

SUPPORTING COUNTRY-LED DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENTS



PRACTICE NOTE

February 2009

CONTENTS

Abbreviations and Acronyms	2
Executive Summary	3
I. Introduction – Context and Background	4
II. The Issue and Its Dimensions	5
1. Governance Assessments at a Glance	7
2. What is a Country-Led Assessment?	9
3. Key Principles	10
4. Understanding the Context	11
5. Country-led Assessments in Post-Conflict Situations	14
III. UNDP's Niche and Possible Entry Points	15
IV. Guidance for UNDP Programming Support	19
1. Capacity Development as the Overarching Objective	19
2. Facilitating Multi-Stakeholder Participation	22
3. Aligning Governance Assessments with National Development Plans	25
4. Promoting Pro-Poor and Gender-Sensitive Assessments	29
5. Strengthening Evidence-Based Policymaking	31
6. Programming	33
V. Bibliography and Knowledge Resources	37

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APRM	Africa Peer Review Mechanism
BDP	United Nations Development Programme Bureau for Development Policy
CABS	Common Approach to Budgetary Support
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CGA	Country Governance Assessment
CGP	Country Governance Profiles
CMI	Chr. Michelsen Institute
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
CSI	Civil Society Index
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DBS	Direct Budget Support
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DGI	Democratic Governance Indicator
DGTTF	Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund
EU	European Union
FNDP	Zambia's Fifth National Development Plan
GAC	Governance and Anti-Corruption Country
ICNRD	International Conference on New and Restored Democracies
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NHDR	National Human Development Report
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OGC	UNDP Oslo Governance Centre
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SGACA	Strategic Governance and Corruption Assessment
SWApS	Sector Wide Approaches
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPA	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Practice Note is based on the experiences of selected Country Offices and outlines the principal objective for UNDP's engagement: to support national ownership and capacity development of national partners to be able to undertake and use governance assessments to enhance democratic governance. UNDP's support for country-led democratic governance assessments is a key element of the organization's broader agenda on democratic governance: to foster inclusive participation, strengthen accountable and responsive governing institutions, and ground governance in international principles of human rights, gender equity and integrity. This approach to democratic governance and the role of assessment therein, is included in the approved UNDP strategic plan for 2008-2011¹.

UNDP has been at the forefront in the international discourse and dialogue on governance assessments, stressing that such assessments be more actionable and useful to national policymaking while at the same time promote and strengthen national and local level engagement and ownership.

UNDP has not developed a governance index that ranks countries, akin to the Human Development Index. Comparative indexes on democratic governance may be catalytic in the "naming and shaming" of countries that are identified as performing poorly, but this is not a role for UNDP, whose focus is rather to help national stakeholders within Member States identify governance problems that need to be addressed, and to have at their disposal the means for assessing the effectiveness of policy reforms to address those problems.

For UNDP, the value of a country-led governance assessment is that it serves as a critical accountability and transparency mechanism for governance performance. Democratic governance is more likely to be sustained if targets for attainment and expectations of how governments should perform are formulated by those who live within the political system. When local actors participate in the assessment process, it stimulates their demand for governance information and a demand for greater accountability from government. For country-led assessments to provide more depth into a particular policy issue, UNDP emphasizes that they must integrate a focus on marginalized and vulnerable groups. Country-specific and disaggregated indicators will help identify specific institutions and practices that perpetuate unfair and sub-standard provision of services to these groups.

A key role for UNDP Country Offices is to support national partners in developing, undertaking and using contextualized assessments that conform to global standards, that are grounded in local ownership and that enable all stakeholders to monitor governance performance, especially its impact on vulnerable groups, within their country over time. With capacity development always at the centre of UNDP's approach, the Practice Note defines four key areas for UNDP support:

1. Promoting multi-stakeholder participation
2. Aligning governance assessments with national development plans
3. Promoting pro-poor and gender-sensitive governance assessments
4. Strengthening evidence-based policymaking

¹ www.undp.org/execbrd/word/dp07-43.doc

I. Introduction – Context And Background

Governance assessments have been an increasing priority for donors and national development partners alike, especially in the last five years. This trend is the result of an international consensus that an improved understanding of the quality of governance in a country is critical to deliver on poverty reduction and human development goals. Governance assessments represent an essential tool in diagnosing governance deficits, and as such, governments, civil society organizations and donors have invested in developing and executing governance assessments in nearly all of UNDP's programme countries.

This Practice Note outlines a strategic framework for UNDP's support to country-led governance assessments. It defines country-led governance assessments and reflects on lessons learned from assessment processes that have been undertaken and are ongoing in UNDP programme countries. It also offers practical guidance for UNDP practitioners by providing a framework, with four main support areas, for future interventions. Additional guidance that provides more programmatic detail on UNDP's approach to governance assessments has been developed to support the Practice Note.² Since 2004, UNDP has been engaged in global discourse and development of its own democratic governance assessment approach, with an increasing number of Country Offices seeking advice on their appropriate role in ongoing and planned governance assessments.

There has been explosive growth in the production and use of governance indicators, indexes and governance assessments by domestic stakeholders in developing countries, as well as by international investors, donors of official development assistance, development analysts and academics. This growth includes global indexes that rank countries' governance performance against differing sets of criteria, as well as frameworks that have been adapted to individual countries to enable comparisons within those countries over time.

In late 2007 and early 2008, two related international conferences were convened in Bergen, Norway, and London respectively that brought together donors and partners to focus attention on governance assessments in the context of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and its principles of national ownership, national capacity development, alignment and harmonization, results management and mutual accountability. The combined outcome of these conferences has been a consensus view that the Paris Declaration, in particular, has changed the parameters by which governance is to be assessed in at least three ways:

1. A shift from external to local or national assessments
2. Less reliance on international experts and more on national institutions and local expertise
3. A shift from purely technical approaches to a better integration of political and managerial issues

This focus provided by the Paris Declaration also is reflected in recent Triennial Comprehensive Policy Reviews of Operational Activities for Development resolutions, adopted by the General Assembly in December 2004 and 2007, which require that the operational activities of UNDP and other United Nations Funds and Programmes be aligned fully with national priorities and needs, and that the focus of the United Nations and UNDP be on strengthening capacities. Enhancing country capacities is at the heart of UNDP's support to country-led governance assessments, which can be catalysts for nationally driven reform initiatives, especially if undertaken through inclusive and consultative processes.

² www.undp.org/oslocentre/flagship/democratic_governance_assessments.html

³ Indicators, indexes and assessments are distinguished in the following way: an indicator is a single measure, whereas an index combines more than one indicator and is used primarily as a ranking tool. Both indicators and indexes are important information sources for an assessment which provides textual analysis?

II. The Issue And Its Dimensions

A broad consensus exists among development practitioners that governance matters for development and for the effectiveness of development cooperation. This, in turn, has increased the demand for monitoring the quality of governance.

While a multitude of motivations and purposes lie behind decisions to carry out governance appraisals, most assessments are used as planning tools to enhance the effectiveness of aid and/or to facilitate aid conditionality. At the same time, governance assessments are increasingly being undertaken by national actors as well as international organizations for purposes not related to aid disbursement. Intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), as well as international organizations including Transparency International, Freedom House and others, are conducting assessments to raise awareness of governance issues, to inform national policymakers about differences in the quality of governance being experienced by different groups and populations, and to enhance civic engagement in dialogue on governance performance.

Most assessments to date serve a bewildering list of purposes:

- Taking stock of the wider political and economic context of governance
- Identifying democratic deficits of governance to set the agenda for reform
- Understanding the factors and drivers of policy reform
- Providing governments with a tool for further democratization
- Providing a tool for advocacy and civic engagement
- Assessing the effectiveness of a specific programme or policy
- Providing donors with a tool for governance performance-based aid allocation

The UNDP publication *Governance Indicators: A Users Guide* (2nd edition)⁴ provides an overview of the mushrooming diversity in sources of indicators that are used in governance assessments and guidance on how to use such indicators. It is important for UNDP Country Offices to be aware of the broad range of governance assessments that exist and to understand how they might be helpful to national counterparts embarking on governance reforms.

Ghana (see Box 1 below) is a useful example of the broad range of governance assessments, including assessments undertaken by regional organizations, multilaterals, donors and self-assessments. These multiple governance assessments duplicate, complement, share and have conflicting purposes. Examples include global indexes or global data sets (e.g., Worldwide Governance Indicators), regional perceptions surveys (Afrobarometer) and assessments specific to Ghana that do not allow for cross-country comparisons (Africa Peer Review Mechanism).

⁴ www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/undp_users_guide_online_version.pdf

Box 1. Selected Governance Assessments in Ghana

- *The Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)*: The APRM in Ghana included an assessment of four dimensions of governance (political, economic, corporate, and socioeconomic).
www.nepad.org/2005/files/aprm/APRMGhanareport.pdf
- *AfriMap*: AfriMap is a project of the Open Society Initiative's network of African foundations to evaluate government performance.
www.afri-map.org/report.php#Ghana
- *Governance and Anti-Corruption (GAC) Country Diagnostic Survey*: This is a national survey of households, public officials and enterprises containing a range of governance- and corruption-related questions implemented by the World Bank Institute.
www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/ghana/results.html
- *Civil Society Index (CSI)*: This index assesses the state of civil society and is implemented by the international civil society organization CIVICUS.
www.civicus.org/new/CSI_country_reports.asp
- *National Integrity Systems: Ghana Country Report*: This is produced by the Ghana Integrity Initiative, the national chapter of Transparency International.
www.transparency.org/content/download/1649/8368/file/ghana.pdf
- *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Ghana Study*: UNECA implemented a comprehensive governance assessment of selected African countries, including Ghana.
www.uneca.org/agr/
- *World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)*: The Worldwide Governance Indicators project of the World Bank reports aggregate and individual governance indicators for 212 countries, including Ghana, for six dimensions of governance during 1996-2006.
<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi2007/home.htm>
- *Global Integrity Index*: The Global Integrity Index annually assesses the existence, effectiveness and citizen access to key national-level anti-corruption mechanisms across a diverse range of countries, including Ghana.
www.globalintegrity.org/reports/2006/ghana/index.cfm
- *Afrobarometer*: Afrobarometer conducts surveys on the African continent, including in Ghana, and on a range of governance and democracy themes.
www.afrobarometer.org/papers/AfropaperNo2.pdf
- *Voice of the People Survey*: This survey is undertaken by the Ghana chapter of Transparency International, based on urban households' perceptions of corruption.
www.tighana.org/Project_Completion_Report.pdf
- *Ibrahim Index of African Governance*: The Ibrahim Index of African Governance assesses governance in 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Ghana. Countries are assessed against 58 I indicators.
www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index/index.asp

The proliferation of assessments raises challenges for UNDP's partners in its programme countries. These include:

- **Lack of transparency.** Assessments often are done without key stakeholders' knowledge or access to the results. This represents a missed opportunity for engaging national stakeholders on results of the assessment.
- **Burden on government.** When different donors insist that governance assessments be undertaken that respond to their own programming and aid policy requirements, it places a tremendous burden on government institutions to provide alternative sets of data.
- **Lack of understanding.** Assessments may be misused because of a misunderstanding of the assumptions in the assessment framework or because they are too highly aggregated to draw the correct conclusions.
- **Situation of specific populations or groups.** If this is not reflected, concerns of these groups will then remain unaddressed in any corrective actions following the assessment.

