



Department  
for International  
Development



# GUIDE TO WORKING WITH PARLIAMENTS AND POLITICAL PARTIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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*A DFID Strategic Document*

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# Executive Summary

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Global Goals mark a step change in putting governance and the underlying political causes of poverty and fragility at the heart of international development. The UK recognises the importance of open, inclusive and accountable democratic systems and their role in the 'Golden Thread' of institutions that underpin stable, inclusive and prosperous societies. DFID is helping to strengthen parliaments and parties across the world in recognition of their significance to poverty reduction, human rights, economic growth, stability and anti-corruption. Over the last three years, we have worked directly with parliaments in three quarters of our bilateral country programmes.

DFID is ready to do even more where we can achieve impact. This Guide is intended for international assistance agency staff as well as government and civil society actors who are working to strengthen democratic governance, human rights, growth, service delivery and inclusion by engaging with parliaments and political parties. It responds to the International Development Committee's 2015 recommendations, and aims to provide practical advice and resources for project design and delivery. Bringing new development insights to bear, the Guide focuses particularly on how to utilise more politically-informed and adaptive methods to encourage effective programming. It is divided into six chapters:

- 1. Why engage with parliaments and parties?** The first chapter examines why and how parliaments and parties are central to development. Assistance to parliaments and parties is sometimes regarded as a difficult area of engagement for the international community. However, parliaments and political parties can reach into every policy area of interest to development actors, especially in relation to economic development, gender equality and anti-corruption. They should be given prominence as influential partners in the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 2. Using political economy analysis (PEA) for project design.** Effective parliamentary and party assistance requires a nuanced understanding of the political context, the incentives and the interests that shape the performance of political institutions. The second chapter offers a practical step-by-step guide to analysing problems, power and players. It stresses the need for a continuing and collaborative political analysis during the lifetime of the project as the political environment evolves.
- 3. Adaptive programming principles for parliaments and parties.** Chapter 3 sets out a simple framework for understanding how to approach parliamentary and party assistance programmes. It suggests that more adaptive and flexible forms of programming should look for evidence of change in institutional capacity, performance and delivery of results for citizens, rather than depending on generic indicators. It then sets out a series of guidelines for enabling political change, through programmes that are flexible, locally-driven and based on multiple entry points.
- 4. Programme content: Parliamentary and party development.** The fourth chapter details a range of possible entry points for working with parliaments and parties. In parliaments, this might include working to strengthen procedures, committee oversight, constituency service and supporting the permanent staff. In parties, this could incorporate supporting internal organisation and campaigning, reforming the party system or encouraging women's caucuses and multiparty dialogue.
- 5. Gender, representation and women's political leadership.** Chapter 5 highlights the centrality of gender equality and women's political leadership to effective policy making and delivery. It describes ways in which parties can work to improve representation, through staff appointments, quotas, and party policy. It also discusses the entry points for parliamentary support.
- 6. Measuring results and adaptive programming.** The final chapter suggests ways in which assistance can be better measured and provides guidance on value for money. Using a 'capacity, performance, impact' structure it highlights potential indicators at each stage of the programme.

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# 1. Introduction: Why engage with parliaments and political parties? Understanding their roles.

This chapter of the Guide examines the pivotal functions performed by parliaments and political parties, and how those roles can strengthen development partner objectives in a variety of areas.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Global Goals underline the importance of accountable and democratic governance to “develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions” and “ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels”<sup>1</sup> explicitly highlighting the “essential role of national parliaments ... for the effective implementation of our commitments”.<sup>2</sup>

Parliaments and parties offer development programmes a way into almost every area of public policy. When working effectively, they can be an influential ally across a broad spectrum of objectives. They provide valuable routes to social, political and economic development, and provide fora for peaceful political debate.

Parliaments provide the means for elected representatives from across the political spectrum to scrutinise executive decisions and monitor public spending. They play a role in law making ranging from drafting legislation to scrutinizing laws drafted by the executive. They act as a vital check on the abuse of state power and provide policy and budgetary scrutiny in areas of economic and social reform. Parliaments and political parties create opportunities for citizens to influence government decisions.

It was these insights that shaped the report of the House of Commons International Development Committee in January 2015. It called on DFID to recognise the role of parliaments in poverty reduction, human rights, equality, economic growth, security, transparency and anti-corruption and said that DFID should not shy away from working directly with parties.

## 1.1 Parliaments and parties matter for long term development and stability

Evidence shows that countries with inclusive political institutions, including parliaments and political parties, tend to have higher levels of income and growth. Although public attitudes to parliaments and parties vary enormously, an overwhelming majority (over 80%) are in favour of electing political leaders as the best form of representation.<sup>3</sup>

A country’s parliament and parties will usually be critical in shaping its political culture and policy priorities. They will help determine how the public relates to government, and how responsive government is to the needs of the people. In newer democracies, they play a role in understanding and managing citizens’ expectations of the state. They often provide legitimacy and authority for government action.

The UK recognises the importance of inclusive democratic political institutions for long-term development and to guard against corruption and conflict. In fragile and conflict-affected states, building inclusive political settlements requires, in part, creating the opportunities for genuine dialogue within the formal political process. Political parties will often represent the interests of the previously warring factions and parliaments become critical in the process as the main public arena for national dialogue.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>, Articles 16.6 and 16.7

<sup>2</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>, Article 45

<sup>3</sup> [http://worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/governance\\_bt/482.php?lb=btgov&pnt=482&nid=&id=](http://worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/governance_bt/482.php?lb=btgov&pnt=482&nid=&id=)

## 1.2 Parliaments and parties are in need of strengthening

The overall picture in terms of capability and impact is mixed. On the one hand, Parliaments are generally becoming more responsive to the public, professionally run and transparent. In some political contexts, they are providing more of a challenge to government. However, many parliaments remain weak and ineffective, with limited public legitimacy, and are unable to manage executive dominance, corruption and political violence.

In many new and emerging democracies, parties face a range of challenges such as internal instability and fragmentation; the dominance of a small number of players that run a party in a command fashion, using patron-client systems; weak links to the grassroots; shrinking memberships; and a lack of well-defined policy platforms. Many parties fall far short of meeting voters' expectations or representing their interests. The increasing cost of political campaigns can drive corruption, while parties also struggle to prevent or address violence.

The failings need to be addressed. DFID is strongly committed to recognise the role of parliaments in achieving a wider range of development outcomes – poverty reduction, human rights, women's empowerment, economic growth, security, transparency and anti-corruption. Assistance to parliaments and parties is sometimes regarded as a difficult area of engagement for the international community. Party assistance is often relatively neglected compared to other areas of external development support. Together, parliamentary and party assistance make up only a small proportion of overall governance spend.

Since the formal political process plays a significant role in determining and shaping development outcomes, engagement with parliament and parties should be considered more widely as a promising route to improving aid impact and sector level results.

Below, we indicate ways in which development partners can provide effective support to developing these important connective institutions that bridge and strengthen state-society relations.

## 1.3 The role and function of parliaments

In general, parliaments perform three core 'process' functions:

**Legislating.** Apart from the Executive, parliament is the only institution that can make the law. Although this capacity varies, in almost all cases some sort of parliamentary approval will be required to pass legislation. Parliamentary scrutiny of legislation means the opportunity to amend poorly drafted and ill-conceived bills.

**Oversight.** In between elections, it is the job of parliament to call government to account for both policies and performance on the public's behalf. No other institution has the power to summon ministers and officials to explain their actions and decisions. However, in many countries the tension between Executive and Legislature often limits the ability of the parliament to call ministers and ministries to account.

**Representing.** An effective parliament provides the connective tissue between people and power. Individual Members of Parliament (MPs) have the opportunity to raise issues in parliament, and shape policy priorities. But the role that takes up most time - and that citizens value most - is constituency work.<sup>4</sup> The volume and variety of constituency work takes MPs into voters' lives, providing MPs with experience and expertise beyond the reach of any government official, making parliament an extremely valuable resource (including for development agencies) in the development and implementation of policy.

## 1.4 The role and function of political parties

Parties have several vital roles to play, which taken together cannot be performed by other organisations:

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<sup>4</sup> Especially in constituency-based systems, but also in list-PR systems, see IPU/UNDP, (2012), *Global Parliamentary Report*, Chapter IV.

**Articulating or mediating public interests and managing conflict.** Political parties provide the principal route for the representation of public opinion in the institutions of government. This role takes on added significance in conflict-affected societies. It is political parties that will represent the diverging interests of groups previously fighting each other. Their ability to manage tensions and facilitate dialogue between groups will go a long way to determining the stability of the political system.

**Aggregating opinion and policy development.** Public opinion is, by definition, highly diverse and fragmented. Political parties organise opinion around specific policy choices, and offer citizens meaningful alternatives around the style and substance of government during elections.

**Governing and effective opposition.** The calibre of the political parties in any country will have a direct effect on the quality of governance. Within a parliament, political parties provide the main vehicles for the organisation of parliamentary business. Negotiations between the parties will determine the membership of committees, the amount of time for debating and the passage of laws.

## 1.5 The role of parliaments and political parties in development priorities

Parliaments and political parties can play an important role in advancing development objectives:

**Shaping national policy priorities.** Parliaments and parties often inform and shape the development of government priorities, introduce ideas or challenge existing drafts. They are therefore potential partners for international assistance organisations seeking to help a country meet its policy goals, whether these are tackling climate change or improving education or health.

**Economic development and poverty alleviation.** Parliaments and parties have often been absent from national development strategies, with development partners tending to work exclusively with the Executive (and occasionally consulting citizens and civil society organisations) on their design and implementation. However, any strategy will be stronger where the parliament, and the parties, are an advocate and ally for their objectives. Parliaments and parties have an invaluable role in diagnosing the problems that a poverty strategy should address through their constituency work or direct contact with voters.

