Literature Review of Applied Research on Democratic Development

Commissioned by the International Development Research Centre
Under the Terms of Research Support Grant Agreement No. 105367-001

October 15, 2008

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Introduction

Objectives

The original statement of objectives for the review were established in the following terms of reference.

"In its Report to the First Session of the 39th Parliament, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development noted that "strengthening democratic governance is neither simple nor quick. It involves the development of skills, processes, and institutions while promoting and consolidating the complex interconnection between law, rights, administration, and politics….Development partners (in the developing regions of the world) don't want foreign models, they want practical knowledge. Donors are more successful when they are knowledgeable about how democratic governance operates…" (pg. 49-50) The Committee went on to express a "strong preference for an arms-length body (to) conduct… independent research that is accessible to both those working within and outside of governments. Moreover, public funding for this activity should also come through instruments that, like IDRC, can be independent of government." (pg. 51)

"In its Response to that Report, Government agreed to "establish a Canadian research program on democracy support and a Democracy Partners Research and Study Program to generate knowledge on the challenges to democracy in specific country contexts." The draft purpose of the research program is to inform actions and strategies for strengthening democratic processes and institutions (elections, parliaments, parties, civil society in the political process, and independent media). Government has now approached the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in relation to this commitment. In that same response, the decision was made to focus on "democracy support", with particular attention to elections, parliaments, civil society as it engages the political process, independent media and political parties. While the decision was made to focus on the five aspects of democracy support outlined above, attention to the operational linkages between democracy support and rule of law, human rights and accountable public institutions will remain important.

"Government and IDRC wish to undertake a literature review that will assist them in coming to a decision on this important matter. Since they are both motivated by a desire to produce new knowledge that supports and enhances democratic values and practices, both government and IDRC wish that any such future research program should have the following features:

- it should be a program of *applied* research;
- it should support original research, or new means of applying existing knowledge;
- the outputs of this applied research should be useful to those people struggling to build and consolidate democratic systems of governance in the developing regions of the world and to those who assist them, including policy-makers and development practitioners;
- it should give prominence to research designed and conducted by individuals from the developing regions of the world.

"With these motivations in mind, Government and IDRC seek to commission a senior consultant with extensive international experience in democratic development to conduct a literature survey. The survey would seek to answer the question "What is known about existing applied research on democratic development, both in Canada and internationally?" The literature review should focus on research being undertaken on "democratic or political processes", defined according to the November SCFAID Government Response as the three core political institutions/processes (parliaments, elections, parties) and the relationship of civil society and an independent media to these core political processes.

"Specifically, the literature survey should identify:
- the main topics and themes in applied research on strengthening democratic or political processes and institutions, situating them in their historical context but with emphasis on the contemporary literature;
- the main areas of agreement or convergence among researchers working on strengthening democratic or political processes and institutions;
- the main areas of disagreement or divergence among researchers working on strengthening democratic or political processes and institutions;
- any significant gaps in the literature; these gaps may be either pertinent topics that are un- or under-researched, or gaps in the methodological toolkits of researchers and practitioners;
- any emerging lines of research that show promise, especially if they appear to be under-resourced;
- (to the extent possible) identify how current research is either being used and/or being made accessible to users;
- the extent to which the existing literature on strengthening democratic or political processes and institutions is driven by the perceptions, needs and voices emanating from the developing regions of the world.

"In addition, the consultant should advise on the following question: 'What is an appropriate conceptual framework for the research program to better understand the key challenges and approaches to democratic processes from a local perspective?'"

From the terms of reference and discussions as the review evolved, seven core objectives were established:

- To identify the main topics and themes in applied research on democratic development and the main areas of agreement and disagreement among researchers working in this field;
- To identify any significant gaps in the literature, as well as emerging lines of research that show promise, especially if they appear to be under-resourced;
- To assess the extent to which policy and programming decisions to support democratic development make effective use of applied research;
- To assess the extent to which research that will be useful to developing democracies is available to and used by those engaged in building and consolidating democracy in these countries;
- To assess the extent to which developing democracies have a local capacity to conduct and apply research that will contribute to democratic governance;
- To assess research capacity in Canada
- To recommend an appropriate conceptual framework for a program of applied research to support democratic development.