II.1 Governance Assessments at a Glance

A typology of governance assessment approaches can be made based on the position of national stakeholders in the assessment process. Three principal assessment types exist: *external assessments*, *peer assessments* and *country-led assessments*. UNDP's main priority is to support and facilitate country-led assessments that are based on nationally agreed governance priorities.

- **External assessments:** External assessment is the most dominant kind of assessment and refers to the large number of assessments carried out by development partners and independent research institutions. UNDP recognizes the necessity of external governance assessments because development partners have legitimate reasons for carrying these out, linked to their own agendas and distinct aid portfolios. However, while legitimate in their own right, the nature of some external governance assessments places clear limitations on ownership and thwarts national capacity development efforts. Of the assessment initiatives promoted by donors, USAID's Democracy and Governance Assessment (DGA) Framework stands out. By spring 2000, it had already been applied in a dozen countries worldwide and refined for more than five years, and it remains ongoing. The Netherlands and the United Kingdom are piloting comprehensive assessment initiatives known as the Strategic Governance and Corruption Assessment (SGACA) and Country Governance Assessments (CGA) respectively. Other emerging donor assessment initiatives are European Union's (EU) Country Governance Profiles (CGP) and the Swedish Government's Power and Conflict Analysis.
- **Peer assessments:** Peer review is based on a non-coercive approach and is an assessment of a state by other states (peers). It includes a self-assessment before the peer review. This modality of assessment involves a number of actors, including the organization or collective body within which the review is conceptualized, organized and undertaken, the reviewed country team and the team of review countries. Vital factors for a successful peer review are mutual trust between the actors involved, as well as commitment and confidence in the process. Peer pressure is decisive for the effectiveness of the review and takes the form of "soft enforcement," as opposed to legal enforcement mechanisms. Three major peer review initiatives focus on governance:

- ◆ *The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)*. The APRM is the centrepiece of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) process for the socioeconomic development of Africa and is a self-monitoring instrument voluntarily agreed to by member states of the African Union [25 countries thus far]. UNDP has actively supported the APRM through its Regional Bureau for Africa. The APRM processes entail periodic reviews of participating countries' policies and practices to ascertain progress toward mutually agreed goals and compliance in four focus areas: Democracy and Political Governance; Economic Governance and Management; Corporate Governance; and Socioeconomic Development (www.nepad.org/aprm/)
- ◆ *The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) peer reviews*. The OECD provides its 30 country members with a framework for peer review to compare and share experiences across diverse policy themes covering economic/trade, political and social issues. Such peer reviews have been used at the OECD since the organisation was created more than 40 years ago (www.oecd.org/peerreview)
- ◆ *The peer review associated with accession to the European Union (EU)*. Any country seeking membership in the EU must satisfy the 1993 Copenhagen Criteria, established by the Copenhagen European Council and strengthened by the Madrid European Council in 1995. These criteria include stable institutions guaranteeing democracy and protecting human rights; a competitive market economy; and the ability to take on political, economic and monetary union obligations. The EU assists entrants financially and technically in meeting the Copenhagen Criteria and regularly assesses progress.
- **Country-led assessments:** a country-led assessment is undertaken by a country on its own initiative (see section II.2). The principle of country-led assessment entails a country undertaking a reflective and systematic evaluation of its own national governance processes. This is the kind of assessment that UNDP strongly encourages and promotes. The advantage of the country-led assessment approach is its potential for developing local capacity by investing in and drawing on local 'know how.' National databases can be established that local stakeholders in turn can use to advance demands and interests.

Governance assessments might be comprehensive focused on a large range of governance issues or they might be sector specific.

- *A comprehensive assessment* focuses on multiple dimensions of governance (e.g., corruption, human rights, elections), or it might be sectoral, based on a particular sector (health, education, agriculture) to support sector-wide programming. An example of the former is the State of Democracy in South Asia project (www.idea.int/democracy/sod.cfm). This project includes the development of a report based on surveys, dialogues with political activists and case studies that capture people's experiences and ideas on democracy in five South Asian countries (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). A comprehensive assessment might also reveal a sector much weaker on governance than others, which could call for a specific sector assessment to be undertaken to provide a more thorough diagnosis. In Indonesia, UNDP is supporting the Indonesia Democracy Index [see Box 8], which serves as a tool for the Government in assessing its policy and democratic development. The Democracy Index allows stakeholders to carry out their own assessments of democracy and gives them a framework for comparing experiences and sharing lessons learned.

- Alternatively, an assessment might begin its *focus on one sector* – for example, water – and later expand its scope to include other sectors (health, agriculture, energy, education). The national buy-in secured in the “first phase” of a sector assessment can provide solid support for subsequently scaling up the exercise across other sectors. Several entry points are embedded in national processes for conducting sector-specific governance assessments, particularly in countries that use *Sector Wide Approaches (SWApS)*. Increasingly, donors have switched from project-based operations in developing countries to working within Sector Wide Approaches in which all significant funding supports a single-sector policy and expenditure programme, under government leadership. Because sector governance is crucial for sector performance, there exists an increased demand from governments and donors for specific tools that assess governance within different sectors.

Finally, in addition to issues of scope and conceptualization, another important distinction for governance assessments lies in the *methodological strategies and techniques* that are used. In the governance realm, composite indexes are a frequently used instrument because of their near-global coverage. This wide coverage is especially appealing to international aid donors and the international investment community, which are often interested in conducting cross-country comparisons to inform aid or capital allocation decisions. Among the most prominent aggregate or composite indexes are the World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators, the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (www.moibrahimfoundation.org/the-index.asp), and Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index (www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi).

II.2 What is a Country-Led Assessment?

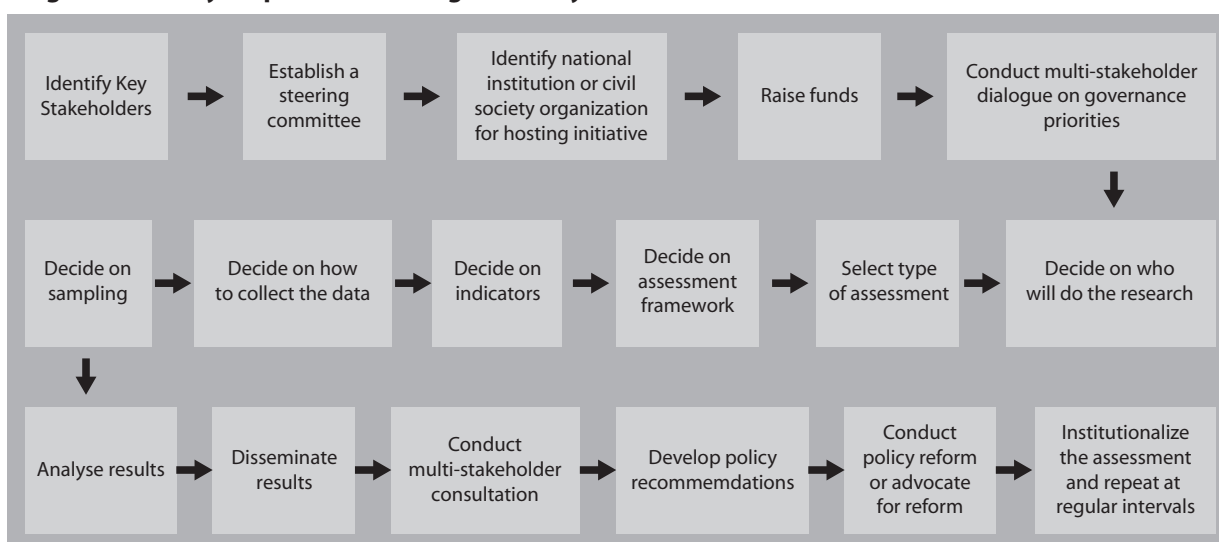
A country-led governance assessment differs from external assessments in that it is initiated, implemented and sustained by national actors. National stakeholders lead the work on the assessment, believe in its legitimacy, and hold it to be relevant. No single actor can be said to represent “the country,” which means that country-led assessments must have the active participation of state and non-state actors, including non-Government organizations (NGOs). They should progressively involve and have the support of an increasing and “representative” number of national actors.

In country-led assessments, the processes involved in assessing democratic governance are as important as the outcome. If governance assessment results are not locally owned and embedded in ongoing national development processes, they likely will be shelved and will not feed into policy-making processes. Therefore, a central feature of country-led processes for assessing and monitoring democratic governance is that local and national stakeholders actively participate in key steps of the assessment process, including what is to be assessed, how to assess it and how the assessment is to be used. Local engagement in all stages of an assessment is critical for linking the assessment results and the corrective actions needed, and for safeguarding the transparency and policy relevance of the assessment process.

The figure below depicts the key steps in conducting a country-led governance assessment. This is a simplistic model; not all countries adopt such a linear approach, but may prefer a different sequencing or embark on different processes simultaneously.

It is important to note that there are a number of different ways that country-led governance assessments are initiated. Government actors are often initiators of governance assessments but for such assessments to be country-led there must be active engagement of non-government actors. Non-government organisations might initiate assessments as part of their advocacy efforts to raise awareness of the extent of a governance problem and to press the government to take action. Research institutions might initiate an assessment to inform society's dialogue on a particular public policy issue. While national stakeholders should be in the driver's seat in country-led governance assessments, this does not preclude an important role for international actors, including multilateral and regional organizations like UNDP, the World Bank, bilateral donors and international civil society organizations (CSOs) and experts. International actors make an important contribution in sharing global and regional experience, in mobilizing resources, and in validating national assessments through their use in programmes and policies.

