personal care; the corresponding duties of provision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) <strong>Practice</strong>: examine the adequacy of procedures and personnel to enforce regulations on health and safety; and the effectiveness of delivery of health and other care, including equality of access to services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) <strong>Negative indicators</strong>: investigate statistics on death and injury in different circumstances; comparative life expectancy among different social groups; incidence of disease and disablement of different kinds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

**Global sources**
- Carter Center, [http://www.cartercenter.org](http://www.cartercenter.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Country reports*, [http://www.cdc.org](http://www.cdc.org)

**Regional sources**
- AfriMAP, database on the public services, [http://www.afrimap.org](http://www.afrimap.org)

Center for Reproductive Rights, <http://www.reproductiverights.org/>

Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP), <http://www.crop.org>


IGCNET (incl. PeaceNet, EcoNet and Womens Net), <http://www.igc.org>

Australian Development Gateway, International and Asia–Pacific-specific resources on health (HIV/AIDS, alcohol, tobacco and drugs, disabilities, disease control, maternal and child health, mental health, nutrition, reproductive health, etc.), <http://www.developmentgateway.com.au>

Child Research Net (special focus Japan and Asia) plus CRN Navigator links to child-related sites, <http://www.childresearch.net/>


ECOWAS, social and economic indicators, <http://www.ecostat.org/>

Groupe d’Études et de Recherches sur la Démocratie et le Développement Economique et Social (Research Group on the Democratic, Economic and Social Development of Africa) (GERDDES), <http://www.gerddes.org/>

Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, <http://www.indigenista.org>

Open Society Mental Health Initiative, <http://www.osmhi.org/>


Reports of the Special Rapporteur on Prisons and the Condition of Detention in Africa, African Commission on Human and People’s Rights;

Reports of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa, African Commission on Human and People’s Rights;


Reports of the Special Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women, Inter-American


Researching Health and Human Rights, <http://www.rhhr.net/>


Save the Children UK, Resources on the child’s right to health, <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk>

*Reports of the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health*, <http://www.ohchr.org>

UN, *Update on the Nutrition Situation* (Geneva: UN, various years)


United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), <http://www.unescap.org>


World Health Organization (WHO), *World Health Statistics* (annual), <http://www.who.int>

**Standards of good practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>International standards</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action to Combat HIV/AIDS in View of its Devastating Human, Economic and Social Impact, Resolution unanimously adopted by</td>
<td>OAS, Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,</td>
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<td>Source</td>
<td>Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>the 99th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Windhoek, 10 April 1998</td>
<td>‘Protocol of San Salvador’, OAS Treaty Series No. 69, 1988, article 10;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 3. HIV/AIDS and the Rights of the Child, 2003; General Comment No. 4. Adolescent Health, 2003</td>
<td>SADC, Protocol on Health, August 1999</td>
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<tr>
<th>Disabled persons</th>
<th>Older persons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Principles for the Protection of Persons with Mental Illness and the Improvement of Mental Health Care</em>, December 1991;</td>
<td><em>ILO Convention No. 102. Social Security (Minimum Standards)</em>, 1955;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4.4. How extensive and inclusive is the right to education, including education in the rights and responsibilities of citizenship?

What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine legal entitlements to schooling, including age limits, standards, etc., and the corresponding duties of provision; also any requirements to provide civic education.

2) **Practice**: examine the extent to which procedures, public resources and trained personnel are sufficient to deliver education rights for all without discrimination or exclusion on grounds of gender or other status.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate illiteracy rates; systematic inequalities in participation rates or educational experience between different social groups; typical cost of schooling compared with average earnings.

Generalized sources

**Data sources as in 1.4.2 and 2.1.2. Further website resources:**

**Global sources**

**Country reports** to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and Committee on the Rights of the Child, [http://www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)

- Education International, [http://www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org)

- International Literacy Institute, [http://www.literacyonline.org/ili.htm](http://www.literacyonline.org/ili.htm)

**Regional sources**
- Africa Education, [http://www.AfricaEducation.org](http://www.AfricaEducation.org)
- AfriMAP, database on the public services, [http://www.afrimap.org](http://www.afrimap.org)
- British Library for Development Studies (BLDS) Bibliographic Database, searchable web version of the BLDS depository library of the UN, South Pacific Commission and GATT, [http://blds.ids.ac.uk/blds/](http://blds.ids.ac.uk/blds/)
- Distance Education Database, [http://www-icdl.open.ac.uk](http://www-icdl.open.ac.uk)
- ECOWAS, social and economic indicators, [http://www.ecostat.org/](http://www.ecostat.org/)
- EUMAP, programme on access to education for Roma, [http://www.eumap.org/](http://www.eumap.org/)
- Pacific Resources for Education and Learning, [http://www.prel.org](http://www.prel.org)
- Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, [http://www.indigenista.org](http://www.indigenista.org)
Open Learning Foundation, <http://www.olf.ac.uk/>


Right to Education Project, documents and web resources on the right to education, <http://www.right-to-education.org/>


Reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, <http://www.ohchr.org>


US National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), <http://www.nabe.org>


Standards of good practice

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<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
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</table>
Protocol Instituting a Conciliation and Good Offices Commission to be Responsible for Seeking a Settlement of Any Disputes which May Arise Between States Parties to the Convention against Discrimination in Education, October 1968;
ILO Convention No. 140. Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974;
Minimum Age Convention, 1973;
Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981;
Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 2000

UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 11. Plans of Action for Primary Education, 1999;
General Comment No. 13. The Right to Education (Art. 13), 1999

World Declaration on Education for All, adopted at the World Conference on Education for All, Jomtein, Thailand, 1990

UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No. 3. Education and Public Information Programmes, 1987

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 1. The Aims of Education, 2001


### Assessment question

| 1.4.5. How free are trade unions and other work-related associations to organize and represent their members’ interests? |

#### What to look for

1. **Laws**: examine legal protection for trade unions, their independence from employers and government, and their right to organize, bargain collectively and represent members’ interests.

2. **Practice**: examine how effectively legal rights are protected in practice; the levels of trade union recognition and membership; the extent of their consultative role at work and more widely.

3. **Negative indicators**: investigate data on refusals of union recognition, harassment of trade union officials and members, blacklisting, etc.

#### Generalized sources

- Canadian International Labour Network (with international links), <http://labour.ciln.mcmaster.ca>
- Center for Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector (IRIS), University of Maryland, <http://www.iris.umd.edu/>
- Human Rights for Workers (special emphasis on China, Vietnam and other Asian countries), <http://www.senser.com/index.htm>
- IGCNET (incl. Womens Net), <http://www.igc.org>
- ILO, *Yearbook of Labour Statistics* (annual)
- International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, <http://www.icftu.org>;
- International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, *Free Labour World*, Brussels (serial)
- Political Resources.net, Labour and trade union organizations links to web pages from <http://www.politicalresources.net>
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(Cont.)

- Reports of the Special Rapporteurship on Migrant Workers and their Families, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, <http://www.cidh.oas.org/Migrantes/defaultmigrants.htm>
- US Central Intelligence Agency, World Factbook (annual)

Standards of good practice

As 1.4.4 above, and principally

**International standards**

- UN ICESCR, 1966, article 8; *Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families*, 1990
- ILO Convention No. 29. Forced Labour, 1930;
- ILO Convention No. 87. Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948;
- ILO Convention No. 98. Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949;
- ILO Convention No 105. Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957;
- ILO Convention No 122. Employment Policy Convention, 1964;
- ILO Convention No. 135. Convention concerning Protection and Facilities to be Afforded to Workers’ Representatives in the Undertaking, 1973;
- ILO Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers, June 1975;
- ILO Convention No. 141. Rural Workers’ Organisations, 1975;

**Regional standards**

- Council of Europe, *Revised European Social Charter*, 1996, article 6, Trade Union Rights;
- *European Convention on Human Rights*, 1950, article 4, prohibition of forced or compulsory labour;
- *European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers*, 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>1.4.6. How rigorous and transparent are the rules on corporate governance, and how effectively are corporations regulated in the public interest?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td><strong>1) Laws</strong>: examine laws regulating corporate governance and financing, including the public disclosure <strong>2) Practice</strong>: examine the effectiveness of procedures for corporate regulation, including the sufficiency and competence <strong>3) Negative indicators</strong>: investigate the incidence of significant failures or biases in the government regulation of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of corporate accounts; laws on protection of health and safety at work; laws on consumer and environmental protection.

of monitoring personnel; the existence and effectiveness of independent watchdog bodies; procedures for redress.

business and finance; incidence of mishaps, injuries etc. due to corporate negligence; prosecutions under the relevant legislation.

Generalized sources

Australian APEC Study Centre, Monash University, resources on regulation of finance, [http://www.apec.org.au/]

Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, [http://www.business-humanrights.org/]


Corporate Governance, extensive links on all aspects of corporate governance, [http://www.corpgov.net/links/links.html]

Corporate Governance, World Bank, [http://trr.worldbank.org/Themes/CorporateGovernance/]

Corporate Information, [http://www.corporateinformation.com/]

Corporate Watch UK, [http://www.corporatewatch.org/]; and Corporate Watch (US), tracking the practices of specific companies, [http://www.corpwatch.org/]

*Critical Perspectives on Accounting* (Journal), [http://www.elsevier.com]

Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs (DAF) unit in the OECD which, among other things, is responsible for corporate governance initiatives, [http://www.oecd.org/daf/]


Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on corporate social responsibility, [http://www.eldis.org/]

Encyclopedia about Corporate Governance, [http://www.encycogov.com/]

European Corporate Governance Institute, [http://www.ecgi.org/]

Findlaw, a specialized search engine for resources on legislation in any country, [http://www.findlaw.com]

Global Reporting Initiative, [http://www.globalreporting.org/]

Global Witness, on the links between natural resources, conflict and corruption, [http://www.globalwitnness.org/]

*Reports* of the Independent Expert on the effects of economic reform policies and foreign debt on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, [http://www.ohchr.org]

*Journal of Corporate Finance*, [http://www.elsevier.com]


Multinational Monitor, [http://www.multinationalmonitor.org/]

Reports of the Independent Expert on the effects of economic reform policies and foreign debt on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, [http://www.ohchr.org]
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Revenue Watch Institute, <http://www.revenuewatch.org>
Rights and Accountability in Development (RAID, Africa), <http://www.raid-uk.org/>
UN Global Compact, <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>
United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on public social and economic policies, ethics, transparency and accountability, and public finance and public resources, <http://www.unpan.org>
West African Monetary Institute, <http://www.wami-imao.org/>
World Resources Institute, concerned with environmental sustainability (and related policies in corporate governance), <http://www.wri.org/>

Standards of good practice

<table>
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<tr>
<th>General standards</th>
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<tr>
<td>United Nations Centre for Transnational Corporations, investment guidelines</td>
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<th>On macro policy and data transparency</th>
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<tr>
<td>IMF, <em>Code of Good Practices in Fiscal Transparency</em>, 2001 (updated);</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Special Data Dissemination Standard/ General Data Dissemination Standard</em>, <a href="http://dsbb.imf.org/Applications/web/sddshome/">http://dsbb.imf.org/Applications/web/sddshome/</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>

New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), *Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance*, 2005


Commonwealth Association for Corporate Governance (CACG), *CACG Guidelines: Principles for Corporate Governance in the Commonwealth: Towards Global Competitiveness and Economic Accountability*, 1999

Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC), Hong Kong, *Corporate Code of Conduct*, 1996

Standards from the Financial Stability Forum, [http://www.fsforum.org](http://www.fsforum.org), contained in the *Compendium of Standards* (over 65 in total)


**On institutional and market infrastructure**


Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems (CPSS), *Core Principles for Systematically Important Payment Systems*, December 1999


International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC), *International Accounting Standards (IAS)* (periodical)

International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), *International Standards on Auditing (ISA)* (periodical)
2. Representative and accountable government

2.1. Free and fair elections

Overarching question: Do elections give the people control over governments and their policies?

| Assessment question | 2.1.1. How far is appointment to governmental and legislative office determined by popular competitive election, and how frequently do elections lead to change in the governing parties or personnel? |

What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine legislation governing appointment to executive and legislative office, and the frequency and timing of elections.

2) **Practice**: examine the impartiality of the procedures for implementing the legislation.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data on key political offices not subject to electoral authorization or accountability and on party turnover in office; extent to which a party retains control of government and its patronage (a) across the territory, (b) over time.

Generalized sources

**Global sources**


**Regional sources**


Association of Asian Election Authorities, [http://www.ifes.org/AsiaAssocSite/index.htm](http://www.ifes.org/AsiaAssocSite/index.htm)

Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, [http://pdba.georgetown.edu/](http://pdba.georgetown.edu/)


(cont.)

IFES (formerly the International Foundation for Election Systems), <http://www.ifes.org>
National IFES sites <http://www.ifes.org/regions.html>;
International IDEA, <http://www.idea.int>;
International Electoral Standards: Guidelines for Reviewing the Legal Framework of Elections (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2002);
Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections (annual);
Lijphart Elections Archive, <http://dodgson.ucsd.edu/lij>
Mackie, T. and Rose, R., A Decade of Elections Results: Updating the International Almanac (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 1997);
Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, <http://nias.ku.dk>
Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, 7 July 2005</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goodwin-Gill, G. S., *Codes of Conduct for Elections* (Geneva: IPU, 1998);

International IDEA, *Code of Conduct for the Ethical and Professional Administration of Elections*, 1997;
*Code of Conduct for the Ethical and Professional Observation of Elections*, 1997;
*Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook* (Stockholm: IDEA, 2006);


ECOWAS, *Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism For Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security*, 2001, articles 2–18


ECOWAS, *Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism For Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security*, 2001, articles 2–18


NEPAD, *Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance*, 2005


OSCE, ODIHR, *Common Responsibility: Commitments and Implementation*, 2006, Report submitted to the OSCE Ministerial Council in response to MC Decision No. 17/05 on Strengthening the Effectiveness of the OSCE;
*Election Observation Handbook*, 5th edn (2005);
Assessment question | 2.1.2. How inclusive and accessible for all citizens are the registration and voting procedures, how independent are they of government and party control, and how free from intimidation and abuse?

What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine legislation on electoral registration and voting procedures for inclusiveness; non-discrimination on grounds of gender, race, ethnicity, etc.; ease of access, security and independence of supervision.

2) **Practice**: examine the adequacy of procedures, resources and personnel to ensure that the right to vote is secured for all in practice; the degree of separation of electoral supervision from the governing party or parties.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data on voter exclusions, the ratio of registered to eligible voters, intimidation of voters or candidates, and vote buying; malpractice in registration, voting or ballot counting; evidence of bias in the operation or personnel of the electoral commission.

**Generalized sources**

- Requires in-country sources.
- **Some general resources**
- **Some civic education resources**
  - APSANET: Teaching Political Science, <http://www.apsanet.org/section_168.cfm>


IFES, <http://www.ifes.org>

IKNOW Politics, <http://www.iknowpolitics.org>


World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on increasing women’s participation in politics, <http://www.wmd.org/>


ELDIS Gateway to Development Information, sources on participation, <http://www.eldis.org/participation/index.htm>


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**Standards of good practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


International IDEA, *Code of Conduct for Political Parties: Campaigning in Democratic Elections* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 1999);


ECOWAS, *Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism For Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security*, 2001, articles 2–18


Cooperative for Research and Education (CORE), *Election Administration Manual* (Johannesburg: CORE, 1995)

**Country standards**


Indonesian Constitutional Court, *Handbook on Election Result Dispute Settlement*, 2004
Assessment question: 2.1.3. How fair are the procedures for the registration of candidates and parties, and how far is there fair access for them to the media and other means of communication with the voters?

What to look for:

1) **Laws:** examine legal regulations governing the registration of candidates (especially women and minorities) and parties, and their freedom to campaign and to communicate with the electors; rules governing election expenditure by candidates and parties; rules governing media reporting of elections.

2) **Practice:** examine the even-handedness in practice of access for candidates and parties to the means of communication with voters; the balance in media coverage of elections; the independence of the public media from government or governing party control; access by independent candidates to the electorate.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate data on exclusions from registration, official and informal obstructions on campaigning, and inequalities in access to campaign finance, to the media, to other means of communication with the voters.

Generalized sources:

*As above, plus, General sources*


*World Reference Atlas* (London and New York: Dorling Kindersley, various edns), media censorship assessment in country entries

*Country-specific data needed*

### Standards of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers, 7 July 2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International IDEA, <strong>Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook</strong> (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2005);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Electoral Standards: Guidelines for Reviewing the Legal Framework of Elections (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2002);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Code of Conduct: Political Parties Campaigning in Democratic Elections</strong> (Stockholm: International IDEA, 1999);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft Code of Conduct on Media and Elections</strong> (no date)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPU, <strong>Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections</strong>, 1994, section 3, Candidature, Party and Campaign Rights and Responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE, ODIHR, <strong>Guidelines for Reviewing a Legal framework for Elections</strong>, OSCE/ODIHR, 2001;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding and Disclosure Handbook for Political Parties</strong>, Commonwealth of Australia, 2004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Assessment question

2.1.4. How effective a range of choice does the electoral and party system allow the voters, how equally do their votes count, and how closely do the composition of the legislature and the selection of the executive reflect the choices they make?

## What to look for

1) **Laws:** examine legislation on the form of electoral system, constituency boundaries, etc.

2) **Practice:** examine how the electoral system works in practice to affect voter choice, equality between voters, voter turnout and the political composition of the legislature and executive.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate data on deviation from proportionality, arbitrary relation between votes and seats won, and limited range of parties represented in the legislature.

### Generalized sources

#### Global sources

- **Country reports** to the UN Human Rights Committee, <http://www.ohchr.org>
- **Electoral Disproportionality** – two datasets from Lijphart and Zelaznik calculated using the Gallagher index:
  - **Zelaznik, J., Electoral Disproportionality Dataset** (Colchester: Department of Government, University of Essex, 1999)
- **International IDEA, The User’s Guide to the ACE Project Electronic Resources, 1998; and Administration and Cost of Elections project (ACE) Project CD-ROM, Beta Version 1, April 1999**
- **IFES, Elections Today** (periodical)
- **IKNOW Politics**, <http://www.iknowpolitics.org/>

#### Regional sources

- **Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas**, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- **Longman’s Current Affairs Series** (political parties):
  - **Coggins, J. and Lewis, D. S., Political Parties of the Americas and the Caribbean** (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1992);
  - **East, R. and Joseph, T., Political Parties of Africa and the Middle East** (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1993);
  - **Lewis, D. S. and Sagar, D. J., Political Parties of Asia and the Pacific** (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1992);
  - **Szajkowski, B., New Political Parties of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union** (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1991)
- **Proportional Representation Library**, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/prlib.htm>
Mackie, T. and Rose, R., *A Decade of Elections Results: Updating the International Almanac* (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 1997);


*Statesman’s Yearbook 1996/97*

UNIFEM, <http://www.unifem.org>


World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on increasing women’s participation in politics, <http://www.wmd.org/>

### Standards of good practice


European Court of Human Rights, *Sadak v. Turkey* (application no. 10226/03), decided 31 January 2007. In the light of political instability in Turkey and keeping in mind its system of proportional representation, the court accepted the national threshold of 10% for recognition as a political party to be a measure ‘to prevent excessive and debilitating parliamentary fragmentation and thus strengthen governmental stability’.


African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, *Constitutional Rights Project and Civil Liberties Organisation v. Nigeria*, Comm. No. 102/93, 1998, para. 50 on the respect to be accorded to the results of free and fair elections to render the right to vote meaningful
### Assessment question

2.1.5. How far does the legislature reflect the social composition of the electorate?

#### What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine any legislation seeking to remedy the under-representation of women, minorities or marginalized social groups in the legislature.

2) **Practice**: examine the adequacy of legal and other measures (by legislators, parties, selectorate) to remedy the under-representation of social groups in the legislature, including hours and conditions of work in the legislature itself.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data on the social composition of the legislature, including variation between parties, and changes over time.

#### Generalized sources

**General sources**

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, numbers of women in parliaments online, [http://www.cpahq.org/topics/women/](http://www.cpahq.org/topics/women/)
- IPU online database of all national parliaments and proportion of women members, [http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm)

**Pressure groups**

- Center for Women’s Global Leadership, [http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/](http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/)
- Organizations promoting women’s political participation in parliaments (addresses available at [http://www.idea.int/gender/](http://www.idea.int/gender/)):
  - Association of West European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA);
  - Center for Asia–Pacific Women in Politics (CAPWIP);
  - Gender and Youth Affairs Division
  - Commonwealth Secretariat;
  - IPU;
- Organization of Women Parliamentarians from Muslim Countries;
- Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA);
- South Asian Network for Political Empowerment of Women (SANPEW)
- International IDEA links page to women’s websites, [http://www.idea.int/gender/](http://www.idea.int/gender/)
(cont.)


NDI, Program on Training Women Candidates and Elected Women Leaders, [http://www.ndi.org]


UNIFEM, [http://www.unifem.org]


World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on increasing women’s participation in politics, [http://www.wmd.org/]

Standards of good practice

**Standards on women**

African Union, *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa*, 2004

**Standards on minorities**

European Commission for Democracy Through Law (Venice Commission), *Electoral Law*
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing Platform for Action, September 1995,
Strategic Objectives and Actions on Women in Power and Decision Making
OAS, Declaration of La Paz on Decentralization and on Strengthening Regional and Municipal Administrations and Participation of Civil Society, 2001;
Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, 1999
Parliamentary Action for Women’s Access to and Participation in Decision-Making Structures aimed at Achieving True Equality for Women, Resolution by the 93rd Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Madrid, 1 April 1995

**Assessment question**

2.1.6. What proportion of the electorate votes, and how far are the election results accepted by all political forces in the country and outside?

**What to look for**

**Indicators:** investigate data on voter turnout over time, especially turnout of women and minorities; on effect of compulsory voting legislation if enforced; on rejections of the electoral process or its results by significant political forces; and on electoral and post-electoral violence.
Generalized sources


In terms of pre- and post-electoral violence, see sources in 1.1.3, 1.1.4 and 1.3.1.

Standards of good practice

**International standards**

Goodwin-Gill, G. S., *Codes of Conduct for Elections* (Geneva: IPU, 1998);


International IDEA, *Code of Conduct for the Ethical and Professional Administration of Elections*, 1997;

*Code of Conduct for the Ethical and Professional Observation of Elections*, 1997;

*Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2006);


**Regional standards**

# The democratic role of political parties

**Overarching question:** Does the party system assist the working of democracy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>2.2.1. How freely are parties able to form and recruit members, engage with the public and campaign for office?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## What to look for

1) **Laws:** examine legal requirements for forming and registering political parties, and any restrictions on their activity and organization.

2) **Positive indicators:** investigate data on the number of political parties, their geographical distribution, membership (including membership from non-traditional groups like women, minorities, youth, etc.), and organization.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate obstacles to party formation and activity, and evidence of harassment of party members and officials. See also 2.1.3 above.

## Generalized sources

*A qualitative issue for in-country teams. The following may be of help:*

- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, UK DFID, database on political parties, <http://www.gsdrc.org>
- International IDEA, Database on National Legislation and Regulation of Political Parties, <http://www.political-parties.org>;
- Database of Political Party Reports, <http://www.idea.int/parties/country_reports.cfm>;
- Database on Political Finance Laws and Regulations, <http://www.idea.int/parties/finance/introduction.cfm>;
- *Legal Regulation of Political Parties in Latin America* (in Spanish), IDEA and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2006;
- for more on International IDEA's databases and documents on political parties see <http://www.idea.int/parties/index.cfm>
- INTUTE: Social sciences database, information on political parties by country, databases and reports, <http://www.intute.ac.uk/socialsciences>;
- Longman’s Current Affairs Series (political parties):
Coggins, J. and Lewis, D. S., *Political Parties of the Americas and the Caribbean* (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1992);
East, R. and Joseph, T., *Political Parties of Africa and the Middle East* (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1993);
Lewis, D. S. and Sagar, D. J., *Political Parties of Asia and the Pacific* (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1992);

NDI, Program on Women and Political Parties Assistance and Program on Political Party Development, <http://www.ndi.org>

Political Resources.net, number of parties names and links to home pages, <http://www.politicalresources.net>


Statesman’s Yearbook 1996/97


### Standards of good practice

#### International standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norris, P., ‘Building Political Parties: Reforming Legal Regulations and Internal Rules’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Regional standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Country standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

Report commissioned by International IDEA, 2004

### Assessment question

2.2.2. How effective is the party system in forming and sustaining governments in office?

### What to look for

1) *Positive indicators:* examine evidence from the recent past of the capacity of governments to construct stable coalitions of party support.