Scope and organization of the report

This report is divided into four sections. Section 1 provides an overview of the state of applied research in context of the objectives defined by the terms of reference and their subsequent elaboration. Section 2 presents reviews of literature in the five specific sectors on which the terms of reference requested that we report. Section 3 reports on the research capacities of partner countries, the United States and Europe, and Canada. Section 4 provides a framework for organizing analysis of democratic development

Notes on methodology

The literature reviews

The body of literature on this subject is now very substantial. To make the task manageable the focus was placed on searches of journals and web sites specifically dedicated to research on democratic development, a secondary list of the principal journals in political science, and monographs and collections dealing with relevant subjects. The principal investigator prepared the overview of the general literature in Section 1, drawing on his knowledge of the field from his experience in teaching and research on the subject over the past decade. The sector reviews in Section 2 were prepared by research assistants under the direction of the research associate. The framework for their reviews and reports is explained in the introduction to Section 2.

Research capacity reviews

The methodology for assessing research capacity in partner countries is explained in the introduction to Section 3. This report was prepared by the research associate. While he was compelled to focus on searches of published research, he attempted to expand the results from those searches through interviews with a sample of representatives of organizations purporting to work in the field. Unfortunately, the response rate was very small. Of 20 contacts made he was able to complete only four interviews.

To provide a reference point for assessing the state of applied research in Canada, a survey was done of work in Europe and the United States. The extent of applied research in Canada was done through a search of graduate programs in political science and published statements of the research interests of faculty in political science and relevant cognate disciplines at Canadian universities.

Use of research

We have very little direct evidence about how research is used in partner countries. Our comments on that are based on observations from the few interviews with representatives of research organizations that we were able to complete. There is some information about donor use of research in literature commenting on the state of democracy support. We were also able to draw inferences about donor use through statements of policy and published guidelines for practitioners.

Definitions of core terms:

The term *"applied research"* was defined by IDRC to mean "research with direct application to policy development and programming decisions" which would encompass "research on democracy that is useful to policy-makers in developing countries as well as research that would be relevant to democracy donors making decisions on what support to focus on."

The terms *"democratic development"* and *"democratization"* will be understood here as the process though which a system of democratic governance is established. *"Democracy"* is defined as a system of governance that promotes and protects democratic values (an explanation of this definition of democracy is provided in Section 4.)

Executive summary

From the terms of reference and discussions as the review evolved, seven core objectives were established;

- To identify the main topics and themes in applied research on democratic development and the main areas of agreement and disagreement among researchers working in this field;
- To identify any significant gaps in the literature, as well as emerging lines of research that show promise, especially if they appear to be under-resourced;
- To assess the extent to which policy and programming decisions to support democratic development make effective use of applied research;
- To assess the extent to which research that will be useful to developing democracies is available to and used by those engaged in building and consolidating democracy in these countries;
- To assess the extent to which developing democracies have a local capacity to conduct and apply research that will contribute to democratic governance;
- To assess research capacity in Canada
- To recommend an appropriate conceptual framework for a program of applied research to support democratic development.

The general state of research on democratic development

A significant commitment to the study of how new democratic regimes emerge and are consolidated did not occur until the "third wave" of democracy was well-advanced. While there was a tradition of scholarship extending back to the middle of the 20th Century which raised questions of this kind, it was not until 1990 that the first major scholarly journal devoted exclusively to democratic studies was published.[1] Since then a flourishing scholarly interest has produced papers, journal articles, collections, and monographs numbering in the thousands.
In addition there is a growing volume of literature in the form of policy statements and reports by governments, international organizations, and private foundations that provide support to democratic development. This review encompasses both kinds of literature.

Research on the process of democratic development

A substantial body of empirical research about the process of democratic development has been accumulated over the past two decades but work on general explanations of how democratic regimes emerge and are consolidated remains at a very elementary stage.

Most of the research consists of studies about the political development of particular countries or regions, and case studies of specific aspects of politics and governance in particular countries or regions. While not explicitly concerned with theory-building, this literature has been the source for primary data for much of the work that has been done on theory. The most useful and soundly-based consists of micro-level studies of particular elements in the process of democratization. These studies have provided observations about many aspects of democratic development, but very few of their findings have been tested in systematic comparisons either across different regions within particular countries or across several countries. Without this kind of replication their narrow focus limits the possibilities for transforming their findings into generalizations.