Figure 1. Key Steps in Conducting a Country-Led Governance Assessment



The *timing* of assessments will be driven to a large extent by the assessment purpose. For instance, if the goal of the assessment is to influence public debate about a country's democracy, it might be useful to consult the election calendar. If the goal is narrower, such as constitutional reform, then it would be best to synchronize the assessment with a schedule already established for public consultation. If the goal is to evaluate reforms or programmes already underway, then it would be best to fit the assessment with the timetable officially laid down at the outset of the reforms in question.

II.3 Key Principles

Four key democratic governance principles underlie country-led governance assessments:

- 1. Accountability:** Country-led assessments act as a critical accountability mechanism for local stakeholders with regard to governance performance.

2. **Participation:** A broad and representative range of national actors have opportunities to provide input to key stages of the assessment process.
3. **Transparency:** National actors have unbiased access to information on the assessment process, and the results of the assessment are made available to the public as a public good.
4. **Legitimacy:** National actors agree that the assessment process and its results are legitimate.

II.4 *Understanding the Context*

Governance assessments based on a partnership of government and civil society organizations may not work in some countries. Governments in such countries may be sensitive or unwilling to engage on a partnership basis with CSOs who they see as adversaries. In some cases, these governments would prefer an assessment in which government leads the entire process or partners only with selected CSOs considered trusted allies. Conversely, some CSOs will not partner with government nor allow them to lead the process and would rather lead the process alone. A purported or intended country-led assessment may not result in the generation of sound and objective governance evidence that can be or is used by policy makers and assessments that do not involve non-government actors will be perceived as biased or based on highly contestable data and information.

Therefore, UNDP only supports those governance assessments that further the principles of accountability to local stakeholders, of broad and representative participation, of transparency through access to information and of the legitimacy of the process. In cases, in which some of these principles are weak, UNDP can help to identify “neutral” institutions acceptable to both government and CSOs, which can steer the process and build the trust and confidence of key stakeholders. UNDP can help ensure that representation is equal when partisan institutions engage in the assessment process. For example, if researchers associated with a particular political party are involved, then UNDP can ensure that researchers from all major political parties also are represented.

However, **the risks of a corrupted assessment process are real and it is important that in such cases UNDP does not validate or be seen to validate an assessment that is inherently flawed.** International validation of the assessment method and process to help ensure that the findings are both scientifically and methodologically sound and legitimate is one way of addressing this. UNDP can facilitate international validation through helping to bring together international experts that will examine the process and method and provide guidance. Another way of addressing the risk is to fully explore as much as possible the feasibility of a meaningful country-led assessment in the specific country context. Critical factors relating to a country’s preparedness for country-led assessments include the political and development context, political commitment, a country’s institutional and managerial capacities and available resources. Box 2 below provides some questions to ask that help to better understand a country-led assessment environment. In some cases, the questions require more than a quick desktop review from the UNDP Country Office, and it may not be possible to conduct a thorough investigation with limited resources; however the questions are designed to indicate the range of issues and factors that will affect a potential country-led assessment.

Box 2. Key Questions for Evaluating Country Preparedness

Political and development context:

The political and development context of the country is important for determining the entry points for a country-led governance assessment, especially for ensuring that such an initiative bolsters the country's national development and governance reform priorities. Countries with a culture of open, participative governance provide a more conducive environment for country-led assessments.

- Does the country have an open or closed culture of public governance? Is information in the public domain, is government conducted transparently, are the media vibrant and independent, is there a diverse civil society and a multiparty political system?
 - Is the country emerging from conflict?
 - Is the country highly dependent on external aid?
 - Is governance reform a priority in national development planning? What kinds of governance indicators are required in the national development plan, the poverty reduction strategy, or a regional initiative like the Africa Peer Review Mechanism?
 - Is governance reform a priority for external donors?
 - What kinds of governance data are readily available and known to a broad range of national actors?
 - Are NGOs and CSOs active in monitoring governance through established indicators?
 - Are donors using a range of governance indicators to assess the country, e.g., for access to Official Development Assistance? Are these indicators disaggregated?
 - Are there issues related to poor harmonization of governance assessment initiatives?
 - Does an international, regional or national event/occasion provide a catalytic and conducive environment for a governance assessment?
-

Political commitment:

Political leadership is critical for the effective development and use of governance assessments. For assessments to be embedded and used in national policymaking by state and non-state actors, they need the backing of the political leadership, as well as effective mechanisms to facilitate dialogue between state and non-state actors.

- Is there interest and demand from key political actors, especially from government leaders, in this area?
 - Are existing mechanisms in place for state and non-state actors to interact?
 - Do political leaders have the capacity to manage relations with domestic and external stakeholders inclusively and constructively?
 - Is the environment conducive for CSOs and government to work collaboratively on governance assessments? Can neutral institutions play a leadership role and build mutual trust and confidence amongst state and non-state actors?
-

Institutional capacities:

A solid assessment of the institutional capacities within a country is necessary to ensure that the national statistical system (the national statistical agency as well as statistics producers in

line ministries) possesses sufficient capacity to undertake and sustain data collection activities. Capacities to coordinate among the state and non-state institutions that produce governance data are extremely important. In addition, capacities of non-state actors in producing non-statistical evidence should be taken into account. Critical areas of enquiry concerning the capacities to design, conduct and use assessments include:

- What are the capacities of the national statistical agency to coordinate, collect, process and disseminate governance data? Does it have experience? Is there already coordinated activity among statistics producers in relation to governance information?
 - What are the capacities and capabilities of the national statistical agency for protecting the privacy of governance data and keeping it secure?
 - Does the national statistical agency have the human resources and technical skills to collect governance data through, for example, household surveys?
 - Do statistics producers and universities have institutional relationships or networks that can be built on?
 - What are the capacities of civil society organizations to collect, analyze and use governance data? What are the capacities of academic institutions and the media to analyze governance data and statistics?
-

Managerial capacities:

The managerial leadership to implement a comprehensive governance assessment is important. The managerial team or taskforce should take the lead in designing an inclusive multi-stakeholder process for developing a set of governance indicators that will be part of a national governance database. This requires political skills as well as managerial skills.

- What are the possibilities for using an existing network of policymakers, CSOs and academia that could lead a governance indicator initiative?
 - What are the possibilities for establishing a multi-disciplinary team that will work effectively together?
 - Is there capacity and a willingness to enable a free flow of knowledge and information among partners and across networks?
-

Resources:

The resources for financing multi-stakeholder consultations and dialogues, as well as the financial resources needed for collecting governance data, will be considerable. An assessment therefore needs to be made of the resources (in-country and external) that are potentially available for implementing and sustaining a national initiative.

- How can a governance assessment initiative be resourced through an existing governance programme in the country?
- What is the level of resources that the government can commit to an initiative/ programme?
- Is there a high level of donor interest in supporting an initiative?
- What kinds of resources can be mobilized from external sources?

11.5 Country-Led Assessments in Post-Conflict Situations

A causal correlation exists between governance and violent conflict: While good governance reduces the likelihood of conflict, bad or weak governance augments the prospects for violence. By the same token, governance assessments intertwine with conflict assessments. In this regard, an analysis of the state of governance has an intrinsic value to “take the temperature” of peace *and* conflict.

With regard to country-led governance assessments in post-conflict situations, a key consideration is that in the immediate aftermath of violent conflict, the level of destruction is such that there might be little democratic governance to be measured. In general, post-conflict settings present certain commonalities, beginning with a greater or lesser degree of institutional collapse and dysfunctional service delivery; depending on the nature and virulence of the conflict, state institutions will face a legitimacy deficit, social division and enmity in which public debate on democratic governance might be highly politicized. Furthermore, institutional destruction and societal disruption may have limited the availability of data sources, especially of an administrative nature, and the collection of information may be hindered by lack of capacity, polarization and mistrust.

Nevertheless, governance assessments adapted to the particular conditions of a specific post-conflict environment may be useful in providing the information base to prepare for immediate and graduated governance interventions. Priority governance interventions in post-conflict contexts often include constitution making and constitutional design; establishment of watchdog institutions (e.g., institutions created to oversee peace agreements, human rights, anti-corruption), truth commissions and criminal justice procedures; local governance and decentralization; security sector reform; and formation of electoral systems and political parties, elections and supporting human rights organizations. Critical crosscutting governance interventions such as building trust and generating reconciliation also are likely to be prioritized.

Most key considerations and challenges related to assessments in post-conflict situations are an integral part of existing conflict assessment tools and methodologies. This knowledge can be distilled and integrated into the development of mechanisms to assess democratic governance in countries recovering from conflict. Moreover, in line with the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) analysis of service delivery in fragile situations,⁵ it has been deemed beneficial to develop post-conflict governance assessments by sectors. In so doing, key concerns on public service delivery in societies emerging from violent conflict and relevant linkages to governance challenges can be better addressed.

⁵ OECD/DAC, 2008, *Service Delivery in Fragile Situations: Key Concepts, Findings and Lessons*.

III. UNDP'S NICHE AND POSSIBLE ENTRY POINTS

UNDP's Strategic Plan for 2008-2011 sets out priorities for support to democratic governance across three broad areas: (i) fostering inclusive participation; (ii) strengthening responsive institutions; and (iii) promoting policies and principles grounded in the United Nations values of human rights and gender equality (www.undp.org/execbrd/word/dp07-43.doc). An important support area expressed in the Strategic Plan, cutting across and bolstering these three priority governance clusters, is country-led governance assessments.

UNDP's primary concern with governance assessments is to promote and support assessment processes that develop the capacities of local stakeholders to understand, participate in and use governance assessments that will directly inform reform in the country and will empower citizens and groups to hold government to account for its performance.

UNDP has not developed a governance index that ranks countries, akin to the Human Development Index. Instead, the focus is on helping policymakers within a country not only to identify governance issues that need to be addressed, but also to have at their disposal the means for assessing the effectiveness of policy reforms to address those issues. For country-led assessments to provide more depth into a particular policy issue, especially as it affects the poor, UNDP emphasizes that they must integrate an explicit focus on marginalized and vulnerable groups. Country-specific and disaggregated indicators will help identify specific institutions and practices that perpetuate unfair and substandard provision of services to these groups.