2) *Negative indicators:* examine evidence of frequent changes of government between elections, short terms in office, or minor parties switching support without public justification.

### Generalized sources

*Databases as above and additionally*

*Statesman's Yearbook 1996/97*

### Standards of good practice

### Assessment question

2.2.3. How far are parties effective membership organizations, and how far are members able to influence party policy and candidate selection?

### What to look for

1) *Laws:* examine internal party rules on membership rights and responsibilities.

2) *Positive indicators:* examine evidence of membership activity within parties: numbers, part played in selecting candidates and leaders, in campaigning, and in policy revision.

3) *Negative indicators:* absence of the data in Parts 1 and 2

### Generalized sources

IKNOW Politics, <http://www.iknowpolitics.org/>

Longman's Current Affairs Series (political parties):
Coggins, J. and Lewis, D. S., *Political Parties of the Americas and the Caribbean* (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1992);
East, R. and Joseph, T., *Political Parties of Africa and the Middle East* (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1993);
Lewis, D. S. and Sagar, D. J., *Political Parties of Asia and the Pacific* (Harlow and Detroit, Mich.: 1992);


National Endowment for Democracy: information concerning political parties can be found at <http://www.ned.org/research/demresources/orgs-political.html>

Political Resources.net, listing of parties on the web, <http://www.politicalresources.net/>

### Standards of good practice


### Assessment question

2.2.4. How far does the system of party financing prevent the subordination of parties to special interests?

### What to look for

1) **Laws:** examine legislation on party funding, including openness to public inspection.

2) **Practice:** examine the extent to which the arrangements work in practice to prevent the subordination of parties to special interests.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate evidence of party or government bias in policy, legislation or patronage towards party funders.

### Generalized sources


Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>

Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, UK DFID, database on political finance, <http://www.gsdrc.org>


International IDEA conference research papers, <http://www.idea.int/idea_work/22_s_africa/index.htm>;

Database on Political Finance Laws and Regulations, <http://www.idea.int/parties/finance/introduction.cfm>


Moneyandpolitics.net, <http://www.moneyandpolitics.net/>

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on public finance and public resources, <http://www.unpan.org>


See 2.6.3.

**Standards of good practice**

See 2.6.3.

**International standards**


**Country standards**


UK House of Commons, Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Neil Committee), *The Funding of Political Parties in the United Kingdom*, Fifth Report, Cm 4057 I & II (appendix 1 to Vol. I,
Assessment question | 2.2.5. To what extent does support for parties cross ethnic, religious and linguistic divisions?

What to look for

1) **Indicators**: examine the level and distribution of the support for the different parties across communal divisions.

**Generalized sources**

Afro Barometer, <http://www.afrobarometer.org/>
Asian Barometer, <http://www.asianbarometer.org/>
East Asia Barometer, <http://eacsurvey.law.ntu.edu.tw/>
Latino Barometer, <http://www.latinobarometro.org/>

**Standards of good practice**

### 2.3. Effective and responsive government

**Overarching question:** Is government effective in serving the public and responsive to its concerns?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>2.3.1. How far is the elected government able to influence or control those matters that are important to the lives of its people, and how well is it informed, organized and resourced to do so?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### What to look for

1) **Positive indicators:** examine the effectiveness of governments in carrying out their policy and legislative programmes.

2) **Negative indicators:** examine evidence of policy areas outside the control of elected government; of subordination to external institutions in the determination of policy, legislation or government expenditure.

### Generalized sources

**Global sources**

- Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on financial policy, <http://www.eldis.org/>;
- IPU, *Human Rights of Parliamentarians* (Committee of IPU), <http://www.ipu.org/iss-e/hr-law.htm>;
- Study Committee II: Parliamentary, Juridical and Human Rights Questions (IPU), <http://www.ipu.org/strct-e/comtees.htm#C2>;

**Regional sources**

- Barometer public opinion surveys: Afro Barometer, <http://www.afrobarometer.org/>;
- East Asia Barometer, <http://eacsurvey.law.ntu.edu.tw/>;
- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>;
- German Social Science Infrastructure Services (GESIS), International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), provides survey data for 38 countries from 1983 onwards, <http://www.gesis.org/en/data_service/issp/index.htm>;
Parliamentary and Presidential Elections around the World, [http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/election.htm](http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/election.htm)


United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on governance systems and institutions, and ethics, transparency and accountability, [http://www.unpan.org](http://www.unpan.org)

van der Hulst, Marc, *The Parliamentary Mandate*, IPU, 2000, [http://www.ipu.org/english/Books.htm#Mandate](http://www.ipu.org/english/Books.htm#Mandate). A global comparative study based on the analysis of information supplied by over 130 parliamentary chambers. Focuses on the nature, duration and exercise of the parliamentary mandate, offering a comparative analysis of worldwide practice in this field. Also addresses the issue of the legal and material resources available or that should be made available to the parliamentarians in the performance of their mandate.


World Bank, Research programme on finance and private-sector research, and database on banking, finance and investment, [http://www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org);


World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transparency, accountability and access to information, [http://www.wmd.org](http://www.wmd.org)

IDASA, public opinion surveys, [http://www.idasa.org.za](http://www.idasa.org.za)


Standards of good practice

**International standards**


*Ensuring Lasting Democracy by Forging Close Links between Parliament and the People*, Resolution adopted without a vote by the 98th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Cairo, 15 September 1997


**Country standards**

Australian Prime Minister, *A Guide on Key Elements of Ministerial Responsibility* (Canberra: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 1998)

---

**Assessment question**

2.3.2. How effective and open to scrutiny is the control exercised by elected leaders and their ministers over their administrative staff and other executive agencies?

**What to look for**

1) *Laws*: examine rules governing the discretion or immunity of administrative personnel; ministerial access to information; performance agreements between ministers and departmental heads; the independence and accountability of executive and executive-appointed agencies.

2) *Practice*: examine the effectiveness of the political control exercised by ministers over their administrative staff in practice.

3) *Negative indicators*: investigate evidence of bureaucratic obstruction, lack of accountability, etc.
### Generalized sources

#### Global sources
- Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, UK DFID, database on civil service reform, [http://www.gsdrc.org](http://www.gsdrc.org)
- Information Systems for Public Sector Management, School of Environment and Development, University of Manchester, Working Papers, [http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/](http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/)
- International City/County Management Association, [http://www.icma.org/](http://www.icma.org/)
- PublicNet is a World Wide Web community created for everybody interested in the public sector and its management: [http://www.publicnet.co.uk/](http://www.publicnet.co.uk/)
- United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on ethics, transparency and accountability, [http://www.unpan.org](http://www.unpan.org)
- World Bank, Civil Service Reform Study, e.g. Klitgaard, R., ‘Cleaning Up and Invigorating the Civil Service’, World Bank, Washington, DC, 1996 (mimeo);
- World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transparency, accountability and access to information, [http://www.wmd.org/](http://www.wmd.org/)

#### Regional sources

### Standards of good practice

See 2.6.1 and 2.6.2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>2.3.3. How open and systematic are the procedures for public consultation on government policy and legislation, and how equal is the access for relevant interests to government?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> examine legal requirements for public consultation in different areas of government activity, including requirements for openness.</td>
<td><strong>2) Practice:</strong> examine how inclusive and transparent procedures for consultation are in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3) Negative indicators:</strong> investigate systematic exclusions from consultative processes, formal and informal; government bias in the consultation or treatment of relevant interests; incidence of organized protest against government policy. <strong>See 2.6.4.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

**Global sources**

- C2D – Research and Documentation Centre on Direct Democracy, [http://c2d.unige.ch](http://c2d.unige.ch)
- Center for Civil Society Studies, Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies, *The Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project and the UN Nonprofit Handbook Project*, [http://www.jhu.edu/~ccss/about.html](http://www.jhu.edu/~ccss/about.html)
- International Budget Project, Open Budget Initiative 2006, [http://www.openbudgetindex.org](http://www.openbudgetindex.org)
- Participation Power and Social Change team at the Institute of Development Studies,

**Regional sources**

- Action Research on Web, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney, [http://www2.fhs.usyd.edu.au/arow/](http://www2.fhs.usyd.edu.au/arow/)
- International Centre for Learning and Promotion of Participation and Democratic Governance (PRIA), [http://www.pria.org](http://www.pria.org)
- NGO Information Centre, [http://www.ngo.or.jp](http://www.ngo.or.jp)
- Office for Public Management, [http://www.opm.co.uk](http://www.opm.co.uk)

Participatory Initiatives, University of Guelph, <http://www.oac.uoguelph.ca>


UNIFEM, <http://www.unifem.org>

Union of International Associations, NGO websites from the searchable website (derivative from their Yearbook of International Associations), <http://www.uia.org/extlinks/pub.php>


### Standards of good practice

#### International standards


#### Regional standards

- OAS, *Declaration of La Paz on Decentralization and on Strengthening Regional and Municipal Administrations and Participation of Civil Society*, 2001
### Assessment question

2.3.4. How accessible and reliable are public services for those who need them, and how systematic is consultation with users over service delivery?

### What to look for

1. **Laws:** examine requirements on public service providers to set open standards or targets for service delivery, and to consult with clients over their formulation and implementation; procedures for complaint and redress.

2. **Practice:** examine the effectiveness of procedures in practice to ensure the responsiveness of public service providers.

3. **Negative indicators:** investigate data on levels of complaint or dissatisfaction expressed with the respective service.

### Generalized sources

- AfriMAP, documents and data on public services, [http://www.afrimap.org](http://www.afrimap.org)
- Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM), [http://www.appam.org](http://www.appam.org)
- The Commonwealth, Governance Unit, [http://www.thecommonwealth.org](http://www.thecommonwealth.org)
- Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, UK DFID, database on service delivery, [http://www.gsdrc.org](http://www.gsdrc.org)
- London School of Economics (LSE) Public Policy Group, [http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEPublicPolicy/](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEPublicPolicy/)


Support for Improvement in Governance and Management in Central and Eastern European Countries (SIGMA), OECD, <http://www.oecd.org>

Information on UK Local Government and Democracy at International Centre of Excellence for Local eDemocracy (ICELE) at <http://www.icle.org> and on Communities and Local Government at <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on public finance and public resources, <http://www.unpan.org>

See also 1.4.

Standards of good practice

ICCPR, 1966, article 25


Assessment question

2.3.5. How comprehensive and effective is the right of access for citizens to government information under the constitution or other laws?

What to look for

1) Laws: examine legislation securing the right of public access to government

2) Practice: examine the operation of the laws in practice, and the accessibility

3) Negative indicators: examine the use of secrecy laws to protect executive abuse
information, including limitations, exclusions, etc.; legislation on official secrecy, and on official immunity from investigation or criticism. of government information to the public. or embarrassment; significant failures of disclosure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generalized sources</th>
<th>Regional sources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>On freedom of information</strong></td>
<td><strong>Global sources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global sources</strong></td>
<td>Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE), Canada, <a href="http://www.cjfe.org">http://www.cjfe.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporters sans frontières (RSF), France, <a href="http://www.rsf.org">http://www.rsf.org</a></td>
<td>Freedom of Expression Project (CEE), Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuters Foundation, UK, <a href="http://www.foundation.reuters.com">http://www.foundation.reuters.com</a></td>
<td>Group of Seven industrialized countries (G7) Information Society Government Online Project, Report which examines 17 initiatives by member governments of the G7 grouping to provide public access to official government information via the Internet which were in operation in 1996: <a href="http://www.open.gov.uk/govoline/front.htm">http://www.open.gov.uk/govoline/front.htm</a></td>
</tr>
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<td>Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), Namibia, <a href="http://www.misanet.org">http://www.misanet.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Media Resistance, Belgium, <a href="http://www.mediasistance.org">http://www.mediasistance.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Standards of good practice

See 1.2.2, 2.6.1 and 2.6.2.

#### International standards

#### Regional standards
- Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Marcel Claude Reyes and Others v. Chile*, 2007 – affirmed the existence of the right of access to information

#### Country standards
Assessment question | 2.3.6. How much confidence do people have in the ability of government to solve the main problems confronting society, and in their own ability to influence it?

What to look for

1) **Negative and positive indicators:** examine survey data on levels of public satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their system of government; and on their degree of confidence in their own ability to influence government and public life in general.

Generalized sources

- East Asia Barometer, <http://eacsurvey.law.ntu.edu.tw/>
- Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Aberdeen, ‘Barometer Surveys’ – surveys of public opinion in post-communist societies (and Korea), <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cspp/>;
  Various publications on the indicators of regime support and trust in post-communist societies, full publications list and the Search Europe Electronically on Concepts (SEEC) database, <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cspp/>
### 2.4. The democratic effectiveness of parliament

**Overarching question:** Does the parliament or legislature contribute effectively to the democratic process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>2.4.1. How independent is the parliament or legislature of the executive, and how freely are its members able to express their opinions?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> examine the legal basis for parliamentary or legislative autonomy from the executive, including control over its own staffing, budget, timetable, legal advice, right of recall, etc. Examine the legal protection afforded to members in the performance of their duties, including their freedom of expression and movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2) Practice:</strong> examine how effectively these legal rights are protected in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3) Negative indicators:</strong> investigate evidence of systematic reliance on the executive for anything essential to the functioning of parliament or legislature; any significant restrictions on members' freedom, whether from government, parliament or party, which prevent them fulfilling their responsibilities to the electorate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

- Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, UK DFID, database on effective legislatures, [http://www.gsdrc.org](http://www.gsdrc.org)

**Standards of good practice**

- Indian Government, *Provisions as to Disqualification on Ground of Defection (Crossing the Floor Legislation)*, Tenth Schedule to Constitution of India added by the 52nd Amendment Act, 1985, and subsequently amended by the 91st Amendment Act, 2003
### Assessment question

2.4.2. How extensive and effective are the powers of the legislature to initiate, scrutinize and amend legislation?

### What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine the rules governing legislation: consultation, initiation, scrutiny, amendment; the time allocated to the legislative process; rules on delegated legislation.

2) **Practice**: examine the effectiveness of procedures for legislative scrutiny in practice.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data on hasty, ill-considered legislation; consultation insufficient or ignored; use of the guillotine; gagging of criticism.

### Generalized sources

**Global sources**

- IPU, *Constitutional and Parliamentary Information* (biannual);
- Human Rights of Parliamentarians (Committee of IPU), <http://www.ipu.org/iss-e/hr-law.htm>;
- *Parliaments of the World: A Comparative Reference Compendium* (Aldershot: Gower, 1986);
- Parlit Database, online database of parliamentary information from <http://www.ipu.org/parlit-e/parlitsearch.asp>;
- Przeworski, A., Alvarez, M. E., Cheibub, J. A. and Limongi, F., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-

**Regional sources**

- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- IDASA, public opinion surveys, <http://www.idasa.org.za>
(cont.)


United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on ethics, transparency and accountability, <http://www.unpan.org>

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**Standards of good practice**

**International standards**

Ensuring Lasting Democracy by Forging Close Links between Parliament and the People, Resolution adopted without a vote by the 98th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Cairo, 15 September 1997


**Regional standards**


**Country standards**


### Assessment question

2.4.3. How extensive and effective are the powers of the legislature to oversee the executive and hold it to account?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to look for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> examine laws governing legislative scrutiny of the executive, its personnel, policy and operations, including powers of disclosure and sanction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2) Practice:</strong> examine the effectiveness of the scrutiny procedures in practice; the independence of government information and statistical services; the access of legislators to non-governmental expertise; the role and effectiveness of parliamentary committees; media coverage of legislative activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3) Negative indicators:</strong> exclusions from the scrutiny process, inadequate powers of investigation or sanction, record of significant failures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Generalized sources

  <http://www.ictparliament.org/>  
- Global Centre for Information and Communication Technology in Parliament,  
  <http://www.ictparliament.org/>  
- IPU, *Constitutional and Parliamentary Information* (biannual);  
  *The Parliamentary Mandate* (Geneva: IPU, 2000);  
- United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on ethics, transparency and accountability,  <http://www.unpan.org>  
- University College London, Department of Political Science, Constitution Unit, ‘Constitutional Watchdogs’, Briefing Paper, March 1997  
- World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transparency, accountability and access to information,  <http://www.wmd.org/>  

### Standards of good practice

**See 2.4.2, and**

**International standards**


**Regional standards**

(cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>2.4.4. How rigorous are the procedures for approval and supervision of taxation and public expenditure?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Laws</strong>: examine laws governing taxation and public expenditure, including the scope of executive discretion, measures against tax evasion.</td>
<td>2) <strong>Practice</strong>: examine the effectiveness of the scrutiny process for public finances, including the independence of auditing and accounting bodies; effectiveness of the tax collection system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) <strong>Negative indicators</strong>: investigate incidence of fraud, malpractice, lack of transparency in public expenditure; levels of tax evasion, including parallel markets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Generalized sources</strong></th>
<th><strong>Regional sources</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


IPU, *Constitutional and Parliamentary Information* (biannual)

Monitoring and Evaluation (MandE) News, extensive list of evaluation techniques and papers, [http://www.mande.co.uk](http://www.mande.co.uk)

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on public finance and public resources, [http://www.unpan.org](http://www.unpan.org)

Warwick Economics Research Paper Series, [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/research/papers/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/research/papers/)


World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transparency, accountability and access to information, [http://www.wmd.org/](http://www.wmd.org/)

**Standards of good practice**

The 12 core standards from the Financial Stability Forum ([http://www.fsforum.org](http://www.fsforum.org)), contained in the *Compendium of Standards* (over 65 in total), apply

**On financial regulation and supervision**

Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS), *Core Principles of Effective Banking Supervision*, 2006


**On macro policy and data transparency**


### On institutional and market infrastructure

- **Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems (CPSS)**, *Core Principles for Systematically Important Payment Systems*, 2001
- **International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC)**, *International Accounting Standards (IAS) and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)*, <http://www.iasb.org>
- **International Federation of Accountants (IFAC)**, *International Standards on Auditing (ISA)*, <http://www.ifac.org/Guidance/>

### Assessment of Institutional and Market Infrastructure

- **Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems (CPSS)**, *Core Principles for Systematically Important Payment Systems*, 2001
- **International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC)**, *International Accounting Standards (IAS) and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)*, <http://www.iasb.org>
- **International Federation of Accountants (IFAC)**, *International Standards on Auditing (ISA)*, <http://www.ifac.org/Guidance/>

### International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS), *Insurance Supervisory Principles* (on insurance supervision), [http://www.iaisweb.org](http://www.iaisweb.org)

### International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO), *Objectives and Principles of Securities Regulation*, [http://www.iosco.org](http://www.iosco.org)


### Santiso, C., *Budget Institutions and Fiscal Responsibility: Parliaments and the Political*
### Assessment question

2.4.5. How freely are all parties and groups able to organize within the parliament or legislature and contribute to its work?

### What to look for

1) **Laws:** examine the legal or constitutional basis for parties and other groups to organize within the legislature and contribute to its work, paying attention to the role of minority/opposition parties and self-organizing groups such as women’s groups, etc.

2) **Practice:** examine the range of opportunities afforded to minority or opposition parties to initiate debates, introduce legislation, contribute to committee work, and so on. Do they have a meaningful role, and are they able to influence agendas and outcomes?

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate evidence of official obstructions, intimidation, refusal of access to information, etc.

### Generalized sources

- Agence de la Francophonie with the Banque Internationale d’Information sur les Etats Francophones, [http://www.francophonie.org/](http://www.francophonie.org/)
- Stojarová, Vera, Sedo, Jakub, Kopecek, Lubomir and Chytilek, Roman, *Political Parties in Central and Eastern Europe: In Search of Consolidation* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2007);
Standards of good practice


*Refah Partisi (The Welfare Party) and Others v. Turkey*, 13 February 2003, Judgement, European Court of Human Rights, on the role of political parties in opposition to promote freedom of expression and ensuring pluralism through non-violent means

Dias, M., 'Fig Leaves or Guardians of Democracy: The Role of Opposition Parties', Paper presented at the Southern Africa After Elections Regional Conference, University of Namibia, 1995

See also 2.1.5.

---

Assessment question 2.4.6. How extensive are the procedures of the parliament or legislature for consulting the public and relevant interests across the range of its work?

What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine the legal basis for the responsibility of parliament or legislature to consult the public, both individually and through representative organizations, in legislation, commissions of enquiry, committee investigations, etc.

2) **Practice**: investigate how far such consultations are systematic, transparent and inclusive in practice. Is the public sufficiently notified in advance? Are the procedures for making submissions user-friendly?

Generalized sources

C2C, Research Centre on Direct Democracy, <http://c2d.unige.ch/>

International Budget Project, research theme on transparency and participation in the budget process, <http://www.internationalbudget.org>


Kurtz, K., ‘Legislatures and Citizens: Communications Between Representatives and Their Constituents’, produced for USAID G/DG by the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Research Foundation of the State University of New York, Albany, NY, 1997


### Standards of good practice


**Assessment question**  
2.4.7. How accessible are elected representatives to their constituents?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to look for</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> examine requirements on elected representatives to be available to their constituents, and the level of facilities provided for them to perform this service.</td>
<td><strong>2) Practice:</strong> examine the accessibility in practice of elected representatives to their constituents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

C2C, Research Centre on Direct Democracy, <http://c2d.unige.ch/>

Country-specific sources to be used. General sources that could be of help:

IPU, <http://www.ipu.org>


NDI, <http://www.ndi.org/>


**Standards of good practice**


### Assessment question

2.4.8. How well does the parliament or legislature provide a forum for deliberation and debate on issues of public concern?

### What to look for

Examine the effectiveness of the parliament or legislature as a deliberative forum on issues of public importance, taking into account such issues as adequate time for debate, the inclusiveness of viewpoints and arguments, level of attendance, etc.

### Generalized sources

- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, UK DFID, database on effective legislatures, <http://www.gsdrc.org>
- IPU, *Constitutional and Parliamentary Information* (biannual);
- Human Rights of Parliamentarians (Committee of IPU), <http://www.ipu.org/iss-e/hr-law.htm>;
- *Parliaments of the World: A Comparative Reference Compendium* (Aldershot: Gower, 1986);

### Standards of good practice

2.5. Civilian control of the military and police

*Overarching question: Are the military and police forces under civilian control?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>2.5.1. How effective is civilian control over the armed forces, and how free is political life from military involvement?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Laws</strong>: examine laws governing civilian control and accountability of the armed forces, including any immunities enjoyed.</td>
<td>2) <strong>Practice</strong>: examine the effectiveness of procedures for civilian control and accountability in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) <strong>Negative indicators</strong>: investigate data on coups d’etat, military regimes; on military personnel, present or former, occupying significant political office; on areas of political decision making subject to military control or veto; on conflicts between civilian authorities and the military.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

**Global sources**

- Centre for Civil–Military Relations (CCMR), Belgrade, <http://www.ccmr-bg.org>
- Center for Comparative and International Studies (Switzerland), <http://www.cis.ethz.ch>
- Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on conflict and security, <http://www.eldis.org/>

**Africa and the Middle East**

- African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), <http://www.accord.org.za>
- Africa Center for Strategic Studies, <http://www.africacenter.org/>
- Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR), <http://www.ecssr.ac.ae>

**Americas**

- Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), <http://www.focal.ca>
- Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA), <http://www.ciiia.org>
- Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies (CISS), <http://www.ciss.ca>
- Centro de Estudios Estratégicos (Secretaría de Asuntos Estratégicos), Brazil
- Centro de Investigación para la paz (Fundación Hogar del Empleado), <http://www.fuhem.es/portal/areas/paz/>

Institute for Security Studies (ISS), [http://www.iss.co.za](http://www.iss.co.za)

Institute for War and Peace Reporting, [http://www.iwpr.net](http://www.iwpr.net)

International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), [http://www.iiss.org](http://www.iiss.org)

International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), [http://www.prio.no](http://www.prio.no)


Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, [http://www.iusafs.org/](http://www.iusafs.org/)

NDI, Research programme on civilian oversight of the armed forces and the police, [http://www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org)

Official Academic Institutions and University Organizations (Institut des Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale), [http://www.ihedn.fr](http://www.ihedn.fr)


Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), [http://www.sipri.org](http://www.sipri.org)

Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, [http://www.transnational.org](http://www.transnational.org)

Núcleo de Estudos Estratégicos (NEE), Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Brazil, [http://www.unicamp.br/nee](http://www.unicamp.br/nee)


Asia

Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS), India, [http://www.ipcs.org](http://www.ipcs.org)

Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), Malaysia, [http://www.isis.org.my](http://www.isis.org.my)

Europe

Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, Germany, [http://www.berghof-center.org](http://www.berghof-center.org)

Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), [http://www.bicc.de](http://www.bicc.de)

British American Security Information Council (BASIC), [http://www.basicint.org](http://www.basicint.org)

Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD), Georgia, [http://www.cipdd.org](http://www.cipdd.org)


Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights, Croatia, [http://www.centar-za-mir.hr/engonama.php](http://www.centar-za-mir.hr/engonama.php)


Groupe de Recherché et d’information sur la paix et la sécurité, Belgium, [http://www.grip.org](http://www.grip.org)

Institute of International Relations ‘Prague’ (IIR), Czech Republic, [http://www.iir.cz](http://www.iir.cz)

Institut Français des Relations Internationales, [http://www.ifri.org](http://www.ifri.org)

Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, [http://www.clingendael.nl](http://www.clingendael.nl)
Standards of good practice

**Regional standards**


OAU, *Declaration on the Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes in Government*, AHG Decl. 5 (XXXVI), 2000


Born, H. and Leigh, I., *Handbook on Making Intelligence Accountable* (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005);


**Assessment question**

2.5.2. How publicly accountable are the police and security services for their activities?

**What to look for**

1) **Laws**: examine laws governing the operation and accountability of the police and security services, including regulations on the use of force, the treatment of suspects, invasions of privacy, complaints procedures, etc.