**Financial oversight and anti-corruption.** Parliaments should be routinely scrutinising government income and approving the national budget. Parliaments have responsibility for examining government spending in every policy area, determining that money was spent and results achieved. In conjunction with other state institutions, such as the audit body and anti-corruption authority, specific parliamentary committees will have a role in fighting fraud and corruption.

**Inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution.** Building inclusive political settlements in the aftermath of conflict means, in part, creating the opportunities for genuine dialogue within the formal political process. The political parties will often represent the interests of the previously warring factions, and parliaments become critical in the process as the main arena for national dialogue. In addition, oversight of the security sector, protection of human rights and strengthening the justice system will be important. Many parliaments in post-conflict environments will have committees responsible for reconciliation and dialogue.

**Gender equality.** The under-representation of women in political decision-making undermines the quality of government policy. Specific initiatives, such as gender-sensitive policy-making and budgeting can give a parliament a pivotal role in assessing the impact of all financial decisions on women versus the rest of the population. Political parties provide important mechanisms for improving women's representation at every level of party and government, through introducing quotas or placing women at the top of party lists.

**Political voice for under-represented groups to “Leave No One Behind”.** The selection and election of candidates will be crucial in improving the representation of marginalised groups, different ethnicities, regions and young people. The work of parties and parliaments should ensure that the policy interests of such groups are not neglected - including assessing the impact of legislation on poor and marginalised groups.

## 2. Using political economy analysis for project design

The purpose of this Guide is not only to provide guidance on undertaking party and parliamentary assistance, but also to explore how more politically-informed programming can be used to improve the impact of such projects. This chapter describes how to conduct a political economy analysis (PEA) for parliaments and political parties.

The PEA should inform programme design by providing an understanding of the root causes of political problems, through analysis of incentives and power structures. But, it is also a collaboration, engaging stakeholders around the problems to be addressed and the strategies to tackle them. Political economy analysis is an ongoing process, not an event, constantly informing programme activity and negotiations between political actors.

### 2.1 Assessing the broader political context

The first stage of the analysis should start with an assessment of the broader political context.

Key considerations are likely to include:

**Political settlement** - Is there a basic political settlement? Is there a constitution/legal framework respected by government and other political actors?

**Recent political history** - Is the country going through a process of transition? Is it characterised by conflict, which might be exacerbated or alleviated by **multi-party politics**? To what extent does a political/parliamentary culture exist?

**Pressure for change** - Is there pressure for political reform? Is this pressure bottom-up or top-down? Is there pressure from the international community for reform?

**Quality of parties and the parliament** - To what extent are intraparty dynamics, interparty relations and relationships between political parties and other state institutions or actors conducive to democratic governance? How active is the parliament and its MPs?

**Electoral system** - Does the electoral system favour one or other of the political groupings? Is the system likely to change in the near future?

**Electoral cycle** – Have recent elections changed the political players and provided scope for reform? Will forthcoming elections diminish local appetite for new initiatives at this stage?

**Party system** - Party systems broadly fall in to: authoritarian/semi-authoritarian; single party dominant; and multiparty competitive. How much fracturing/coherence and stability is there in parties?

**Representation of citizens** - To what extent does the system ensure fair representation of genders, ethnicities and other different sections of society?

These broad questions about the quality of politics in a particular country will give some indication as to the potential scope for a parliamentary or party support project. They may suggest that the current political context is not conducive to such assistance.

This could be the case, for example, where support may lend credibility to deeply flawed processes, where development partners are strongly perceived to favour one party over another, or where there is no internal drive for reform and shifting power between the executive and parties carries immediate conflict risks.



Regardless of whether the decision is made to take forward political governance programming, it is important for donors to ensure that other policies do not undermine democratic accountability.

Specific questions to consider:

- Is bilateral and multilateral development financing to the government scrutinised by the parliament as part of the budget process or is it 'off budget'?
- Is development assistance transparent? How do MPs learn about the projects being undertaken in their constituencies?
- Does the international community support the parliamentary process or inadvertently encourage the passage of legislation by decree, or with little scrutiny by the parliament?
- What political messages are sent to leaders about the importance of political rights, civil society, credible elections and a functioning parliament?

## 2.2 Conducting a political economy analysis for parliamentary and party support

The decision of how to engage with parliaments or political parties should be shaped by the results of a fuller political economy analysis (PEA). There are many ways to conduct PEAs for parliamentary and party support and each organisation working in this field will have its own specific methodological framework. The methodology presented here is based on that developed by Global Partners Governance for the political economy analysis of parliaments, but also draws on the National Democratic Institute's assessment tool for party assistance<sup>5</sup> and feedback from peer review particularly from the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

### Part one: Consultation, collaboration and negotiation

It is critical that the PEA should be a collaborative and continuing exercise. Any reform strategy needs to be built around a common understanding of both problems and solutions, led by local stakeholders. Such individuals will be invaluable in providing insight and information on understanding the challenges, but crucially will be the people to identify and implement innovative solutions. The PEA should engage stakeholders at every stage of the process, including MPs, staff, party officials and members, but also draw in civil society organisations, media and audit institutions. These discussions should create a degree of consensus around the problems that need to be tackled and what needs to be done to solve them.

### Part two: Identifying the manifestations of weakness

The analysis should begin by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the parliament or parties, examining how effectively they are conducting their main functions (and who benefits - women, minorities or other groups).

For parliaments, key questions are: 1) how well legislation is drafted, and how well parliament scrutinises and shapes the law; 2) to what extent does parliament effectively scrutinise government policy and call government to account; 3) whether parliament effectively oversees and approves government spending, and; 4) whether it is transparent, provides opportunities for citizen engagement and represents citizens' interests in parliament and constituency.

For political parties the key questions will be the extent to which: 1) they develop and present policies; 2) they are 'programmatic' and offer different policy choices to voters; 3) they have internal democratic structures; 4) they are able to compete effectively in elections; and 5) the party system offers opposition to the governing party, and an alternative, viable policy agenda.

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<sup>5</sup> For more details see: Power, G., (2016), [How to Conduct a Political Economy Analysis of Parliaments: Understanding Incentives and Political Behaviour](#), Politically Agile Programming Paper No. 4, Global Partners Power, G., (2011), [The Politics of Parliamentary Strengthening: Understanding political incentives and institutional behaviour in parliamentary support strategies](#), GPG/WFD. NDI, (2014) [Political Context Tool](#), NDI

There are likely to be several causes of underperformance, and this phase should reveal structural weaknesses relating to constitutional power, inadequate procedures, limited capacity or restricted political space. The analysis should highlight the gap between the institutional architecture and how it operates in practice. For instance, in a parliament, it will identify whether there is a gap between the formal powers that MPs have to scrutinise government and the willingness or ability of MPs to use them.

### **Part three: Mapping institutional power**

To understand how the parliament or party is working means identifying who has influence and the sources of their authority. The influence of different individuals will wax and wane, as coalitions are formed and re-formed. The analysis should start by mapping the figures with greatest influence over the behaviour of MPs, staff, and party members, and their influence over the cultural norms that determine what is deemed acceptable (and unacceptable) political behaviour. The analysis should also take into account the gender balance in that complexion of power.

Those figures tend to fall into three categories. First, political positions such as Prime Minister, party leaders and party whips. Second, institutional and administrative positions. In parliament, these would include the Speaker or President, Secretary General or Clerk, chairs of parliamentary committees and senior staff. In parties, they would include the Secretary General, senior staff, factional leaders, heads of policy commissions and senior members of youth and women's wings. Third, there are also likely to be figures outside parliament who also have political influence, such as Ministers, senior Ministry officials, tribal leaders, religious figures, civil society, media, labour unions, and the business community.

In addition, the analysis should understand the source of that influence. That authority usually stems from control over patronage, procedure and/or resources. For example, i) in parliament, the ability to promote MPs will often be in the hands of party leaders, whips or the government, as a form of political patronage. In parties, patronage will usually lie with political leaders and senior staff. ii) Control of procedure offers the power to determine how and when decisions are taken (or not taken) within parliament or party, and usually lies with senior formal figures, and iii) the ability to decide how a parliament or party spends its money on staff, committees, or constituency work, will obviously affect what sort of work is undertaken.

### **Part four: Understanding incentive structures**

Behaviour and performance is shaped by various incentive structures. Parliaments and parties need to be understood as groups of individuals (politicians, activists and staff) who form coalitions of interest. There are almost no circumstances in which every MP or party member will be pursuing the same objectives at the same time. The political economy analysis will seek to identify the dominant incentive structures shaping political and parliamentary behaviour, again paying attention to potential gender differences. In parliament, these tend to fall into three categories:

**Personal incentives** – Every politician will be driven by a variety of personal motivations. The analysis should uncover the drivers of such behaviour examining the potential rewards such as power, promotion, pay, patronage, status, and demands from voters.

**Political party incentive structures** – An ambitious politician will need to respond to the demands of their party, as parties nearly always decide whether politicians are selected, elected and promoted to higher political offices. The analysis should look at the level of discipline that parties exercise and the main forms of patronage they can deploy.

**Institutional incentive structures** – The organisational structure will determine the opportunities for politicians to promote either their own interests, or those of voters. For example, an effective committee system is likely to encourage cross-party collaboration, and where committee chairs are paid additional salary it creates incentives to serve on committees.

Within political parties, the motivations of various stakeholders, including political leaders, activists, and groups, will influence behaviour. These are likely to be shaped by a multitude of factors, including interests, values, culture, ethnicity, religion, personal history, a desire for financial gain or power, or personal perceptions of the political landscape and its risks and opportunities. In addition, a party's values and ideology will influence how it perceives potential opportunities for development.

### **Part five: Establishing the scope for meaningful international support**

The PEA stages described should provide the basis for establishing where action and interventions are likely to have most impact. The analysis should make a realistic assessment of what is possible over a given period.