A key role for UNDP Country Offices, therefore, is to support national partners in developing and instituting contextualized assessments that conform to global standards, are rooted in local ownership and that enable all stakeholders to monitor governance performance, especially its impact on vulnerable groups, within their country over time.

In addition to supporting assessment initiatives through UNDP's priority governance programming areas (elections, parliamentary development, anti-corruption, local governance and so forth), the ***Global Programme on Capacity Development for Democratic Governance Assessments and Measurements*** is a multi-year programme (2008-2011) that provides an additional avenue for Country Offices to support their national partners in implementing country-led assessments, consistent with the 10-point framework set out in Box 3 below.

The aspirational framework builds on the four democratic governance principles for country-led governance assessments (accountability, participation, transparency, and legitimacy) as well as on UNDP's comparative strengths for supporting national counterparts in programme countries. It helps in determining the key support areas for UNDP on governance assessments and can be shared with development partners to improve their governance assessment frameworks and approaches.

⁶ www.undp.org/oslocentre/flagship/governance_assessments_paris_declaration.html

Box 3. Ten Pointers on Country-led Governance Assessments

1. The governance assessment system should be anchored in the national development plan or a national political commitment such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), African Peer Review Mechanism or national governance/anti-corruption strategy.
2. The assessment should be country-contextualised and focus on national governance priorities.
3. A methodology should be used that conforms to global standards in terms of technical and scientific rigour.
4. Indicators for the assessment should be selected and generated through a transparent, participatory and inclusive process, and the assessment process and results should form part of a wider social dialogue.
5. An institutionalized procedure should exist to collect data from a variety of sources (surveys, administrative data, national statistics, civil society), as well as a national database base for storing this information and making it publicly accessible.
6. The assessment should be poverty- and gender-sensitive along with sensitive to other vulnerable groups in the country.
7. A targeted approach should be employed to develop the capacities of national stakeholders, including government policymakers, civil society, academia, the media, parliament and political parties. In particular, the national statistics agency or office in charge of governance data collection, storage and analysis should be targeted.
8. The assessment should be cost-effective through the selection of an appropriate assessment methodology and timely in that the assessment can address and be responsive to current governance priorities.
9. The results of the governance assessment should be widely disseminated and communicated to stakeholders, including vulnerable groups, and should be used by a broad range of stakeholders to inform governance policy reform.
10. Resources should be available to ensure repetition of the assessment to enable monitoring of improvement/deterioration in the quality of democratic governance.

UNDP's comparative advantage in promoting and nurturing country-led governance assessments derives from its position as the lead United Nations Agency on democratic governance, its focus on long-term capacity development, its expertise and experience in democratic governance, its experience with human development indicators through the National Human Development Reports, its engagement in Millennium Development Goal monitoring, and perhaps most importantly, the trust it enjoys among United Nations Member States.

In particular, UNDP has proven strengths in the following areas:

- Providing support to capacity development efforts for both state and non-state actors in governance assessment processes
- Facilitating and convening of national dialogues involving state and non-state stakeholders on national governance assessments

- Helping ensure that governance assessments are linked and integrated with national development plans, through encouraging and facilitating harmonization and rationalization of multiple governance assessments within a country

UNDP has provided advisory and financial support to catalyze country-led assessment processes in more than 20 countries in all regions, including Afghanistan, China, Egypt, Malawi, Mongolia, Montenegro, Paraguay, Philippines, Tunisia and Zambia. The Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the International Conference on New and Restored Democracies (ICNRD) and the EU accession process prioritize country-led governance assessments and are important avenues for UNDP to provide assistance. For example, UNDP has actively been supporting Mongolia's follow-up of the 2003 ICNRD by providing advisory support to development of a national democratic governance indicator system (see Box 4 below). UNDP also is actively engaged in arranging international and regional seminars, developing toolkits and guidance papers, and providing training and learning events on governance assessment themes for diverse groups but focused principally on national partners.⁶

Box 4. Assessing Democracy in Mongolia

Mongolia embarked on a country-led governance assessment in 2003, using International IDEA's democracy assessment framework as the foundation for its assessment methodology (www.idea.int/democracy/da_mongolia.cfm) and adapting it to a national context with guidance from UNDP. The assessment brought about a national consensus on democratic governance indicators that have laid the foundation for tracking Mongolia's MDG9 on democratic governance.

The development of a Democratic Governance Indicators (DGIs) framework was part of the follow-up to the 5th International Conference on New and Restored Democracies (ICNRD-5), held in Ulaanbaatar in 2003. ICNRD-5 adopted the Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Plan of Action, which commits governments to instigate plans to strengthen democracy and establish mechanisms to monitor democratic development over time.

The Mongolia DGI process was led by a team of national researchers appointed by the Government. Some reported key lessons learned from the DGI process include:

- The process should be nationally owned and at the same time draw on international expertise
- It should be adapted to the country context but still include a comparative element
- It should adopt a mixed, multi-disciplinary methodology
- It should be institutionalized through establishment of national institutions and mechanisms

Country-led assessments have considerable potential for generating the information needed to diagnose issues, develop responses and evaluate programme and policy implementation across UNDP's priority democratic governance themes. This includes such areas as electoral laws, institutions and processes;

non-government institutions, including political parties, civil society organizations and the media; public administration reform; local governance institutions; parliamentary development, access to justice and the rule of law; human rights; gender equality; and anti-corruption.

Assessments serve as a useful source of information for United Nations programming, including the formulation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF); they provide much-needed baseline information for UNDP interventions, rather than rely on externally generated analysis and data. Country-led assessments also offer opportunities and a focus on developing national capacities in participatory monitoring and evaluation of UNDP governance programmes.

Finally, **National Human Development Reports (NHDRs)** are an important catalyst for supporting country-led governance assessments. The NHDR framework holds significant potential for producing governance indicators that are poverty- and gender-focused, policy action-oriented, nationally owned and participatory, and methodologically sound. More than 30 countries have produced NHDRs with a primary focus on democratic governance and its implications for national policy formulation and consensus building among stakeholders (see Box 5 below for Bulgaria's experience). The governance indicators contained in these reports have allowed policy makers to monitor progress and identify in greater detail priority-attention areas. Furthermore, the NHDRs' experiences with providing independent and objective analysis, statistics and other relevant data are tremendous assets for producing national governance indicators.

Box 5. Bulgaria NHDR 2001: Citizen Participation in Governance

The Bulgaria NHDR 2001 demonstrates how democratic governance indicators can be helpful to address policy issues through a human development and democratic governance framework. This report is arguably the NHDR that uses governance indicators – at least perception indicators – to their fullest effect. The disaggregation and innovative indicator questions allow for in-depths finding and analysis. In addition, the emphasis on participation and empowerment is backed up by statistical evidence to highlight the degree to which citizens feel they are able to participate and influence public policy. Policy recommendations in the NHDR are based on governance indicators that represent national opinion (disaggregated by ethnicity, socioeconomic status, political affiliation and so forth) rather than that of international/national experts. The high level of disaggregation also allows policymakers and other stakeholders to determine what areas (both issues and geographically) deserve priority attention. The strength of such a report, however, depends on the follow-up of surveys and further data collection, which will enable monitoring progress/regress in various areas.

National Human Development Reports (NHDR) and the Use of Democratic Governance Indicators (2004), UNDP.
www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs05/cross/NHDR.pdf

IV. GUIDANCE FOR UNDP PROGRAMMING SUPPORT

This section outlines practical guidance for UNDP programming in the four main areas for Country Office support to governance assessments:

1. Promoting multi-stakeholder participation
2. Aligning governance assessments with national development plans
3. Promoting pro-poor and gender-sensitive governance assessments
4. Strengthening evidence-based policymaking

These four areas place national capacity development at the centre of UNDP's support to country-led governance assessments. This is consistent with the Strategic Plan 2008-2011, which positions capacity development as the organization's core contribution to development, and with the March 2008 policy note "Supporting Capacity Development: The UNDP Approach www.capacity.undp.org/, which outlines five important steps: engaging stakeholders on capacity development; assessing capacity assets and needs; formulating a capacity development response; implementing the capacity development response; and evaluating capacity development.

IV.1 *Capacity Development as the Overarching Objective*

The financial, technical and institutional capacities required for robust, technically sound governance assessments are considerable. It is therefore important to have a solid understanding of the existing capacities at the outset of such an assessment. A capacity assessment, or an analysis of desired capacities against existing capacities, can provide this understanding, generating an understanding of capacity assets and needs that in turn informs the formulation of a capacity development response.

UNDP's Capacity Assessment Methodology consists of a process, framework and supporting tools, and is detailed in UNDP's *Capacity Assessment Methodology User's Guide*.⁷ The capacity assessment process is systematic and rigorous, yet flexible and adaptable to different contexts and needs, including support for governance assessments. Applying the process can generate quantitative data as well as qualitative information to support development of a relevant and targeted capacity development response.

The Capacity Assessment Framework provides a comprehensive view of the issues that could be addressed in a capacity assessment. Such a framework has three dimensions:

1. **Points of entry:** UNDP recognizes that capacity resides on three levels › the enabling environment, the institution/organization, and the individual › and thus needs to be addressed across these levels. Each can be the point of entry for a capacity assessment, but the UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework is specifically tailored to the enabling environment and the organizational level. Once a point of entry is selected, the capacity assessment may "zoom in" or "zoom out" from that level as needed. At the institutional and individual levels, capacities also include specific technical capacities

⁷ www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=6022

2. **Core issues:** Four capacity issues are most commonly encountered across sectors and levels of capacity: 1) institutional arrangements; 2) leadership; 3) knowledge; and 4) accountability. Not every assessment needs to cover all four, but a capacity assessment team should at least consider all as it defines the scope of an assessment.
3. **Functional and technical capacities:** Functional capacities are necessary for creating and managing policies, legislations, strategies and programmes. UNDP has found that the following functional capacities are key: 1) engage stakeholders; 2) assess a situation and define a vision and mandate; 3) formulate policies and strategies; 4) budget, manage and implement; and 5) evaluate. Various technical capacities also may need to be assessed, but these depend on the situation; they cannot be predetermined.