2) **Practice**: examine the effectiveness of procedures for ensuring the public accountability of the police and security services, and for ensuring that they do not exceed their legal powers.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data on deaths and injury to suspects or those exercising their lawful civil and political rights; on systematic biases in the treatment of citizens; on abuses of power of all kinds. See also 1.2.4 and 1.3.1.
Generalized sources

Black and Asian Police Association, <http://www.bapagmp.co.uk/>

Centro de Estudios de Guatemala (CEG)


Instituto de Estudios Internacionales, Universidad de Chile, <http://mordor.seci.uchile.cl/facultades/estinter/>

International Centre for Security Analysis (ICSA), <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/orgs/icsa/>

International Police Association, e-mail list of National Sections, <http://www.ipa-iac.org>

International Relations and Security Network (ISN), <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/>


Interpol, <http://www.interpol.int>


Law Enforcement Gays and Lesbians International (LEGAL International), <http://members.aol.com/legalint/>  

NDI, Research programme on civilian oversight of the armed forces and the police, <http://www.ndi.org>


Police Accountability, Promoting Civilian Oversight in Southern Africa, <http://www.policeaccountability.co.za>


VERA Institute of Justice, <http://www.vera.org/>

Standards of good practice

UN General Assembly, *Community Policing*, Resolution 34/169, 12 December 1979
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, 1985
ECOWAS, Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace Keeping and Security, 1999;
Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism For Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, 2001, articles 19–24

Strengthening National Structures, Institutions and Organizations of Society which Play a Role in Promoting and Safeguarding Human Rights, Resolution adopted by the 92nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Copenhagen, 17 September 1994


Assessment question 2.5.3. How far does the composition of the army, police and security services reflect the social composition of society at large?

What to look for

1) Laws: examine legislation relevant to the social composition of the armed forces, police and security services, including provision for exclusions. See also 3.2.3 and 3.2.4.

2) Practice: examine how recruitment and promotion procedures work in practice to affect the social composition of the relevant service, including the operation of internal complaints procedures.

3) Negative indicators: investigate evidence of social groups significantly under-represented in the respective services, including in higher grades; of systematic bias, discrimination or maltreatment of particular social groups within their ranks.

Generalized sources

Black and Asian Police Association, <http://www.bapagmp.co.uk>
International Police Association, e-mail list of national sections, <http://www.ipa-iac.org>
Law Enforcement Gays and Lesbians International (LEGAL International), <http://members.aol.com/legalint/>

Standards of good practice

Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (the Patten Commission), A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland (Norwich, 1999)
**Assessment question**: 2.5.4. How free is the country from the operation of paramilitary units, private armies, warlordism and criminal mafias?

**What to look for**

1) **Negative indicators**: investigate evidence of areas of territory or social life subject to the operation of groups using extra-legal violence; incidence of death, injury or intimidation at their hands. *See also 1.2.1.*

**Generalized sources**


Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on conflict and security, <http://www.eldis.org/>

European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations (HEUNI), <http://www.heuni.fi/>


International Crisis Group *country reports*, <http://www.icg.org>


Terrorism Research Center, <http://www.terrorism.com>


**Standards of good practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


ECOWAS, *Declaration of a Moratorium on Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in West Africa*, 1998
2.6. Integrity in public life

*Overarching question: Is the integrity of conduct in public life assured?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>2.6.1. How effective is the separation of public office from the personal business and family interests of office holders?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What to look for</td>
<td>1) <em>Laws:</em> examine regulations governing the separation of public office from the private interests and connections of office holders, including declarations of interest, conflicts of interest, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) <em>Practice:</em> examine the effectiveness and independence of the procedures for the above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) <em>Negative indicators:</em> investigate evidence of systematic connections between office-holders and private interests involved with government; personal favouritisms; failures to declare interests or conflicts of interest; ‘revolving door’ appointments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Generalized sources

### Global sources

- **Anti-Corruption Resource Centre**, database on reports and literature, organizations, toolkits, websites, etc., <http://www.u4.no/index.cfm>
- **Association of Certified Fraud Examiners**, <http://www.acfe.com>
- **Center for Public Integrity**, <http://www.publicintegrity.org>
- **Coalition for International Justice**
- **Corruption Online Research and Information System (CORIS)**, Transparency International, <http://www.corisweb.org/>
- **IPU**, <http://www.ipu.org>
- **Overseas Development Institute, Research on governance and corruption**, <http://www.odi.org.uk>
- **Respondanet**, an anti-corruption database (in English and Spanish), <http://www.respondanet.com>
- **Standing Committee on International Legal Practice**, *Resolution of the Council on the International Bar Association*, 1996 (mimeo)

### Africa and the Middle East

- **African Parliamentarians Network against Corruption (APNAC)**, <http://www.apnacafrica.org>
- **Open Society Justice Initiative, Program on Anti-Corruption**, <http://www.justiceinitiative.org>
- **Southern African Information Portal on Corruption (IPOC)**, <http://www.ipocafrica.org/>

### Americas

- **OAS Anti-corruption database (in Spanish only)**, <http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/redesinteramericanas/institu/instituciones.htm>

### Asia

Transparency International, *Corruption Perception Index*,  
<http://www.transparency.org>


United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on ethics, transparency and accountability,  
<http://www.unpan.org>

World Bank, research programme on finance and private sector research,  
<http://www.worldbank.org>

World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transparency, accountability and access to information,  
<http://www.wmd.org/>

Australian APEC Study Centre, Monash University, resources on regulation of finance,  
<http://www.apec.org.au/>

Australian Development Gateway, International and Asia-Pacific-specific resources on anti-corruption,  
<http://www.developmentgateway.com.au>

Open Society Justice Initiative, Program on Freedom of Anti-Corruption,  
<http://www.justiceinitiative.org>

Sherman, T., ‘Combating Money Laundering in the Asia Pacific Region’, Research Institute for Asia and the Pacific, Business Briefing, 27 September 1995

Stability Pact Anti-Corruption Initiative,  
<http://spai-rslo.org/new.asp>

**Europe**

Anti-Corruption Network for Transitional Economies,  
<http://www.anticorruptionnet.org/indextxt.html>

Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia,  
<http://www.oecd.org>

Coalition 2000, *Corruption Monitoring System*, Sofia,  
<http://www.online.bg/coalition2000/eng/monitor.htm>

Council of Europe and European Union, OCTOPUS Programme,  
<http://www.coe.int>;

Council of Europe, Group of States against Corruption (GRECO),  
<http://www.coe.int/t/dg1/Greco/Default_en.asp>

EUMAP, programme on corruption and anti-corruption policy,  
<http://www.eumap.org/>


*Public Sector Corruption: An International Survey of Prevention Measures*, OECD, 1999,  
<http://www.oecd.org>;  
web pages on Public Finance and Regulatory Management and Reform,  
<http://www.oecd.org>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards of good practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>International standards</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Regional standards</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Country standards</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian Government, <em>‘Honest State’ Initiative</em>, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australian Department of the Premier and the Cabinet, <em>‘Code of Conduct for Ministers’ (extract from the Cabinet Handbook</em>, 1994)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.6.2. How effective are the arrangements for protecting office holders and the public from involvement in bribery?

**What to look for**

1) **Laws:** examine laws against corruption in the government and the public services, where appropriate against relevant international and regional conventions.

2) **Practice:** examine the effectiveness and independence of the procedures and penalties for enforcing anti-corruption legislation in different areas of public life: governments, especially procurement policy, the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, customs and excise, and other public services. Examine the rigour of accounting and auditing procedures. Examine evidence of civil society involvement in anti-corruption work and publicity.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate the known incidence of bribery in cash or kind, petty and major; elite and public perceptions of corruption and experience of its incidence; other corruption indicators.

**Generalized sources**

**Global sources**
- Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption, <http://www.gopacnetwork.org/>
- International Budget Project, Research theme on transparency and Participation in the budget process, <http://www.internationalbudget.org/>

**Regional sources**
International IDEA

International Budget Project, Open Budget Initiative 2006,
<http://www.openbudgetindex.org/>

Journal of Corruption and Reform

International Social Science Journal, special issue on Corruption in Western Democracies, 149 (September 1997)

Management and Governance Network (Magnet) at the UNDP,
<http://magnet.undp.org/>

Standing Committee on International Legal Practice, ‘Report: Survey of Law on Bribery of Public Officials’, 1996 (mimeo);
Standing Committee on International Legal Practice, Resolution of the Council on the International Bar Association, 1996 (mimeo)

Transparency International, Corruption Perception Index, Bribe Payers Index, etc.,
<http://www.transparency.org>

World Bank, Reports on the observance of standards and codes (ROSCs) on fiscal transparency,

World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transparency, accountability and access to information,
<http://www.wmd.org/>


Coalition 2000, Corruption Monitoring System, Sofia,
<http://www.online.bg/coalition2000/eng/monitor.htm>

Council of Europe, Group of States against Corruption (GRECO),
<http://www.coe.int/t/dg1/Greco/Default_en.asp>

Council of Europe and European Union, OCTOPUS Programme,
<http://www.coe.int>

EUMAP, programme on corruption and anti-corruption policy,
<http://www.eumap.org/>

Nathanson Centre for the Study of Organized Crime and Corruption, Organized Crime Web Links,
<http://www.yorku.ca/nathanson/Links/links.htm#Corruption>


OECD, web pages on Public Finance and Regulatory Management and Reform,
<http://www.oecd.org>

Transparent Agents and Contracting Agencies (TRACE),
<http://www.traceinternational.org/>

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Public Service Ethics in Africa, ST/ESA/PAD/SER.E/23, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa, 2001,
<http://www.unpan.org/EthicsWebSite/inc/reportpg.htm>

US Information Agency, Bribery and Corruption,
<http://usinfo.state.gov/ei/economic_issues/bribery_and_corruption.html>

(November 1999),
<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/ites/1198/ijee/ijtoc.htm>
### Standards of good practice

#### International standards


- **Parliamentary Action to Fight Corruption and the Need for International Co-operation in this Field**, Resolution by the 94th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Bucharest, 13 October 1995


#### Regional standards


- **Charter for the Public Service in Africa**, Third Pan African Conference of Public Service Ministers, Windhoek, February 2001


- **OAS**, *Inter-American Convention against Corruption*, 1996

- **African Union**, *Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance*, 2007


- **East and Southern Africa**, *Usa River Communiqué*, 1995

2.6.3. How far do the rules and procedures for financing elections, candidates and elected representatives prevent their subordination to sectional interests?

**What to look for**

1) **Laws**: examine laws on the financing of elections, expenditure of candidates and the expenses of elected representatives, including limits, disclosure, sanctions, etc. *See also 2.1.3 and 2.2.4.*

2) **Practice**: examine how fairly and effectively the regulations are applied in practice.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate data indicating significant dependence of elected officials on special interests, including their policy and legislative record.

**Generalized sources**

- World Bank, Civil Service Reform Study, e.g. Klitgaard, R., ‘Cleaning Up and Invigorating the Civil Service’, World Bank, Washington, DC, 1996 (mimeo);
  (ad hoc) *Country Assistance Strategy Papers*
- World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transparency, accountability and access to information, [http://www.wmd.org/](http://www.wmd.org/)
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

Standards of good practice


Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers, *Recommendation No. R (2003) 4 on Common Rules against Corruption in the Funding of Political Parties and Electoral Campaigns*


Assessment question

2.6.4. How far is the influence of powerful corporations and business interests over public policy kept in check, and how free are they from involvement in corruption, including overseas?

What to look for

1) *Laws*: examine regulations governing the transparency of corporate relations with government, appointment procedures for public executive and advisory bodies, etc.

2) *Practice*: examine the effectiveness of procedures for maintaining the independence of government policy and implementation from subordination to corporate interests.

3) *Negative indicators*: investigate incidence of ‘capture’ of government departments, agencies or policy by corporate interests; significant failures or biases in the government regulation of business and finance. *See also 1.4.6.*

Generalized sources

*As above, plus*

Australian APEC Study Centre, Monash University, resources on regulation of finance, <http://www.apec.org.au>


CorporateWatch, UK, investigative site, <http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk>


EUMAP programme on corruption and anti-corruption policy, <http://www.eumap.org/>


International Budget Project, Research theme on transparency and participation in the budget process, <http://www.internationalbudget.org>


OAS Permanent Council, Special Committee on Transnational Organized Crime, <http://www.oas.org>


United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), <http://www.unep.org>


United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), <http://www.unido.org>

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on ethics, transparency and accountability and on public finance and public resources, <http://www.unpan.org>


World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on transparency, accountability and access to information, <http://www.wmd.org/>

**Standards of good practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Finance Corporation (IFC), Environment Division, <em>Doing Better</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>2.6.5. How much confidence do people have that public officials and public services are free from corruption?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What to look for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) **Positive and negative indicators:** assess opinion poll surveys and other relevant indicators of public confidence in the integrity of public officials and services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generalized sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Asia Barometer, <a href="http://eacsurvey.law.ntu.edu.tw/">http://eacsurvey.law.ntu.edu.tw/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Civil society and popular participation

3.1. The media in a democratic society

*Overarching question: Do the media operate in a way that sustains democratic values?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>3.1.1. How independent are the media from government, how pluralistic is their ownership, and how free are they from subordination to foreign governments or multinational companies?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <em>Laws:</em> examine legislation on media ownership and operation, including cross-ownership, editorial independence, laws on defamation and freedom of information and expression, rules governing the broadcast media, either public or private, etc.</td>
<td>2) <em>Practice:</em> examine how effectively any legislation is enforced, the government’s public relations arrangements and tolerance of media criticism, citizen access to the Internet and modern forms of communication, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

See 2.3.5.

**Global sources**

Article 19, <http://www.article19.org>

**Africa and the Middle East**

Africa South of the Sahara, ‘Media and Mass Communication’ (website links), Stanford
(cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campaign for Communication Rights in the Information Society (CRIS),</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.crisinfo.org/">http://www.crisinfo.org/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Commonwealth Press Union,</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.cpu.org.uk/">http://www.cpu.org.uk/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Christians, C. G. et al., <em>Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning</em>, 7th</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>World Reference Atlas</em> (London and New York: Dorling Kindersley, various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>edns), media censorship indicators, media ownership in country reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign Policy, <em>The List: Powerful Media Moguls</em>, October 2006,</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.foreignpolicy.com">http://www.foreignpolicy.com</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Human Rights Watch with the US Commission on Security and Cooperation in</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1998</td>
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<td></td>
<td>International Association for Women in Radio and Television, <a href="http://www.iawrt.org/">http://www.iawrt.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Center for Journalists, Media Laws from various countries,</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.icfj.org/">http://www.icfj.org/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>International Press Institute (IPI), <a href="http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/">http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>freedom.html&gt; (regional overviews and 165 country reports)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Mediachannel.org, links to journalism and broadcasting sites in South and</td>
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<td>South-East Asia, Central Asia, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, Africa,</td>
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<td>Central and South America, North America and Europe,</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.mediachannel.org/links/links-frameset.html">http://www.mediachannel.org/links/links-frameset.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, South Africa, <a href="http://www.iaj.co.za/">http://www.iaj.co.za/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Database of the Americas, <a href="http://pdba.georgetown.edu/">http://pdba.georgetown.edu/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chenoweth, N., <em>Virtual Murdoch: Reality Wars on the Information Highway</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(London: Secker &amp; Warburg, 2001)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hoffmann-Riem, W., *Regulating Media: The Licensing and Supervision of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broadcasting in Six Countries* (New York: Guilford, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual_Reports.html&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South Asian Journalists Association (SAJA), <a href="http://www.saja.org">http://www.saja.org</a></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>EUMAP, programme on media policy, <a href="http://www.eumap.org/">http://www.eumap.org/</a></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>European Journalism Center (EJC), <em>Organising Media Accountability</em> (Maastricht: EJC, 1997);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Media Diversity Institute, <http://www.media-diversity.org>
Organization of News Ombudsmen (ONO), <http://www.newsombudsmen.org>
Political Risk Services (PRS), Political Risk Yearbook (New York: PRS, 1995), section on media/status of the press
Poynter Online, Bibliographies on media credibility, media ethics, world press, etc., <http://www.poynter.org>
UNDP, Human Development Report (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), table 19, p. 226: number (per 1,000) of daily newspapers, radios, television sets, telephone mainlines, mobile telephones, personal computers and (per 10,000) Internet hosts
UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook (annual)
World Association of Press Councils (WAPC), <http://www.wanewscouncil.org/World.htm>
World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on media and access to information, <http://www.wmd.org/>

Standards of good practice

African Union, Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, 2007, articles 17 and 27
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

(Cont.)

Broadcasting Policy and Practice in Africa, 2003;
Freedom and Accountability: Safeguarding Free Expression Through Media Self-Regulation, 2005;
International Standards for the Media: Briefing Notes on Basic Principles of Journalism, 2005,
all at <http://www.article19.org>


EthicNet, Databank for European Codes of Journalism Ethics (for 37 countries),
<http://www.uta.fi/laitokset/tiedotus/ethicnet/index.html>


International Center for Journalists, codes of ethics from various international and national
organizations, <http://www.icfj.org/>

Sonnenberg, U. (ed.), Organising Media Accountability: Experiences in Europe (Maastricht: European
Journalism Centre, 1997), <http://www.ejc.nl>


USAID, ‘The Role of Media in Democracy: A Strategic Approach’, USAID, 1999,
<http://www.usaid.gov>

von Dewall, G., Press Ethics: Regulation and Editorial Practice (Düsseldorf: European Institute for
the Media, 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>3.1.2. How representative are the media of different opinions and how accessible are they to different sections of society?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> examine regulations and procedures governing public service broadcasting, media standards and complaints. <strong>2) Practice:</strong> investigate data on distribution within the population of the means of access to different media, including the Internet; on the range and variety of types of programme, publications etc., especially relating to public affairs. <strong>3) Negative indicators:</strong> investigate the incidence of media censorship, official and unofficial; of significant bias or distortion in news and current affairs presentation; disproportionate representation of social groups among media professionals. See also 1.3.2 and 2.1.3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**


The ‘new media’

Advisory Network for African Information Strategies (ANAINS)

International Development Research Centre, Canada, <http://www.panasia.org>

European Journalism Center, *European Media Landscape*, <http://www.ejc.nl/>


Media and Communications Studies, UK, University of Aberystwyth, <http://www.aber.ac.uk>

Media Diversity Institute, <http://www.media-diversity.org>


Mercator Minority Language Media in the EU, University of Aberystwyth, <http://www.aber.ac.uk/mercator/>


International Institute of Development Communication, project on African web access at City University, London, UK, <http://www.iicd.org/>

‘KnowNet Weaver’, <http://www.knownetweaver.org>


Networks & Development Foundation (FUNREDES), Dominican Republic, network for Central America and the Caribbean, <http://www.funredes.org/mistica>


Poynter Online, Bibliographies on media credibility, media ethics, new media, world press, etc., <http://www.poynter.org>


Various innovative projects and potential resources from <http://www.stockholmchallenge.se/>

For example, Drik, a photographic resource centre and image bank, <http://www.drik.net>;

DrumNet (Kenya) commercial networking, <http://www.drumnet.org>;

Haitian Research and Development Network (REHRED) promoting ICT to the poor, providing information and encouraging democracy;

### Standards of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Project</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**UN General Assembly, Convention on the International Right of Correction, August 1962**

**Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing Platform for Action, September 1995, Strategic Objectives and Actions on Women and the Media**

**African Charter on Broadcasting, 2001**


**International Center for Journalists, code of ethics from various international and national organizations, <http://www.icfj.org/>**


*Good practice documentation as in 3.1.1 above*
Assessment question | 3.1.3. How effective are the media and other independent bodies in investigating government and powerful corporations?
---|---

**What to look for**

1) **Positive indicators**: examine the incidence of reports which expose malpractice or cause justifiable embarrassment to office holders or powerful corporations.

2) **Negative indicators**: examine the extent to which the media are dependent for their information on official government or corporate channels.

**Generalized sources**

See 1.4.6.

- Adbusters Media Foundation, [http://www.adbusters.org](http://www.adbusters.org)
- Campaign for Communication Rights in the Information Society (CRIS), [http://www.crisinfo.org](http://www.crisinfo.org)
- Corporate Watch, UK [http://www.corpwatch.org.uk](http://www.corpwatch.org.uk)
- EUMAP, programme on media policy, [http://www.eumap.org](http://www.eumap.org)
- *Index on Censorship*, London (monthly), [http://www.indexonline.org](http://www.indexonline.org)
- Multinational Monitor, [http://multinationalmonitor.org](http://multinationalmonitor.org)
- Poynter Online, Bibliographies on media credibility, media ethics, new media, world press, etc., [http://www.poynter.org](http://www.poynter.org)
- Société française des sciences de l’information et de la communication (SFSIC), [http://www.sfsic.org](http://www.sfsic.org)

**Standards of good practice**

*Windhoek Charter on Broadcasting in Africa*, 2001


- *Broadcasting Policy and Practice in Africa*, 2003;
- *Broadcasting Pluralism and Diversity*, 2006;
### Assessment question

**3.1.4. How free are journalists from restrictive laws, harassment and intimidation?**

#### What to look for

1) **Laws:** examine laws which significantly limit journalistic freedom.

2) **Negative indicators:** investigate the incidence of harassment, intimidation or obstruction of journalists, including death or injury. See also 1.3.1 and 1.3.2.

#### Generalized sources

As above, and

- Campaign for Communication Rights in the Information Society (CRIS), [http://www.crisinfo.org](http://www.crisinfo.org)
- Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Aberdeen, [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cspp/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cspp/)
- Charter 88, [http://www.charter88.org.uk](http://www.charter88.org.uk)
- Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), *Press Freedom Online*, [http://www.cpj.org](http://www.cpj.org);
- Digital Freedom Network, [http://www.dfn.org](http://www.dfn.org)
- Freedom Forum, [http://www.freedomforum.org](http://www.freedomforum.org)
- *Index on Censorship*, London (monthly), [http://www.indexonline.org](http://www.indexonline.org)
- International Center for Journalists, Media Laws from various countries, [http://www.icfj.org](http://www.icfj.org)
- International Press Institute links page, [http://www.freemedia.at](http://www.freemedia.at)
International IDEA

International PEN, Writers in Prison Committee: Case List (London: International PEN, annual)
Poynter Online, Bibliographies on media credibility, media ethics, new media, world press, etc.,
   <http://www.poynter.org>
Reporters sans Frontiers, <http://www.rsf.org/>

Standards of good practice

International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists, adopted by the 1954 World Congress of the IFJ, amended by the 1986 World Congress


As above

Assessment question

3.1.5. How free are private citizens from intrusion and harassment by the media?

What to look for

1) Laws: examine privacy laws and codes of media practice.