Any successful reforms are likely to alter the balance of power within the parliament or party, and any international assistance programme will need to understand the likely effect of reforms and the potential winners and losers from these changes. These factors will provide an understanding of the current power structures within the parliament or party, and anticipate the attitudes of the most influential figures towards possible change, who will determine the success or failure of proposed reforms.

### **Part six: Using the political economy analysis for continuing project adaptation**

Politics is never static, and to remain useful the PEA needs to reflect the changing complexion of political interests and incentives. The insights and analysis need to be regularly updated. This process of reflection should be used to test the suitability of existing project activities and indicators, and where necessary, used to refine and revise them.

#### **PEA of the Afghanistan Parliament: DFID Afghanistan**

In 2014, DFID Afghanistan commissioned a PEA of the Afghanistan parliament, to understand the key factors inhibiting its effectiveness. The study revealed the disconnect between the formal institutions of power and the operation of political power through informal networks, external sources of influence, patronage and traditional loyalties. It suggested that many of the problems lay in the distorted incentive structures.

The report made a series of recommendations aimed at co-ordinating the strategic objectives of programming, using multiple entry-points to improve internal organisation, strengthen parliamentary leadership, and encourage links between parliament, civil society and the media. The report was used to inform parliamentary programming in Afghanistan which is successfully targeting these links between parliament, civil society and media.

# 3. Adaptive programming principles for parliaments and parties

This chapter highlights the institutional characteristics that programmes should seek to support and the adaptive principles that underpin this approach. The key message is that the programme content should remain relevant by constantly adapting to changes in the political environment. Expectations must be realistic: sustainable change generally happens incrementally and over the long term.

## 3.1 Building representative and responsive institutions

Rather than looking for specific, all-purpose indicators for parliamentary and party development, adaptive programming recognises that a realistic assessment of outputs, outcomes and impact will depend on the context. However, regardless of context and content, indicators should be seeking to build three types of institutional characteristics:

**Improved structures and capacity.** Projects should aim to make a parliament or political party resilient enough to cope with the daily challenges of politics on their own. This is likely to involve assistance that strengthens the organisational architecture, constitutional power, resources and procedure.

**Improved performance.** It is no good having improved structures if political behaviour is affected by corruption and/or ineffective. Projects will need to help shape the behaviour of politicians, by supporting efforts to change the incentives that motivate them, and by making them more directly responsible to the public for their actions.

**Improved delivery.** The public will judge political institutions not just by how they operate or engage with the public, but with what they deliver. International assistance should be clear that improving structures and performance should result in better quality public services – but also be aware that this is a long-term objective.

The PEA will tell you what outcomes are realistic in a particular context, and whether the project should be aiming simply to improve institutional capacity, political performance or the wider political environment. There are no firm rules, but the following table provides a basic framework.

Type of state	Characteristics	Programme focus
Authoritarian	Dominance by one party/leader. Complete or near complete absence of political space.	Sometimes opportunity to work with organisational structures of party/parliament, but limited scope for change.
Semi-authoritarian	Some opposition parties and independent civil society permitted, yet elections manipulated and limits on overall political space	Sometimes space for work with opposition parties or parliament, but may require including ruling party in order to get access to the country. Focus is usually on basic organisational structures and capacity of opposition or parliament, possibly some work on increasing party/parliamentary performance.
Shallow democracies	Pluralistic and free, yet low institutional performance and high citizen dissatisfaction.	Usually significant access to parties and parliament. Less focus on organisational structure and instead more on performance of parties/politicians and of political system overall.
Conflict environments	Either ongoing civil conflict or recent exit there from.	Usually significant access to parties/parliament. Some focus on organisational structure, strong focus on party dialogue often around constitutional reform.
Transitional democracies	Consolidated pluralism, governance improving.	Usually significant access to parties/parliament. Focus on contribution of parties and parliament to development outcomes.

This means that outputs and outcomes will vary, and may include measures of institutional capacity and performance depending on the context. For example, the main objective of a project in a semi-authoritarian state may be to help strengthen a particular organisation or support other small-scale changes, rather than look for wide-ranging governance reform.

## 3.2 Enabling change: Suggestions for adaptive parliamentary and party support

Whatever the analysis, programmes should always use multiple entry-points and techniques that enable partners to implement changes themselves. Programmes should continually assess whether they are contributing to a supportive environment for open politics, societies and economies. The Inter-Parliamentary Union has developed a [set of principles](#) for parliamentary assistance in conjunction with other international organisations, which emphasise the need for responsiveness and inclusiveness. Many of the themes are reflected in the list below.

### **Parliamentary and party assistance is politically sensitive**

Working with parliaments and parties could open development agencies to the charge of interfering in local domestic politics. Programmes need to be clear about their developmental objectives and define engagement with key stakeholders. Managing risks also depends on observing the principles below, particularly ensuring that the process of reform is owned and driven by local politicians, staff and parties, and the forms of support are both politically astute and politically agile.

### **Change is always political and driven locally**

Development agencies have long talked about local ownership, but do not always succeed in implementing it. A more politically-informed style of programming must engage with the interests and incentives of local stakeholders. The political economy analysis should be the start of a process that identifies a common sense of the problem, and potential solutions. Local partners should help to define project objectives and indicators, and be given responsibility for meeting them. While MPs, parties and parliamentary staff will have different goals and competing sources of power, it is very hard to make progress without local commitment and reform champions.

#### **Flexible programming: SUNY/CID support to the Kenyan Parliament**

The parliamentary support programme run by State University of New York (SUNY) Center for International Development in Kenya between 2000 and 2015, supported by USAID and DFID, provides an example of how a locally-led initiative can be supported by flexible programming. The process of reform was initially driven by a small group of MPs, frustrated by executive dominance and pervasive levels of corruption. The three-pronged strategy sought to: appeal to self-interest in order to maximise support, and build a coalition for reform particularly around control of the parliamentary budget; educate members as to the benefits of reform; and ensure that MPs owned both the process and the outcomes of those reforms.

It was important that the ideas emerged from within the institution, rather than being seen as the proposals of an external body. SUNY/CID played an important role in facilitating that change by supporting and helping to shape locally-led initiatives. The project recognised that the needs of politicians and parliamentary staff change as political circumstances evolve. The key to successful programme management, as demonstrated by SUNY, is to be able to respond flexibly, adapting activities without losing sight of the strategic purpose of the project.

### **Combine principle and self-interest to build a coalition for reform**

Projects should seek not just to shape institutional structures, but also to shape the behaviour of those working within the institutions. Assistance programmes need to appeal directly to the interests of those affected by change, and offer incentives by finding ways of helping them do their jobs better.

### **Create pockets of good practice and a ripple effect**

Wider institutional change will often come from small pockets of innovation and activity that act as catalysts for broader adoption of new methods. Projects should seek to enhance the catalytic effect of those pockets of good practice, by creating a ripple effect across the institution, so that new behaviours spread. In many instances, more effective working practices will spread across the institution by themselves, but there is an important role to be played by project managers in ensuring that they are promoted and disseminated across the institution to ensure long-term effect.

### **Use inception periods and multiple entry-points**

Politics is always moving, and political outcomes will depend on a variety of factors. Programmes need to be flexible, take time to understand the context and be able to respond to changes as they occur. Using several approaches to address the same problem (e.g. working simultaneously with parliamentary committees, staff and parliamentary parties) may be more likely to be effective. Effective coordination and collaboration is essential.

### **Politically-informed programming: Global Partners Governance support to the Iraq Council of Representatives**

DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's parliamentary support programme in Iraq was based on the principles of multiple entry-points and locally-led agile programming. Responding to the requests and incentives of Iraqi politicians the Global Partners Governance project supported a handful of committees to develop new techniques so that they were able to respond better to key policy and political issues as they emerged. At the same time, the project worked with the Speakership to develop a set of central recommendations for all parliamentary committees based on those innovations.

The project strengthened committee oversight throughout the parliament by working with the incentives of both the committees and parliamentary leadership. The individual committees saw their influence increase, and had an interest in promoting their successes, which were then emulated by others - whilst the actions of the Speaker's office formally embedded these new practices.

The project was simultaneously a bottom-up and top-down exercise, but always led by Iraqi staff and politicians to meet their needs. The project helped parliament to develop its own internal standards, but was also instrumental in helping the committees to meet them, creating an internally-driven cycle of improvement.

### **Addressing gender imbalances and inclusion of marginalised groups should be central to party and parliamentary programmes.**

The underrepresentation of women and other marginalised groups in politics weakens the policy process and quality of law. Programmes should seek not only to increase the number of women in politics, and in positions of leadership, but also to change the quality, tone and content of political discourse. Chapter 5 below discusses these issues in more depth.

### **Measuring change needs to be politically aware and based on realistic indicators**

Improving governance is long-term, unpredictable and contingent on many local political factors. Programmes should aim for realistic results within their specific output areas that may then be replicated, and have a broader effect on the parliament or party. The high-level impact will aim at strengthening political accountability and delivery for the poor, but parliamentary and party projects will only ever represent a contribution to this larger goal, and their success should not be judged solely by this criteria. Conflict sensitivity and do no harm is crucial.

### **Sustainable change comes from long-term projects**

Success in parliamentary and party strengthening projects is unlikely to happen quickly. If development programmes are serious about creating sustainable changes to the performance of parties and parliaments they need to accept that this will take time, and design programmes accordingly (for example the long running support in Kenya). As the International Development Committee noted, "Parliamentary strengthening needs to take the long view—particularly in post-conflict and fragile states— because progress is hard".<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> House of Commons International Development Committee, (2015), [Parliamentary Strengthening: Ninth Report of Session 2014-15](#), HC 704<sup>7</sup> Gerring, J, 'Are Parliamentary Systems Better?', Comparative Political Studies, March 2009 vol. 42 no. 3 327-359

# 4. Programme content: Parliamentary and party Development

## 4.1 The state of the evidence on parliamentary assistance

Parliaments play a crucial role in horizontal and vertical accountability (OECD DAC, 2012), and several wide-ranging studies reflect the widely accepted belief that international assistance plays an important role helping parliaments to fulfil their core roles more effectively, particularly in improving scrutiny and oversight.