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[1] The first was the *Journal of Democracy* which was established with funding from the National Endowment for Democracy and is published by Johns Hopkins. A second major journal, *Democratization,* began publication in the United Kingdom in 1994.

There have been two kinds of broad-gauge empirical studies—with attitudinal data and with aggregate socio-economic indicators--that have proposed some hypotheses aimed at theory-building but both are subject to methodological limitations that suggest they are unlikely to yield more authoritative results.

As a result of these deficiencies much of the literature that addresses "big questions" in the study of how new democracies emerge and are consolidated takes the form of interpretative essays based on assumptions that have not been adequately tested.

Critiques of the existing state of knowledge in the field suggest two forms of comparative research to remedy these deficiencies. First, there is a need for the replication in different contexts within individual countries of studies that will provide system-wide data, controlling for contextual variables, on all of the component elements of democratization. This would serve to both deepen understanding of each country's progress toward democratic development and help identify the effects of contextual variables on the processes of change. Second there is a need for inter-country comparative research built from these system-wide intra-country studies that will control for the effects of a wider set of contextual variables.

The role of diplomacy in external support to democratic development

It is a fundamental assumption in the research on democracy support that reform is an endogenous process that can occur only through the actions of domestic elites and citizens. While the scholarly literature on democratic development has focused its attention on identifying the conditions which precipitate and facilitate these actions, research on how they may be influenced by diplomatic intervention is still at an early stage.[2] As a result the size and scope of the literature are very limited. Most of it is based on case studies of the role of international actors in regime changes in specific countries and of the effects of sanctions and political conditionality. Otherwise, for the most part it consists of largely interpretative essays, some based on extrapolations from the general literature in comparative and international politics and some based on attempts to draw generalizations from the case studies.

As one group of researchers, led by Michael McFaul, has pointed out, "the dynamics of international influence on democratic transitions are poorly understood."[3] They say the questions that need to be answered include:

> Do international factors, including democracy promotion policies of Western actors, play a significant role in encouraging or discouraging transitions to democracy? If so, when and how do external incentives, financial and technical aid, socialization techniques, diplomacy or demonstration effects influence domestic decision-makers to attempt to transition to democracy? What combination of domestic conditions and foreign "interventions" are most likely to lead to the weakening of non-democratic regimes and their replacement with democratic governments? What are the pathways of external influence on domestic change and what does the nexus of interaction between external and domestic variables look like in reality?[4]

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[2] For this analysis we have excluded discussion of cases in which there has been any form of military intervention.

[3] McFaul, Michael, Amichai Magen and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, "Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development: Working Paper" entre on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, 2007 p. 1
[4] *Ibid.*

In addition, commentary literature says questions need to be addressed about how democracy promotion diplomacy is best practiced. If external intervention is to be effective it must be understood by populations in partner countries to be in their best interests. This is particularly important because it has been argued that recent events have weakened the legitimacy of democracy promotion.

There are also questions about agency. Is democracy promotion best done through bilateral or multi-lateral engagement and, if the latter, what multi-lateral organizations are likely to be most effective? One of the findings of existing research is the significance in effecting and stabilizing democratic reform of the diffusion of democratic values through neighbouring states. For this reason the effect of external intervention may be enhanced if engagement occurs through multi-lateral regional organizations like the OAS and OAU.

The role of international assistance in democracy promotion

Case studies and commentary on democracy assistance have emphasized the consequences of the fragmentation of effort that results from the large number of international actors providing support to democratic development. The democracy promotion community has grown into a complex array of largely unconnected entities, with separate administrative structures and separate programs. These actors disburse funds[5] through hundreds of individual projects and grants. Decisions about their allocation within particular countries are made discretely by donors, on a project by project basis, with little or no regard for the coordination of their activities with other donors. It is argued that the multiplicity of sources of funding and lack of effective coordination among them has led to a dysfunctional system of program delivery resulting in unnecessary duplication of activities, wasteful allocation of resources and the neglect of significant needs.

This fragmentation of effort is reinforced by the fact that programming decisions tend to be made without reference to any overarching conception of how best to achieve reform. Within most programs assistance is administered through separate streams of support to "good governance", "human rights", "civil society", "the rule of law" and "democratization". All five of these terms are recognizably part of the vocabulary of democratic development. Yet in most donor policies they are treated as distinct categories. Although there has been some recent movement toward finding a more all-embracing concept of "democratic governance", these conceptual distinctions persist in the administration of assistance.