Critical capacities for governance assessments that cut across these three dimensions are highlighted in Box 6.

Box 6. Key Capacities Required in Country-led Governance Assessments

- Engaging and facilitating multi-stakeholder discussions on assessment and monitoring
- Producing comprehensive governance statistics
- Coordinating data-producing agencies and organizations
- Research and data collection: desk studies, surveying, focus groups
- Data disaggregation
- Data analysis
- Database management of governance data
- Analyzing global governance indexes
- Disseminating assessment results
- Presenting assessment results
- Using governance evidence in policymaking

Capacities of Government Partners

Government partners often will be in the driver's seat of a country-led governance assessment. This requires considerable managerial capacities in ensuring that consultative processes are inclusive and engage the broadest range of stakeholders. As noted earlier, the managerial leadership to implement a comprehensive governance assessment is important and can require establishing a task force to take the lead in designing an inclusive multi-stakeholder process. Capacities related to convening and coordinating meetings throughout an assessment process are critical. A commitment to fully disseminate information on governance assessment conferences and meetings likewise is needed to ensure that non-government stakeholders have the opportunity to participate. The capacities of government partners to engage the media to raise awareness on assessment processes also are important for ensuring an inclusive assessment process.

Given that governance assessments rely on multiple sources of information and data from the administration, it is also important that mechanisms are in place to enable the monitoring and evaluation units of ministries and departments to communicate and collaborate effectively in providing information for a governance assessment.

Capacities of the National Statistical System

Critical capacities for the national statistical system, and the national statistics agency in particular, include capacities to coordinate, collect, process and disseminate governance data. There also exists a capability to effectively protect governance data and keep it secure. The national statistical system includes statistics-producing institutions (including within line ministries) as well as the national statistics agency. The national statistics agency has a vital contribution to make to both produce and coordinate the production of governance statistics, as well as to working with others to investigate the most appropriate choice of indicators, their compilation and the setting of realistic performance targets that are challenging and susceptible to policy intervention.

Many official statisticians have shied away from generating and disseminating indicators on democratic governance for various reasons, including principally the lack of existing data, a perceived and real lack of experience in this field and, in some countries, the potential sensitivity of such an undertaking. However, multiple initiatives currently address national statistical capacity through national statistical development strategies, e.g., Paris 21, Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics, and the Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa. The objective is to enhance country data systems, statistical methodological rigour and analytical capacity. Within that context, it is important to consider the national statistics office as a critically important institution for governance assessments and as a focus for capacity development initiatives.

Capacities of Civil Society Organizations

Civil society is both an assessor (performing a “watchdog” function) as well as the subject of a governance assessment, in that the diversity and plurality of civil society is an important indicator of governance in a country. The CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) is a good example of this (www.civicus.org). The CSI is used to assess the state of civil society across four dimensions: civil society structure; the political, socioeconomic, cultural and legal environment; the extent to which civil society promotes and practices positive social values; and the impact of civil society.

Civil society organizations have a hugely important role to play in designing, conducting and using governance assessments. Indeed, civil society is often better placed than other stakeholders to contribute to governance assessments by providing unofficial data sources, by collecting the voices of the poor and marginalized groups, by performing a “watchdog” role, by providing communities with access to information, and by generating popular demand for accountability and enhanced service delivery performance. Internally induced reform is more sustainable than any externally induced change and this represents a critical role for civil society and the media.

However, challenges to the important contributions of civil society remain omnipresent, including the extent to which freedom of expression and access to information is upheld, as well as the availability of mechanisms for inputting into official processes, debating public policies and monitoring governance and development outcomes.

Crucial factors that hinder CSOs’ effective engagement in governance assessments include the access to information environment; the scope of CSOs’ substantive expertise, especially their capabilities to engage in evidence-based analysis; deficits in credibility, particularly where there exist perceptions of spurious CSOs and donor driven CSOs that lack legitimacy afforded by a constituency and in representation; and deficits in political independence (e.g., CSOs’ affiliation to political parties and so forth).

Capacity Development Response

The UNDP Practice Note on Capacity Development provides guidance on the formulation of a capacity development response.⁸ Once a capacity assessment has been made and desired capacities identified, UNDP's approach to supporting capacity development emphasizes four priority areas for investment in capacity:

1. Institutional Arrangements: e.g., support to functional reviews and the design of human resource management systems, monetary and non-monetary incentive mechanisms and results-based management;
2. Leadership: e.g., support to visioning, systems thinking and strategic planning exercises; promotion of peer-to-peer mentoring; coalition building and negotiation skills development; design of career management systems;
3. Knowledge: e.g., support to education reform strategies to incorporate human development needs into curriculum reform; facilitation of partnerships for investment in reforming post-secondary education; support to South-South learning solutions;
4. Accountability: Design and support to monitoring and evaluation systems and independent partner review mechanisms; promotion of public information disclosure policies and legislation; support to civic education.

UNDP's analysis of evidence shows that actions in these areas can have a sustainable impact on the development and retention of capacity across levels of capacity (individual, organizational and enabling environment), sectors and themes. In addition, actions across the four areas are generally used in combination because they mutually reinforce one another.

Summary of What UNDP Can Do:

- Promote capacity development in governance assessments as a priority concern to national government counterparts as well as to donor partners
- Support conducting capacity assessments as part of a governance assessment initiative
- Provide training opportunities, given that training is a priority area in the UNDP Global Programme on Democratic Governance Assessments. National counterparts have access to training opportunities through the UNDP Country Office.
- Support strengthening of national research and diagnostic capacity to enhance the professionalism, integrity and technical rigour of governance assessments.
- Support civic education initiatives that enhance the capacities of civil society organizations to effectively engage and participate in governance assessment dialogues
- Use and encourage the use of local consultants and research institutions
- Produce knowledge products and guidance on country-led governance assessment approaches

IV.2 Facilitating Multi-Stakeholder Participation

UNDP's role in the promotion and implementation of multi-stakeholder engagement processes lies in its extensive experience as a catalyst of multi-sectoral development processes, as well as its strong role as a

⁸ www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=5599

convenor among between governments, civil society organizations and the private sector. A multi-stakeholder engagement process is a structured process used to ensure participation in the governance assessment based on defined principles and with an objective to develop partnerships and networks amongst different stakeholders. Participation is therefore not only a question of the number and type of stakeholders involved, but also of the intent and extent of their role in the process.

Country-led governance assessments rely on effective multi-stakeholder engagement in all major stages of an assessment process: determining the need and purpose for assessing governance; the assessment framework; content of the assessment; relevant research methods and tools; and uptake and use of the assessment. See Box 7 below for China's experience.

For a multi-stakeholder approach to be applied effectively, it requires:⁹

- Ability and willingness amongst stakeholders to engage with each other and to communicate and collaborate effectively;
- Network of formal and informal institutions that can be relied upon for action;
- Balance in power relations between stakeholders;
- A certain level of skills, capacities and knowledge of all major stakeholder groups;
- Outcome-oriented process, ensuring that there will be resources and commitment to follow-up on actions.

Box 7. Consensus Building on Assessing Governance in China

China's development policies have recently witnessed a shift from a growth model to an emphasis on equity, inclusion and balanced development. To support this policy shift, UNDP is facilitating a national discussion on what constitutes key components of good governance. A key objective for the UNDP Country Office in China is to support the Chinese Government in developing governance indicators (www.undp.org.cn). The first step in this task has been to support knowledge sharing of best practices and experiences in governance assessments from initiatives supported by UNDP and other international development agencies; to facilitate a consultative and participatory process to identify key issues for governance assessment suitable to China's development priorities, leading to development of a nationally owned draft framework for governance assessment in China; and, critically, to support consensus building among national stakeholders on the draft framework for governance assessment in China. An important output of UNDP China's assistance is a draft framework for governance assessment developed and disseminated to all stakeholders, based on a series of national workshops that have brought together major stakeholders such as academics, government officials, CSOs and international development agencies.

⁹ *Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Processes: A UNDP Capacity Development Resource* (UNDP 2006) – www.capacity.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=1945

When organizing a multi-stakeholder process on governance assessments, it is important that all major stakeholders are aware of the purpose of the process and understand the role they can play, the issues at stake, and the time and place of workshops and meetings. Some programmes or initiatives try to achieve this by launching a broad awareness campaign at the beginning and giving media trainings to facilitate reporting throughout the process.

Key stakeholder groups in governance assessments include government bodies, state institutions, elected officials, political parties, civil society organizations, academia, the media and the private sector. Stakeholders also include donors and regional and international organizations. Umbrella and networked organizations, such as CSO networks, business associations and Local Government Associations, are especially important in multi-stakeholder processes, in that they represent multiple organizations and voices.

The relationship of local governance to country-led democratic governance is an important concern. This relationship has two major dimensions:

1. How country-led governance assessments incorporate measurements of local-level governance?
2. How local-level stakeholders participate in country-led governance assessments?

It is important to highlight that the positions and democratic principles for supporting country-led governance assessments apply equally to assessments of local governance. A growing number of initiatives and tools assess local governance, local democracy and decentralization, including International IDEA's Local Democracy Assessment Methodology or UN-Habitat's Urban Governance Index.¹⁰ UNDP has a role to play to ensure that support to these initiatives is focused on local ownership and capacity development.

In addition, it is important that an assessment that purports to comprehensively assess the quality of governance in a country also incorporates and reflects issues that are specific yet universal to local-level governance (for example, public service delivery or the quality of local elections). If governance at the local level is left out of country-level assessments, it makes such assessments less relevant or of limited use for local government and other sub-national actors.

A country-driven governance assessment must include mechanisms that enable local-level stakeholders to participate. At the least, this means ensuring that local-level actors from government and civil society are represented at important meetings, as well as ensuring that there exists a targeted strategy for sharing information and raising awareness about the assessment.

Summary of What UNDP Can Do:

- Provide advice to the government counterpart on designing a framework for a multi-stakeholder engagement process.
- Assist with establishment of a governance assessment "research team," comprised of measurement experts from academia and the national statistical system. The research team acts as the lead advisor on technical questions and executes data collection and analysis tasks.
- Facilitate the involvement of a broad range of citizen groups, including vulnerable groups, through participation in surveys and focus group discussions. The survey and focus groups represent important opportunities for capturing distinct voices on the quality of governance.

¹⁰ UNDP. *Users' Guide on Measuring Decentralized Governance* (Draft 2008).