One study from 2009 suggested “a strong relationship between parliamentarianism and good governance” particularly for economic and human development.<sup>7</sup> Other studies also show that international assistance has been effective in improving the effectiveness of committees in scrutinizing and making the Executive more accountable, and improving the effectiveness of committees more generally. There is also evidence that, in terms of tackling corruption, international assistance can have an effect on improving financial audit and oversight, and has resulted in the increased implementation of codes of parliamentary ethics.

In terms of supporting a broader process of reform, more recent evaluations of UK-funded parliamentary strengthening projects have highlighted the effectiveness of parliamentary assistance programmes that are flexible, politically astute, and deploying multiple entry-points. For example, there is evidence that external assistance had a transformative effect on the parliament in Kenya.<sup>8</sup>

There are many potential ways in which international assistance can support the development of parliaments and parties. This chapter looks at a variety of options for programme content.

## 4.2 Working with parliaments: Issues and entry points

The need to use multiple entry-points is especially important in parliaments given that there is never any one person in charge. A variety of figures will run different aspects of the parliament and influence the behaviour of MPs, including the Speaker, the Secretary General, committee chairs, party leaders, and senior members of staff, as well as external influencers. Improving an area such as the legislative process is likely to involve working with all these figures.

### 4.2.1 Organisation, structures, procedural reform: Working with parliamentary leaders

The most significant official figures within a legislature will include the Speaker (or President), the Chief Clerk (or Secretary General), and any parliamentary committees where officials and MPs meet to determine how the institution is run. Support to the parliamentary leadership should aim to improve their skills, the co-ordination of parliamentary work, improve internal efficiency and provide strategic direction for the development of parliament. This might include:

**Support to the Office of the Speaker.** The Speaker will often have a wide-ranging role over all parliamentary business, ensuring the efficiency of the legislative process, coordination of committees, running the plenary sessions and liaising with government over the introduction of legislation. There could be a number of roles for international efforts to assist the Speaker’s staff: strategic advice on managing the flow of legislation, liaising with committee chairs, procedural advice and improving mechanisms for monitoring and improving committee performance.

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<sup>7</sup> Gerring, J, ‘Are Parliamentary Systems Better?’, *Comparative Political Studies*, March 2009 vol. 42 no. 3 327-359

<sup>8</sup> See Nakamura, R, (2015), *The Kenya Model of Parliamentary Development: Co-producing Institutional Change and Power*, G. (2015) *A Political Approach to Parliamentary Strengthening: An Analysis of the Kenyan Experience and Recommendations for Future Programming*

**Timetabling parliamentary business.** One of the most contentious areas of parliamentary activity is the amount of time allocated to debates, legislation and opportunities to question ministers. While the Speaker is likely to have the ultimate decision, most parliaments contain some type of 'Business Committee' where MPs from different parties negotiate. Although it would be important to manage political sensitivity, technical assistance support to MPs and whips to help them build negotiation skills can be highly productive.

**Strategic plans and rule reform.** Many international assistance projects have made use of five- or ten-year strategic plans for parliamentary reform as a way of identifying indicators and outcomes attached to continued support. These plans will often include developing internal capacities but may also involve the reform of parliamentary procedure.

**Codes of conduct and ethical standards in parliament.** In the last few years, an increasing number of parliaments have adopted codes of conduct in order to regulate the behaviour of MPs and tackle conflicts of interest that lead to corruption. International assistance can play a useful role in supporting such efforts, particularly through resources and by linking them with such initiatives in comparable parliaments.

### **Supporting the Strategic Plan in Rwanda: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**

The Inter-Parliamentary Union developed its own Self-Assessment Toolkit to help parliaments assess their own organisational robustness, capacity and performance. This has been used in a number of parliaments and involves discussions amongst a core group of MPs to identify problems and potential solutions. In Rwanda, the self-assessment exercise worked with both Houses of the parliament to reflect on the implementation of the institution's strategic plan. It highlighted areas for improvement such as the training and recruitment of staff, better use of parliamentary procedure by MPs and allocated responsibilities for the next phase of the strategic plan.

#### **4.2.2 An effective engine room: Working with parliamentary committees**

It is difficult to overstate the importance of effective committees within a parliament. Parliamentary committees tend to focus on one policy area each for the lifetime of a parliament. They consist of MPs from many parties and therefore promote cross-party collaboration, which can be particularly useful in easing tensions in conflict-affected countries. The MPs on the committee build up a specialist expertise in that policy area, but perhaps more significantly, the committee system as a whole will cover all the key policy areas that shape the path of development in a particular country. Furthermore, successful parliamentary reform will often use policy issues as a way of engaging political interest and prompting wider reform.

Forms of support might include:

**Committee inquiries and public hearings calling ministers to account.** One of the staple parts of committee work is initiating inquiries into the work of a ministry, taking evidence, questioning ministers and producing reports that are designed to improve the development of policy and delivery of services. Many parliamentary support projects help them to run committee inquiries, consult the public and experts, and elicit answers from ministers.

**Improving legislative scrutiny.** Committees in most parliaments will be responsible for examining and amending bills before passing them onto the plenary for debate. This often benefits from outside support and expertise.

**Post-legislative scrutiny.** An often overlooked aspect of committee work is in following up to see if legislation passed by parliament has first, been enacted and second, is having the effect that was intended. This is particularly important to scrutinise the provision and delivery of services to women and the poor.

**Enhancing financial oversight.** Many projects, notably those run by the World Bank, have supported committees with specific responsibility for scrutinising expenditure such as a Public Accounts Committee or Finance/Economy. These can be highly effective in raising the profile of those committees and improving the skills and aptitudes of both MPs and staff, particularly in pursuing corruption. In addition, policy



committees, covering areas such as health or education, should also be examining spending by those ministries, checking to see whether their commitments have been met. This might involve targeted support to committees or other actors like the Supreme Audit Institution to enhance scrutiny.

### **Enhancing financial oversight: World Bank Institute**

In 2010, the World Bank Parliamentary Strengthening Program and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) launched a four year long programme titled the “Capacity Building to Strengthen Good Financial Governance in Southern and Eastern Africa” to contribute to good financial accountability and transparency in African countries by strengthening the capacities of Public Accounts Committees (PACs). The development partners integrated various methodologies, such as: peer learning, coaching and mentoring; establishing a Community of Practice; and specific action learning processes. During the four-year programme, the various activities brought together more than 600 participants who took part in more than one event. The programme contributed to the enhanced performance among the member states in: developing partnerships with relevant accountability stakeholders; PAC Operations; performance audits; audit reports; PAC recommendations follow up procedure; procurement; budget process and Parliamentary Budget Offices; public hearings; anti-corruption; PAC and the Executive relations; Supreme Audit Institution independence; and south-south learning/ Members’ capacity building.

#### **4.2.3 The importance of institutional memory: Working with parliamentary staff**

It is common in newer parliaments for the turnover of MPs at elections to reach 70% or 80%. This volatility means that many of the new skills and changes in behaviour will be lost at each election. The staff can be the parliament’s institutional memory, providing advice on parliamentary rules, working practices in committee and plenary, and acceptable standards of behaviour, particularly in the induction of new MPs.

Support to the development of parliamentary staff might include:

**Building the skills, competencies and authority of parliamentary staff.** International assistance can play a critical role in developing the skills of staff, and in emphasising to politicians the centrality of parliamentary officials to achieving their own objectives. Promoting an understanding of gender issues and enhancing opportunities staff from different gender and marginalised groups could be important.

**Strengthening the parliamentary research service.** MPs want to perform effectively in the plenary session, and thus they will welcome succinct and reliable information that they can use to make points in parliamentary debates. The research service is thus a key point of contact for MPs, and a valuable channel for communicating key messages to MPs, guiding them on parliamentary practice and developing the culture within the institution.

**Establishing support units and sources of guidance for MPs.** All politicians will occasionally need to take advice on aspects of parliamentary procedure, administrative issues or ethical matters. These might include the creation of a parliamentary budget office to improve financial oversight (as mentioned above), a procedure and ethics office to advise MPs on potential conflicts of interest or whether they are in danger of breaching parliamentary rules, and critically, advice to new MPs on how they get paid, employ staff and find an office.

### **Supporting parliamentary research in Pakistan: Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)**

The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) is a body created by an act of parliament in 2008 to provide quality research and capacity building services for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. WFD has supported PIPS through the “Improving Parliamentary Performance in Pakistan” consortium, to provide research, capacity building and training to the Young Parliamentary Associates that have been deployed to assist parliamentarians of both federal chambers. PIPS has also worked with WFD in the provision of technical support to parliamentarians and Secretariat staff of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab – adapting the federal parliament training modules to the provincial assemblies.

#### 4.2.4 Listening to voters: Improving constituency service

In every part of the world the role that is most valued by voters, and takes up the largest part of MPs time is constituency service.<sup>9</sup> Yet often MPs are expected to give citizens money, pay for tuition, hospital bills or find jobs for their immediate family. The inability of MPs to cope with this combination of excessive demands can have a distorting effect, sometimes leading to the direct buying of votes, corruption, or MPs only serving the needs of supporters. Options include:

**Support in running a constituency office.** Politicians will often benefit from international assistance on setting up an office and dealing with different sorts of constituency casework. Where there are no resources for constituency work, development agencies have provided funding for the development of parliamentary offices, staffed by non-partisan parliamentary officials, to encourage greater engagement between politicians and voters, channel requests and provide advice, especially in post-conflict situations.