2) Practice: examine their effectiveness in practice; procedures for redress in the event of complaint.

3) Negative indicators: incidence of complaints

Generalized sources

As above

Bernier, Marc-François, Ethique et déontologie du journalisme (Quebec: Presses de l’université Laval, 1994)
Cooper, T. W., Television and Ethics: A Bibliography (Boston, Mass.: G.K. Hall, 1988)
Cornu, D., Ethique de l’information (Paris: PUF Que Sais-Je, 1997)
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

International Center for Journalists, Media Laws from various countries, <http://www.icfj.org/>


MediaWise, database of international and country-specific codes of conduct for the media, <http://www.presswise.org.uk/>


Organization of News Ombudsmen (ONO), <http://www.newsombudsmen.org>


World Association of Press Councils (WAPC), <http://www.wanewscouncil.org/World.htm>

Standards of good practice


International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), *Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists*, adopted by 1954 World Congress of the IFJ, amended by the 1986 World Congress


International Center for Journalists, Code of Ethics from various international and national organizations, <http://www.icfj.org/>

Juusela, P., *Journalistic Codes of Ethics in the CSCE Countries* (Tampere: University of Tampere, 1991)

Ugandan Journalists Association, *Code of Professional Conduct*
### 3.2. Political participation

**Overarching question:** Is there full citizen participation in public life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>3.2.1. How extensive is the range of voluntary associations, citizen groups, social movements etc. and how independent are they from government?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> examine regulations governing the registration, governance, financing and membership of voluntary associations, NGOs and self-management organizations.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2) Positive indicators:</strong> investigate data on the range and distribution of voluntary associations, their fields of activity, public impact, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3) Negative indicators:</strong> investigate the incidence of subordination to government or governing parties, to foreign agencies or interests; the proportion of income not derived from members’ contributions. See also 1.3.2, 2.2.3, 2.3.5 and 2.4.6.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global sources</th>
<th>Regional sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NDI, programme on citizen participation, <a href="http://www.ndi.org">http://www.ndi.org</a></td>
<td>Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <a href="http://pdba.georgetown.edu/">http://pdba.georgetown.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on governance systems and institutions, [http://www.unpan.org](http://www.unpan.org)

### Monitoring and Evaluation (MandE), excellent archive of participation, evaluation and NGO service provision, [http://www.mande.co.uk](http://www.mande.co.uk)

### NGO Information Centre, [http://www.ngo.or.jp/](http://www.ngo.or.jp/)

### Office for Public Management, [http://www.opm.co.uk](http://www.opm.co.uk)


### Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organisations (PIANGO), [http://www.piango.org](http://www.piango.org)

### Pan American Development Foundation, programme on strengthening communities and civil society, [http://www.padf.org](http://www.padf.org)

### Standards of good practice

- **UN General Assembly, ICESCR, 1966, article 8**
- **Council of Europe, Council of Europe Recommendation No. R(80) 2 concerning the Exercise of Discretionary Powers by Administrative Authorities, 11 March 1980**
- **Council of Europe Resolution (77) 31 on the Protection of the Individual in Relation to the Acts of Administrative Authorities, 28 September 1977**
- **UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights, General Comment No. 25. The Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights and the Right to Equal Access to Public Service, 1996**
Assessment question | 3.2.2. How extensive is citizen participation in voluntary associations and self-management organizations, and in other voluntary public activity?

What to look for

1) **Positive and negative indicators**: investigate data on membership of voluntary associations, self-management organizations, etc.; and on citizen involvement in other forms of voluntary public activity.

**Generalized sources**

**Global sources**
- Association for Research on Nonprofit Organisations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), online journals and occasional papers, <http://www.arnova.org>
- Eldis Gateway to Development Information, excellent sources on participation, including ‘good practice’ manuals from major international organizations, <http://www.eldis.org/>

**Regional sources**
- C2D Direct Democracy, <http://c2d.unige.ch/>
- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- Monitoring and Evaluation (MandE); some assessment of range can be gleaned from <http://www.mande.co.uk>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards of good practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Union of International Associations, NGO websites (derivative from their Yearbook of International Associations)</strong>, <a href="http://www.uia.org/extlinks/pub.php">http://www.uia.org/extlinks/pub.php</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on political and civic participation of youth</strong>, <a href="http://www.wmd.org/">http://www.wmd.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UnionWeb</strong>, <a href="http://www.unionweb.co.uk">http://www.unionweb.co.uk</a>; (many sub-national organizations, especially in the USA, e.g. <a href="mailto:demsouth@all4democracy.org">demsouth@all4democracy.org</a>; <a href="mailto:projectsouth@igc.apc.org">projectsouth@igc.apc.org</a>; <a href="mailto:horizon@horizoninstitute.org">horizon@horizoninstitute.org</a>; <a href="http://www.vote.smart.org/">http://www.vote.smart.org/</a>; <a href="mailto:mngle@publicampaign.org">mngle@publicampaign.org</a>; Democracy for All Canadians, <a href="mailto:dfac@angelfire.com">dfac@angelfire.com</a>; non-US, e.g. Accion Zapatista, Colombia Support Network, Contact Centre etc.; UK, e.g. Integrated Communities and Sustainable Regeneration project, <a href="http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/cucr/html/res3.html">http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/cucr/html/res3.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OAU, Charter on Popular Participation</strong>, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIVICUS and MDGs Campaigning Toolkit for Civil Society Organisations engaged in the Millennium Development Goals</strong>, <a href="http://www.civicus.org">http://www.civicus.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment question | 3.2.3. How far do women participate in political life and public office at all levels?

What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine laws on gender discrimination in public life; if the government has ratified CEDAW, how far legislation conforms to its standards.

2) **Practice**: examine the effectiveness of procedures for implementing the relevant legislation, including affirmative action policies.

3) **Positive and negative indicators**: investigate data on women's participation in political and public office at all levels; in political parties; in voluntary associations and their management. See 1.1.2, 2.1.5 and 2.5.3.

Generalized sources

**Major resources for statistical data**

- Ahooja-Patel, K., ‘Gender Distance among Countries’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 1993
- Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on participation, <http://www.eldis.org/>
- International IDEA, Global Database of Quotas for Women, <http://www.quotaproject.org>;
- IPU, online database of all national parliaments and proportion of women members, <http://www.ipu.org>;

**Pressure groups**

- Center for Women’s Global Leadership, <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/>
- International IDEA links page to women’s websites, <http://www.idea.int/gender/inc>:
- Feminist Majority Foundation Online, <http://www.feminist.org/>
- International Women’s websites, <http://research.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/links_intl.html>;
- Organizations promoting women’s political participation in parliaments (addresses available from <http://www.idea.int/gender/>):
- Association of West European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA);
- Center for Asia–Pacific Women in Politics (CAPWIP);
- Gender and Youth Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat;
- IPU;
(cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women in Politics: World Bibliography, IPU, various</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NDI, Program on Women's Participation, <a href="http://www.ndi.org">http://www.ndi.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NDI; Organization of Women Parliamentarians from Muslim Countries; Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA); SADC; South Asian Network for Political Empowerment of Women (SANPEW)**

### Standards of good practice

#### International standards

- *UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, 1979
- ILO Convention No. 100. *Equal Remuneration*, 1951;
- ILO Convention No. 111. *Discrimination (Employment and Occupation)*, 1958;
- ILO Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1952

**Parliamentary Action for Women's Access to and Participation in Decision-Making Structures aimed at Achieving True Equality for Women, Resolution by the 93rd Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Madrid, 1 April 1995**

**UNDP, Women and Political Participation and Good Governance: 21st Century Challenges, UNDP, 2004**


#### Regional standards

- African Union, *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa*, 2004


**Assessment question**

3.2.4. How equal is access for all social groups to public office, and how fairly are they represented within it?

### What to look for

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Laws:</strong> examine laws on discrimination against other social groups in the light of any relevant UN or regional conventions ratified by the government.</td>
<td>2) <strong>Practice:</strong> examine the effectiveness of procedures for implementing the relevant legislation, including affirmative action policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) <strong>Positive and negative indicators:</strong> investigate data on the participation of relevant social groups in political and public office at all levels. See also 2.5.3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Generalized sources

Some information on women in the sources above, plus:


- IPU, *Constitutional and Parliamentary Information* (biannual)

- Monitoring and Evaluation (MandE), excellent archive of participation, evaluation and NGO service provision, <http://www.mande.co.uk>

- United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on governance systems and institutions, <http://www.unpan.org>


### Standards of good practice

- *UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, 1979


3.3. Decentralization

*Overarching question:* Are decisions taken at the level of government that is most appropriate for the people affected?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>3.3.1. How independent are the sub-central tiers of government from the centre, and how far do they have the powers and resources to carry out their responsibilities?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**What to look for**

1) **Laws:** examine the legal status, responsibilities and powers of local and regional government, including financial provision and discretion.

2) **Practice:** examine the extent to which local and regional government in practice are able to carry out their responsibilities independent of central supervision.

3) **Negative indicators:** investigate data on central government control over local discretion.

**Generalized sources**

### Global sources

- International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) NDI, programme on local government, <http://www.ndi.org>
- UN Habitat, Global Campaign for Urban Governance, <http://www.unhabitat.org>
- United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific

### Regional sources

- British Library for Development Studies (BLDS) Bibliographic Database, searchable web version of the BLDS depository library of the UN, South Pacific Commission and GATT, <http://blds.idss.ac.uk/blds/>
- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- European Local Government Officers, Database of European Town Halls, <http://www.elgo.co.uk>
- *Public Management Newsletter*, from SIGMA/OECD (Support for Improvement in Government and Management in Central and Eastern European Countries, joint initiative of the OECD/Centre for Cooperation with the Economies in Transition (CCET) and the EU PHARE programme)
documents and databases on governance systems and institutions, <http://www.unpan.org>


See more general resources at 3.3.2 and 3.3.3.

### Standards of good practice

- **African Union**, *Charter on Popular Participation*, 1990
- **OAS**, *Declaration of La Paz on Decentralization and on Strengthening Regional and Municipal Administrations and Participation of Civil Society*, 2001
- **Indian Federal Parliament**, *73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments*, 1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>3.3.2. How far are these levels of government subject to free and fair electoral authorization, and to the criteria of openness, accountability and responsiveness in their operation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Laws</strong>: examine legislation requiring the electoral authorization of local and regional government, and openness and accountability in the conduct of their affairs.</td>
<td>2) <strong>Practice</strong>: examine the extent to which electoral arrangements are free and fair, and the openness and accountability of government are secured in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) <strong>Negative indicators</strong>: investigate evidence of weak democratic legitimacy; low turnout in elections; secrecy of government; weak public accountability.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Generalized sources

### Global sources

- Eldis Gateway to Development Information, excellent sources on participation, including ‘good practice’ manuals from major international organizations from <http://www.eldis.org/>
- UN Department of Public Information, Non-Governmental Organizations (DPI.NGO), <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/index.asp>

### Regional sources

- Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>
- European Local Government Officers, database of European town halls, <http://www.elgo.co.uk>

## Standards of good practice

### Regional standards

- Council of Europe, *Council of Europe Recommendation No. R(80) 2 concerning*

### Country standards

**Assessment question**

3.3.3. How extensive is the cooperation of government at the most local level with relevant partners, associations and communities in the formation and implementation of policy, and in service provision?

**What to look for**

1) **Laws**: examine requirements on local and regional government to consult relevant partners, communities, electorates, client groups, in policy and service provision; and to set standards or targets for service provision.

2) **Practice**: examine the range of mechanisms employed in consultation, their inclusiveness and effectiveness in practice.

3) **Negative indicators**: investigate the incidence of expressed dissatisfaction with local and regional government services; lack of standards or targets in service provision; failure to meet the standards set.

**Generalized sources**

**Global sources**

ActionAid International, [http://www.actionaid.org](http://www.actionaid.org)

**Regional sources**

Action Research on Web, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney, [http://www2.fhs.usyd.edu.au/arow/](http://www2.fhs.usyd.edu.au/arow/)
Eldis Gateway to Development Information, excellent sources on participation, including ‘good practice’ manuals from major international organizations, [http://www.eldis.org/](http://www.eldis.org/)


Participation Power and Social Change team at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, [http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/index.html](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/index.html)

Participatory Initiatives, University of Guelph, [http://www.oac.uoguelph.ca](http://www.oac.uoguelph.ca)


Union of International Associations, NGO websites from the searchable website (derivative from their *Yearbook of International Associations*), [http://www.uia.org/extlinks/pub.php](http://www.uia.org/extlinks/pub.php)


Ashoka: Innovators for the Public (resources for social entrepreneurship), [http://www.ashoka.org](http://www.ashoka.org)


InterAction: American Council for Voluntary International Action, [http://www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org)


International Centre for Learning and Promotion of Participation and Democratic Governance (PRIA), [http://www.pria.org/](http://www.pria.org/)

International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (IIRR), the Philippines, [http://www.iirr.org](http://www.iirr.org)


NGO Information Centre, [http://ngo.or.jp/](http://ngo.or.jp/)


Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions (SRISTI), [http://www.sristi.org](http://www.sristi.org)

Standards of good practice

**International standards**


**Regional standards**

- Council of Europe, *Charter of Local Self-Government*, <http://conventions.coe.int/>
- OAS, *Declaration of La Paz on Decentralization and on Strengthening Regional and Municipal Administrations and Participation of Civil Society*, 2001; *Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities*, 1999

4. Democracy beyond the state

4.1. External influences on the country’s democracy

*Overarching question: Is the impact of external influences broadly supportive of the country’s democracy?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>4.1.1. How free is the country from external influences which undermine or compromise its democratic process or national interests?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Laws:</strong> examine the extent to which a country is able to pursue national planning and development strategy unhindered by intervention by or conditionality to foreign lenders or business, according to article 1 of the <em>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</em>.</td>
<td>2) <strong>Negative indicators:</strong> examine the evidence of external interventions and dependencies, economic, military, environmental, cultural, which damage a country’s interests or democratic processes; the extent of aid dependency and international indebtedness; adverse effects of foreign companies operating in the territory; the degree of foreign control of the media and other forms of cultural production. <em>See also 2.3.1 and 3.1.1.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Generalized sources

#### General sources

- **BRIDGE Programme, Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex,** Resources on Gender and Trade, <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk>
- **Diplo Online,** with tools on diplomacy and databases on embassies’ websites, <http://www.diplomacy.edu>
- **Eldis Gateway to Development Information,** database on aid and debt, trade policy, and the World Bank and the IMF, <http://www.eldis.org/>
- **Global Policy Forum,** <http://www.globalpolicy.org/>
- **Henry L. Stimson Center** (peacekeeping, arms control, foreign policy), <http://www.stimson.org>
- **Human Rights Watch,** reports on multinational corporations (MNCs) and host countries

#### Regional sources

- **Debt statistics available from the Bank for International Settlements and the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)**
- **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN),** Statistics, <http://www.aseansec.org/>
- **ECOWAS,** external trade indicators, <http://www.ecostat.org/>
- **OAS Permanent Council, Special Committee on Transnational Organised Crime,** <http://www.oas.org>
- **OECD,** *Development Co-operation* (annual)
- **SADC, Programme on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment,** <http://www.sadc.int/english/tifi/index.php>
- **UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC),** <http://www.eclac.cl/>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Ombudsmen Centre for the Environment and Development (OMCED),</td>
<td><a href="http://www.omced.org/">http://www.omced.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Jane’s</em> military database,</td>
<td><a href="http://www2.janes.com">http://www2.janes.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Wizards, Menlo Park, California, (on internet accessibility)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas Development Institute, Research on trade and finance,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.odi.org.uk">http://www.odi.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Reports</em> of the UN Secretary-General to the UN Security Council; UN Security Council resolutions on select countries,</td>
<td><a href="http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/">http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO, International Telecommunication Union questionnaires</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on public finance and public resources, and public social and economic policies, <http://www.unpan.org>

ACDA, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers* (annual); and various country-specific studies

*World Debt Tables* (annual);
*World Development Report* (WDR), military expenditure as % of GDP, official development assistance in USD per capita and as % of GNP;

*Reports* on the observance of standards and codes (ROSCs) on payments and settlements, <http://www.worldbank.org/ifa/rosc.html>;


World Trade Organization (WTO), <http://www.wto.org>

### Standards of good practice

UN *ICCPR*, 1966, article 1;
ICESCR, 1966, article 1;
*Declaration on the Right to Development*, 1986, articles 1 and 5


OECD, *Criminal Law Convention on Corruption*, 1999


UNEP Industry and Environment (UNEP IE), *Technical Report No. 29*, Paris, 1995 (travel industry/tourism and host community ‘codes of conduct’)

*International Parliamentarians’ Petition (IPP) for Democratic Oversight of the IMF and World Bank*, <http://www.ippinfo.org/>

Assessment question | 4.1.2. How equitable is the degree of influence exercised by the government within the bilateral, regional and international organizations to whose decisions it may be subject?

What to look for

1) **Laws:** identify the main regional and international organizations of which the country is a member. Examine the rules governing representation and decision making in these organizations, and their representativeness relative to the size of the country in global terms.

2) **Positive and negative indicators:**
   - **(a) bilateral.** Examine how far bilateral relations in the economic, political, security or other fields may be subject to undue pressure, unilateral conditionality, or terms which infringe international codes of good practice.
   - **(b) regional.** Examine the rules and practices of the relevant regional organizations, as to whether the country is treated equally and fairly with other partners in their negotiation and decision procedures. Do the same for (c) the international organizations of which the country is a member.

Generalized sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global sources</th>
<th>Regional sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


Australian APEC Study Centre, Monash University, resources on trade, environment and regulation of finance, [http://www.apec.org.au/](http://www.apec.org.au/)

C2D Direct Democracy, [http://c2d.unige.ch/](http://c2d.unige.ch/)


Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), [http://www.aladi.org/](http://www.aladi.org/)


OECD, *Development Co-operation* (annual)

South Centre: An Intergovernmental Organization of Developing Countries, [http://www.southcentre.org/](http://www.southcentre.org/)

Southern African Research and Documentation Centre, [http://www.sardc.net](http://www.sardc.net)
(cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relief Web, Financial Tracking Database for Complex Emergencies (FTS), <a href="http://www.reliefweb.int/arfts/index.html">http://www.reliefweb.int/arfts/index.html</a>, including the ECHO 14-point donor reporting conventions and humanitarian assistance procedures</th>
<th>UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), <a href="http://www.eclac.cl/">http://www.eclac.cl/</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UN Commission on Global Governance</td>
<td>UNIFEM, <a href="http://www.unifem.org/">http://www.unifem.org/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Macroeconomic

- Multilaterals Project, <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/multilaterals.html> (texts of international multilateral conventions and other instruments)
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), <http://www.unescap.org>

### Standards of good practice

#### International standards

- UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Right to Development*, 1986; *Declaration on Social Progress and Development*, 1969
- *ILO Conventions* Nos 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 113, 182
- UN Global Compact Network, <http://www.unglobalcompact.org>
- UN International Development Targets as requested of the Secretary-General by the General Assembly in Resolution 53/192, 1999, para. 60

#### Regional standards

Global UNDAF Guidelines, fullest elaboration found in country programmes, e.g. Mozambique, <http://www.unsystemmoz.org>


Agenda 21, The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 1992


International Parliamentarians’ Petition (IPP) for Democratic Oversight of the IMF and World Bank, <http://www.ippinfo.org/>


**Assessment question**

4.1.3. How far are the government’s negotiating positions and subsequent commitments within these organizations subject to effective legislative oversight and public debate?

**What to look for**

1) **Laws**: examine the legal basis for parliamentary or legislative oversight of the government in relations with bilateral, regional and international organizations, and its role in confirming subsequent treaty and other commitments.

2) **Practice**: examine how the parliament or legislature is practically organized for these tasks, e.g. through dedicated committees; whether it has sufficient time, information and expertise to influence government negotiating positions. How open is the government to NGOs and other organized publics influencing its negotiating positions?
Generalized sources


Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on trade policy, <http://www.eldis.org/>

Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, <http://www.dcaf.ch/index.cfm>


United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on governance systems and institutions, <http://www.unpan.org>

Standards of good practice

UN, International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, 1989

Ratification and support for the International Criminal Court, <http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/icc/implementation.htm>


International Parliamentarians’ Petition (IPP) for Democratic Oversight of the IMF and World Bank, <http://www.ippinfo.org/>


4.2. The country’s democratic impact abroad

**Overarching question:** Do the country’s international policies contribute to strengthening global democracy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>4.2.1. How consistent is the government in its support for, and protection of, human rights and democracy abroad?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**What to look for**

*Positive and negative indicators:* examine the impact of the government’s policies, favourable and adverse, on the progress of democracy and the protection of human rights (economic, social, cultural, civil and political) in other countries with which it has dealings, or which are affected by its policies.

**Generalized sources**

**General sources**

- C2D Direct Democracy, [http://c2d.unige.ch/](http://c2d.unige.ch/)
- Commission on Global Governance
- Henry L. Stimson Center (peacekeeping, arms control, foreign policy), [http://www.stimson.org](http://www.stimson.org)
- IPU, *Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement* (Geneva: IPU, 1998);
- Reports of the UN Secretary-General to the UN Security Council;

**Regional sources**

- Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), [http://www.aladi.org](http://www.aladi.org)
World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on cross-border assistance to democrats in closed societies and countries in transition, <http://www.wmd.org/>

### Standards of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International standards</th>
<th>Regional standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention), 1972;</strong></td>
<td><strong>OAS, Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacture and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives and Other Related Materials;</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (The Mine Ban Treaty), 1997, also est. Landmine Monitor, a global reporting network;</strong></td>
<td><strong>OAU, Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, 1999</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 1.3, 1.4, 2.5.4, and 4.2.2.
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

Assessment question 4.2.2. How far does the government support the UN and agencies of international cooperation, and respect the rule of law internationally?

What to look for

1) **Laws**: examine the country’s ratification of UN and regional human rights treaties, and its membership of UN agencies.

2) **Positive and negative indicators**: examine the evidence on the country’s support for the UN, its agencies and peacekeeping activities. Assess the level of its commitment to international and regional cooperation more generally. Identify major treaties and conventions which the country has not ratified, and any significant breaches of international law.

---

**Contribution of Parliaments to ensuring Respect for and Promoting International Humanitarian Law on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions**, Resolution by the 102nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Berlin, 15 October 1999

**The Need to Revise the Current Global Financial and Economic Model**, Resolution of the 102nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Berlin, 15 October 1999


**Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-use Goods and Technologies**, 1996
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generalized sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amnesty International, <em>Annual Reports</em>, appendices VI and VII: ratification, signatures to international (VI) and regional (VII) principal human rights treaties; also separate country audits in <em>Annual Report</em> for incidence of violations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on trade policy, the World Bank and the IMF, conflict and security and the Millennium Development Goals, <a href="http://www.eldis.org/">http://www.eldis.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Footprint’ ranking of environmental impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports of the UN Secretary-General to the UN Security Council; UN Security Council resolutions on select countries, <a href="http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/">http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, <a href="http://www.transnational.org">http://www.transnational.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development, National Implementation on the Rio Commitments (statistics on social and ecological balances), <a href="http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natinfo/natinfo.htm">http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natinfo/natinfo.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Treaty Database, <a href="http://untreaty.un.org/">http://untreaty.un.org/</a> and <a href="http://www.bayefsky.com/">http://www.bayefsky.com/</a>; this also includes data on treaties of regional and sub-regional bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US State Department, <em>Country Reports</em>, <a href="http://www.state.gov">http://www.state.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Movement for Democracy, documents and database of organizations working on conflict resolution and democracy, <a href="http://www.wmd.org/">http://www.wmd.org/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Standards of good practice

**International standards**

- UN, *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, 1984;
- *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, 1979;
- *Declaration on Social Progress and Development*, 1969;
- *Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict*, 1974;
- *Declaration on the Right to Development*, 1986;
- Geneva Convention, 1951;
- *Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind*, November 1975;
- ICCPR, 1966;
- ICESCR, 1966;
- *Migrations in Abusive Conditions*;
- Optional Protocol to ICCPR, 1966;
- Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, 1989, aiming at abolition of the death penalty

**Regional standards**

- *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*, 1950, article 25, recognizing the competence of the European Commission to consider violations; and article 46, recognizing the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights;
- *Protocol No. 6*, 1983 concerning the abolition of the death penalty

- *Inter-American Convention against Corruption*, 1996;
- *Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture*, 1985

- *Agreement for the Establishment of the African Rehabilitation Institute*, 1985;
- *Constitution of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organisations*, 1974;


- OECD, *Criminal Law Convention on Corruption*, 1999

---

Standards of good practice

(cont.)