- ☑ Assist with establishment of a steering group comprised of representatives from government counterparts, elected officials, CSOs, academia and the national statistical system, responsible for drafting and presenting the governance assessment framework to a wider group of stakeholders and for presenting and disseminating assessment findings
- ☑ Support the convening of a series of national conferences on the assessment, including a conference to raise awareness before the assessment, a conference to review and validate the assessment framework, and a conference for dialogue on the results
- ☑ Connect and create partnerships between international experts and local/national experts on governance assessments
- ☑ Ensure a balanced stakeholder engagement including external development partners, particularly donors, civil society organizations (particularly those that represent marginalized groups), and representatives from the private sector
- ☑ Facilitate exchange of experience between countries that have already undertaken an assessment or are in the process of one

IV.3 Aligning Governance Assessments with National Plans

Many multilaterals and donors have some form of governance assessment they use in countries to inform their development priorities and programming.

For example, the World Bank uses a variety of tools, including the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) and the Governance and Anti-Corruption Country (GAC) Diagnostic Surveys; the European Commission uses a Governance Profile; and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) employs a County Governance Analysis.

UNDP has not developed its own tool for assessing partner countries' systems of governance. However, UNDP is obviously interested in taking the national governance context into account when it decides on programmes with national stakeholders. Several United Nations/UNDP documents require a "situation analysis" component or a governance snapshot, including the Common Country Assessment (CCA), the UNDAF, the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) and governance programme documents. These will often include specific governance indicators, but very seldom nationally generated ones. Ideally, the United Nations' and UNDP's governance programming would be aligned with a country-led governance assessment on which UNDP can base its programming priorities and develop an agreed baseline and common reference for monitoring with government counterparts.

Alignment of governance assessments to national development plans is one of the most effective ways of ensuring that governance assessment results affect policy reform and that governance reform in particular is integrated into a country's broader development objectives. A key entry point for alignment is to use the governance component of the national development plan and the formulation and selection of indicators for the governance component as the basis for a country-led governance assessment. This has the advantage of harmonizing various governance assessment initiatives in the country around nationally agreed governance priorities, as well as being able to take advantage of an existing multi-stakeholder engagement process. See Boxes 8 and 9 below for the experiences of Indonesia and Malawi respectively.

Box 8. Indonesian Democracy Index: Assisting the Government of Indonesia in Evidence-based Planning

The Indonesian Democracy Index is built upon the foundation of national ownership. After the transition to democracy in 1998, the National Long Term Development Plan (RPJP), developed by the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), incorporated a goal of “Achieving A Democratic Indonesia Based on the Rule of Law.” Bappenas was then tasked with planning government programmes that promote efforts to consolidate democracy as well as deepen the roots of democratic culture in society. However, in trying to do so, Bappenas had no tools with which to measure the situation of democratic practices, or their progress or regression over time in various provinces. UNDP Indonesia was requested to assist Bappenas in coming up with such a tool.

The Indonesian Democracy Index subsequently looks at three aspects: civil liberty, political rights, and democratic institutions, that signify democratic life in various Indonesian regions. These aspects are then divided into 13 variables that include freedom of belief, freedom from discrimination, the rate of public participation, free and fair elections, effective parliaments, independence of the judiciary, and the role of the media. The data are collected through a number of activities, such as review of media reporting and relevant documents, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with local stakeholders, including local bureaucracy, parliament, law enforcement, civil society, academics, the media, and minority groups. Data collection is conducted by a third-party contractor. However, in the future this work will be done by the Central Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Indonesia.

The index will then be used by Bappenas and provincial planning agencies in all of Indonesia’s 33 provinces as a measurement tool to define planning for Government political development programmes. The index should be able to inform development planners of the strength of individual regions on any of the three aspects and their variables.

UNDP Country Offices should advocate for the national development plan to be the basis for a country-led governance assessment, and should work with government counterparts to help donors investigate opportunities for aligning their assessments with the national development plan. However, challenges with this approach may include:

- Many developing countries are confronted with huge constraints in terms of human, material and technical resources to devote to exercises of this nature. For example, standardization in data collection is an especially resource-intensive but necessary undertaking.
- A lack of coordination between ministries responsible for implementation of the national development plan › and between those and other line ministries › as well as a lack of coordination of the monitoring and evaluation systems across various levels of government can be formidable.

In some developing countries, there exist too many external players with different assessment thematic focuses, purposes and approaches; e.g., countries that have acceded to the Africa Peer Review Mechanism as well as the Millennium Challenge Corporation compact require significant capacity to synthesize and coordinate these different assessments.

Box 9. Governance Indicators in Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy (MGDs)

The period 2002/03 signalled the commencement of numerous governance assessment exercises as Malawi completed a decade of experimentation in democratic governance. A number of bilateral and multilateral development partners, as well some research institutions, conducted assessment exercises under different labels such as "audit," "measurement," "evaluation," or "score card." A major step toward donor harmonization in Malawi was the adoption of the Common Approach to Budget Support (CABS), based on the fundamental principles of poverty reduction, sound macroeconomic management and good governance, including sound financial management, accountability and effective anti-corruption programmes. The CABS donor group established a Committee on Governance to coordinate donor activities in the area of governance; regular monthly meetings are held to measure progress toward these commitments.

A Performance Assessment Framework (PAF), which represents an agreed set of indicators, has been developed and a political commitment to align this with Malawi's national development plan (Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, or MGDS) has been expressed. The MGDS, launched by the President on 25 July 2007, recognizes governance as the enabler for Malawi's economic development and growth. The MGDS further identifies key and specific indicators and also presents an institutional framework for monitoring and evaluation, with the objective of integrating the management of governance monitoring into the National Monitoring System. Seven sub-themes are found within governance, namely, macroeconomic stability; public sector management; decentralization; justice and rule of law; security; corporate governance; and human rights. The MGDS sets out sub-thematic components for each theme, as well as long-term goals and medium-term expected outcomes and sets of activities for each sub-theme.

Through support from UNDP Malawi and the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development convened a multi-stakeholder workshop to agree on governance indicators in the MGDS, encompassing representatives from Government Ministries; state institutions including the Malawi Human Rights Commission, the Anti-Corruption Bureau and the National Statistics Office; civil society; and academia.

The MGDS proposes the ongoing collection of governance indicators, on the basis of short- and medium-term designations as first- and second-generation indicators – i.e., those to be collected currently and on a regular basis, and those to be collected over a period of two to three years.

In an increasing number of country contexts, development partners are finding opportunities to harmonize development programmes to align with country priorities, in line with commitments under the Paris Declaration. Full harmonization of governance assessments might not be desirable or possible, however, because of the great variety in the purposes of assessments as well as differences in thematic focus.

Zambia [see Box] is a useful example of steps towards harmonizing governance assessments. Multiple donor countries have signed a joint assistance strategy that will share one comprehensive governance assessment.

Box 10. Toward Joint Governance Assessments in Zambia

In early January 2007, Zambia launched its Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP). In response to the FNDP, donor agencies drafted and signed a Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia (JAS) aiming at a rationalization and harmonization of donor interventions in the country, in line with the Paris Declaration. The Government has committed itself to publish a yearly report “on the state of governance in Zambia.” Some baseline data are necessary to analyze progress made regarding commitments outlined in the governance chapter of the FNDP. Furthermore, the newly established Governance Secretariat, housed at the Ministry of Justice, is responsible for developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for governance under the FNDP. A systematic way of measuring governance is a valuable input into the larger monitoring and evaluation framework of the Governance Secretariat.

At the same time, several donor agencies have conducted or plan to conduct governance assessment in various forms:

- European Commission Governance Profile
- DFID Country Governance Analysis
- Denmark governance programme review
- U4 (Bergen, Norway) comparative study on anti-corruption policy
- World Bank CPIA
- Norway’s Country Evaluation of its development assistance
- Netherlands’ Governance Analysis, alongside its more extensive Strategic Governance and Corruption Analysis

The great variety of focus amongst these studies is not necessarily conducive to full harmonization. Nevertheless, some, if not all, of these assessments overlap to some extent and partly analyze similar or identical dimensions of governance. UNDP Zambia and International IDEA are therefore supporting the capacity of national stakeholders, including civil society and academia, to engage more broadly in the area of governance assessments. This includes the design of a multi-stakeholder and inclusive process to develop indicators.

Three main opportunities for harmonization in governance assessments are found:

- 1. Content of the assessment:** Donors, governments and civil society can try to harmonize assessments in terms of shared focus areas. For example, if three assessment frameworks include a focus on corruption, there exists potential for harmonization around selected indicators for corruption. Potential for harmonization also is found in the accountability frameworks that seek to assess governance indicators in direct budget support environments.
- 2. Data collection activities:** If several governance assessments in a country share similar timing, then opportunities may arise to harmonize data collection. For example, information required for two assessment projects can be collected in the same instrument.
- 3. Dissemination of results:** The timing of dissemination of various governance assessment initiatives can be harmonized so that reports are released on the same day, creating opportunities for sharing of findings and for ensuring the broadest audience base.

Summary of What UNDP Can Do:

- Support government counterparts in organizing multi-stakeholder workshops on governance indicators in the national development plan
- Support national counterparts in encouraging donors to rationalize assessments through developing joint assessment approaches
- Convene and facilitate dialogues between government counterparts and donors to explore strategies and options for aligning assessments with the national development plan
- Support mapping exercises of governance assessment activity in the country and disseminate the mapping widely to raise awareness and increase transparency
- Support governance assessments in donor-engaged Sector-Wide Approaches (SWApS)

IV.4 Promoting Pro-Poor and Gender-Sensitive Assessments

Pro-poor and gender-sensitive governance assessments are a priority concern for UNDP and also are an area of considerable interest to national development partners. Governance assessments must include an explicit focus on vulnerable groups in society and the differing impacts and experiences that men and women have of government institutions and governance processes. This concern is based on the principles of equality, non-discrimination, participation and inclusion and reinforces UNDP's commitment to a human rights-based approach to development.

A human rights perspective is essentially based on the values, standards and principles of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent legally binding human rights conventions/treaties. It translates people's needs into rights, recognizing people as the active subject and claim holder. It further identifies the duties and obligations of those against whom a claim can be brought (the state) to ensure that rights are respected and protected. It is based on the recognition that human development, reducing poverty and tackling vulnerability require giving the poor and vulnerable both a stake and a voice in their societies.¹¹

¹¹ See the UNDP publications: *A Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Programming in UNDP – Adding the Missing Link* and *Indicators for Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development in UNDP Programming: A Users' Guide* (2006).