**Finding collective solutions to constituents' problems.** In most countries, MPs attempt to solve each problem on a case-by-case basis, often resulting in clientelism and patronage. Financial pressure on MPs has meant that in some countries they have sought collective solutions, establishing health insurance schemes, or scholarship funds instead of feeling pressure to give money to voters, or establishing credit unions next to the constituency office. Development agencies are well-placed to encourage and foster such innovative and strategic responses to public pressure amongst MPs.

**Constituency Development Funds.** In an effort to promote local economic development, a number of countries and donor agencies have supported the establishment of constituency development funds (CDFs). These enable the local politician to fund local initiatives that generate social and economic development. There are fears that such funds can reinforce patronage networks but a body of international best practice is beginning to develop about the use and monitoring of CDFs that can be applied in most contexts.<sup>10</sup> In all these areas of support, it is important that donors carefully manage any risk of diversion of resources.

#### 4.2.5 Utilising public pressure: Citizen action to improve parliaments

The focus of this note is principally on institutional and political reforms to improve the capacity, performance and delivery of parliaments and political parties. That means that politicians themselves must implement those changes, but citizen engagement and public pressure for change are often a vital part of such developments.

##### Outreach and public engagement

Parliaments themselves need to recognise that the quality of their recommendations is only as strong as the public evidence on which it is based. Many parliaments have made significant changes to the way in which they communicate with and listen to the public.<sup>11</sup> Projects should encourage parliaments to publish more information, seek better media coverage, improve public access to parliaments and support committees in drawing on public opinion and evidence during their work. They can also support civil society groups on aspects of lobbying and advocacy around specific policy issues. This move from an adversarial style towards more collaborative relationships with civil society can be productive. Programmes should also encourage increased media interest in parliamentary politics, perhaps through joint exercises between parliament and the media around key policy issues.

##### Open data and parliamentary transparency

Lack of access to elected representatives amongst disadvantaged or underrepresented groups is a key driver of exclusion and inequality. In recent years, the number of ways in which citizens can contact, monitor and influence politicians has grown dramatically. Foremost amongst these have been the growth of social media platforms such as [www.theyworkforyou.com](http://www.theyworkforyou.com) which provide information on MPs and activity in parliament, and often rate the performance of MPs. An NDI study from 2011<sup>12</sup> lists 191 such organisations

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<sup>9</sup> IPU/UNDP, (2012), *Global Parliamentary Report*, Chapter IV

<sup>10</sup> Baskin, M. & Mezey, M. (eds), *Distributive Politics in Developing Countries: Not Quite Pork*, Lexington Books: London, and (forthcoming 2016) *Handbook on Constituency Development Funds: Principles and Tools for Parliamentarians*, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

<sup>11</sup> IPU/UNDP (2012) *Global Parliamentary Report*, Chapter 2

<sup>12</sup> Mandelbaum, A. (2011), [Strengthening Parliamentary Accountability: Citizen Engagement and Access to Information – Survey of Parliamentary Monitoring Organisations](#), NDI: Washington

worldwide. The quality of such organisations varies widely, but they can provide a useful ally in creating public pressure for change.

There are some promising examples ranging from publicising data on election candidates and their assets, to using SMS, email, Twitter and websites to report on electoral irregularities. Parliamentary monitoring websites are expanding globally, for example in South Africa with [Mzalendo](#) and [Odekro](#), as well as Freedom of Information websites such as [InfoLib](#) the Liberian Freedom of Information site.

At the most basic level such organisations will help to press for greater publication of information from parliaments. The website [www.openingparliament.org](http://www.openingparliament.org) provides a useful set of resources, case studies and contacts from around the world.

#### **Citizen engagement with parliament: Latvia**

Transparency International's Kandidatiuzelnas project in Latvia involved a web application to gather and publish data about prospective MPs' political history and reputation including known assets, business deals, party changes, etc. It also provided a repository of governance and corruption scandals involving the outgoing parliament.

It had three stated objectives: to freshen up voters' memory before the elections; to encourage voters to cast a responsible and informed vote; and to encourage political parties to apply the highest ethical standards to their candidates. It recorded 45,000 unique visitors between its launch and Election Day with significant use by journalists.

### **4.2.6 Regional networks and multilateral parliamentary engagement**

Assistance programmes should also consider utilising existing regional networks and peer to peer engagement. In many parts of the world legislative assemblies meet within their region, reflecting common geographic interests or around specific policy sectors and economic development. For donor agencies such initiatives can be a way of encouraging policy development in key areas. International bodies, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, hold regular conferences and events for politicians and staff to develop their skills and knowledge.

## **4.3 Working with parties: The organisation of politics, and the politics of organisation.**

### **4.3.1 The state of the evidence for political party support**

Effective political parties are essential for a functioning democracy,<sup>13</sup> a belief held by a majority of citizens from different continents.<sup>14</sup> Political competition and cooperation between political parties, characterised by stronger, inclusive, issues-based political parties, staffed by competitively-recruited individuals (including women) has been found to be a more effective predictor of executive constraint than a country's democratic status.<sup>15</sup>

Evidence on the effectiveness of party assistance is patchy. Several studies suggest that there is little evidence of the transformative effect of party assistance, but recognise that this is to do with the way objectives have been defined, unrealistic expectations, and poor programming.<sup>16</sup> There is, however, evidence that international assistance has helped parties improve their campaign techniques and thus improve the choice to citizens at elections. In addition, such support has proved effective in some countries during the transition from authoritarianism to more democratic systems, helping parties improve their own organisation and technical capacities, and in supporting former rebel movements turn themselves into functioning political parties.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Carothers, T., (2006); Svasand (2014);

<sup>14</sup> IPU/UNDP (Power, G.) (2012).

<sup>15</sup> Evans, W., Ferguson, C., (2013), [Governance, Institutions, Growth and Poverty Reduction: A literature review](#). DFID

<sup>16</sup> Carothers, T. (2006); Svasand (2014)

<sup>17</sup> Reilly, B., Nordlund, P. (2008), *Political Parties in Conflict-Prone Societies*, IDEA: Stockholm; Power, G. & Shoot, R. (Eds) (2013) [Political Parties in Democratic Transitions](#), DIPP: Copenhagen

There is also some evidence of impact in improving the relations between political parties, particularly in post-conflict environments through programming that is built around promoting multi-party dialogue. In addition, evidence suggests that international assistance has been instrumental in improvements in party systems, support for regulatory reform, and strengthening party systems.<sup>18</sup>

As with parliaments, a political economy analysis of the factors underlying party weakness in any particular country is likely to reveal a number of contributory factors relating to the party system as a whole, the organisational robustness of the parties and the way in which they engage with each other, and the electorate. Enhancing the effectiveness of parties may mean addressing the deficiencies of individual parties as well as problems in the party system.

#### 4.3.2 Working with parties: Issues and entry points

Again, strategic programming is likely to involve multiple entry-points, which might include:

**Organisational development.** Training and advice on strengthening internal party management, improving the recruiting, training and management of party cadres, establishing local party branches, and other basic elements of successful organisational development.

**More effective outreach.** Helping parties meet the challenge of expanding membership, developing a core constituency, forging ties to civic and social organisation, building grassroots volunteer networks, message development, and public profiling.

**Building policy capacity.** Moving from parties built around charismatic personalities to parties built around ideological orientation and programmatic outlook requires significant development of policy capacity on the part of parties. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) has done important work analysing when and why programmatic parties tend to emerge, and the complexities involved.

**Campaign methods.** Party assistance sometimes aims to help parties develop more effective campaign methods, such as better use of polling, more effective media work, and the building of volunteer networks. Party aid providers usually emphasise that such work aims not simply to help parties during a specific election, but instead to become more effective at connecting with and representing the interests of citizens in between elections.

**Greater inclusion of women and youth.** Working with parties to help them increase the role of women within party leadership and membership structures and improving outreach to women constituents is an important area of emphasis for party assistance. So too is work relating to greater inclusion of youth in political parties.

#### 4.3.3 Fraternal party method vs. multiparty method

Support for individual political parties divides between two core methods. The fraternal party method is where a Western political party or foundation provides direct support to a party with a similar political ideology. For instance, through the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, sister party relationships are formed to support political parties in developing countries.

The multi-party method is where support for political parties is offered simultaneously to all political parties, or at least many of the leading parties (for example, all parties represented in parliament) in a given country. Support could cover: i) the same activities with all parties (in multi-party fora); ii) same activities separately with each party; or iii) a “menu of options” from which parties select providing “equality of opportunity” but allowing each to pick what they need.

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<sup>18</sup> Power, G. et al. (2009) *Evaluation of International IDEA's Political Parties Programme*. London: Global Partners

The different methods all have strengths and weaknesses. Party support based on shared political ideologies has the potential to create a close bond between providers and recipients, making greater engagement on sensitive matters of internal party reform possible. Multiparty support can be effective in sensitive political environments where working with one political party may result in accusations of partisan interference. Working simultaneously with multiple parties may also open doors for an aid provider to carry out work on party system issues, like fostering greater cooperation amongst parties.

These types of assistance need not be exclusive. International support can include *both* sister party and multi-party assistance, and in fact the presence of both can reduce claims of bias in the international community. More efforts should be made to understand how these two types of assistance interact and how they can complement each other more effectively.

In all support, donor agencies need to be clear with the political parties about the principles on which support is based such as inclusivity, transparency and equality.

#### **Helping build an African regional party network: Westminster Foundation for Democracy**

Support for regional party networks can produce valuable results. For example, in a recent survey of the Africa Liberal Network (ALN), a group of 44 ideologically aligned parties, members pointed to evidence of greater gender equality, often a result of a more robust gender policy framework, integrating a gender perspective in their by-laws and candidate recruitment policies and creating 'gender focal points'. An ALN affiliated party stated that new gender policies had led to an increase in the number of women on the National Executive from two to six and the number of women on the party's Central Committee from 10 to 22. Another noted that women now make up approximately 30% of positions in all his party decision-making bodies and for the first time a woman has held the post of Deputy Secretary-General.