In this context decisions about the kinds of assistance to be given are based on individual donor assessments or preferences and there is a perception that many project decisions are driven by supply-side concerns originating from interests within the donor countries or constituent communities that donors represent..

The consensus from the case-study and commentary literature is that there is a lack of effective strategic planning in the delivery of assistance.

The weakness of strategic planning is compounded by a lack of knowledge about lessons learned. Few donors publish detailed reports that would be helpful in assessing the effectiveness of the projects they support and it appears that few donors do this kind of assessment.

Further, a recurring theme in the literature is the fact that the evaluation protocols established by donors don't provide information that would be useful in strategic planning. As is apparent from the five sector reviews reported in Section 2, much of the evaluation research is concerned with process issues related to the way in which assistance is delivered.

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[5] Estimates of annual public sector spending range from $5-billion to 9-billion (US). Private entities are an additional source of funding with expenditures at least in the range of $700-million.

Evaluation research

The need for better information about the effectiveness of assistance has become a major concern of both researchers and donors. At issue is how program activities affect the complex and system-wide processes of long-term change that are required to produce enduring political reform. There is a broad consensus that" we know very little about whether (democracy assistance) programs achieve their goals."[6]

In the view of independent researchers who have looked at the field as a whole there is a serious lack of analysis assessing how well particular forms of assistance may contribute to the larger enterprise of democratic development, What is needed, as Peter Burnell points out, is evaluation research that will lead to improvement in the design of democracy promotion strategies.[7]

For this purpose it is widely agreed that the first requirement is for research that will deepen understanding of the nature of democratic development and how it may be affected by external intervention. This is the central recommendation of a team of leading American scholars commissioned by USAID to recommend how best to evaluate democracy assistance programs. Their report proposes that policy-makers invest in research that would establish indicators for democracy assistance comparable to those "relied on by policymakers and foreign assistance agencies in the areas of public health or trade and finance…"[8]

The report proposes that these indicators be created and tested through a series of comparative studies that will take account of differences in the context and circumstances under which democratic development occurs:

> …Without some way of analyzing the quality of democracy through time and across countries, there is no way to mark progress or regress on this vital factor, to explain it, or to affect its future course. To gain knowledge of the world, and hence to make effective policy interventions, comparisons must be made"[9]

In emphasizing this approach, the report points to another major deficiency in existing research. While the case-study literature provides evaluation of progress on particular aspects of democratic development in specific countries, there have been very few attempts to do comprehensively inclusive country-specific assessments.

The need for this kind of "whole-of-system" country-specific assessment is affirmed in all of the criticisms of evaluation research and is manifestly essential for effective strategic planning.

The need for conceptual clarity

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[6] Finkel, Steven E., Anibal Perez-Linan and Mitchell A. Silgson, "The Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990-2003", World Politics 59 (April 2007), p. 404

[7] Burnell, Peter, "From Evaluating Democracy Assistance to Appraising Democracy Promotion," in *Political Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 2, (June 2008), p 411 *passim*

[8] Committee on Evaluation of USAID Democracy Assistance Programs, National Research Council, *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research*, National Academy of Science, Washington, 2008, p. 39

[9] *Ibid.* p. 70

The effectiveness of this kind of approach requires some basic agreement on a theory of democratic development. The difficulty is that many questions about what such a theory would encompass remain subject to debate. In part this is because the literature in comparative politics has focused on conceptions of democratic development based on attempts to compare and categorize existing regimes.[10] Despite the proliferation of definitions to which this has led, there is an emerging consensus around the notion that "(a) democracy exists only insofar as its ideals and values bring it into being."[11] Accordingly, most definitions of what a fully-developed democracy would look like now emphasize the connection between institutions and processes of governance and the realization of the values of freedom, equality, and justice as they have evolved in the tradition of liberal political thought. In this view democratic development should be understood as the establishment of a system of governance that promotes and protects liberal-democratic values.[12]

Section 4 outlines a framework for country-specific assessments based on this definition. It describes the elements of a fully-developed liberal democracy understood as an ideal type and incorporates propositions about the conditions necessary to establish and sustain an enduring system of democratic governance.

The model is intended to meet the need for an overarching framework in which to design country-specific strategies for democracy promotion and evaluate progress toward their realization.