The ability of countries to develop a pro-poor and gender-sensitive evidence base is crucial. How best to do that, and using which approaches and processes, are central questions in any national governance assessment. The UNDP publication *Measuring Democratic Governance: A Framework for Selecting Pro-Poor and Gender-Sensitive Indicators* (UNDP 2006) provides helpful guidance on these questions (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs06/Framework%20paper%20-%20entire%20paper.pdf)

Aggregate data can hide as much as they reveal: glaring group inequalities can go unnoticed within a country if data are presented in bundles only. To inform policy, the issue needs to be precisely identified. For indicators to provide more depth into a particular policy issue, they should be disaggregated for “invisible groups” to receive special attention in policymaking processes. Most data used for indicators reflect the experiences of the general population, so it is important to disaggregate that data according to income, gender, rural and urban, capital city and other cities, and relevant marginal groups.

Data disaggregation is just one means of highlighting the situation of special groups in governance assessments. The assessment itself also can be made pro-poor and gender-sensitive through the integration of participatory techniques, including surveys and focus groups, which provide an opportunity for the poor or for women to have a voice on issues of concern. A governance assessment also should include specific indicators with special relevance to marginalized groups. For example, an indicator on the number of hours per day that polling booths are open during election periods could be included in a governance assessment; the higher the number of hours, the greater the opportunities for casual labourers and shift workers to vote without loss of earnings. A governance assessment should be more sensitive to marginalized groups by ensuring that such groups are represented in the assessment process as key stakeholders and have an opportunity to be involved in the selection of indicators (see page 27 on partnerships with CSOs).

Summary of What UNDP Can Do:

- Promote the integration of gender- and poverty-sensitive approaches in governance assessments
- Provide training to national partners on conducting gender- and poverty-sensitive assessments through the UNDP Global Programme for Capacity Development on Democratic Governance Assessments and Measurement.
- Support targeted surveys and studies to generate additional data that is disaggregated
- Provide assistance to marginalized groups so that their voices are reflected in multi-stakeholder dialogues on country governance assessments
- Building on the tools and guidance on Rights-Based Approaches, (www.undp.org/governance/programmes/hurist.htm), convene and facilitate national or sub-national consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, to analyze trends and identify disparities and vulnerable groups that have been overlooked and excluded

IV.5 Strengthening Evidence-Based Policymaking

Empirical evidence makes it possible to formulate and implement better and more targeted policies, including in the area of democratic governance, and especially for ensuring that democratic governance reform helps improve the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized. Where there exists a culture of evidence-based policymaking, comprehensive, rigorous, disaggregated, relevant and timely governance assessments can help shape more informed decisions and increase awareness on the quality of democratic governance in the country.

A number of factors influence the use of national governance assessments in policymaking, including:

- **Involving and engaging policymakers in governance assessments:** For assessments to inform and help create policy, it is essential that they are considered valid, reliable and useful by those who will use them, that is, policymakers and other stakeholders (see Box 11 below). When policymakers are involved at an early phase, and when a common understanding is reached early on about what a governance assessment should include, then it is more likely for this group to accept the findings and engage constructively with them. A strategy for engaging policymakers therefore should be developed from the outset of a governance assessment.
- **Presentation of assessment:** It is important for policymakers and the media to be able to understand and use governance assessments. Gaining access to the assessment and being able to critically appraise are necessary skills for professional policymakers and media practitioners alike. Thus, presentation of the governance assessment in a user-friendly format is critical factor to effective use and uptake of an assessment, and usage of more innovative tools that present governance data visually is increasing.
- **Clear message:** Researchers should work together with policymakers to more fully understand the sorts of questions they need to answer, and to agree on the most appropriate evidence that will help solve policy problems. This means having a strategic approach to policy development and, wherever possible, establishing integrated teams of policy officials and researchers.
- **Shared notions of evidence:** The assessment is more likely to be used in the policymaking process if there exists agreement between policymakers and researchers, and within the research community, on the validity of the indicators and their underlying data. Potential disputes between researchers about the superiority or inferiority of quantitative versus qualitative data, or experimental methods, can lead to evidence that is technically very good but of little use to policymakers.
- **Getting appropriate “buy-in”:** Getting policy makers to own and use governance assessments also involves getting commitment and buy-in at the most appropriate levels. In central government, this usually means getting ministers and senior policy officials to commit to the assessment being undertaken and the evidence that goes to support it. This also requires a commitment from policymakers to use findings that are contrary to expectations.

Box 11. Understanding Policymakers' Use of Governance Assessments in The Philippines

With UNDP support, the Philippines University (National College of Public Administration and Governance) and the Philippines Statistics Coordination Board identified and mapped governance indicator sources in the country and surveyed the extent to which policy- and decision makers in Philippines are using those indicators.

By providing basic information on institutions engaged in establishing and identifying governance indicators generally used in Philippines, the report proved useful for matching the supply of indicators with political demand: (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/gip_philippines_users_guide.pdf).

The policy survey included 150 policy-/decision makers to assess the extent to which governance indicators are being used and whether differences exist on how sources are applied at various levels of government: (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/gip_philippines_rapid_assessment_report.pdf)

Specifically, the report assesses:

- What, if any, governance indicator sources national policy-/decision makers use in their work
- Knowledge and understanding of policy-/decision makers with regard to national/global indicator sources
- Needs and attitudes of decision makers with regard to existing national sources and the potential of developing new sources
- Strengths and weaknesses/limitations of existing sources, to help inform stakeholders where new data need to be created

Summary of What UNDP Can Do:

- ☑ Support the development of a strategy that targets policymakers' engagement in governance assessment processes
- ☑ Include policymakers and the media in training events on governance assessments through workshops and seminars
- ☑ Support the establishment of integrated teams of policy officials and researchers
- ☑ Support exercises that raise awareness of the existence of governance assessments and indicators, e.g., mappings of governance indicators in use in the country
- ☑ Support surveys of policymakers to understand the use of governance data in policymaking processes and the sources of information most relied upon

IV.6 Programming

Appropriate and effective implementation and management arrangements are critical to the success of UNDP's support to country-led governance assessments. Country-led assessments require strong commitment by senior management within UNDP Country Offices.

Broad-based political support is necessary for success in designing and implementing governance assessments. Leadership in key national partner institutions will likely change at some point during implementation of an assessment, and such changes can cause a shift in objectives and priorities or affect the level of commitment to the programme. One way to help ensure continuity and stability of leadership is by helping to establish – or by working with an existing – **task force or committee to steer or manage the programme**. Such a committee will foster greater ownership of the programme and institutionalize project outcomes, since it serves as a forum where multi-stakeholder representation can engage in discussions on governance assessments.

Country Offices are encouraged to draw support from the organization's own in-house network of policy advisers within the Democratic Governance Group, including the Regional Centres and the **UNDP Oslo Governance Centre**.

Partnerships

At the global level, the Global Programme on Capacity Development for Democratic Governance Assessments and Measurements provides a basis for developing new partnerships, focusing in particular on identifying and supporting potential partners in developing countries as well as prioritizing partnerships with the United Nations Economic Commissions and other regional inter-governmental organizations, regional technical bodies and networks (e.g., networks of statistical offices) and UNDP's Regional Centres. UNDP prioritizes fostering South-South partnerships where national stakeholders and actors can share knowledge and experiences on governance assessments. Regional partnerships including the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and its Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) are important at the country level.

Also at the country level, UNDP's primary partnerships on governance assessments will be with government, civil society organizations, the national statistical office and donors. However, UNDP is also very well positioned to draw on its global presence and connect international expertise with national partners. This is especially important for national capacity development and for validating the technical soundness of an assessment.

Country Office partnerships with CSOs are especially crucial for ensuring that governance assessments reflect the needs and aspirations of vulnerable groups; improving the condition of the poor and excluded is the ultimate justification for the existence of UNDP as a development agency. Collaboration with CSOs that articulate the needs and aspirations of the poor is a *sine qua non* of good practice; at the same time, wide variations in national CSO history, diverse configurations, inter-CSO relations and state attitude will inevitably require UNDP to select carefully with whom to engage and how. As part of UNDP's wider support to civil society strengthening, UNDP recommends that a periodic mapping of CSOs be undertaken by Country Offices that will provide a basis to reassess and focus the goals of its partnership strategy: With whom does

it partner, and to what development end? To assist in the selection process, it is important to assess, develop and publish situationally relevant criteria to determine with which civil society actors to engage, and why. Significant factors include domestic rootedness, demonstrated mandate, legitimacy, competence, expertise and accountability.¹²

Selecting an Implementing Partner

The selection of the Implementing Partner depends largely on capacity issues and the size and entry point of the programme. For any UNDP project, the Implementing Partner can encompass one of four options:

1. A government entity; this is referred to as National Implementation (in non-harmonized terminology, known as National Execution or NEX).
2. A United Nations Agency or multilateral organization.
3. An NGO with legal status to operate in the project location(s)
4. Direct implementation by UNDP

Some issues to consider with respect to each implementation option are presented in Box 12 on the following page.

Resources

A number of financing and resources options for country-led governance assessments exist: (i) in-country co-financing instruments; (ii) the UNDP Global Programme on Capacity Development for Democratic Governance Assessments and Measurements; (iii) the UNDP Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF); and (iv) the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF).

- **Co-financing instruments:** Co-financing arrangements represent important mechanisms for UNDP to support implementation of country-led governance assessments. UNDP administers two main instruments for this: cost-sharing instruments and trust funds (see section on DGTTF below). When a programme country government or another partner, such as a donor government, contributes resources to specific UNDP programmes or projects, the arrangement is known as cost sharing. Government and NGO cost sharing can be an important financing option for reinforcing multi-stakeholder ownership of governance assessment processes. UNDP can play an important role in combining national sources of financing with sources made available from the United Nations and elsewhere.
- **UNDP Global Programme on Capacity Development for Democratic Governance Assessments and Measurements:** Recognizing the need for more meaningful and operational tools for assessing governance, the Global Programme (2008-2011) provides financing to eligible countries to develop and apply methods and approaches for measuring and monitoring governance. The programme has three financing windows: (1) Country-level window, which includes financing for four activities within beneficiary countries, namely, (i) mapping existing governance indicators; (ii) developing governance assessment frameworks; (iii) collecting data; and (iv) developing governance databases and using governance indicators. (2) Regional-level window, which includes financing for: (i) regional-based training; (ii) developing region-specific knowledge products; and (iii) regional conferences and (3) Global-level window which includes financing for: (i) knowledge services; (ii) capacity development; and (iii) policy development and advocacy. Country Offices are advised to contact the Governance Specialist at the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre for information on how to access funds within the Global Programme.