#### **4.3.4 Support to political party systems**

**Political party law.** Problematic political party laws often contribute to the distorted political party assistance. A law establishing very high barriers to the formation of parties may contribute to a dominant party system. A law establishing extremely low barriers may contribute to fragmentation. Working with diverse stakeholders on political party reform is one way to try to help a country reshape its political party system.

**Political party financing.** Non-transparent, poorly regulated party financing is at the root of many problems with party development in developing countries. A critical, yet still relatively underdeveloped area of party assistance is work helping countries strengthen systems of party financing.

**Interparty dialogues.** Some party aid providers, especially the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) or the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) facilitate regular dialogue processes among parties in the country, to help them defuse conflicts, work jointly to establish clear electoral rules, articulate ethical standards, and agree on needed legal change for party system reform.

#### **Interparty dialogue in Mali: Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Dialogue (NIMD)**

The NIMD has operated an interparty dialogue platform in Mali since 2007. All of the parliamentary parties participate in this platform and all have an equal vote. During the heightened civil conflict and coup d'état in 2012-2013, the interparty dialogue platform facilitated the political parties, including a broader alliance of civil actors, in agreeing on a roadmap towards reinstating the constitution and democratic rule. In 2014, the platform helped the political parties to come together and discuss the ongoing peace process. NIMD worked with the parties to identify their positions on the negotiations, discuss possible solutions and reach consensus where possible. NIMD also supported the parties to channel their views to the government and negotiators in the peace process.

### 4.3.5 Combined parliamentary and party support

The effectiveness of parties are a large determinant in the quality of the parliament's work, determining the parliamentary timetable, negotiating compromises over legislation, and providing guidance for MPs on behaviour, voting and attendance in parliament. Political parties in parliament frequently need help in terms of their structure, organisation and the values they instil in MPs.

**Organisation of parties in parliament.** To function within parliament and undertake any sort of dialogue with other parties, a party will need the basic organisational structures that enable MPs to meet regularly to discuss policy and forthcoming parliamentary business, communicate messages from MPs to leaders and from leaders to MPs, and accepted procedures for taking decisions. Development agencies may provide advice and support to parties to improve their internal organisation and processes, or possibly resources.

**Research and policy development.** The extent of negotiation between parliamentary parties over parliamentary business depends on them having a clear policy position in the first place. In many parliaments, the tension between parties is based on visceral rather than intellectual points. Working with parties to develop policies based on evidence rather than opinion is likely to strengthen both the quality of scrutiny and oversight in parliament, and possibly change the quality of the debate between parties.

**Forums for inter-party dialogue within parliament.** In conflict-affected countries, the interaction between the political parties in parliament will often exacerbate those tensions rather than reduce them. Debates in the plenary session will often emphasise difference and division, rather than common points of interest. Although parliamentary committees work across party lines, there is also merit in developing formal and informal spaces for inter-party dialogue to break down barriers.

#### **Support to the constitutional dialogue and parliamentary development in Tunisia: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

The project, implemented by UNDP and funded by seven international donors, provided technical and logistical assistance to the newly elected National Constituent Assembly and Tunisian civil society in the constitutional dialogue process, and supported parliament in carrying out its key functions. The project had three main objectives. First, to support a participatory and inclusive constitutional process through assistance to the consultation process, and provide international perspectives on constitutional, institutional and legislative procedures. Second, to build the capacity of the parliament and support the process of reform, and to support the staff of parliament. Third, to support the role of civil society in national dialogue.

The project is regarded as highly successful because it strengthened the institution of parliament by working around key policy issues and dialogue, using multiple entry-points, responding to local need and aligning the incentives of different political groups around key objectives.

# 5. Gender, representation and women's political leadership

## 5.1 The state of the evidence on women's political participation and empowerment

There is evidence that higher numbers of women in local politics can result in better developmental outcomes. A study of gender quotas in countries which are part of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that an increase of the share of female legislators by one percentage point increases the ratio of government expenditure on health and social welfare to GDP by 0.18 and 0.67 percentage points, respectively.<sup>19</sup> In India, local-level gender quotas have been associated with increased spending on water and sanitation infrastructure, which itself has disproportionately large benefits for girls and women. Women's greater representation in local political office, such as the *panchayats* in India, results in greater budget allocations towards infrastructure and services serving women's and children's needs.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, there is evidence that higher numbers of women in parliament increases public health spending and positively influence the number of doctors and the percentage of women who receive pre-natal care.<sup>21</sup> There is also some evidence that community projects that are led by women have a better focus on basic services. In Brazil, women-led community projects had a stronger focus on improving living conditions, including HIV prevention, education and day care whereas men's initiatives had a stronger focus on cultural activities.<sup>22</sup>

Data from a randomised control trial in West Bengal indicates that exposure to women leaders as a result of local-level quotas leads to changes in men's stereotypes of women. Being exposed to women political leaders also positively influences voters' opinion of women leaders<sup>23</sup>. Analysis of the impact of local level gender quotas in India further shows that the gap between the aspirations of adolescent boys and girls decreases in villages where a female leader has been elected, with the gender gap in aspirations closed by 25% in parents and 32% in adolescents in villages assigned a female leader for two election cycles.<sup>24</sup>

Party and parliamentary assistance can contribute to greater women's political empowerment. The task is to improve both the presence and influence of women in parliamentary politics, changing the political discourse and the policy process.

## 5.2 Women in politics: Causes and consequences of under-representation

All around the world, women are under-represented at every level in politics. Within political parties, although women typically constitute between 40% and 50% of members, the proportion of women in leadership positions is estimated at around 10%.<sup>25</sup> Women currently account for 22% of parliamentarians worldwide. Only the parliaments of Rwanda, Bolivia and Andorra have had 50% or more female members.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Chen, L. J., 2010, 'Do Gender Quotas Influence Women's Representation and Policies?', *The European Journal of Comparative Economics*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 13-60

<sup>20</sup> The World Bank, 2012, [World Development Report: Gender Equality and development](#), Washington DC: World Bank

<sup>21</sup> Knack, S. and Sanyal, P. (2000) "Making a Difference: How Women In Politics Affect Health and Education Outcome"

<sup>22</sup> De Mello e Souza, C., 2008, 'Grassroots Leadership in the Network of Healthy Communities in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: A gender perspective', *Gender and Development*, 16: 3, pp. 481-94

<sup>23</sup> Beaman et al (2009). 'Powerful Women: Does Exposure Reduce Bias?' *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol 124

<sup>24</sup> Beaman, L et al , Female leadership raises aspirations and educational attainment for girls, *Science* 3 Feb 2012, pp. 582-586

<sup>25</sup> NDI/UNDP, (2014), *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties*, p. 17

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif311210.htm>

By virtue of their life experiences, women have valuable perspectives that need to be brought to bear on the policy process; women are more likely to suffer financial hardship, lack property rights and take responsibility for the welfare of dependents. The inadequate representation of women in politics distorts the way in which policy is formulated, depriving decision-makers of vital evidence and expertise. More importantly, women bring perspectives, attributes and experiences that are unlikely to be fully represented in a male-dominated parliament on critical issues for developing countries, such as poverty, security, health, education and resolving conflict.

An IPU survey from 2008 of politicians in 110 countries asked women parliamentarians to identify the most significant barriers to entering politics.<sup>27</sup> The survey confirmed that women face particular difficulties in combining their responsibilities with political careers. In developing countries, where the number of female-headed households is increasing, these problems are exacerbated by the structure and running of political parties whose leadership structures tend to be dominated by men, and their preference for choosing male candidates for winnable seats. The cost of running a campaign, lack of effective political networks, and higher levels of poverty amongst women mean that they face even greater difficulties in running for office unless they can find other sources of income. Lastly, the electoral system has an effect on the gender balance, with women more likely to be elected under proportional systems than in single-member constituency systems.<sup>28</sup>

### 5.3 Improving rates of selection and election: Political parties and gender

International assistance to political parties should seek to support gender equality within political parties by improving internal structures and involvement of women in leadership positions, by increasing the selection of women candidates, and by providing support for women candidates running for election. Working with the whole of parties to help all MPs and staff (including men) better consider gender issues is an important part of this.

#### **Advancing women's political empowerment in Burkina Faso: National Democratic Institute (NDI)**

To address the political marginalisation of women in Burkina Faso, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) collaborated with an informal group of Burkinabe civic groups advocating for the adoption of a gender quota on party candidate lists. NDI helped them develop strategies for sensitizing political parties and other authorities on gender inclusion. The National Assembly allowed these groups to develop draft legislation on a 30% quota, which was subsequently enacted into law in 2009. NDI subsequently supported the establishment in 2013 of the Coalition for the Implementation of the Quota Law, comprising eight civil society organizations and three political parties. As a result of this forum, the Ministry of Interior worked with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to clarify guidelines for the implementation of the law. The Burkinabe National Assembly now includes 24 women MPs, a 3.6 % increase over the previous legislature.

#### 5.3.1 Improving gender balance in party structures

Two recent handbooks on promoting women's participation in political parties (from NDI and UNDP, and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights - ODIHR), provide valuable resources for programme design.<sup>29</sup> Central to their recommendations is to ensure that political parties' internal policies and practices increase women's representation at various levels. This would mean that women hold a certain number of leadership positions, but also that women are appointed to key party committees, taskforces and working groups.