**Environment**

*Agenda 21* (especially section II)


*Maastricht Treaty on European Union*, 1992 provides EU citizens with a basis for prosecution of member governments for breach of EU environmental laws

*Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer*, 1987


OAS, *Declaration of Santa Cruz de la Sierra and Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas*, 1996


**Military**

*Contribution of Parliaments to Ensuring Respect for and Promoting International Humanitarian Law on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions*, Resolution by the 102nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Berlin, 15 October 1999


*The Need to Revise the Current Global Financial and Economic Model*, Resolution of the 102nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Berlin, 15 October 1999

UN, *Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (Convention on Conventional Weapons)*, 1980 and Four Protocols (voluntary);

*Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention)*, 1972;

**Convention on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources**, 1968; (Revised Version), 2003; 
African Union, **Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development on Agriculture and Water in Africa**, Assembly of the Union, 2nd Extraordinary Session, Sirte, Libya, 27–28 February 2004

**Rio Declaration on Environment and Development**, 1992

**UN Convention On Biological Diversity**, 1992  
**UN Convention to Combat Desertification**, 1994

UNEP, **Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal**, 1989;  
**Technical Report No. 29**, Paris, 1995 (travel industry/tourism and host community codes of conduct);  

**Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (The Mine Ban Treaty)**, 1997, also est. Landmine Monitor, a global reporting network;  
**Geneva Conventions**, 1949;  
**Genocide Convention**, 1948;  
**United Nations Register of Conventional Arms**, 1992

**Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-use Goods and Technologies**, 1996

**Regional (arms)**

African Commission on Human and People’s Rights, **Resolution on the Respect of International Humanitarian Law and Human and People’s Rights**, 1993  
**EU, European Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers**, 1998

OAS, **Consolidation of the Regime Established in the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)**, General Assembly Res, AG/RES 1798 (XXXI-O/01), 2001;  
**Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacture and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives and Other Related Materials**;  
**Model Regulations for the Control of the International Movement of Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition**, 1997

OAS, **Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Production of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials of the Organization of American States**, 1997;  
**Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution**, June 1993

OCSE, **Istanbul Summit Declaration, Charter for European Security**, 1999

(NGO-initiated)

International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment question</th>
<th>4.2.3. How extensive and consistent is the government’s contribution to international development?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What to look for</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Laws:</strong> examine whether the country is a signatory to the <em>UN Convention on the Right to Development</em> and associated legislation and protocols. Examine whether lender and borrower governments are party to OECD (DAC), World Bank or UN economic codes of good practice in monetary transfers.</td>
<td><strong>2) Implementation:</strong> if an economically developed country, examine the aid budget in relation to the UN target (0.7% of GNP); the degree to which aid is subject to unilateral conditionalities or tied to domestic providers; the extent of coordination of the aid programme with other relevant government policies, including non-discriminatory immigration policy. If a country is donor-dependent, how open is the process to public debate and accountability? For all countries, examine how far the government supports their own and others’ efforts to meet democratically agreed development targets such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3) Positive and negative indicators:</strong> examine the commitment of the government to international development, quantitative and qualitative, and the effectiveness of its organization to implement this, including collaboration with partners. Look for evidence of the one-sided imposition of conditionalities, or the funding of inappropriate projects; include any adverse effects on international development of other government policies, such as agriculture, trade, finance, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generalized sources**

**International sources**

Bretton Woods Project, [http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org](http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org)


Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on trade policy, World Bank and the IMF, aid and debt, climate change, globalization, etc., [http://www.eldis.org/](http://www.eldis.org/)

**Regional sources**


Reality of Aid, <http://www.realityofaid.org/>

Reports of the High-level Task Force on the Implementation of the Right to Development;


International Budget Project, <http://www.internationalbudget.org>


Europe’s Forum on International Cooperation (EUFORIC), <http://www.euforic.org/>

OECD, Aid Statistics, including Donor and recipient country (152) aid charts, aid allotted to particular sectors and regions, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats>;

Globalization and Human Development in South Asia

UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics, TD/STAT.30, 2005;
Foreign Direct Investment Database and Foreign Direct Investment Online, <http://www.unctad.org/>


World Social Forum, various including <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/index.php>

Standards of good practice

International standards
UN, ICESCR 1966, article 15; Convention against Corruption, 2003; Declaration on Social Progress and Development, 1969;
Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind, 1975;
Declaration on the Right to Development, 1986
Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993


Regional standards
Court, J., Mendizabal, E., Osborne, D. and Young, J., Policy Engagement: How Civil Society Can Be More Effective (London: RAPID, ODI, 2006);

EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Guidelines and checklists on Evaluation, (e.g. Untying EC External Assistance), <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation/index.htm>
*Country reports* on the observance of standards and codes (ROSCs) (good practice in countries on transparency, corporate governance, payments systems, etc.)  
*International Parliamentarians’ Petition (IPP) for Democratic Oversight of the IMF and World Bank*, <http://www.ippinfo.org/>  
Commitment to Development Index 2006, prepared by the Centre for Global Development, <http://www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/_active/cdi>  
UN Millennium Project, *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals* (London and Stirling, Va.: Earthscan, 2005);  
Special Programme of Assistance for Africa (SPA), *Guiding Principles on Civil Service Reform*, 1995  
### Assessment question

4.2.4. How far is the government’s international policy subject to effective parliamentary oversight and public influence?

### What to look for

1) **Laws:** examine the legal basis for parliamentary oversight of international policy, including military policy and the deployment of troops abroad.

2) **Practice:** does the parliament or legislature have sufficient and timely information and adequate expertise for effective oversight, and is it appropriately organized for this task? Is the government open to NGOs and other organized publics influencing its policies?

### Generalized sources

- Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, [http://www.dcaf.ch/index.cfm](http://www.dcaf.ch/index.cfm)
- Eldis Gateway to Development Information, database on trade policy, [http://www.eldis.org/](http://www.eldis.org/)
- United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), international, regional and country-specific documents and databases on governance systems and institutions, [http://www.unpan.org](http://www.unpan.org)

### Standards of good practice

Part 3

The assessment experiences
In Part 3, we pass on the experience of the teams and individuals who have conducted assessments in 20 different countries and to convey something of the enthusiasm and sense of purpose they have brought to what is inescapably a hard and complex task. As Parts 1 and 2 have shown, the International IDEA democracy assessment methodology sets out a standard methodology for assessors; however, the reports from assessors reveal a remarkably diverse range of democratic situations as between countries, approaches and techniques. All the assessments that have taken place have remained committed to the standard methodology and the central principle of local ownership of the assessment process that encompasses the research, the analysis, the consultation processes, and the identification of priorities for future reform. But, as Krishna Hachhethu, a Nepalese member of the South Asia regional assessment team, says, ‘Democracy has many stories’.

Therefore, while we standardize the assessment process, we neither standardize ‘democracy’ itself nor seek to standardize the way in which the assessment teams approach the task of assessing the quality of democracy in their country or region. The framework is designed to be flexible, allowing teams to add search questions or to adopt differing modes of consulting, communicating and analysing. Thus assessment teams have in practice largely kept within the overall framework, but have also adopted a remarkably diverse set of working methods, innovations, fund-raising initiatives and timescales, as well as engagements with governments, civil society and donors, and have learned from different experiences.

The assessment methodology was invented and first applied by Democratic Audit in the UK. The methodology was developed for universal use under the direct aegis of International IDEA and then pioneered over six months in eight countries – Bangladesh, El Salvador, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Peru, New Zealand and South Ko-
rea. These pilot assessments covered different regions of the world and a mix of developed and developing countries in order for us to be able to test the process fully. The in-country assessments were preceded by a ‘desk assessment’ carried out by researchers at the University of Leeds, and nearly all of them involved a conference of outside experts and interested parties. These desk assessments drew primarily on Internet searches and standard texts, but were mainly confined to material in English. They were successful enough for us to be able to recommend a similar exercise in advance of direct in-country work. Since 2000, the assessment framework has travelled widely across regions of the world and between countries at different stages of democratization. The pilot assessments have been followed by assessment exercises in (in alphabetical order) Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Union (EU), Ireland, Latvia, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland (a province of the UK), the Philippines, the South Asia region (covering Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) and the United Kingdom (the latest audit). These second-generation assessments were largely conducted independently of International IDEA, and in many cases resulted from a deliberate selection of the methodology as the most appropriate from among the many assessment methods currently used internationally. The assessment framework has also been used to provide input into other democracy and governance assessment projects, such as those initiated by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), AfriMAP, the Danish Association for International Co-operation (Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke, MS), Développement Institutions et Analyses de Long terme (DIAL, Development Institutions and Long Term Analyses), and the Italian Institute for Human Science (Istituto Italiano di Scienze Umane, SUM).

The democracy assessment framework is designed to be flexible, allowing teams to add search questions or to adopt differing modes of consulting, communicating and analysing. Assessment teams have largely kept within the overall framework, but have also adopted a remarkably diverse set of working methods, innovations, fund-raising initiatives and timescales, as well as engagements with governments, civil society and donors, and have learned from different experiences.
Democracy has many stories

Krishna Hachhethu’s statement that ‘democracy has many stories’ struck a common chord at a conference held at International IDEA in March 2007 to collect and reflect on the experiences of the 17 assessments that had taken place so far. The quotes in this section, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the transcripts of the conference and workshops. Hachhethu argued that the founding principles of popular control and political equality should drive the process of assessment, but that assessors should be sensitive to the differing perceptions of democracy and key priorities among people across the world and in particular countries:

In the minds of the South Asian people maybe popular control and political equality are very process-driving, whereas the future of the South Asian understanding of democracy is primarily with their livelihood, freedom and social justice. So the basic guiding thread of democracy in the South Asian report is how to balance when we are developing. The trajectory of democracy in the West and in stable democracies and developing countries is very different and makes a big difference to understanding. If we ignore this part, if the people of the South Asia read a report that does not reflect their experience, their day-to-day life, it will be taken as one additional academic work. Everybody, every reader, should feel that there is some reflection of their experience and understanding.

This point about the differences of the democratic trajectory and experience between countries was also reflected in a distinction central to the Mongolian assessment, between what the assessors called ‘core’ and ‘satellite’ indicators, as they explain in their report:

The core indicators represent common values of democratic governance and satellite indicators mainly express national characteristics of democratic governance in Mongolia. Developing satellite indicators reflected the following principles:

- National characteristics of democratic governance
- They had to be contextually specific and grounded
- Promote local ownership among key stakeholders
- Strengthen the appeal for applying the framework to other countries
- Bridge the divide between universality and particularity (Handbook of Democratic Governance Indicators 2006: 10).
The South Asian quest for the meaning of democracy among the peoples of the five nations in the study highlights a significant development of the original assessment framework that happened with several of the assessment exercises – namely the use of opinion surveys and of ‘dialogues’ with experts to identify priorities and issues for research. The South Asian report, *State of Democracy in South Asia* (Lokniti 2008), explains that the teams used ‘four pathways’ to assess the quality of democracy in the five nations and to measure its relevance to the daily lives of their populations:

- ‘qualitative assessments’ adapted from the IDEA framework and conducted by in-country scholars;
- a thorough cross-country survey of lay opinion on the meaning of democracy, confidence in governing institutions, the status of minorities and so on;
- ‘dialogues’ with political and social activists to counterpose the opinions of the lay public; and
- case studies of inconvenient issues that contradicted ‘democratic wisdom’ to tease out the ‘puzzles of democracy’.

A significant development of the original assessment framework happened with several of the assessment exercises in South Asia – the use of opinion surveys and of ‘dialogues’ with experts to identify priorities and issues for research. The assessments found great differences in perceptions between the politically aware and other citizens. It is not sufficient to consult and talk to the knowledgeable.
The South Asian assessors found a tension between the views of the politically aware and those of other citizens – in the words of Professor Peter deSouza, between the ‘elite commonsense’ and ‘people’s commonsense’. It was to catch and reflect the multiple views and stories that the South Asian assessment employed its different methodologies. ‘When we have a dialogue with the activists, or when we had a dialogue with the enlightened people, the trust in political parties and Parliament was so low, but when we went to the people with the same questions, trust in parties and Parliament exceeded 50 per cent on average … Teams need to think about these tensions in their reports’. Similarly, the Mongolian assessment held a ‘mirror survey’, putting the same questions to a mass sample and to elite groups. They found great differences in perceptions among parliamentarians and political elites, and between business elites and the public. Such findings are valuable in teasing out the tensions inherent in any democracy.

Box 3.1.
Excerpts from dialogues conducted for the State of Democracy in South Asia study

The army and political parties
‘The Prime Minister handles the Defence Ministry. Moreover the retired Generals are joining the political parties and they also keep linkages with the forces. In the last election, eight Generals got nominations from political parties and if they are refused by one party, they are wholeheartedly welcomed by the other party. This is a very dangerous trend in democracy of our country.’

Prof. Amena Mohsin
(chair, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh)
Dialogue on Democracy in Bangladesh, Dhaka, 27–28 March 2004

Discrimination against women
‘Citing her experience in electoral politics, she said that during the campaign she meets many women who cry and talk about their preferences for women candidates but during the casting of votes, their sons and husbands would do it through proxy. Referring to the political parties, she said that these parties destroy not only democracy but also families. Turning to the Naga traditional societies, she said, “In spite of the big-hearted claims, like we do not discriminate against women, they would not allow the women to be a part of the village councils. It is not that they cannot accept women leaders; they may say, “Madam, Madam” to Sonia Gandhi or to lady officers, but they will ask their women not to open their mouths. This is a double standard.’

Ms Valley Rose
(woman activist and politician, Manipur, India)
Dialogue on Democracy and People’s Future, Manipur, Imphal, 26–27 February 2004
Donors and public institutions

‘The donors have played a big role in making the state institutions dysfunctional. For example, they do not want to support the university departments in conducting research, but would be willing to pay hefty money to the professors if they do the research through some private NGOs. I think what is happening is that individuals are operating, donors are operating, but all at the cost of public institutions. This process is furthered with donor policies and money.’

Krishna Khanal
(political scientist, Tribhuvan University, Nepal)

Politics an elite game

‘There are feudals, industrialists, bureaucrats and politicians in the same family. They have formed networks against peoples’ rights. This is very disturbing. People are no more interested in politics, which they consider to be an elite game. People are more concerned about food, health care, employment, etc. The poverty ratio stands at 40–45 per cent. How can one think of democracy in such conditions?’

Gul Rehman
(Muttahida Labour Federation, Peshawar, North West Frontier Province, Pakistan)
Dialogue on Democracy in Pakistan, Lahore, 7–8 February 2004

Freedom from want

‘Around one-third of the population of metropolitan cities is living in slums and they are denied the freedom from want and all other basic needs and rights of a human being. The majority of these slum dwellers belong to dalit and minority communities, and are living in constant threat of demolition of their huts. They are being denied even the most basic needs like water, sanitation and schooling facilities for their children. They neither have freedom from fear nor freedom from want. The democratic state, which was supposed to help them to achieve this freedom, is actively working in the direction to deny them these freedoms.’

Prof. Hassan Mansur
(president, People’s Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL) Karnataka, India)
Dialogue on Democracy and Human Security, Hyderabad, 18–19 September 2004

Minorities and equality

‘Reverend Rahula described two problems in granting special rights to minorities. “Firstly, it will perpetuate their second-class status. Secondly, the majority will continue to use the minorities for their advantage.” Rev. Rahula suggested that the majority-minority discourse needed to be transcended. He wanted all citizens to be educated on the value of equality. He also asserted that the majority-
There is a warning here. It is not sufficient to consult and talk to the knowledgeable. Professor Suhas Palshikar, one of the leaders of the State of Democracy in South Asia project, notes that ‘the dialogues held by this project have shown that the activists are radical and anti-establishment to such an extent that their assessment is at sharp variance with the general public sentiment. This distorts the nature of public debate emanating from assessments’. 

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**Democratizing political parties**

‘In my opinion, democracy in South Asia has not flourished and it won’t until we democratise our political parties. Our political parties more or less resemble private limited companies and family trusts. Take PPP, established by Zulfiqar, inherited by Benazir, who will probably be followed by Sanam Zulfiqar. The same is true for ANP. In India, the same is happening to the Congress. We need to follow the democratic processes as in the USA and UK, where the political parties elect leaders for each term. It is not a family affair where the son should follow the father and so on. Unless an effort is made to democratize the political parties, and unless they perform their role properly, democracy will not come.’

*Prof. Ahmed Zeb*  
*(Dera Ismail Khan, North West Frontier Province, Pakistan)*  
*Dialogue on Democracy in Pakistan, Lahore, 7–8 February 2004*  
*(Lokniti 2008: 149)*

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**On the constitution**

‘Sometimes, we say that we have a good constitution. But what’s the use of this constitution if it can’t protect me and tame the criminals? The criminals take me away at night and kill me in the morning and this constitution can’t ensure justice. One thing is clear: either we have a good constitution, which can protect us and protect our freedom of speech, or we don’t have any proper constitution.’

*Abdul Awal Mintoo*  
*(president, Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bangladesh)*  
*(Lokniti 2008: 38)*

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*Source: All the quotations except the final three are taken from unpublished transcripts of the various dialogues conducted as part of the State of Democracy in South Asia project.*
TASC, the Think Tank on Action for Social Change which conducted the democracy assessment in the ‘two Irelands’, used a major opinion poll to provide a series of findings on democratic issues that were published with great success to gain publicity for the launch of the research programme and to set a framework of popular opinion for the assessment itself. The assessors in Latvia commissioned an opinion poll to assess ‘the dynamics of society democratization’, covering such issues as minority rights protection, trust in public institutions, people’s ability to influence the decisions of public bodies, and political and social activism. For an example of the results, see Table 3.1.
Table 3.1. Trust in public institutions, Latvia
[Figures are percentages]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The president</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The church</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The army</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The police</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The health care system</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The trade unions</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The courts</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Saemia (Parliament)</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The political parties</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Assessment teams that were unable to afford their own opinion surveys tended to make use of surveys undertaken for other purposes, even though they had no role in framing the questions. However, one advantage of using existing surveys is that they can track changing trends over time. An example from the Netherlands assessment suggests that people’s confidence in democracy can decline as well as increase (see Table 3.2).
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide

Table 3.2. Opinions about politics and social trust, the Netherlands
[Figures are percentages of number of respondents]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree with the following statement</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whatever the government does, it is of little use to daily life</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People like me have no influence whatever on what the government does</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t think that members of the House and ministers care much about what people like myself think</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I look at politicians’ actions, I think they’re arrogant</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the House devote too much attention to the interests of a few rich groups instead of the general interest</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What we need are fewer laws and institutions and more courageous and dedicated leaders</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, most people are trustworthy</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Democratic Audit in the UK has collaborated with a major trust to run a longitudinal series of opinion polls on democracy issues over 15 years. The organization takes part in drawing up the questions to be asked and uses the results in its assessments and one-off reports; at a time when electoral reform was an issue, it also persuaded the trust to commission major opinion polls to calculate the outcomes of, or ‘re-run’, the 1992 and 1997 general elections under the alternative electoral systems under consideration, asking respondents to vote on dummy ballot papers. This exercise introduced a practical and measurable element into a public debate that would otherwise have been dominated by unprovable assertions. In Australia the audit has been able to have some questions directly related to democracy issues added to the Australian Election Study (AES), conducted at the time of each federal election. As in other countries, the AES has found that voters take a less relaxed view than political elites of what is acceptable in terms of public spending.
The use of opinion polling helps assessment teams to identify what people find important about democracy and to gauge how deeply a democratic culture runs in any country. The South Asian project provides a vivid example of this process. It found that ordinary citizens in South Asia have reworked the textbook ‘Western’ model of democracy to emphasize ‘the idea of people’s rule, political freedom, equality of outcomes and community rights’. Its report illustrates the findings across the five nations with a striking diagram (see Figure 3.1).

![Figure 3.1. Multiple meanings of democracy in South Asia](image-url)

These findings make an interesting comparison with the results of a survey conducted for the assessment in the Republic of Ireland (see Table 3.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature of Democracy</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A more equal society</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong and stable government</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rule of law</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting for a government in elections</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A free market economy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Clancy, Paula, Hughes, Ian and Brannick, T., *Public Perspectives on Democracy in Ireland* (Dublin: Democratic Audit Ireland Project, Think Tank for Action on Social Change (TASC), 2005), p. 2

Democracy assessments: origins, funding and form

[129] The origins, funding and form of assessments differ greatly. The pilot assessments funded by International IDEA were all university-based and most of the non-International IDEA assessments so far – nine individual country assessments and the South Asian regional assessment – have their roots in universities, but there have been wide variations in the funding and the process. The Australian National University won large grants from the Australian Research Council in 2001 and 2004 for its continuing assessment process; the Advanced Social and Political Research Institute (ASPRI) at the University of Latvia received state funding from Latvia’s Commission of Strategic Analysis for its full-scale democracy audit. At the other end of the scale, the assessment carried out by John Henderson at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand, was ‘under-resourced’ and had to confine itself to an ‘academic exercise’ with a single report-back seminar; and Edna Estefania Co, who leads the assessment...
process at the National College of Public Administration and Governance at the University of the Philippines, is carrying out ad hoc assessments section by section, governed by local priorities and the changing agendas of donor organizations. According to Edna Co, ‘Donor agendas ebb and flow and it’s quite problematic for carrying out a full programme, as some parts of the framework are politically sensitive. For example, civilian control of the military is a bit too sensitive, and so is the section on democracy beyond the state because USAID, the biggest donor, is very wary on this subject’. Three assessments – in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland and the UK – sprang from civil society, the first two of them funded by international donor organizations, and the third by two UK charitable trusts.

The assessments in the Netherlands and Mongolia were government-led, although the Dutch assessment was funded wholly by the government, whereas the UNDP’s Oslo Governance Centre provided technical assistance and various international donors supplied the funds for the Mongolian exercise. Originally, it was felt that state-led assessments were liable to be biased towards the executive and contravened a golden rule that all assessments should be citizen-led. But the assessments in Mongolia, the Netherlands and Latvia (which was in a sense state-sponsored) seem to have been carried out without inappropriate intervention. Indeed, as Todd Landman, who took part in the Mongolian assessment, reports, ‘the Mongolian experience was an eye-opener because the government was very open to all sorts of information, analysis and critical comments and reflections from civil society, human rights bodies and international donors’. The experience has also tied the government into the reform process. The Latvian team gained further legitimacy for their work as it became possible to argue abroad, ‘You see, this country is democratic because they have this critical report of themselves’. (In the same way, Edna Co is able to use the assessment framework in a politically sensitive nation because it is ‘an internationally recognized methodology’.) In the Netherlands, Maarten Prinsen experienced no constraints on the assessment – ‘I am a civil servant for more than 21 years, so I know how it works in government’ – and indeed ministers and his department shared in highlighting aspects of the report and disseminating its findings widely.

The assessments that came about independently of IDEA seem generally to have been undertaken out of a perceived need to ‘take stock’ of the country’s responses to in-country needs and, on occasion, to a crisis. The most dramatic of these was probably the democracy assessment undertaken by the government in the Netherlands. It was provoked by the conjunction of two political murders – of the film-
maker Theo van Gogh and the politician Pim Fortuyn – by radicals, threats against other opinion leaders and politicians, major electoral shifts from the major to smaller political parties, and the rejection of the EU constitution in a referendum in 2005. Maarten Prinsen, the senior state official who took the initiative, explains that ‘There was a big difference between the politicians and the thoughts of the people. All these things were the basis of the decision to have a comprehensive overview of what’s happening in our democracy in the Netherlands’.

The one-year assessment process in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a classic ‘stocktaking exercise’ designed to establish what had been achieved by various donor-led democratization projects in the ten years after the end of the war. The assessment, funded by the Open Society Forum (OSF), had three main objectives: to identify the strengths and weaknesses of democratic practice in the country; to identify priorities for reform; and to provoke public debate on how effective Bosnian democracy was. The Australian assessment grew out of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the nation’s federation. Marian Sawer, leader of the assessment, said:

There was a lot of celebration around our democratic heritage – the fact that we are one of the oldest democracies in the world, the first country to vote itself into existence, the first country in which women could both vote and stand for Parliament. But it was quite clear that it was time we took a really hard look at ourselves; we needed to problematise a lot of our political practices that departed a long way from democratic principles … basically, we had to de-stabilise the celebration that was going on and get people to talk seriously about what was defective in our democracy.