The need for local engagement

A recurring theme in the research calling for country-specific strategic plans is the need for full local engagement in their design and implementation. Gordon Crawford has used the term "local authorship" to describe what is needed. He elaborated on this point in his presentation to the Democracy Council's "Democratic Dialogue" in Ottawa in 2007:

> The process of democratic reform must be locally-driven. This principle is based on the fundamental point that democratization is an endogenous process. It cannot be imposed from outside… Democracy can neither be exported nor imported. It has to be developed from within. There can be a role for external actors, certainly, but one that facilitates and supports country-driven processes…..[13]

Sector research

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[10] *Cf.* Storm, Lise, "An Elemental Definition of Democracy and its Advantages for Comparing Political Regime Types," *Democratization*, Volume 15, Issue 2, April 2008, pp 215-229

[11] Sartori, Giovanni. 1987. *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*. Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House, p. 7

[12] For example, Larry Diamond in his 2008 book *The Spirit of Democracy* rejects as inadequate "thin" concepts of democracy that focus on the choice of political elites through free and fair elections. Instead he defines democratic development in terms of a "thick" concept that includes (among other things) a recognition of and protection for the basic freedoms, protection for minority rights, political and legal equality, and the practice of the rule of law. (pp. 22-23) Diamond identifies the first as "electoral democracies" and the second as "liberal democracies." The problematic nature of definitions that do not include a reference to liberal values is reflected as well in Fareed Zakaria's trenchant critique of "illiberal" democracies in his 2003 book *The Future of Freedom, Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*.

[13] Crawford, Gordon," Facilitating Democratic Reforms: Learning from Democratic Principles" Ottawa, February, 2007

Our reviews of applied research in the five specific sectors, on which we report in detail in Section 2, underscore the findings from our assessment of the wider issues in the field.

Research about the process of development in each sector consists predominantly of micro-level case studies within individual countries and reflects the limitations of this approach. Generally, these studies have not been replicated on a system-wide basis within individual countries or in inter-country comparisons. As a result of these deficiencies, generalizations remain at the stage of hypotheses that need to be tested in a variety of different contexts to control for differences in political experience, economic conditions, social structure, and culture.

The possibilities for theory-building are further limited by the fact that research related to individual sectors rarely moves beyond the sector at issue to consider relationships to other elements in the process of democratic development. There are very few attempts to deal with inter-sector relationships and virtually none that explore relationships across sectors holistically.

Sector-level policy research consists almost entirely of evaluations of the results of specific assistance projects commissioned by donors. There are several deficiencies common to this research in all five sectors.

First, the evaluations are predominantly concerned with process issues in the delivery of assistance. To the extent that they give any consideration to impact, they tend to draw their inferences from anecdotal evidence rather than evidence gathered through sound empirical methods. Second, almost universally, the evaluation research has failed to explore questions related to the impact of activities on the longer term or the wider process of systemic transformation. Third, there is little research that evaluates the circumstances in which support activities offer results. This involves questions about timing, sequencing, and the effects of differences in the social, economic, cultural, and political context. Fourth, there is a need for research that evaluates the assumptions and rationales underlying current activities to support sector development.

Finally, each of the sector reviews points to significant limitations in the data available to researchers concerning the nature and scope of international support. The surveys of international support activities identified during the course of the review are all confined to mapping activities in a particular sector. Differences in the definitions and methodologies they employ mean that they cannot be combined with similar studies in other sectors to provide a picture of assistance as a whole. In addition, no survey of assistance in a given sector has been replicated subsequently thus ruling out the testing of propositions about international support based on cross-time analysis. Further, no survey of support to a given sector has provided data on the nature and scope of international assistance (as a whole) to that sector.

A report on research priorities in each of the five sectors is provided in Section 2.

Applied research in Canada

Compared to Europe and the United States Canadian research capacity is significantly under developed.

A survey of curricula in political science and policy studies departments shows that most Canadian universities deal with this subject through studies of regime change in particular countries or regions. Only five universities regularly offer general courses on democratic development and only three give these courses as part of their graduate curriculum. Most other graduate programs deal with democratization through one or two classes as part of their area studies courses in comparative politics.

There are two Canadian research centres devoted to the study of democracy: the Centre for

Studies of Democratic Institutions at UBC and the Centre for the Study of Democracy at Queen's. Some research on particular countries is done through area studies centres and programs at other universities. There are fewer than a dozen Canadian academics whose work deals primarily with democratic development.