¹² UNDP and Civil Society Organizations: A Practice Note on Engagement. www.undp.org/partners/cso/publications/UNDP%20CSO%20Policy.doc

Box 12. Implementation Partners

National implementation:

National implementation is used when there is adequate capacity among the national authorities to undertake the functions and activities of the programme or project. Implementation of the projects requires that the national institution acting as Implementing Partner has the technical and administrative capacity to assume responsibility for mobilizing and applying effectively the required inputs in order to reach the expected outputs. The most appropriate national authority will differ according to the country situation, but it is recommended that it be the same authority that is responsible for the national development plan in order to maximize opportunities for integrating a governance assessment into the consultative processes for the national development plan as well as monitoring and evaluating of the plan's goals and targets. UNDP experience with national implementation of governance assessment programmes is that it is desirable to work through national multi-stakeholder steering committees for strategic decision making and oversight. One way to overcome capacity constraints that might be present with national implementation is to bring in an external implementing agency, such as the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), to implement some of the more complex activities within the framework of a nationally executed project.

UNDP direct implementation:

Direct implementation may be considered where: (a) there exists a situation that calls for speed of delivery and decision making, where UNDP management is necessary for mobilizing resources; (b) national authorities lack the capacity to carry out the project; (c) the project could not be carried out by another United Nations Agency; (d) The UNDP Country Office has adequate capacity to manage, report and achieve the expected outputs of the project. UNDP currently has little experience directly implementing governance assessment initiatives. Careful consideration needs to be given to the political nature of a multi-stakeholder governance assessment before selecting this implementation option. Country Offices need to consider how direct implementation may affect UNDP relations with the executive and/or the neutrality of the United Nations as perceived by other development actors and donors.

NGO implementation:

NGO implementation should be considered for country-led assessment projects, especially for projects that involve close interaction with target groups such as the poor and vulnerable and those that call for expertise in the use of participatory methods. NGO implementation also can be a useful option for a targeted, research-based activity or training activity on governance assessments.

United Nations Agency or multilateral organization implementation:

Agency implementation has the same benefits and disadvantages with respect to governance assessment programmes as it does with other programmes. One benefit is that it brings a neutral, external actor to the decision making table. However, no specialized technical agency exists in this field. The United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) has developed its own capacities for undertaking political analyses of countries but possesses limited experience in supporting and facilitating country-led assessments.

- **The Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF):** The Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (www.undp.org/governance/ttf.htm) is managed by the Democratic Governance Group of UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy. Its main function is to provide Country Offices with discretionary funds to explore innovative approaches and address issues in politically sensitive areas where the use of core funds may prove more problematic and slow. UNDP Country Offices are encouraged to apply for funds from the DGTTF for governance assessment initiatives.
- **The United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF):** The primary purpose of UNDEF is to support democratization throughout the world. UNDEF will finance projects that build and strengthen democratic institutions, promote human rights and ensure the participation of all groups in democratic processes. The Fund provides assistance to government, non-government, national, regional and international organizations. UNDEF has supported country-driven democracy assessment activities such as those in Mongolia; for information, see www.un.org/democracyfund/

V. Bibliography and Knowledge Resources

5.1 UNDP Publications

- ◆ UNDP Strategic Plan (2008-2011): *Accelerating Global Progress on Human Development* (www.undp.org/execbrd/word/dp07-43.doc)
- ◆ UNDP. *Governance Indicators: A User's Guide* (2007, 2nd edition) (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/undp_users_guide_online_version.pdf)
- ◆ UNDP. *Measuring Democratic Governance: A Framework for Selecting Pro-Poor and Gender-Sensitive Indicators* (2006). (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs06/Framework%20paper%20-%20entire%20paper.pdf)
- ◆ UNDP. UNDP Users' Guide Series. These are thematic guides on governance measurement and include: *A Users' Guide to Measuring Corruption* www.undp.org/oslocentre/flagship/users_guide_measuring_corruption.html; *Measuring Decentralised Governance* (forthcoming); *Measuring Public Administration Reform* (forthcoming); *A Users Guide on Indicator Sources Measuring Conflict and Fragility* (forthcoming); *Planning A Governance Assessment: A Guide to Approaches, Costs and Benefits* (forthcoming). All forthcoming publications will be posted at (www.undp.org/oslocentre/flagship/democratic_governance_assessments.html)
- ◆ UNDP *Practice Note on Capacity Assessment* (<http://capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=6004>)
- ◆ UNDP. *Capacity Assessment Methodology User's Guide* (2007) (www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=6022)
- ◆ UNDP. *Supporting Capacity Development: The UNDP Approach* (2007). (<http://capacity.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=2141>)
- ◆ *UNDP and Civil Society Organizations: A Practice Note on Engagement* (www.undp.org/partners/cso/publications/UNDP%20CSO%20Policy.doc)
- ◆ *UNDP Practice Notes on Democratic Governance* (www.undp.org/governance/practice-notes.htm)
- ◆ UNDP, *Measuring Human Development: A Primer* (2007) (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/nhdr/support/primer/>)
- ◆ UNDP and Christian Michelson Institute (CMI). *Governance Assessments and the Paris Declaration: Opportunities for Inclusive Participation and National Ownership*, Seminar Report, September 2007. (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/BergenSeminar.pdf)
- ◆ Hasbat Hulan. *Assessing Democratic Governance in Mongolia*, paper prepared for the CMI/UNDP Bergen Seminar on Governance Assessments. (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/bergen_2007/Governance%20Assessments%20Mongolia%20Case%20Study.pdf)
- ◆ Goran Hyden. *The Challenges of Making Governance Assessments Nationally Owned*, paper delivered at the CMI/UNDP 2007 Bergen Seminar on Governance Assessments, September 2007 (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/bergen_2007/Key%20Note%20speech%20Goran%20Hyden.pdf)
- ◆ Lise Rakner and Vibeke Wang. *Governance Assessments and the Paris Declaration. A CMI Issues Paper*, prepared for the CMI/UNDP Bergen Seminar on Governance Assessments (2007). (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/CMI%20paper.pdf)

- ♦ University of Sussex and UNDP. *Preliminary Survey on Donor Use of Governance Assessments*, paper delivered at the CMI/UNDP 2007 Bergen Seminar on Governance Assessments, September 2007 (www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/bergen_2007/Survey%20of%20Donor%20Use%20of%20Governance%20Assessments.pdf)

5.2 UNDP Resources

- ♦ The UNDP Oslo Governance Centre, which is part of the Democratic Governance Group of the Bureau for Development Policy, is responsible for managing the Global Programme on Capacity Development for Democratic Governance Assessments and Measurements and for developing UNDP's policy and programme support on governance assessments. As part of this work, the Centre maintains a knowledge portal on governance assessment, facilitates training and other capacity development activities on this subject, and maintains a database of experts on governance measurement and assessment:

(www.undp.org/oslocentre/flagship/democratic_governance_assessments.html)

5.3 Non-UNDP Publications

- ♦ Christiane Arndt and Charles Oman. *Uses and Abuses of Governance Indicators*. OECD Development Centre Studies (2006) (www.oecd.org/dev/publications/governanceindicators)
- ♦ The UNDP Oslo Governance Centre maintains a bibliography of more than 200 publications on governance assessments and governance measurement at (www.undp.org/oslocentre/flagship/democratic_governance_assessments.html)

5.4 Non-UNDP Resources

- ♦ The Metagora project (www.metagora.org), hosted by Paris21 in Paris, is a pilot international global statistics initiative supported by the World Bank, OECD, the United Nations and EU. It focuses on methods, tools and frameworks for measuring democracy, human rights and governance. Its work programme includes implementation of pilot surveys on selected human rights issues, development of databases, test of indicators, and policy-oriented analysis. Metagora has produced training and guidance materials on measuring governance and using governance data (www.metagora.org/training/).
- ♦ The Africa Peer Review Mechanism is the centrepiece of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) process for socioeconomic development of Africa. (www.nepad.org/aprm/)
- ♦ The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization based in Stockholm, Sweden, that has produced a framework on, and supports the implementation of, citizen assessments of democracy (www.idea.int/democracy/index.cfm).
- ♦ The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC, www.oecd.org/dac), which is the principal body through which the OECD deals with issues related to cooperation with developing countries, has included issues related to harmonization and coordination of governance assessments in its work programme. This work is being led by the DAC's network on governance (GOVNET), an international forum that brings together practitioners of development co-operation agencies, both bilateral and multilateral, as well as experts from partner countries; it began with a donor conference on governance assessments in February 2008 (www.oecd.org/document/14/0,3343,en_2649_34565_39869902_1_1_1_1,00.html)

- ♦ The World Bank Institute manages the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project, which has produced aggregate and individual governance indicators for 212 countries and territories over the period 1996-2006, for six dimensions of governance. The aggregate indicators combine the views of enterprises, citizen and expert survey respondents in developed and developing countries. Individual data sources underlying the aggregate indicators are drawn from a variety of survey institutes, think tanks, non-government organizations and international organizations (<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi2007/>).
- ♦ The German agency Capacity Development International (InWEnt) provides training on governance measurement through its statistics-focused capacity development programmes. The programmes target representatives from local organizations in developing countries working with governance statistics (www.inwent.org).
- ♦ WorldPublicOpinion.Org provides a web resource on different public opinion surveys across the globe on the subject of governance and human rights, among other subjects (www.worldpublicopinion.org/?nid=&id=&lb=hmpg)
- ♦ The Afrobarometer (www.afrobarometer.org) is a research project that measures public attitudes on economic, political and social matters in sub-Saharan Africa. It is carried out through a partnership of the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (www.idasa.org) and the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development see (www.cddghana.org). Afrobarometer results are based on face-to-face and house-to-house interviews of individuals.