In the Irish case, TASC’s major donor, Atlantic Philanthropies, was coincidentally initiating a major programme on human rights that aimed to bring about concrete and sustainable social change in Ireland (both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland) within a relatively short time frame of 15 years or so. TASC saw the assessment as an opportunity to create benchmarks against which it could measure the achievement of the programme objectives. For TASC itself, taking on the challenge was a way of demonstrating and asserting the contribution that NGOs could make in a polity with few such independent bodies.

Democratic Audit in the UK was inspired by the damage that the repressive policies of the Thatcher governments were believed to be do-
ing to political freedom and by concern about the absence of effective checks and balances on government power; the Liberal Democrat peer, Lord (Trevor) Smith, founder of the audit, said that the charitable trust that set it up took the view that ‘the free-market government was carrying out audits of practically everything else, we thought that we should “audit” our democracy itself’.

Coordinating the assessments

There have been as many differing arrangements for carrying out assessments as there have been projects. However, the breadth of the investigations necessary to conduct full assessments has generally obliged the projects to involve a wide range of contributors. The norm seems to be that projects generally have a small core of people who coordinate the research and draft reports together with a wider set of experts, who have often been recruited from outside the institution carrying out the assessment and who usually seem to work independently of each other. For example, the Democratic Audit of Australia currently has a core team of seven people, but draws heavily on the academic institutions of Australia for its great range of discussion papers and ‘focused audit’ reports. The comparative dimension is strengthened by contributions from experts in Canada, New Zealand and the USA on the regulation of political finance and from Professor Olof Petersson in Sweden on the regulation of opinion polls.

The breadth of the investigations needed for full assessments has generally obliged the projects to involve a wide range of contributors. Projects generally have a small core of people who coordinate the research and draft reports together with a wider set of experts, often recruited from outside the institution carrying out the assessment and usually working independently of each other.

For its most recent assessment of democracy in the UK in 2001, Democratic Audit had a small core team of two editors and two researchers, drawing together contributions from 26 academics, journalists, lawyers and interest group experts (some of whom contributed voluntarily). The Latvian project worked through a single coordinator, with teams of two people each jointly investigating the 14 sections of the original assessment framework. In all 25 people contributed to the assessment, from 12 different institutions, including the European Parliament. Mongolia’s democracy assessment was undertaken by a team of eight social science researchers housed by the Institute of Philosophy, Sociol-
ogy and Law at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, generally viewed as leading experts in their academic fields. Each researcher was assigned an area of responsibility to analyse relevant international and national research documents, official reports and data published by organizations as part of their responsibilities. The Bosnian assessment, a one-year exercise, involved 16 researchers and eight other team members. They decided that they would carry out the assessment ‘step by step’ rather than complete the full 14 sections in one go. The Irish audit had a core team of four writers/editors and three researchers with 15 contributors and drew on academic and civil society partnerships with, for example, the National Women’s Council of Ireland (who ran a gender check) and Amnesty International (Ireland) on human rights. TASC also held a series of expert round tables to evaluate the draft findings of each section. The whole enterprise was preceded by an independent and high-level Irish Commission which held public hearings across the island and consulted widely in Ireland and Northern Ireland; after reporting and making recommendations in 2005, members of the Commission continued to act as a Standing Advisory Committee to the audit. Dino Djipa, who, as research director of Prism, the social research company hired by the OSF, conducted the Bosnian survey, found that the framework presented ‘a challenge of capacity’ in terms of the breadth of expertise required; the ability of researchers to understand and implement the methodology; their diversity and the varying depths of their commitment and analyses; their writing styles; and the task of coordinating their work. ‘The important message as far as the OSF is concerned, is that the internal and external capacity for such a demanding project should have been evaluated with more caution and less enthusiasm.’ Yet he also recorded that various authorities had found the assessment to be a ‘cornerstone’ for future assessment, ‘precious and instructive’ and valuable for training purposes (‘although reading it will give you a systematic sweat’).

Maarten Prinsen described graphically how the Dutch assessment was conducted:

*The framework in some cases has presented a challenge of capacity in terms of the breadth of expertise required, researchers’ ability to understand and implement the methodology, and the task of coordinating their work. The internal and external capacity for such a demanding project should be carefully evaluated.*
At the ministry, we did it ourselves, we formed a small team of some trainees, a few students, and a left-over civil servant who had nothing else to do and applied to join. We used NGOs, especially scientific institutions, who collect data on politics, political parties, etc, in the Netherlands, and some government bodies relevant to some subjects. In the end, especially in the end, a lot of civil servants gave inputs on state of our legislation and implementation. For example, I got a set of 35 comments by our secret service. All read, of course, the chapter of human rights … Afterwards we finalised our report, we didn’t have a draft with a workshop because the workshop would be too big because the assessment covers such a large field, so many subjects, and there wouldn’t be enough time to discuss it all. So we finalised the report after a few internal debates with a few colleagues and gave it to our two ministers at that time, the Minister of the Interior and the Special Minister for Government Reform. They highlighted eight topics (see Box 3.3).

**Box 3.3.**

Announcing the State of Our Democracy report in the Netherlands

‘Mr Atzco Nicolai and Mr Johan Remkes initiated a nationwide debate concerning the quality of democracy in the Netherlands. This debate will be based on the report “The State of our Democracy 2006” … The report makes it clear that in general the democratic values in the Netherlands are well kept. Also according to international standards the quality of our democracy stands firmly … However, the ministers Nicolai and Remkes also indicated eight weak points for a policy agenda, which they consider to be “untamed” problems:

- Social cohesion and integration of the “new Dutch”
- Free expression of (political) opinion in danger?
- The uncertain role of political parties
- Displacement of political arenas: independent governing bodies, quangos, public office holders and informal links not liable to democratic control
- Political and administrative complexity
- “Drama democracy” and policy accumulation
- Fitting European decision making into Dutch democracy
- Decreasing confidence in politicians.

Concerning these points the ministers want to stimulate and/or initiate debate in the Dutch society. To this aim the ministers pose the question whether the state of the Dutch democracy has been adequately described in the 2006 report, and whether the above mentioned points of concern require the development of new policies.’

*Source: Netherlands Ministry of the Interior, Press release, 11 December 2006*
The choice of comparators can contribute to the workload – sometimes unavoidably, as in the case of Australia. As Australia is a federal state, the Australian Democratic Audit has been obliged to conduct a comparative assessment across nine internal jurisdictions, looking for best (and worst) practice in all areas, from freedom of information to the conduct of Parliament and the standards of electoral administration. It also tracks processes whereby, as Marian Sawer points out, public decision making has been moving from parliaments and public debates into intergovernmental forums where decisions take place behind closed doors. The Australian audit treats Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom as ‘comparator democracies’, taking advantage of the audits that have already taken place in these countries and of good practice where it is emerging. The Irish audit was initially designed to measure democracy and human rights across a still-divided

**Box 3.4. Party systems and social diversities in South Asia**

“The electoral system in South Asia was not designed to address the issue of diversities. Each of the countries in the region, in part because of their common history as part of the British empire, adopted a parliamentary form of government with a simple plurality (first past the post) system of elections, though Sri Lanka subsequently shifted to a presidential system with proportional representation in elections, a system otherwise considered more suitable to represent diversities. What is significant is that neither the FPTP nor the PR systems produced the expected outcomes, either a two-party system in the former or a multi-party system in the latter. Instead electoral coalitions have come up in which dominant parties need the support of a number of smaller parties to secure a majority. Party systems in the region have found a way to address both regional and social diversities ...

With region, religion, caste and ethnicity constituting the dominant factors defining the social base, South Asia not only seems to have entered a phase of the ethnicisation of politics with each party claiming sectional support, but has also necessitated the emergence of coalition politics. While the emergence of ethnicity based parties appears to redefine ideologies and marginalise policy issues from the electoral arena, they have no doubt brought parties closer to popular aspirations and made it easy for citizens to identify with political parties. Similarly, while the rise of coalition politics has brought greater instability, it has also provided a mechanism for reconciling the competing claims of parties that represent different social constituencies.’

*Source: Lokniti: Programme for Comparative Democracy (2008) State of Democracy in South Asia (New Delhi: OUP), pp. 82-3*
Ireland, both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland. The idea was that a parallel assessment might contribute to rapprochement between the two polities on the island and enhance democracy in both by identifying ‘mutual lessons’ and possible common democracy-related projects. The original intention was to integrate the two assessments in the final report(s), but constraints of time and resources made this impossible. However, the exercise was conducted in the same way using similar sources and approaches, and two distinct reports provide a wealth of comparable raw data. The South Asian project also, of course, has a built-in comparative framework, in terms of both popular and elite opinion and the subjective assessment process. This has enabled the assessors to identify common features between the countries as well as significant differences.

The UK audit uses data and information from EU member states and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries as comparators, mostly on economic and social conditions (for a special report on economic and social rights), but also for example on freedom of information regimes and counter-terrorism measures. Comparative work puts a strain on the research resources of assessment teams where it is not available in appropriate form from secondary sources. A degree of caution is needed in the use of quantitative international data as benchmarks since they frequently embody qualitative assumptions and practices that cast poorer countries in particular in a negative light: for example, the Human Development Index weights economic growth unduly for such nations, and Transparency International’s corruption index rests too heavily on the perceptions of small samples of Western business executives.

Putting the democratic messages across

There is considerable variety in the balance of the actual outputs between full assessments, special reports, partial audits and monitoring or follow-up reports, and in the ways in which they are published and disseminated. Most of the projects published a single volume reporting on a full assessment, with the South Asian team also publishing separate country reports and considering plans to publish the case studies and ‘dialogues’ separately. Publishing full assessments in one book brings problems. As Dino Đijpa and others have said, there is a ‘challenge of awareness’ because they are ‘complex and extensive documents that really don’t appeal to the wider public’. In Bosnia, he says, ‘it was perceived that the notion of democracy is taken really for granted, too abstract, too far from the wider public immediate concerns’. Maarten Prinsen agrees. The Dutch report was published
on the Internet and as a book, with a press release, but he felt that it dealt with ‘so many different aspects of democracy, it was too much for journalists to take up, even a focus on eight points was too much’. Stuart Weir, from the UK, says that it is inevitably difficult for commentators and the media fully to grasp the findings of assessments that deal with such broad and interconnected issues regarding the quality of their democracy – especially as the very idea of democracy is generally contested. Also full assessments tend to produce very long books. However, he feels that it is important to try to conduct full assessments every four or five years because the longitudinal perspective makes major questions and trends more visible over time and strengthens the case for reforms. Democratic Audit has conducted three major audits – the first on political freedom and civil and political rights, the second on political power and democratic control, the third a full 14-section audit – and now plans a ‘monitoring audit’ (six years after the last) to assess progress on key questions as political power in the UK shifts. Both the OSF in Bosnia and the Latvian team have plans for a full follow-up assessment in two to four years’ time, and the Latvians are now preparing a monitoring report because ‘events in Latvia are going in an interesting direction’, as Juris Rozenvalds said. ‘The report will have bullet points, to show where democracy is going up, where it is going down, and so on, accessible to the broad public.’

There is considerable variety in the actual outputs, between full assessments, special reports, partial audits and monitoring or follow-up reports, and in the ways in which they are published and disseminated. Most of the projects have published a single volume reporting on a full assessment, but these do not appeal to the wider public and it is difficult for commentators and the media fully to grasp the findings of assessments that deal with such broad and interconnected issues. Different methods have been used to make the results of the comprehensive assessments more digestible. Specialist, focused reports may have more impact than the full audit.

Different methods have been used to make the results of the comprehensive assessments more digestible for those who find a large book unmanageable. For the Mongolian assessment, five national experts were selected to ‘score’ the assessment findings on a five-point scale from 5 (most democratic) to 1 (least democratic), and the results were published together in tabular form (see Table 3.4).
Table 3.4. Expert indicator scores for citizenship, law and rights, Mongolia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core indicators</th>
<th>Average score by Mongolian experts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nationhood and citizenship</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there public agreement on a common citizenship without discrimination?</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rule of law and access to justice</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are state and society consistently subject to the law?</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civil and political rights</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are civil and political rights equally guaranteed for all?</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic and social rights</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are economic and social rights equally guaranteed for all?</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average score for core indicators</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Satellite indicators                                 |                                   |
| To what extent is equality in civil and socio-economic rights secured for migrants? | 2.6                               |
| To what extent do effects of social traditions and personal interests support the process of ensuring equality of rights? | 2.4                               |
| **Average score for core and satellite indicators**  |                                   |
|                                                       | 2.8                               |

*Source: Handbook of Democratic Governance Indicators (DGIs): Method, Process and Lessons Learned in Mongolia (Ulaanbaatar: UNDP Mongolia and Follow-up to the Fifth International Conference on New and Restored Democracies, 2006), p. 62*

At the end of each of the 14 sections or chapters of the Latvian assessment a similar table was constructed for each question, the results being marked on a scale from ‘very good’ to ‘good’, ‘satisfactory’, ‘poor’ and ‘very poor’. There then followed a brief item on the ‘best feature’ for that section, then the ‘most serious problem’ and finally a ‘suggested improvement’. Taken together, these provide a quick snapshot of the democratic condition in the country. In the latest UK audit, the findings from each section were summarized together at the end of the book in bullet-point form, and these were in turn edited for publication as a separate pamphlet. An interesting innovation for this pamphlet was the construction of a bull’s-eye figure, to show at a
glance a comparison of democratic progress between each section, and over time, between successive audits (see Figure 3.2).

Another strategy is to produce specialist reports as stepping stones towards a complete assessment. Marian Sawer, from Australia, says that their focused reports have more impact than their full audit ‘because it is easier for people to get their minds around the focused audits’. She reports that the influence of the reports has been felt particularly in areas such as electoral administration, political funding and women’s equality.
Box 3.5. How well does Australian democracy serve Australian women?

The aim of this focused audit has been to consider the extent to which Australian democracy has promoted the equality of men and women, or gender equality for short. Gender equality is understood here as a complex goal that requires governments to address both equality of opportunities and sex-based differences. The diversity of Australian women’s lives adds further complexity, necessitating that a gender-equal democracy must discriminate neither against nor between women.

[In addressing these principles] the report considers a number of key issues in the provision of gender equality, specifically:

- the legislative framework that is intended to eliminate discrimination against women;
- the history and current functioning of the policy machinery that was developed in order to monitor the impact of public policy on women;
- the level of representation of women in Australia’s parliaments, on public sector boards, in local government and in the judiciary; and
- the degree to which women’s non-governmental organizations are consulted with, have access to, and are supported in their relationships with government.

On the whole, the picture that emerges from this assessment is not positive. Whereas Australia was once a leader in the global struggle for gender equality, the report makes clear that in recent years Australia has resiled from this commitment and many of the achievements of an earlier period have now been undone. This is most obviously true with regard to the dismantling of women’s policy machinery and the silencing of the women’s non-governmental sector. While the body of legislation designed to protect women from discrimination remains substantially intact, it is evident that on its own the legislative framework is inadequate to ensure a substantial political equality between women and men measured against the indicators outlined above.


Democratic Audit in the UK also publishes ‘focused reports’ on particular issues, such as the accountability of quasi-governmental bodies, electoral reform, the conduct of foreign policy and far-right political parties, partly to raise awareness about these issues and the audit’s work in general, partly as research exercises that can later feed into full audits. Stuart Weir says, ‘The report on quasi-governmental bodies, which are very numerous and influential in the UK and have major executive and public service functions, had a major impact in
the media and with the public, and led to a significant reassessment by government of their role and accountability. In fact, both government and parliamentary committees have used our methodology for assessing the accountability and openness of these essentially non-democratic agencies. Other reports have also had a very real impact, such as a recent report assessing Britain’s anti-terrorist legislation from the standpoint of human rights and its impact on community relations (see Box 3.6).

**Box 3.6.**
Terrorism, community and human rights

We have concentrated on government laws and practice that diminish or remove protections of the liberty of the individual and the right to fair trial. But the restrictions on freedom of speech and association can have a “chilling” effect on individuals as they watch their words or change their behaviour to avoid suspicion, and on society at large as they diminish the space for democratic debate around issues that are best publicly resolved. ... What is likely is that debates within the Muslim communities that need to be had will be constrained, as a Bangladeshi woman in one of our focus groups describes, while the more malevolent “preachers of hate” will retreat out of sight and their views will become more difficult to challenge. At the same time, necessary engagement between the majority and minority communities will also be constrained and the normal processes of integration will be slowed or narrowed ...

As we have argued throughout this report, a continued commitment to the rule of law and respect for human rights is integral to a successful counter-terrorism strategy. We can only defend the democratic and open way of life if we demonstrate a continuing commitment to its values and practice in the way we actually combat terrorism.


The Philippines project has adopted the framework as a ‘permanent monitoring tool’, but for the reasons explained above Edna Co who leads it has been obliged to carry out assessments of sections of the framework instead of a full assessment. So far she and colleagues have completed a report on free and fair elections and the democratic role of political parties, funded and published by the German Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung, a report on economic and social rights funded by Christian Aid and a report on political corruption. The reports have been very timely and apt in terms of the political and democratic cir-
cumstances in the Philippines and it is a tribute to Edna’s persistence that so much has been achieved.

Box 3.7.
The challenge of corruption in the Philippines

Much leeway in the use of discretion and authority effectively holds the state capture to narrow interests, as happened during Marcos’ authoritarian rule, and in large scale graft and corruption in the post-Marcos era. The enforcement of rules has been uneven and arbitrary, and centred on personalities. A transactional culture of fixing the rules, of negotiating around them and skirting them has developed. Such shortcuts inform citizens in their own dealings with the cumbersome bureaucratic procedures.

The efforts to curb corruption are visible in the laws, executive orders and anti-corruption bodies, of which there are many in the Philippines. However, the continuing challenge is for these mechanisms to be seriously enforced and executed. The other acute concern is the extent to which citizens and officials are committed to institutionalizing the rules so that they become part of the social norms. And, finally, Filipinos look up to their leaders as exemplars of integrity and have a hard time of it finding them. Embedding rules into social norms and institutions, and showing leadership by example are strategic challenges that society has to work on, even without support from external donors. Donors, including development banks, pour aid into the creation of strategies and mechanisms to battle corruption. However, unless anti-corruption projects are truly owned by the Filipino people and an anti-corruption culture develops, there is little hope of sustaining these remedial strategies.

Source: Lim, Millard, Jayme-Lao, Maria, Juan, Lilibeth and Co, Edna, Philippine Democracy Assessment: Minimizing Corruption (Manila: Ateneo University Press, 2007), pp. 175–6

Dissemination

The most high-profile exercise in dissemination has probably been that in the Netherlands, where the audit had considerable government backing in terms of both political will and resources. After an internal review, the report was handed over to two ministers – the minister for the interior and the special minister for government reform – who highlighted eight topics and drafted a side letter to the report. The report was then published, with a press release, in book form and on the Internet and was taken up by the large newspapers. Copies were distributed not only to the media but also to NGOs (250 of them), government bodies and other interested parties. The queen of the Netherlands then happened to choose one of the eight topics –
violence and threats against politicians and opinion leaders – in her Christmas address on television to the Dutch public. Her intervention created a major media debate around the topic. The government organized a series of public debates on the report with members of the general public, and not with experts, on freedom of speech, government structures, the media and politics, citizenship and trust. ‘The debate on citizenship and integration was the most popular of all’, says Maarten Prinsen. ‘No minister attended but I was there with a few colleagues and more than 200 people came, also people with headscarves.’ The government finally organized a big conference including more than 550 people, with two ministers present, and then published a small book on the future of Dutch democracy.

Other assessment teams have had to proceed with far fewer resources, but the pattern has been at least to publish a report in book form and electronically on a website, to release the findings to the press and to organize a public presentation or debate, sometimes – as in Ireland and the United Kingdom – inviting well-known ministers, politicians, public officials and experts to take part and attract a wider audience. The UK-based Democratic Audit now also publishes popular and eye-catching leaflets, summarizing the main findings, which are also posted on the audit’s website and sent to politicians and other opinion leaders by email.

There are several success stories. Five hundred copies of the Latvian report were published in Latvian and sold out, a considerable achievement in a small country. The Latvian team plan to publish the report shortly in English and it has also been published on the Internet. To emphasize the importance of democracy to Latvia, ‘at least one copy was sent to every Latvian embassy outside the country’. The audit team also engaged in debates with almost every faction in Parliament and with the political and academic elite. As Marian Sawer has said, focused reports can gain considerable public attention. For example, the Australian audit published a report on how well Australian democracy was serving women. More than 300 people attended its launch in Canberra – ‘which is a lot of people for Canberra’ – and it won a great deal of media coverage and attention. In Mongolia, 500 copies of the report in Mongolian and 1,000 copies (of a shorter version) in English were published in addition to 3,000 brochures and other materials that were distributed to stakeholders across Mongolia. This was accompanied by a follow-up international conference, attended by representatives of 12 countries and 23 international organizations, and other events throughout the country to publicize the findings.
Many teams are able to maintain websites to give longer life to their findings. The website of the Australian audit is a very well organized archive of all their reports and discussion papers, along with news and reports on democratic events in comparator nations. All the reports and papers are downloadable as well as being available in print form. The audit draws attention to new reports and papers and democratic developments through a large email network that includes many journalists and politicians. In Bosnia, the OSF has set up a website, the Pulse of Democracy, ‘to give the opportunity to a lot of people – not only the researchers – to talk about issues of democracy’, says Dino Djipa. ‘Basically, they have taken five different topics addressed in the assessment and have invited different people to write short articles around them. They want to use the website to initiate a wider discussion.’ Similarly, Democratic Audit is going into partnership with OpenDemocracy, a website on global democratic and human rights issues, to run a blog focused on the UK where the audit will publish instalments of the forthcoming audit of the UK for people to comment on before the report is finalized.

Engaging the public

These efforts to disseminate the findings of the assessments are of course designed to try to engage the general public as well as the country’s political class in public debate on how to improve a country’s democracy. It seems that the government-led assessment in the Netherlands came very close to achieving this kind of breakthrough. The dramatic political murders of two well-known public figures and the popular rejection of the EU constitution in a referendum raised consciousness among the people, as well as inspiring the assessment, and thus made media coverage and public debate more likely. Most assessment teams have neither the resources and public standing of the Dutch Government nor the ‘benefit’ of the specific circumstances that made the assessment particularly salient and relevant.

The other assessment teams have given much thought to the questions of how to make the assessments relevant to the everyday concerns of
the people and how to achieve a wider public debate. The teams in South Asia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina were especially preoccupied about the gap between expert assessment and popular experience. Dino Djipa, from Bosnia and Herzegovina, explains the central difficulty that the OSF assessment there faced. The Bosnian assessment team had three objectives – to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their democracy; to identify priorities for reform; and to provoke public debate on how effective democracy was in practice. The assessment won praise for its quality from the expert community, but on the third objective, Dino Djipa says they achieved only partial success:

Such complex and extensive assessment really doesn’t appeal to the wider public. It was perceived that the notion of democracy is taken really for granted and too abstract; and that the wider public immediate concerns are really somehow irrelevant to democracy. People are really concerned about their economic situation, unemployment, low salaries, and these kinds of things; and the key challenge is how to explain to them to what degree these problems are connected with the way democracy works. And there is a problem of also the political culture, or the lack of political culture or tradition of democracy in the country.

In his view, the assessment process had to engage more deeply with the concerns and experience of ordinary people if there were to be a genuine breakthrough to a wider debate about the quality of a country’s democracy. As in all the assessments, the OSF engaged experts for the assessment in Bosnia and Herzegovina – inevitably, given the complexity of the issues involved. But for Dino Djipa, this raised problems about the principle of ‘local ownership’.