The approach to the subject through area studies is fairly common in American and European universities. However, there are major programs that treat democratic development as a specialization in both the United States and Europe. The University of Warwick, for example, offers specialist concentrations on democratization in both the MA and the PhD and faculty in its Centre for Studies in Democratization have published 72 articles and books on democratization and related subjects over the past four years.

In addition, in both Europe and the United States a number of democratic development research programs have grown up in research centres outside the universities. Examples are the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in the United States, the Clingendael Institute in the Netherlands, and the Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE) in Madrid.

The research capacity of partner countries

Very few articles by partner-country researchers turn up in the applied research. One reason is that scholarship in relevant subjects in many emerging or potential new democracies, even those with well-established post-secondary institutions, is under-developed. Post-secondary curricula have not incorporated these subjects and researchers there have not been trained in or encouraged to do relevant research. Another reason is that there is little infrastructure in these countries to support scholarly communication. A third reason is the lack of funding for research.

Many countries engaged in democratic reform don't have these problems. They have a well-developed community of scholars with training in political science or cognate disciplines who could undertake relevant research, but they don't have access to the levels of funding for research that are available to academics and researcher centres in the established democracies.

In Section 3 we report on a review of research output and potential in countries designated as priority countries for Canadian international assistance.

Donor and practitioner use of research

Commentaries on democracy support policy say policy-makers, administrators and practitioners have made very little use of academic research related to their work. The communications between academic researchers and practitioners in the field of democratic development have never been as strong as those between academic researchers and practitioners in the field of economic development. In part this is because work on democratic development has not achieved the degree of theoretical or empirical authority of work on economic development.

The communications between academic researchers and practitioners in the field of democratic development have never been as strong as those between academic researchers and practitioners in the field of economic development.

One reason for this is that while the academic community has an active interest in the process of democratic development, there has been little academic research about democracy support policies. Very few academics do work on policy and most of the studies that have a policy focus are generated by donors or research organizations with aid-specific mandates.

Representatives of the Southern research institutes and networks interviewed for this report said their research is designed to be of interest to policy-makers and activists and that they make concerted efforts to communicate with these audiences. However, there is no direct evidence

from the web sites of donors, practitioners, or activists to assess the effectiveness of these efforts.

Opportunities for Canada

There is a clear sense among those who have viewed it with some critical perspective that research in this field needs to be taken to a new level. We have gone as far as we can with existing research methods in explaining how democratic development occurs. To enhance understanding of the process of democratic development in a way that will serve both democracy activists and international donors who want to support their activities, there is a need for more systematic comparative research. The body of propositions accumulated through existing research methods needs to be tested through inter-country comparative research that incorporates system-wide analysis and effectively controls for a wide range of variables. This is essential to develop explanatory theory which can permit more effective strategic planning, more effective monitoring of progress, and more effective evaluation of the impact of support activities.

The scope for engagement is broad. However, Canada will have to be careful in deciding how best to participate. The kind of research that is needed is expensive. If a Canadian research program is to add significant value, it must be focused on a limited number of realistically-attainable objectives. Towards this end we identify three options for Canadian engagement.

One approach would be to focus on one or more themes in the five sectors on which we report in Section 2. As the literature reviews indicate, there are important questions as yet unanswered in the research on these sectors. Canada could support research that builds on or contributes to comparative studies already underway in a particular sector, such as the African legislatures project, or it could develop a similar kind of comparative project in a different region or sector. A drawback with this approach is suggested by the Terms of Reference which note that while these five sectors are to constitute the focus for the report, "attention to the operational linkages between democracy support and rule of law, human rights and accountable public institutions will remain important."   While we were not asked to review the other sectors intensively, we note that there are important themes that could be usefully investigated in these sectors. Further, in narrowing a comparative research agenda to a specific sector, there is the risk that the analysis generated will not adequately control for causes and consequences outside the sector.

A second approach would be to undertake research to develop primary data about one or more of the component dimensions of democratization. This would permit the testing and refinement of various indicators that could be used for measuring the impact of democracy promotion assistance. As the report on evaluation commissioned by USAID recommends, evaluation research in the field of democratic development needs indicators similar to those used in measuring economic and social assistance. Primary research of this kind would also serve the purpose of generating data to support secondary analyses of such issues as sequencing. Since this kind of research is likely to be very expensive, Canada would probably need to engage in it through partnerships with other donor countries.