Many parties also make use of women's wings or caucuses within the political party. These have proved to

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<sup>27</sup> Ballington, J., (2008) *Equality in Politics: A Survey of Women and Men in Politics*, IPU: Geneva

<sup>28</sup> Larserud, Taphorn (2007) *Designing for Equality: Best-fit, medium-fit and non-favourable combinations of electoral systems and gender quotas*, International IDEA: Stockholm

<sup>29</sup> NDI/UNDP, (2014), *ibid.*; OSCE ODIHR, (2014) *Handbook on Promoting Women's Participation in Political Parties*, OSCE ODIHR: Warsaw



be useful forums for women to discuss issues and help to shape party policy, provided they are integrated in to the policy-making structure and do not displace the role of women in the party from other important committees. In addition, party conventions or conferences, where key policy decisions are often taken, should adopt targets for women's participation.

### **Enhancing Women in Political Parties: Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy**

Acting on the recognition that training for women in political parties often has limited effect, the Tanzania Centre for Democracy (TCD), Centre for Multiparty Democracy, Malawi (CMD) and the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) have jointly embarked on a new approach to enhancing women's participation in political parties and in politics. The approach has three elements: i) regulatory frameworks, cultures and practices within political parties; ii) high level dialogue and between the parties over gender equality; and iii) using political mentoring programmes and networking to promote women's political leadership. The intention is not just to ensure that women are given training but also to help shape the constitutional context, attitudes to gender equality within parties and to change political behaviour in this area.

## **5.3.2 Selection processes and electoral quotas**

There are several options for increasing the selection of women candidates. International assistance to political parties should seek to help the party itself to develop clear recruitment guidelines that emphasize the important of gender balance. One of the most common reforms to improve the gender balance within politics is the adoption of quotas that stipulate the number or proportion of women that are selected or elected to parliament. Such quotas have proved to be the single most effective tool for fast tracking women's representation in elected bodies of government.<sup>30</sup>

There are three types of gender quotas:

**Legislated candidate quotas.** Statutory candidate quotas require a change in the electoral law and oblige all political parties to field a certain number of women candidates. This means that the state can enforce sanctions against parties that fail to comply, and in some cases reject candidates unless the law is met. This provision does not guarantee the election of women, as they will also need to be selected for winnable seats or appear high on a party list.

**Party quotas.** These quotas depend on individual political parties voluntarily adopting procedures that place a certain number of women candidates on the party list or in constituencies. It means that any political party can decide the structure and format of their gender balance in selecting candidates, and are easier to adopt.

**Legislated 'reserved' seats.** This form of electoral law reserves a certain number of seats specifically for women candidates. It may be adopted in a number of different forms. For example, it may include a set number of constituencies where only women can stand, or specific women-only lists that appear on the ballot paper. Donors provide support to improve the integration of reserve/special seats representatives to ensure they are not sidelined from core business.

## **5.3.3 Campaigning**

As mentioned in Chapter 3, there is an important role for international assistance in helping political parties to run a campaign. This is particularly so for women candidates. A number of international initiatives have provided training and advice on fundraising, messaging, media skills, voter contact and strategy. The experience of women MPs from other countries, acting as mentors for individual candidates or groups of women, can be particularly useful in providing direct, practical and first-hand experience of many of the challenges of electioneering.

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<sup>30</sup> Dahlerup, D., et al. (2013), [Atlas of Electoral Gender Quotas](#), IDEA/IPU/Stockholm University, p. 16

### 5.3.4 Developing party policy on gender equality

Underpinning all of these measures is the need to ensure that political parties absorb and instil gender-sensitive policies. This may be achieved partly by altering party structures and increasing the number of women in leadership roles, but international assistance should also work with parties to develop equality legislation proposals. This might include a commitment to legislation such as combating gender-based violence, and should also ensure that parties take a gender perspective on all of their policies, anticipating the effect of policy on all genders.

## 5.4 Strengthening policy and political leadership: Parliaments and gender

Whereas international assistance to political parties tends to focus primarily on the selection and election of women candidates and the development of policy, parliamentary assistance should aim to ensure that once in parliament women MPs play a significant role. They may do this for example through their work in the committees and within the parties, and in ensuring that legislation meets the needs of women. The IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* sets out seven action areas to enhance the representation of women and improve policy-making. It highlights the need to strengthen the statutory basis for gender equality, ensure that the policy-making process is gender-sensitive, change the parliamentary culture, and ensure that gender equality is an issue for all MPs.

Options for international assistance in this area include:

### Promoting institutional reforms

Many of the barriers to women participating fully within a parliament relate to the way in which parliaments are organised and run. Structures often work against the active participation of women, who then struggle to secure influential positions such as committee chairs, whips or spokespeople. The basic infrastructure of a parliament should cater to women's needs, including the provision of enough toilets or female only prayer rooms. In addition, attention should be given to aspects such as working hours and parental leave policies. International assistance can play an important role in the training and development of skills for women MPs and in procedural reforms that enhance the influence of women within parliament as a whole.

### Mainstreaming gender policy

Making a parliament gender-sensitive is partly about its functioning and rules, but it is also about the issues that it discusses and decides. One of the central tasks for international parliamentary strengthening programmes is to ensure that the policy process takes account of the differential effect of legislation on women. This is usually achieved by including gender analysis in the legislative process. The starting point is using data to understand how the policy affects genders differently, and then to develop legislation that attempts to reduce these imbalances. For instance, any education bills should be accompanied by information about the number of girls in full-time education, their attendance, and academic achievements compared with boys. Legislation should be assessed for its impact on equality, and once implemented parliament should monitor the effects of the legislation over time.

### Supporting gender-sensitive budgeting

Gender-sensitive budgeting is an area where parliamentary assistance programmes can have a significant effect provided there is a sufficiently close relationship between budgets and actual disbursement of funds in the country. The budget process should be understood as a political exercise as much as a technical one. Decisions about expenditure will always be shaped by the interests of different stakeholders inside and outside parliament. Making more information available on the effect of government spending on women and men, especially to MPs and gender equality organisations is likely to increase wider understanding of the issues and influence government spending.

There are a large number of resources on how to conduct gender-sensitive budgeting,<sup>31</sup> but the analysis should include consideration of expenditure targeted at the needs of women or reducing inequality, as well as the effect on both sexes of government spending. The budget process should include a gender impact assessment, and how changes in spending are likely to alter that situation.

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<sup>31</sup> Most of the resources are available at [www.gender-budgets.org](http://www.gender-budgets.org)

### **Support to gender-equality committees**

Gender impact analysis should apply to all policies, and not just budgets, and gender equality committees serve a useful purpose in the legislative process, providing an analysis of each bill, and its impact on gender equality. They may pursue their own inquiries and investigations into the effect of policy in specific areas, and monitor the government's compliance with international standards. As with any committee, the members build up expertise and work effectively across party boundaries. International support can strengthen both their reach and their influence, and ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed through all committees.

### **Cross-party caucuses**

In many parliaments, particularly in post-conflict countries or where tensions between blocs and parties are particularly fraught, international support has helped establish cross-party caucuses built around the common experience and interests of women politicians. The initial focus may be on changing the parliamentary rules and structures so that women MPs can play a more prominent role in parliament, or it may be prompted by concerns about particular policies or pieces of legislation. The establishment of such committees can provide a useful way of improving communication between different political parties, increase the influence of women within parliament and can increase the likelihood of it adopting structures and policies that promote gender equality. Sustainability is sometimes a challenge and other less formal forms of cross-party engagement such as workshops bringing women MPs together around specific issues can be useful.

#### **Supporting women's parliamentary caucuses in Côte d'Ivoire: Inter-Parliamentary Union**

IPU supported the establishment of a Caucus of women parliamentarians in Côte d'Ivoire in 2013. The first-ever Women's Caucus in the Ivoirian National Assembly was established with the aim to advance women's rights and mainstream gender throughout all parliamentary work. Inspired by IPU's new guidelines on women's caucuses, the group drafts and reviews legislation, promotes the participation of women in parliamentary decision-making and is responsible for improving gender-sensitive infrastructure and culture. Since then the Caucus has received support from the leadership of parliament and has access to a budget provided by the Parliament. In turn, the Caucus of Women Parliamentarians of Côte d'Ivoire has been providing support to the establishment of similar structures in other parliaments. In 2015, it is leading efforts to enhance women's participation in Côte d'Ivoire, including by raising awareness among men MPs and political party leaders on Temporary Special Measures.

### **Engaging civil society**

Simply increasing the number of women in the formal political process will not necessarily lead to change. A recent report from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) states that both formal and informal institutions matter.<sup>32</sup> Engaging with state actors, such as parliaments and parties, is essential, but achieving improved gender outcomes will mean that assistance needs also to build broad-based coalitions inside and outside those institutions.

#### **Improving representation in Ghana: Womankind Worldwide**

The Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF-Ghana) has challenged women's exclusion from political tenure by supporting a proposed affirmative action law to increase participation and fulfil Ghana's commitment to international conventions, treaties and protocols. Since 2010, 28 Coalitions of Women in Governance (COWIGs) have been established across the country, with over 500 members (65% women and 35% men). The coalitions have built support among the 10 regions of Ghana for the affirmative action, and over 600 women have received training to participate in political decision-making structures across Ghana.

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<sup>32</sup> Domingo, P., et al., (2015), [Women's Voice and Leadership in Decision-Making](#), ODI: London

# 6. Measuring results while encouraging adaptive programming

The global development community has made efforts to undertake politically informed and adaptive programming in recent years, **reflected in initiatives such as DFID's own 'Smart Rules' published in 2014.**

This chapter sets out an approach to measuring impact for parliamentary and party assistance while encouraging flexible programming. Politics is never static, and the chapter looks at what sort of impact is realistic for parliamentary and party assistance, describing a process to ensure that programmes stay focused on resolving the important problems and are driven by outcomes more than activities.

There are a wide range of initiatives which now aim to measure impact while also allowing project flexibility. This approach tries to combine many of the key elements in a succinct manner, but recognises that decisions about the best monitoring system will depend on many contextual factors including geographic scale, timeframe and high-level goals.

Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks should be seen not only as mechanisms of accountability but also of learning and adaptation. The indicators they use and the process by which they choose them should reflect this.