How was the notion of local ownership perceived in terms of its relation to citizens? To what degree are we really citizens? In the context of this assessment, it means a completely different thing: to what degree did ordinary citizens contribute to this whole assessment; in a way what did we learn from them how they see how democracy works in Bosnia Herzegovina? Because most of this analysis is based really on the work of the experts in the different fields. Okay, for example, they have addressed the issue of reviewing the results of different public opinion polls, let’s say, conducted by different organisations about different issues. But there was no effort to systematically work with the citizens, to learn from them what they really experience and how they really see some of these problems.
The media did not help to bridge the gap. They were obsessed by numbers and not by the analysis. ‘They were mostly interested in the results of the survey of experts we conducted using this questionnaire, and very nice coloured charts used in the presentation.’

In Ireland, TASC also found that its 650-page report was too rich and dense to encourage people to engage with its findings. It sent copies to the 166 new members of Parliament in June 2007, and to civil servants and others, but feared that they would go onto shelves and stay there. However, TASC learned that many people who did make the effort to engage with the material found it rewarding and it is now to promote the report as a valuable desktop reference book for use by politicians, civil servants, journalists and civil society. It has commissioned a short brochure for people active in public policy issues who may not be interested in democracy as such, but who could benefit from the report’s data, analysis and judgements on matters of concern to them. The 166 members of Parliament will get a second chance to make use of the audit report.

Assessment teams have given much thought to the question of how to make the assessments relevant to the everyday concerns of the people, achieve a wider public debate, and bridge the gap between expert assessment and popular experience.

Engaging with the public

An equal share in social and economic provision is clearly one of the principal benefits that people expect from democracy, but it is something that our assessments tend to deal with at an analytical and aggregate level rather than at an experiential and individual level. Peter deSouza suggests that democracy assessments can measure the ‘transaction costs’ of citizens’ experience of claiming benefits or services from the state more fully. As he stated at a workshop,

The democratic state, of all states is under an obligation to recognise the equal claims of all citizens. This means that it must make every effort to have in place institutions and policies that meet the needs of its citizens equally. It must not
discriminate or favour but must respond to the claims made on it in terms of the merit of those claims. We know in practice, however, that this is an ideal picture of the democratic state and that the actual state that we face and meet everyday is not remotely like this. It has deficits, distortions and deviations. The citizen has to be prepared to expend some costs when transacting with the state. In a democratic state such costs are supposed to be lower as compared to the transaction costs incurred in non-democratic states.

If these ‘transaction costs’ were to be measured alongside other aspects of democratic performance, then the assessments would be engaging with matters of real significance to people generally, and doing so could make the significance of democracy to everyday lives more evident and real to people. In addition to seeking to engage people with their evaluation of the quality of their democracy, assessors might also engage more fully with people if they reported on the popular experience of what their democracy actually delivers or does not deliver to them. In this way, democracy assessment must include and try to capture the experiences of the citizen of democracy at the everyday level as well as in more macro ‘performance’ terms.

Peter deSouza identifies five areas at least where the citizen has to enter into transactions with the state:

1. *the protection of the citizen’s life and liberty*, where people must deal with agencies such as the police and the army;
2. *the redress of wrongs*, where people must engage with bureaucracy and the courts;
3. *the provision of documentation*, such as voter identity cards, ration cards and so on, which are central to establishing citizenship and hence rights;
4. *regulation*, where the state’s function is to permit or to proscribe either individual or collective activity such as changes to dwellings, zoning and so on, for the common good; and
5. *the provision of welfare and development*, including services such as health, education, water and electricity that are essential for people’s well-being.

We can add to or subtract from this list, as deSouza says. The search questions, of course, should lead assessors to analyse all these areas of state responsibility in a democracy, but the point is to go further and to measure the ‘costs’ for citizens in domains where they have to enter
into a transaction with the state to get what is a just entitlement that the state either has promised or is duty bound to provide. But what actually happens when people make a claim on the state (e.g. for a pension or medical care in a government hospital, or filing a police complaint) or when the state engages with them (e.g. investigating or charging people for possible criminal or terrorist activity, or enrolling them for military service)? Would people rather internalize a cost than make a claim on the state? What frustrations lie in store? Will public servants demand a bribe or public services take a damagingly long time to provide a legitimate entitlement? Even in so-called ‘developed democracies’, the idea of measuring transaction costs remains relevant (see e.g. Thakur 2007).

Peter deSouza therefore suggests that democracies can be assessed more deeply by measuring the transaction costs to the citizen. A set of transaction costs could be aggregated; an index of such costs may perhaps be assembled using people’s perceptions of the ease or difficulty of getting legitimate claims attended to. The concept could take into account the citizen’s frustration with the state or could be developed to allow for interstate comparison. The literature on ‘transaction costs’ in public choice economics could perhaps be imported into our debates on democracy measurement. In Peter deSouza’s view, transaction costs are a better measure of democracy than those that focus on institutions, such as those of the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) and Freedom House; these, he says, ‘have no place for citizen experiences since they are made often from some Archimedean vantage point that is too sanitised and perhaps too elite’.

The innovative application of the International IDEA assessment methodology in Mongolia, South Asia and Australia, among other countries, has moved in the direction of measuring citizens’ experiences of democracy in addition to formal institutional performance. ‘Focused audits’ on the experience of migrants in Australia and case studies on ‘inconvenient facts’ such as the perpetuation of social exclusion through elementary education in India (undertaken as part of the South Asian assessment) are exemplary in this regard. This has had the effect of increasing stakeholder involvement and ownership in the assessment exercise; and it has also focused national and local attention on the findings and proved useful in jump-starting debates about reform. It is hoped that the assessment methodology will continue to generate this widespread engagement with the processes of democracy.
The lessons are clear

Consideration of the many different experiences with democracy assessment examined in this part of the guide demonstrates a clear set of interrelated lessons that ought to be of significance to future democracy assessments around the world.

• First, it is important to recognize the diversity of the democratic stories that emerge from specific assessments while continuing to work within the democracy assessment framework.
• Second, assessment teams need to work creatively with available funding and capacity on the ground in ways that allow a democracy assessment to move forward.
• Third, teams should develop systems for national coordination of the assessment even though different responsibilities may be carried out by a diverse set of stakeholders.
• Fourth, coordination does not stop with the assessment itself but must be translated into the overall ‘house language’ of the process and presented in ways that get the democratic message across to the full range of potential audiences.
• Fifth, the message can be broadcast through a variety of different forms of dissemination, as the experiences in this section of the guide have shown.

Above all, democracy is about people being in control of the decisions and decision makers that affect their lives. Thus, any democracy assessment must both engage the public and engage with the public in ways that capture their imagination for a better life and their aspirations for what a high-quality democracy can deliver.
Part 4

From assessment to reform: influencing the democratic process
From assessment to reform: influencing the democratic process

Part 1 of the Guide introduced the main purpose and structure of the democracy assessment framework. Part 2 provided the full assessment framework, complete with the search questions, what to look for, generalized sources, and national, regional and international standards of good practice. Part 3 reflected many of the experiences of applying the framework in a variety of different country contexts, covering large and small states, federal and unitary systems, old and new democracies, and advanced industrial and less-developed societies. These different experiences have shown that the framework works, that it is flexible and adaptable to the contextual specificities of a wide range of countries, that it has contributed to public debate and raised awareness, and that it has allowed for the expression of popular understanding and elite consensus, and in many cases the identification of reform priorities and ways in which to monitor the achievement of democratic progress. It has also shown that, despite the existence of a common framework of assessment, democracy itself has many ‘different stories’, whether in its foundation and development or its response to the unending challenges. The effectiveness of the assessment framework as illustrated in Part 3 provides a significant test of its value.

This final part of the guide builds on the link between the assessment process, assessment outputs, and the development of a democratic reform agenda. One of the main purposes of individual country assessments by in-country assessors has always been to make a contribution to the democratization process itself. The comparative experiences of applying the framework suggest that there are different potential audiences for the product of a democracy assessment and that there are long-term and short-term effects of an assessment, each of which can be linked to developing strategies for reform.

Over the years, the different audiences for democracy assessments have included citizens and domestic stakeholders in the private and
public sector, as well as international stakeholders from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, primarily but not exclusively in the donor community. Many of these stakeholders have been actively involved in the assessment, while others have been exposed to the final outputs through large public events, official speeches, media interviews, book launches and ongoing consultative processes. The long-term and short-term effects have included such milestone achievements as contributing to the public debate about or discourse on democracy; enriching civic education within and outside the academic world; developing consensus around a reform agenda; and influencing specific reforms and/or reform agents, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of such reforms.

[161] These achievements have varied across the range of countries. Perhaps one of the most significant examples of the link between democracy assessment and democratic reform is illustrated in the case of Mongolia, where the government enacted a Ninth Millennium Development Goal which specifies a set of targets for upholding all human rights found in the Universal Declaration, to uphold and inculcate democratic principles and values, and to combat corruption. In Mongolia all major stakeholders took part in various aspects of the assessment, while the key elements of the National Plan of Action have begun to be institutionalized through additional support from the international community. In contrast to other contexts, where the democracy assessment is one of many voices in the national debate, in Mongolia it was the only voice in the debate. But this voice was given its fullest expression, where all forms of critical reflection about the nature and quality of Mongolian democracy were given space and received widespread national and international attention.

The different audiences for democracy assessments have included citizens and domestic stakeholders in the private and public sector, as well as international stakeholders from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, primarily but not exclusively in the donor community. Many have been actively involved in the assessment. The long-term and short-term effects have included contributing to the public debate about or discourse on democracy; enriching civic education within and outside the academic world; developing consensus around a reform agenda; and influencing specific reforms and/or reform agents, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of such reforms.
In similar fashion, the Dutch assessment was government-led. The final report was disseminated through a variety of strategies to reach as wide an audience as possible. The final report was sent to 250 NGOs, government bodies, journalists and the queen, who used one of the eight topics from the report in her Christmas speech. In addition, major public debates were held on the eight topics, including freedom of speech, the structure of government, the media, and citizenship. A final large conference was held with ministers present, who outlined significant steps for the future. The new Dutch Government (in 2007) set out three broad reforms in the light of the assessment, including a ‘charter for responsible citizenship’, technical changes to the constitution, and a pledge to reduce the complexity of government processes more generally.

In the light of these specific examples, this part of the guide addresses ways in which to think about an assessment as an effective means to communicate a particular story about democracy that has been forged through a process of national consensus. This story ought to be communicated to as diverse and broad an audience as possible and should lead to the formulation of concrete proposals for democratic reform that draw on the findings of the assessment in ways that are based on local ownership of the reform agenda. It is clear from the experiences of applying the assessment framework that assessment teams have moved beyond the set of search questions and have used the framework as a useful tool for critical reflection within the country that is being assessed. A domestic team of assessors and stakeholders based in the country of the assessment provides the empirical basis for answering the questions while reflecting on the democratic achievements and deficits for the period being assessed, as well as identifying the obstacles to democratic reform that may exist. In this way, the assessment is crucial for celebrating democratic achievements while revealing critical gaps in the lived democratic experience of the country and obstacles in need of attention through proposals for reform to move the democratic agenda forward.

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Achievements and challenges

The original set of pilot studies in Bangladesh, El Salvador, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, New Zealand, Peru and South Korea provided important lessons for how the framework can be applied to old, new and restored democracies and how common comparative inferences could be drawn from their assessment experiences. The original studies showed that there are a number of notable democratic achievements that can be made early during a period of transition and consolidation, and similar achievements have been evident in the subsequent country assessments detailed in Part 3. The assessments have shown that it has been relatively easy to:

- obtain a broadly agreed constitution with a bill of rights;
- establish some sort of office of ombudsmen and/or a public defender;
- hold free elections and establish universal suffrage;
- support the revival of local government; and
- ensure the protection of basic freedoms such as party association, press, speech and assembly.

It has been more difficult to establish:

- the effective inclusion of minorities and women’s participation;
- equal access to justice and protection of the right to life;
- meaningful intra-party democracy;
- control of executives;
- a reduction in private influence and private interests in the public sphere; and
- a significant role for opposition parties

and in many ways these remain precarious.

While this is not an exhaustive list of the challenges faced by these countries (for further challenges, see Table 4.1), the main gaps identified between early constitutional and institutional achievements, on the one hand, and longer-term problems that erode the democratic quality of life, on the other hand, are consonant with popular commentaries on and critical analyse of democratic underachievement beyond the countries that have undergone the kind of assessments outlined in this guide (see e.g. Diamond 1999; Zakaria 2003; O’Donnell et al. 2004; Carothers 2007a).

These popular commentaries are critical about two key things: (a) an overemphasis on elections (the ‘electoral fallacy’) at the cost of exam-
ining other key dimensions of democracy and (b) the false logic of
democratic ‘sequencing’ (see Rustow 1970; Carothers 2007a). While
elections are important and feature prominently in the assessment
framework, the many other dimensions of the framework show that
elections are but one facet of the democratic experience, where ques-
tions of rights, inclusion, the media and political parties, among
other things, must sit alongside the holding of regular elections. De-
ocratic sequencing sees the development of democracy as a set of
necessary steps in which the state and the rule of law are stabilized be-
fore democracy is introduced fully. A recent critique of this sequential
approach (Carothers 2007a, 2007b; see also Fukuyama 2007; Mans-
field and Snyder 2007; Berman 2007) cautions against the sequential
logic to the process of democratization and argues that democracies
and the democrats that inhabit them are best placed to bring about
democratic reform and that their efforts to do so often precede rather
than follow any interventions from the international community, and
even in those instances where this is not the case, the power of outside
intervention in democracy promotion is overrated.

This view is largely compatible with the types of lesson that have been
learned by applying the assessment framework across such a diverse
set of countries, which – unlike the various debates on democratic
sequencing – has included established democracies, as well as new
and restored democracies. The new democrats of Mongolia forged a
competitive electoral system in which real alternation of power has
taken place, and where all major stakeholders have become engaged
in state reform and strengthening the rule of law. In the Netherlands,
popular rejection of the EU constitution and two prominent political
assassinations initiated an assessment that revealed the need to revisit
issues of Dutch citizenship and the complexity of government itself
in representing the needs and democratic aspirations of the popula-
tion. In South Asia, the State of Democracy project sought to lo-
cate democracy in the context of that region of the world in order to
discover what South Asians think about democracy and how they
have adapted its very idea. The project showed that across the region
democratic ‘preconditions’ (Karl 1990) are not necessary for the in-
stallation of democracy and that democracy has not yet been able to
address questions of poverty.

These different examples suggest that the framework, in addition to
being equally applicable to such a diverse range of country contexts, is
equally useful in generating concrete proposals for democratic reform,
the success of which relies heavily on the agents of the assessment and
their ability to provide the broad conditions of ownership for key stake-
holders who have the capacity and opportunity to drive the reform process. In terms of the assessment framework and within IDEA’s general orientation towards democracy as an ongoing and evolving process, it is expected that democracy is not an ‘all or nothing affair’, so that certain features may be better developed than others, and the assessment of the quality of democracy necessarily requires a multidimensional approach that can provide a more nuanced and contextually-specific ‘performance profile’. Moreover, the assessment framework lends itself well to the identification of possible explanations for the gaps between achievements and remaining challenges, which in turn can lead to the formulation of a democratic reform agenda.

The democracy assessment framework, in addition to being equally applicable to a diverse range of country contexts, is equally useful in generating concrete proposals for democratic reform. It lends itself well to the identification of possible explanations for the gaps between achievements and remaining challenges, which in turn can lead to the formulation of a democratic reform agenda.

Context, influence, audience and outputs

The potential for initiating, implementing and sustaining significant democratic reforms, however, must be seen as a function of four larger factors that need to be taken into consideration. The four factors are:

- the contexts in which the assessments were carried out;
- the types of influence that the assessment made possible;
- the audience to which the assessment was directed; and
- the types of output that were produced.

These factors can act alone or in combination to affect the type of democratic reform possible, both in the short term and in the longer term.

Context

Across the experiences, the context of the assessment varied greatly across the main agent of the assessment (government, civil society or an academic institution), the relative openness of the political process to reform, and the relative voice the assessment had in the public domain and popular political discourse. Differences across these contextual
features of each assessment will have (and have had) an impact on the degree to which democratic reform is possible and on the character of the assessment itself. Government endorsement adds official legitimacy to the exercise but may affect perceptions of its independence and validity. Openness to reform means that the assessment proposals will be better received and the reform process itself will be easier to initiate, implement and maintain. In similar fashion, if an assessment achieves a dominant position in public discourse on the state of democracy and the need for reforms then it will necessarily feed more readily into a reform agenda based on the findings of the assessment.

The main agent of the assessment

[171] The original model for democracy assessment was based on the experience of Democratic Audit in the UK. Research for the three main volumes in which the findings were first published was carried out at the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex, with significant additional input from academics from other UK universities (e.g. University College London, Oxford University, and the London School of Economics). This model was used in the first eight pilot studies, which were conducted through collaboration between International IDEA and an academic institution in each country, with desk studies prepared by academics based at the University of Leeds. The Australian Democratic Audit and the Philippine Democracy Assessment – based, respectively, at the Australian National University and the National College of Public Administration and Governance at the University of the Philippines – also follow this model. The UK, Australian and Philippine examples are ongoing sets of activities and produce a variety of different outputs (see below), while the other examples outlined in Part 3 have so far been single projects, with varying degrees of follow-up activity and/or institutional reform initiatives.

[172] As Part 3 demonstrates, considerable variation exists in the subsequent assessments that have been carried out, ranging from government-led to civil society-led. In Mongolia and the Netherlands, the government was the main agent for the assessment. In the Mongolian case, civil society, the media and the academic world had a greater role throughout the assessment than they did in the Netherlands. In Mongolia the academic sector provided the core empirical research on the development of democratic governance indicators (with desk studies prepared by the University of Essex) and civil society engaged in producing a civil society index (with assistance from Civicus). The two major international conferences held in Ulaanbaatar included representatives from the government, the parliament and civil society
(which also included representatives from the media). In contrast, in the Netherlands, the Interior Ministry was largely responsible for conducting the assessment, the results of which were then disseminated through the main debates about and the distribution of the final report, which received media coverage and responses from NGOs and other civil society organizations. In both cases, having the government as the main agent of the assessment has led to reform proposals, the reform agenda being arguably more extensive in the case of Mongolia given the many challenges that country faces, having emerged from a prolonged period of communist rule.

The democracy assessment in Latvia was carried out by the Latvia Commission of Strategic Analysis and the University of Latvia. The commission was established in April 2004 under the auspices of the president and comprises well-known Latvian scholars. Thus the Latvian project falls somewhere in between the primarily government-led examples of Mongolia and the Netherlands, where government sponsorship has added legitimacy to the enterprise compared to those carried out by civil society organizations, think tanks and academic institutions.

The assessments in ‘the two Irelands’, South Asia and Bosnia were primarily led by non-governmental agents. The Democratic Audit of Ireland has been carried out by a think tank, TASC. The South Asian project was coordinated by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), an autonomous social science research institution based in New Delhi. The Bosnian assessment was sponsored by the Open Society Forum and carried out by an independent research team. In each of these cases, substantial reports have been published leading to varying degrees of media coverage and responsiveness from the general public, while in Bosnia the assessment led to the establishment of a website – ‘The Pulse of Democracy’ – as a tool for disseminating further the results of the assessment and increasing awareness of ongoing democratic challenges.

Quite apart from identifying the main agent for the assessment, however, there is the additional issue, particularly in deeply divided societies, surrounding the ideological or political affiliation of the agent, the composition of the assessment team, and the representativeness of the team. Clearly, an assessment team should be broadly based and inclusive of all major stakeholders and different sets of interests. As is outlined in Part 1, a team that is too narrow or one that is unbalanced or biased in some way can affect the legitimacy of the assessment and ultimately the possibility for reform. The institutionalization of
reform is a long process, which involves creating broad consensus among key political actors, as well as developing the supportive political culture that is needed if democracy is to last in the case of new or restored democracies and to deepen in the more established democracies. As Juris Rozenvalds observed after completing the Latvian assessment, ‘there is no democracy without democrats’. Although many observers have made the same observation, this comment captures Rustow’s (1970) notion of ‘democratic habituation’, which can take a generation or two to become deeply embedded into the political culture of a new democracy.

The relative openness of the political process

The second contextual factor that will have an impact on the degree to which an assessment can lead to substantive reform is the relative openness of the political process. Assessments have been carried out for very different reasons at very different times in the political development and evolution of the individual countries that have been assessed. For the more established democracies, the impulse to carry out an assessment is often associated with some sort of crisis of governability, popular dissatisfaction or disquiet about the political status quo, or some sort of ‘trigger’ event, such as a significant change in government, a critical election, or some other significant disruption. These events offer significant political opportunities for the democratic reform agenda to begin to form and an assessment or democratic ‘stocktaking’ provides a useful means to initiate the reform process.

As Part 3 has shown, in the three established democracies of the UK, the ‘two’ Irelands and the Netherlands, significant events led to a new demand for assessment of and critical reflection on the quality of democracy. In the UK, Democratic Audit has framed its work between the latter years of the Thatcher era – the background against which Political Power and Democratic Control in Britain (Weir and Beetham 1998) and The Three Pillars of Liberty (Klug, Starmer and Weir 1996) are set – and the electoral success and dominance of New Labour – the context for the third book, Democracy Under Blair (Beetham, Byrne, Ngan and Weir 2002). The Dutch assessment was a response to growing questions about the national culture in the light of the proposed EU constitution and about national citizenship after two high-profile killings. For Australia, the Democratic Audit used the moment of the centenary celebrations to launch a long-term investigation into Australian democracy. For the two Irelands, the peace process and ongoing Stormont talks served as a catalyst (and bot-
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tleneck) to the parallel democracy assessments completed in 2007 under the rubric *Power to the People?* (Hughes, Clancy, Harris and Beetham 2007; and Wilford, Wilson and Claussen 2007).

For the new democracies, the moment of transition from authoritarian rule has been an important milestone and many of the assessments have been carried out after some time has passed since the transition. The Mongolians combined a reflective look at their democracy since the transition in the early 1990s with their role as chair of the Fifth International Conference on New and Restored Democracies. The Philippines continues to work on sections of the assessment framework as and when funding becomes available, but the impulse for the assessment has come from the Marcos era and the continued political upheaval. For Latvia, the negotiations on accession to the EU brought a variety of reforms mandated by the Copenhagen Criteria and provided the opportunity for a democracy assessment. For Bosnia, international donor interest in assessing achievements in democratization ten years after the war prompted the assessment, which had three main objectives: (a) the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of current democratic practices, (b) the identification of priorities for reform, and (c) to provoke public debate on the effectiveness of democracy in practice. The South Asian assessment combined the long-term experience with democracy in India with the more recent experiences in the region, most notably the popular rejection of monarchical rule and the call for democracy in Nepal.

*Openness to reform means that the assessment proposals will be better received and the reform process itself easier to initiate, implement and maintain.*

**Public space**

The next contextual factor that affects the probability of an assessment leading to significant reform involves the relative public presence the assessment achieves. In advanced industrial democracies there are ‘multiple points of entry’ – a plurality of social groups, different interests, bases of political support, and civil society organizations, as well as large print media outlets, television and radio stations, wide penetration of the Internet, academic commentary, and other forms of opinion-shaping activities and outlets. In contrast, new democra-
cies in transitional economies or less-developed countries will tend to have concentrated media outlets or media monopolies, fewer academic specialists, less active or underdeveloped civil society organizations, and in many cases concentrated areas of political power and deep patron–client networks, which on their own or in combination can limit the degree to which a democracy assessment will lead to reform. The relative voice that an assessment achieves may therefore be a function of the combination between the main agent of the assessment and the public space in which it is operating.

Such a combination thus creates a trade-off for any country contemplating a democracy assessment. On the one hand, government-led assessments may have more formal voice, but they need to be careful to ensure that they are representative, valid and legitimate exercises that include broad representation of key stakeholders. On the other hand, society-led or academic assessments achieve a certain autonomy, independence and validity, but may well have to compete for control of the public space in communicating their work and will need to achieve some consensus with government actors in order to bring about a reform process. In Mongolia, the government-led assessment occupied most of the public space and was the main voice for democratic reform, while in the Netherlands the Interior Ministry needed to mobilize the national media and hold public debates on the main findings of the assessment. Assessments in transitional or less-developed countries may also want to attract international attention in order to gain some form of externally validated voice to bring about democratic reform, which leads to more general questions about the types of audience for which assessments are being carried out.