A third approach would be to support research to create whole-system assessments of the condition of democracy in a comparative sample of partner countries. These assessments would serve three purposes. They could be used for strategic planning both by internal actors and donors; they could help donors make decisions about where their interventions may be most helpful; and they could provide benchmarks for donors to use in monitoring and evaluating the impact of their activities. In addition, since whole-system assessments do not restrict themselves to a particular sector, the knowledge they generate promises a more realistic and inclusive understanding of the current challenges facing democracy promotion. Further, since assessments would be based on the principle of local authorship, this approach has the advantage of providing the best opportunity for developing research capacities in partner countries.

Given the limits on the resources available, Canada would significantly diminish the value of its research program if it were to distribute its funding broadly across all of these approaches. Since other donors appear to be giving more attention to the need for research, as a next step we would recommend consultations with these donors to establish their priorities and explore the possibilities for cooperation. These consultations should also include the independent foundations dedicated to research on democratic development, such as FRIDE in Spain and the Clingendael Institute in the Netherlands. Canada should also try to leverage its investment in research by taking a more active role in defining the research agenda of multi-lateral research and donor organizations that it supports, such as International IDEA.

Section 1

1.1 Research on the process of democratic development

Most of the literature that deals with the process of democratic transformation is not explicitly concerned with general explanations of how democratic regimes emerge and are consolidated. Rather it consists of research about the political development of particular countries or regions, and case studies of specific aspects of politics and governance in particular countries or regions. Although its purpose has not been theory-building, this literature has been the source for primary data for much of the work that has been done on theory. The most useful and soundly-based contributions are derived from micro-level studies of particular elements in the process of democratization. These studies have provided observations about many aspects of democratic development, but very few of their findings have been tested in systematic comparisons either across different regions within particular countries or across several countries. Without this kind of replication their narrow focus limits the possibilities for transforming their findings into generalizations.

There have been two kinds of broad-gauge empirical research. One employs attitudinal research for comparative analysis.[14] Attitudinal studies have been used to suggest hypotheses about the requirements for democratic development.[15] They have also provided data that permit short-term tracking of change on selected variables. However, attempts to distil authoritative generalizations from this kind of research are limited by differences in the questions investigated, the wording of questions, the specification of independent variables and the way in which survey instruments have been designed and administered.[16] The second form of broad-gauge research uses aggregate data to try to test propositions about factors influencing democratic development. This approach measures democratic development with country placement on scales ranking them as authoritarian, mixed or partially-democratic, and democratic. These rankings are treated as the dependent variable in studies intended to investigate questions such as the relationship between economic development and democratic development. There are limits to what this research can investigate imposed by the nature of the aggregate data available for testing independent variables. Questions have also been raised about the reliability of the methodologies on which the indicators for democratization are based.[17] As a group of leading American scholars point out,

> Existing empirical indicators of overall democracy in a country suffer from flaws that include problems of definition and aggregation, imprecision, measurement errors, poor data

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[14] There are regional surveys in Latin America, Asia, and Europe, as well as larger studies, such as the World Values Study, that in its most recent survey covers 62 countries.

[15] See, for example, the use of World Values Survey data by Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, to try to explain cultural factors in democratic change in *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: the Human Development Sequence*, Cambridge, 2005. The usefulness of the Inglehart-Welzel thesis has been challenged by Jan Teorell and Axel Hadenius in an article in *Studies in Comparative International Development* ("Democracy without Democratic Values: A Rejoinder to Welzel and Inglehart" , 4l1:3, September 2006) on methodological grounds. However, their work does illustrate how attitudinal data may be used in developing explanatory theory.

[16] For an analysis of the kinds of methodological problems that are likely to arise with studies using survey data see Canache, Damarys, Jeffery J. Mondak and Mitchell A. Seligson. "Meaning and Measurement in Cross-National Research on Satisfaction with Democracy". *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (Winter, 2001), pp. 506-528 .