## 6.1 Indicators for problem-centred programming and flexible use of results frameworks

Emphasising the need for flexibility, DFID has stated that results frameworks should be seen as a “dynamic tool that can be changed throughout the course of the programme”<sup>33</sup> Results frameworks should ensure that the project remains focused on its overall objectives, while allowing flexibility in changing indicators.

Results frameworks should try to capture evidence at four levels within parties and parliaments: strengthening institutional structures, improving the performance of the direct project beneficiaries, improving the performance of the institution (the parliament or party as a whole), and enhancing the impact of the parliament or party on the wider political governance environment.

These are indicative measures for parliamentary and political party development, and can be used flexibly within a logframe. As noted above (section 3.1), the political context will determine what constitutes realistic objectives, and thus shape indicators at each stage.

**Evidence of improved institutional capacity.** The results framework should include measures as to whether the project has successfully addressed any institutional weaknesses by reforming procedures, strengthening internal organisation and improving capacity. It should assess whether the institution has the capacity to operate on its own terms.

*Potential indicators include:* Internal procedures established, understood and accepted. Specific measures of decision-making processes. Sufficient resources to perform basic party/parliamentary functions. Sufficient numbers of adequately trained staff. Processes for institutional learning. Adoption of systems that ensure women are appointed to positions of influence.

**Evidence of changes to the performance of the target group.** These measures should examine the effect of the project on the direct recipients, in terms of their capacity, behaviour and performance. That is, is there evidence of reforms being implemented, improved performance or changed behaviour? It should

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<sup>33</sup> DFID, (2015), [Smart Rules: Better Programme Delivery, Version V](#), DFID: London, p. 61

look for evidence of self-sustaining change, where new patterns of behaviour or reforms are entrenching themselves.

The project should see evidence that Members of Parliament, staff, party leaders and party members are using new insights to tackle problems in new ways, or to implement reforms. Projects should be looking for changes that sustain themselves over a period of time. A key indicator for projects will be whether the application of new forms of behaviour is repeated, and thus becomes standard practice amongst the target group.

*Potential indicators include:* Number and quality of committee reports. Number and quality of public evidence sessions. Number and quality of committee hearings with ministers. Development of policy by parties. Development of gender impact assessment techniques. Adoption of new campaign techniques by women candidates.

**Evidence of change to the performance of the parliament/party or party system.** Measurement should then look at the effect of the assistance on the performance of the institution as a whole. That is, have the individual outcomes, such as more effective committees or better internal party organisation, contributed to a more effective and efficient parliament or party, or the functioning of all the main parties as a party system? This would involve measures of institutional performance as a whole over the project lifetime.

*Potential indicators include:* application of techniques and increase in overall volume and quality of committee reports in parliament as a whole, evidence sessions, ministerial hearings. Use of party policy to develop party manifestos as part of election campaigns. Adoption of routine gender impact assessments for legislation. For party system programming, indicators might include examples of specific cooperation among major parties on issues of electoral reform or party law reform.

**Evidence of change to the wider political governance environment.** The final level of measurement is at the highest level, whether the parliament or party or party system is contributing to the achievement of development outcomes, strengthening overall accountability within the country or tackling chronic problems of delivery. Such an impact would most likely be beyond the direct influence of the project, but may be a contributor to such changes.

The higher level impact will almost always be framed in terms of the project's contribution to a better quality of political governance and development outcomes, but judging the success or failure of the project should recognise that party or parliamentary assistance is exactly that, a *contribution*, and be assessed as to how far it has contributed to those ends, rather than being held solely responsible for them.

*Potential indicators include:* Increased responsiveness and accountability of government to parliament. Improved policy, legislation and service delivery. Active promotion of development goals. Greater number of women playing an active and leading role in politics. Assess progress in the context of international measures such as the World Bank Governance Indicators<sup>34</sup> or the Varieties of Democracy Index.<sup>35</sup>

	Organisational capacity	Performance (target group)	Performance (institution)	Impact
Committees	New processes and procedures to improve committee oversight and scrutiny of law	Number and quality of reports/hearings/amendments by specific committees.	Adoption of similar techniques by other committees, number and quality of reports/hearings/amendments by all committees	Government regularly accounting to parliament for policy and delivery.
Constituency work	Establishment of constituency offices and techniques for dealing with casework.	Increase in number of requests for help from citizens. Public satisfaction with results.	Wider adoption of constituency office structures and techniques in other areas. Number of	Improved quality of local services. Greater awareness of local needs and policy response in parliament.

<sup>34</sup> <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>

<sup>35</sup> <https://v-dem.net/en/>

			requests for help, public satisfaction with results.	
Gender equality	Adoption of systems that guarantee appointment of women to key positions	Development of techniques to support women's political leadership within parliaments and parties.	Mainstreaming of gender issues through techniques such as gender impact assessments and gender-sensitive budgeting.	Improved policy and law that promotes interests of women and men.
Party policy development	Adoption of inclusive policy-making processes	Development of party policy in key areas by policy staff, involving party-wide and civil society consultation.	Manifestoes based on policy positions used as the basis for campaign electioneering.	Genuine choice competition at elections. Government policy responsive to public.
Party Dialogue	Establishment of dialogue mechanisms	Negotiation between delegates from different political parties to build areas of consensus.	Formal adoption of agreements by wider political parties	Implementation of political, social, or economic reforms

Aggregating information can be a challenge and the outcome matrix approach draws on existing rating approaches combined with elements of outcome mapping methodology. It creates a measurement tool that enables each programme to identify its progress markers and assess themselves against them over time.

Lastly, it is important to find measures that are not solely quantitative. For example, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy combines quantitative indicators and narratives about change<sup>36</sup>. The Independent Commission on Aid Impact (ICAI) itself recognises that indicators suggesting increased accountability or reduced conflict and fragility tend to be qualitative rather than quantitative. And, as the OECD DAC guidance on assistance to political parties makes clear, keep strengthening evaluations, but don't overemphasise numbers<sup>37</sup>. In both party and parliamentary assistance strict quantitative indicators are likely to be unhelpful.

## 6.2 Value for Money

DFID guidance on developing the business case for projects has value for money at its heart, and emphasises the widely-accepted definition of the three 'E's', economy (inputs), efficiency (outputs) and effectiveness (outcome).

**Economy.** The economy or input considerations will revolve around the cost of time and resources in order to run and deliver the project. Parliamentary and party assistance tends to depend on expert advisers, or former or current politicians to offer peer-to-peer learning. The business case will need to consider the balance of resources, whether there needs to be a permanent presence in country or whether savings could be made through different models. What is the cost of reaching women and marginalised groups? Programmes to support parliamentary and political party reform should normally be relatively low cost and are likely to be made primarily of staff time.

*Factors include:* Amount and rate for staff and expert consultant time; cost of venue hire, accommodation, and subsistence; cost of producing documents. All should be comparable with market rates. Include in-kind contributions of the parliament or party, partly as a demonstration of political will and buy-in: free use of venues for meetings; provision of resources, catering or speakers.

**Efficiency.** Efficiency will depend on the way in which the resources are used in order to produce certain outputs. In looking at the cost of these factors, attention should be given to whether such experts or

<sup>36</sup> Ramshaw, G., (2015) [Monitoring democratic governance programmes: Evolution over revolution](#). Westminster Foundation for Democracy: London.

<sup>37</sup> Carothers, T., 'Principles for Political Party Assistance', in OECD, (2013), [Accountability and Democratic Governance](#), DAC Guidelines and Reference Series: Paris

politicians will be used strategically and repeatedly over a significant period. Supporting the process of organisational development often depends on developing long-term relationships between experts and beneficiaries. It is important to ensure that projects are not 'captured' by parliament's requests and that the provision of infrastructure and goods is handled carefully so that the project remains focused on political reform.

*Factors include:* Ensuring quality of inputs (staff, experts, venues and documents) in light of cost. Strategic and long-term use of staff and experts, to ensure familiarity with political conditions, increasing local political will and sustainable change. Use of techniques that increase wider capacity of parliament or party, such as training the trainers, cascading learning and in-house production of guidelines based on project activities.

**Effectiveness.** Effectiveness should consider the extent to which outputs are leading to the desired outcomes. As mentioned, the relationship between outputs and outcomes in parliamentary and party assistance is complex, and contingent on a number of different factors. It is easier to assess these links after the project has been delivered, than it will be while developing the business case. However, the analysis should consider not only whether the theory of change and project content match, but also the likely effect of any activities on wider institutional performance. Effectiveness should consider the degree to which the programme reaches and has impact on women and marginalised groups.

*Factors include:* Extent to which the project logic and activities build institutional capacity, performance and impact. Level of local ownership of objectives and activities. Co-ordination and collaboration with other in-country donor assistance. Use of pockets of good practice and ripple effect to encourage reforms. Repetition and replication of new processes and patterns of behaviour within the wider institution.

To emphasise, the effectiveness of governance work should be assessed not just against the likely effect on the direct beneficiaries, but what ITAD (*Information, Training and Development*) term 'leverage and replication' (and what we describe as pockets of good practice and the ripple effect).<sup>38</sup> That is, ensuring projects develop from phases ii) and iii) above. In terms of value for money, a judgement should be made as to how far the results of the project will affect the parliament as whole, or the wider policies and operation of the political party.

The final considerations in terms of value for money when developing a business case for parliamentary and party assistance are included in the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) principles which guide their assessments of DFID's work in relation to value for money.<sup>39</sup> Specifically, they stress that complex problems require innovative solutions, and ICAI encourages risk-taking provided those risks are well-managed.

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<sup>38</sup> ITAD, (2010), [Measuring the Impact and Value for Money of Governance and Conflict Programmes](#), ITAD

<sup>39</sup> ICAI, (2011), [ICAI's Approach to Effectiveness and Value for Money](#), ICAI: London

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