Types of audience, output and impact

As this discussion indicates, there are many potential audiences for a democracy assessment, which will necessarily vary according to the purpose of the assessment, the conditions under which it was carried out, the agents that undertook it and the type of political conditions prevailing at the time it was completed. These audiences include national stakeholders within government and in political, civil and economic society. But they may well include audiences outside the country, including other countries wishing to carry out their own assessments and the international donor community, which has increasingly emphasized a link between the quality of governance, economic growth and poverty reduction. Part 3 has shown how the different assessment experiences produced a variety of significant outputs, including book-length reports, national conferences and debates, media
events, short reports on parts of the framework or specific issue areas, policy analysis, new data sets with individual and aggregate level indicators, advocacy documents, and proposals for and the enactment of new legislation, such as the Charter for Responsible Citizenship in the Netherlands and Mongolia’s enacting of the Ninth Millennium Development Goal.

The audiences for a democracy assessment may include national stakeholders, within government and in political, civil and economic society, and audiences outside the country, including other countries wishing to carry out their own assessments and the international donor community.

The overall combination of the purpose, agent, context, audience and outputs of any assessment is linked to its potential impact. Assessments can have direct influence on policy makers and other political elites – as in the cases of the Netherlands, Mongolia and Latvia, and to a lesser extent in Ireland and the UK. Assessments can also strengthen constituencies, NGOs and civil society organizations that can mobilize and add pressure for democratic reform. Many assessments can have a longer-term cultural impact through raising awareness and becoming mainstreamed through educational curricula at secondary school level, as well as within the university system.

Assessments can also strengthen constituencies, NGOs and civil society organizations that can mobilize and add pressure for democratic reform.

Areas for reform

These different dimensions of the assessment process (agent, context, openness of the political process, audiences, outputs and impact) create different opportunities and areas for democratic reform. We categorize these areas into three main types: (a) institutional reform, (b) resource-based reform, and (c) long-term cultural shifts. It is important that these are not seen in any way as mutually exclusive, but rather as complementary and as forming a holistic approach to improving the quality of democracy in the medium-to-long term. The
reforms suggested here by no means offer a panacea for democracy’s ills across all political contexts, but they are linked to the framework as key areas of reform that will help a country realize more fully the two principles that lie at the heart of the framework.

**Institutional reforms**

It is clear from the assessments that have been carried out that significant institutional reform is essential to improving the quality of democracy. These reforms are based on enhancing vertical and horizontal accountability mechanisms in ways that prohibit the centralization of power or prevent power and decision making being exercised without real oversight. Across different institutional arrangements (e.g. unitary and federal systems, presidential and parliamentary systems, and proportional and majoritarian systems), the assessment experiences have shown that it is important that institutional mechanisms are in place for maintaining independent forms of representation and accountability. (The Dutch assessment has led to calls for the establishment of a Directorate General for Governance and Democracy.) Institutional oversight requires real power backed with constitutional or statutory authority to oversee and control actions of government that can have a deleterious impact on human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. For example, popular institutional solutions include the establishment of national human rights institutions, electoral commissions, anti-corruption bodies and ombudsman offices, as well as more traditional legislative and judicial powers of oversight that have evolved over long periods of time in the more established democracies. For transitional societies there is an additional demand for institutional solutions that confront authori-

**Popular institutional reforms include the establishment of national human rights institutions, electoral commissions, anti-corruption bodies and ombudsman offices, and more traditional legislative and judicial powers of oversight. For transitional societies there is an additional demand for institutional solutions that confront authoritarian legacies, the military ‘reserve domains’ of power and the use of emergency powers within national constitutions. There should also be institutional solutions to enhance the participation and inclusion of all groups, including minority groups and women.**
tarian legacies (at a formal and legal level and at a cultural and practical level), the so-called military ‘reserve domains’ of power (e.g. in Bangladesh and Pakistan), and the use of emergency powers within national constitutions. Moreover, there should also be institutional solutions to enhance the participation and inclusion of all groups, including minority groups and women.

Resource-based reforms

The framework includes consideration of economic and social rights alongside civil and political rights. The assessment experiences have shown that political and legal equality must be complemented by the means for realizing social equality: the persistence of social and economic inequality constrains the ability of large numbers of people to take part in the public affairs of the country. The fulfilment of economic and social rights is often criticized for placing a heavy burden on the fiscal capacity of governments, but programmes that enhance the protection of civil and political rights also entail such a burden. All rights depend in some degree on tax revenues and government spending. Interestingly, one of the ‘inconvenient truths’ of the South Asian study was that there is a broad perception among mass publics that democracy has not yet been able to reduce poverty. The South Asia report argues: ‘South Asia needs to evolve an alternative approach to thinking about democratic reforms. This approach would respond to the promise of democracy. … It [needs] to prioritise the challenge of accommodating minority interests and aspirations, … re-invigorat[e] politics … [through] a radical re-working of political institutions and the state’ (Lokniti 2008: 152–3).

Long-term cultural shifts

As is alluded to above, in order for democracy to become ‘the only game in town’ (Linz and Stepan 1996: 5), there is a longer-term need for the kind of reforms that promote and develop a broader political
culture that is supportive of democracy. The Bosnian and Latvian assessment experiences made this point very clearly, and in many ways showed that new and restored democracies face a somewhat harder challenge in this regard. The Pulse of Democracy website set up by the OSF in Bosnia was a parallel and initially unrelated way of raising awareness of developing democracy. For Latvia, Juris Rozenvalds is sanguine about the cultural impact of the assessment: ‘this country is democratic because they have [a] critical report of themselves…’.

In Bangladesh, one of the original pilot studies and part of the South Asia study had to work against a background of ongoing military interventions in the political sphere which the public in general backed, which suggests a weak attachment at best to democracy and democratic principles. The South Asia assessment argues that ‘an affirmation of democracy does not lead to the negation of authoritarian alternatives, so support for democracy is thin’ (Lokniti 2008: 12–13).

In the Netherlands, the government has sought to formulate an interconnected package of measures to guarantee, reinforce and – where necessary – renew democracy, together with the results of the Citizen’s Forum (Burgerforum) and the National Convention (Nationale Conventie), among other initiatives. On 5 October 2006 the National Convention made proposals for the establishment of a national political system that could contribute to the restoration of confidence between the citizen and politics and also serve as a constitution for the 21st century. In Australia, many of the audit outputs form part of the curricula for university students. As Marian Sawer observes, ‘students cut their teeth on our assessments of Australian political practices when learning about Australian politics’.

There is a longer-term need for the kind of reforms that promote and develop a broader political culture that is supportive of democracy. The institutionalization of reform is a long process, which involves creating broad consensus among key political actors, as well as developing the supportive political culture that is needed. The new and restored democracies face a somewhat harder challenge in this regard.

All in all, it is clear that institutional, resource-based and cultural reforms demand varying degrees of attention and time, and a wide range
of different actors in order to build a broader, deeper and better democratic future. This guide has made it clear throughout that democracy assessment must be comprehensive, inclusive and forward-looking in ways that draw on the democratic achievements, are grounded in the many different contexts in which democracy flourishes, and require the support of all citizens within the country that has been assessed. Democracy assessment engages all levels of society as well as key international actors in an effort to build and strengthen democratic institutions, democratic society and democratic culture in ways that reflect the needs of the population governed within the democracy itself. In this way, democracy is not exported or imported, but supported.

Table 4.1. Typical achievements and challenges drawn from the pilot studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section of framework</th>
<th>Achievements</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Citizenship, law and rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Nationhood and citizenship</td>
<td>Democratic constitution established</td>
<td>Broadly based inclusion of all sectors of society Elimination of authoritarian legacies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. Rule of law and access to justice</td>
<td>De facto separation of judiciary from executive</td>
<td>Access to justice for all Inefficient processing of cases Criminal elements and corruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Civil and political rights</td>
<td>Bill of rights Office of ombudsman, public defender, or equivalent</td>
<td>National emergency rights derogations Low public regard for police Poor conditions of detention Violence against women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4. Economic and social rights</td>
<td>Government focused on economic development Shift in international community to poverty reduction and debt relief</td>
<td>Limited fiscal capacity of states to guarantee basic rights Increasing gap between rich and poor Liberalization without regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section of framework</td>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Representative and accountable government</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>Competitve elections</td>
<td>Official and unofficial electoral harassment and intimidation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishment of independent electoral commissions</td>
<td>Unequal access for parties to the media</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved and inclusive voter registration</td>
<td>Possible vulnerability of constituency-based electoral systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Voters exercise their electoral rights</td>
<td>Socially unrepresentative electoral candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2. The democratic role of political parties</td>
<td>Freedom for parties to form, recruit and campaign</td>
<td>Fragmentation of party representation</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Personal party politics</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Limited internal party democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Party finance problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3. Effective and responsive government</td>
<td>Realistic threat of removal for most governments</td>
<td>Executive dominance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some legislative oversight of executive</td>
<td>Pork-barrel politics</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Citizen redress possible</td>
<td>Reporting delays</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Some independent media</td>
<td>Limited role for opposition parties</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weak freedom of information legislation</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.4. The democratic effectiveness of parliament*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.5. Civilian control of the military and police</td>
<td>Clear procedures for civilian control of military</td>
<td>Removing military from previous zones of conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public service reforms</td>
<td>Strengthening the accountability of the security services to parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring the police serve the whole community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Making services more socially representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6. Integrity in public life*</td>
<td>Establishment of an anti-corruption commission</td>
<td>Addressing rent-seeking behaviour and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased reporting of corruption from civil society and the general public</td>
<td>Strengthening anti-corruption bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section of framework</td>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Civil society and popular participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. The media in a democratic society</td>
<td>Free independent print media Relaxing state media monopoly</td>
<td>Continued government control of the media Private media monopoly Official and unofficial harassment of journalists Trivialization of media content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. Political participation</td>
<td>Active civil society organizations (CSOs) Effective role for CSOs Encouragement for self-help</td>
<td>Donor dependency of CSOs Lack of CSO accountability Low participation of women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government responsiveness</td>
<td>Adoption of consultative mechanisms</td>
<td>Preferential access for the wealthy Sense of powerlessness among general public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3. Decentralization</td>
<td>Revival of elected local government Greater responsiveness to local citizens Cooperation with local partners for delivery of services</td>
<td>Inadequate and unequal resource base at local level Lack of trained personnel Limited fiscal decentralization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Democracy beyond the state</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. External influences on the country's democracy</td>
<td>Incorporation of international treaties into domestic legislation</td>
<td>Subordination to international financial institutions Unequal representation of countries from the global South in international organizations Chronic border disputes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2. The country's democratic impact abroad</td>
<td>Support for UN peacekeeping missions Generosity towards refugees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*a This element was not in the original framework.

*b In the original framework, this item was entitled ‘Minimising Corruption’.

*c This item has been consolidated into a different section of the new framework.

*d In the original framework, this item appeared as a single question.*
We have described the principles and purposes of our framework for democracy assessment. Our framework is not the first such attempt at assessing the quality of democracy and freedom in countries around the world. The distinctive features of our approach can most readily be appreciated by comparison with other approaches. These are set out in Table A.1, which identifies five different types of assessment framework. We categorize the five approaches in the following ways – by what issues and themes they investigate, who carries them out and for what purpose, their geographical coverage and their respective methodologies. The table also gives examples of the agencies, countries and bodies that carry them out.

This is not an exhaustive list, and there are obvious overlaps between the types listed. Thus, for example, there is a strong thematic overlap between the first four in the table, all of which predominantly include civil and political rights in their assessment. But this similarity should not obscure crucial differences of purpose between them that feed into their respective methodologies. Thus, the first category, human rights surveys, aim to identify where individual countries stand in a global comparison; the second, governance assessments, uses assessment to select and monitor aid projects in given countries; the third, democracy indices, are concerned to explore empirical relationships between democracy and other significant variables; the fourth, democratic audits, are primarily concerned to raise consciousness and the level of public debate about democracy issues; and the fifth, economic and social assessments, provide a tool for externally funded economic or social investment.

Our approach is set out at the bottom of the table for comparison. Of the five types surveyed, our approach has most in common with the democratic audits, from which it has evolved. That is to say, the primary purpose of our assessment methodology is to help raise public
consciousness about democracy issues in particular countries, to assess the quality of democracy, to identify where it is strong and where it is weak, and to identify reforms.

Since we are sceptical about outsiders sitting in judgement on a country’s democracy, often from a position of presumed superiority, we take the view that the right people to conduct such assessments are the citizens of the country involved, a principle which is now increasingly being recognized internationally. Not least, only they know the history and culture of their country – an important base for understanding its approach to and arrangements for democracy. In some instances, it may be appropriate – and in many cases it can add legitimacy to an assessment – if the government is involved (as in the case of Mongolia and the Netherlands: see Part 3). Much will depend on the government’s motives and the independence of the assessment. In Zimbabwe, for example, President Robert Mugabe’s government established a major survey of the people’s democratic aspirations to shoulder aside a popular initiative and to take control of the process. Mugabe then rejected the conclusions of his own official inquiry.

Thus, safeguards will be an essential prerequisite for such assessments. For example, government assessments should allow the assessors, as our methodology demands, to define for themselves which aspects of democracy and which criteria should be chosen for investigation, as well as which benchmarks or standards might be appropriate for use in the assessment.

Other frameworks tend to predetermine these key issues of method, and these issues are often neither explicitly recognized nor discussed. In the International IDEA process, they are exposed to debate and choice, while the flexibility of the framework makes it sensitive to the contextual specificities of individual countries under assessment. To identify such choices, and what is involved in them, is one of the key purposes of this Guide.

We have, however, gone beyond the original idea and practice of a democratic audit in a number of ways, which involve incorporating elements from some of the other types of assessment. Extending the idea of democratic audit to newly established democracies required us to expose the original criteria and methods employed for the UK audits to a process of international assessment and criticism. As a result, the framework now includes sections on economic and social rights and the international dimensions of democracy that were not in the original framework. It also treats more seriously and acutely the proc-
esses of assessment and the choice of standards or comparators to be used. As well as the body of economic and social assessments, we have also drawn on the experience of project-led governance assessments in our methodology.

Furthermore, anyone attempting to construct lists of possible sources for relevant data, whether international, regional or country-specific, is bound to be indebted to the sources and findings developed by the profession of political science and by international NGOs. In these different ways we attempt to draw on the best of existing assessment work, while also maintaining our distinctive approach.
Table A.1. Comparing assessment frameworks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of assessment</th>
<th>Who carries it out?</th>
<th>What it covers</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Geographical coverage</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Selected examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Human rights surveys</td>
<td>International NGOs and governments</td>
<td>Civil and political rights; economic social and cultural rights</td>
<td>Identify where countries stand in a global comparison</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Quantitative or qualitative comparison between countries</td>
<td>Freedom House¹\ Human Rights Help Monitor² \ Human Rights Watch³ \ Amnesty International⁴ \ US State Dept.⁵ \ CIIRI Human Rights Data Project⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Governance assessments</td>
<td>Government aid agencies</td>
<td>Electoral democracy, accountable government, the rule of law</td>
<td>Means to select and monitor aid projects</td>
<td>New democracies</td>
<td>Country-specific assessments against agency-derived indicators</td>
<td>CIDA⁷ \ DFID⁸ \ USAID⁹ \ EU¹⁰ \ Millennium Challenge Account¹¹ \ APRM¹²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Democracy indices</td>
<td>Social and political scientists</td>
<td>Civil and political rights, electoral democracy</td>
<td>Explore empirical relationships between democracy and other variables (e.g. economic development and conflict)</td>
<td>Some global, some new democracies</td>
<td>Aggregate quantitative indicators (dichotomous or polychotomous)</td>
<td>Lipset¹³ \ Diamond¹⁴ \ Hadenius¹⁵ \ M. Moore¹⁶ \ Kaufman et al.¹⁷ \ Przeworski et al.¹⁸ \ Polity IV¹⁹ \ Bertelsmann Transformation Index²⁰ \ EIU²¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Democratic audits</td>
<td>Joint civil society initiatives</td>
<td>Civil and political rights, electoral democracy, accountable government</td>
<td>Raising consciousness about democracy and its condition</td>
<td>Old democracies</td>
<td>Country-specific qualitative assessment by citizens</td>
<td>Canada²² \ Sweden²³ \ UK²⁴ \ Australia²⁵ \ Denmark²⁶ \ Netherlands²⁷ \ EU²⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Economic and social assessments</td>
<td>International agencies and governments</td>
<td>Economic and social indicators</td>
<td>Guide to externally funded economic and social investment</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Quantitative indicators to assess comparative performance</td>
<td>UNDP²⁹ \ World Bank³⁰ \ Social Watch³¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International IDEA democracy assessment</td>
<td>National and international civil society, and governments</td>
<td>Full range of political and social democracy</td>
<td>Enhance public debate; identify and evaluate reform priorities</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Country-specific qualitative assessments by in-country experts</td>
<td>Transparency International³² \ International IDEA-sponsored</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References for Table A.1

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Annex B
The democracy assessment questionnaire

Example

You are invited to tick one of the boxes in answer to each question in the accompanying list. The classifications are:

\[ \begin{align*}
    VH &= \text{very high;} \\
    H &= \text{high;} \\
    M &= \text{middling or ambiguous;} \\
    L &= \text{low;} \\
    VL &= \text{very low.}
\end{align*} \]

As an example, under question 2.1, if you consider that there are serious abrogations of the rule of law, for example, the existence of areas or groups above or beyond the reach of the law, or outside its protection in your country, then you might tick ‘L’ or ‘low’ for your assessment of the degree to which the rule of law is operative.

The numbering of the boxes corresponds to the relevant questions on the lists. For each section you are then asked to specify what you consider a) the best feature, and b) the most serious problem in your country from a democratic point of view; then c) to suggest what you think might be done to improve this problem.

2.0 The rule of law and access to justice

Are state and society consistently subject to the law?

2.1 How far is the rule of law operative throughout the territory?
2.2 To what extent are all public officials subject to the rule of law and to transparent rules in the performance of their functions?

2.3 How independent are the courts and the judiciary from the executive, and how free are they from all kinds of interference?

2.4 How equal and secure is the access of citizens to justice, to due process and to redress in the event of maladministration?

2.5 How far do the criminal justice and penal systems observe due rules of impartial and equitable treatment in their operations?

2.6 How much confidence do people have in the legal system to deliver fair and effective justice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>VH</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>VL</th>
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<td>2.6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Best feature ...........................................................................................................
Most serious problem ...........................................................................................
Suggested improvement .........................................................................................
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Annex D
About the authors

David Beetham has written extensively on democracy and human rights, including economic to and social rights. He is associate director of and a major contributor and author for the UK-based Democratic Audit, and was one of the authors of the Handbook of Democracy Assessment developed by International IDEA (Kluwer Law International, 2002). He is the author of numerous other publications, including The Legitimation of Power (Humanities Press International, 1991); Introducing Democracy: 80 Questions and Answers (Polity Press, Blackwell and UNESCO, 1995); Democracy and Human Rights (Polity Press and Blackwell, 1999); Democracy: A Beginner’s Guide (Oneworld, c. 2005); Defining and Measuring Democracy (Sage, 1994); and Parliament and Democracy in the Twenty-first Century: A Guide to Good Practice (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2006). He holds the position of professor emeritus at the University of Leeds.

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Todd Landman is a Reader in the Department of Government and director of the Centre for Democratic Governance at the University of Essex. He was deputy director of the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex from 1999 to 2003, and co-director from 2003 to 2005. He is vice-chair of Democratic Audit’s Board of Trustees, has worked on numerous projects for International IDEA, and has assisted the Mongolian Government in carrying out a democracy
assessment. He is the author of numerous publications, including *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics* (Routledge, 2000, 2003, 2008); *Studying Human Rights* (Routledge, 2006); *Protecting Human Rights: A Comparative Study* (Georgetown University Press, 2005); (with Joe Foweraker et al.) *Governing Latin America* (Polity Press, 2003); and (with Joe Foweraker) *Citizenship Rights and Social Movements: A Comparative and Statistical Analysis* (Oxford University Press, 1997). He has been a consultant for the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Danish International Development Agency (Danida), the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the UNDP, the European Commission, Minority Rights Group and Amnesty International.

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The Practical Guide has benefited tremendously from a participatory review process that began in 2005 involving State of Democracy (SoD) Network members. We take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in its production, and particularly the authors – Todd Landman, who led the University of Essex team that authored the guide; Edzia Carvalho; and Stuart Weir and David Beetham who have been part of the SoD project since its conception nine years ago.

We are also very grateful to the following members of the SoD Network who provided specific input to this particular guide: Sarah Bracking, currently based at the University of Manchester, UK; Peter R. deSouza of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi, India (member of the SoD in South Asia team); Dino Djipa of Prism Research Bosnia and Herzegovina; Krishna Hachhethu, member of the SoD in South Asia team, based at the Nepal Centre for Contemporary Studies, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu; Bronwen Manby, adviser at the Africa Governance Monitoring and Advocacy Project (AfriMap), Open Society Institute; Maarten Prinsen, based in the Dutch Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations (coordinator of the Dutch State of Our Democracy assessment); Juris Rozenvalds of the Advanced Social and Political Research Institute, University of Latvia, Riga (member of the Latvia SoD assessment team); Marian Sawyer of the Democratic Audit of Australia, Australian National University; and Tsetsenbileg Tseeven, member of the Mongolia SoD assessment team.

We also thank Keboitse Machangana, adviser for Democracy Analysis and Assessment at International IDEA; Melida Jimenez, consultant; and Florencia Enghel, International IDEA’s Publications Manager, for successfully coordinating and managing production of this guide within International IDEA; and, finally, Eve Johansson for her editorial work in putting the publication into final form.
Annex F
About International IDEA

What is International IDEA?

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. Its objective is to strengthen democratic institutions and processes. International IDEA acts as a catalyst for democracy building by providing knowledge resources, expertise and a platform for debate on democracy issues. It works together with policy makers, donor governments, UN organizations and agencies, regional organizations and others engaged in the field of democracy building.

What does International IDEA do?

Democracy building is complex and touches on many areas including constitutions, electoral systems, political parties, legislative arrangements, the judiciary, central and local government, and formal and traditional government structures. International IDEA is engaged with all of these issues and offers to those in the process of democratization:

- knowledge resources, in the form of handbooks, databases, websites and expert networks;
- policy proposals to provoke debate and action on democracy issues; and
- assistance to democratic reforms in response to specific national requests.

Areas of work

International IDEA’s notable areas of expertise are:

- Constitution-building processes. A constitutional process can lay the foundations for peace and development, or plant seeds of conflict.
International IDEA is able to provide knowledge and make policy proposals for constitution building that is genuinely nationally owned, is sensitive to gender and conflict-prevention dimensions, and responds effectively to national priorities.

- **Electoral processes.** The design and management of elections has a strong impact on the wider political system. International IDEA seeks to ensure the professional management and independence of elections, adapt electoral systems, and build public confidence in the electoral process.

- **Political parties.** Political parties form the essential link between voters and the government, yet polls taken across the world show that political parties enjoy a low level of confidence. International IDEA analyses the functioning of political parties, the public funding of political parties, their management and their relations with the public.

- **Democracy and gender.** International IDEA recognizes that if democracies are to be truly democratic, then women—who make up over half of the world’s population—must be represented on equal terms with men. International IDEA develops comparative resources and tools designed to advance the participation and representation of women in political life.

- **Democracy assessments.** Democratization is a national process. International IDEA's State of Democracy methodology allows people to assess their own democracy instead of relying on externally produced indicators or rankings of democracies.

**Where does International IDEA work?**

International IDEA works worldwide. It is based in Stockholm, Sweden, and has offices in Latin America, Africa and Asia.
Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide presents International IDEA’s State of Democracy (SoD) assessment framework. Developed to facilitate the conduct of comprehensive democracy assessments led and owned by local actors, the SoD framework moves away from the practice of comparing countries’ democratic performance based on externally generated rankings. It enables local actors to evaluate the quality of their democracies for purposes of contributing to democratic reform.

The Guide sets out the elements of the assessment framework and linkages between: the democratic principles upon which it is based, the mediating values, the structure and the range of search questions, that seek to establish the formal existence of democratic institutions and the extent to which these perform in practice. Guidance on data sources and standards of good practice is also provided.

The experiences of the SoD Network - a community of practice that has applied the SoD assessment framework in their countries and regions since its launch in 2000 - are shared here. The challenges and lessons learnt by the Network when undertaking assessments and linking them to reform will be valuable to those seeking to apply the framework in their countries.