[17] Examples are the scales used by Freedom House to produce its annual "Freedom in the World" reports, the Economist Intelligence Unit's "Index of Democracy", and scales based on the Polity Date Archive at the University of Maryland.

coverage, and a lack of agreement among scales intended to measure the same qualities. There is thus no way to utilize existing macro-level indicators in a way that provides sound policy guidance or reliably tracks modest or short-term changes in a country' democratic status. [18]

These problems don't entirely vitiate the usefulness of studies with these indicators. Work with them has helped to refine propositions and identify independent variables that need to be taken into account in analyses of democratic development.

The limitations of the current body of empirical work are a major obstacle to the development of explanatory theory. As a result much of the literature that addresses "big questions" in the study of how new democracies emerge and are consolidated takes the form of interpretative essays [19] based on assumptions that have not been adequately tested in empirical research. In sum, there are central issues in the study of the internal factors associated with the development of new democracies that cannot be conclusively resolved from the existing research, among them the following:

1. Is there a set of conditions that is essential before a democratic regime can develop?

2. Is there a set of conditions that is essential to the consolidation of a democratic regime?

3. Why is it that in countries with apparently similar characteristics where democratic regimes have emerged, some continue on the path to consolidation while others revert to authoritarianism?

4. Conversely, why is it that democratic regimes have developed and endured in some states where there are few of the conditions that existing theories have thought necessary for democratic success? [20]

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[18] Committee on Evaluation of USAID Democracy Assistance Programs, National Research Council, *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research*, National Academy of Science, Washington, 2008, p 7. See also Chapter 3 "Measuring democracy", pp. 61-63.

[19] The literature on sequencing illustrates this interpretative approach. The concept of sequencing entered the discourse with a series of articles that raised questions about the uneven results flowing from the "Third Wave." At issue was whether there was a particular sequence in the way in which democratic development occurred. Thomas Carothers challenged the concept of sequencing in an article called "The Sequencing Fallacy" in the *Journal of Democracy* in 2007, which provoked a debate in that journal. Both sides asserted positions based on interpretations of selectively cited cases from the political experience of the past two decades. There is no way from the analysis presented of substantiating either position. See Carothers, Thomas, "How Democracies Emerge: The 'Sequencing' Fallacy," *Journal of Democracy* 18.1 (2007) 12-27; Mansfield, Edward D., and Jack Snyder, "The Sequencing 'Fallacy'", *Journal of Democracy* 18.3 (2007) 5-10; Fukuyama, Francis, Liberalism versus State-Building, *Journal of Democracy* 18.3 (2007) 10-13; Berman, Sheri "The Vain Hope for 'Correct' Timing," *Journal of Democracy* 18.3 (2007) 14-17. For the two main articles that precipitated the discussion see Mansfield, Edward D., and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 5–38 and Zakaria, Fareed "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (November–December 1997): 22–43.

[20] The problematic nature of research in the field is further illustrated by articles on this subject in the August, 2008, issue of *Democratization* which is devoted to a series of "deviant" cases of countries where a form of electoral democracy has been adopted, despite the absence of conditions generally thought to be necessary for democratic development. The case studies

5. Is there a particular trajectory toward democratic development with logically-phased sequencing in the factors that bring it about?

Beyond these more general questions, there are many specific questions that need answering about how best to measure the effects of each of the economic, social, and cultural variables that are presumed to influence democratic reform.

In fact, there is virtually no issue in the study of the internal factors in democratic development that does not require further investigation. Some subjects are simply under-developed, while others have generated unresolved debates.

Critiques of the existing state of knowledge in the field suggest two forms of comparative research to remedy these deficiencies. First, there is a need for the replication in different contexts within individual countries of studies that will provide system-wide data, controlling for contextual variables, on all of the component elements of democratization. This would serve to both deepen understanding of each country's progress toward democratic development and help identify the effects of contextual variables on the processes of change. Second there is a need for inter-country comparative research built from these system-wide, intra-country studies that will control for the effects of a wider set of contextual variables. It is only in this way that explanatory theory can be accorded a sound empirical foundation. [21]

1.2   Research on external factors in democratic development

The role of diplomacy in democracy promotion

It is a fundamental assumption in the research on democracy promotion that reform is an endogenous process that can occur only through the actions of domestic elites and citizens. While the scholarly literature on democratic development has focused its attention on identifying the conditions which precipitate and facilitate these actions, research on how they may be influenced by diplomatic intervention is still at an early stage.[22] As a result the size and scope of the literature are very limited. Most of it is based on case studies of the role of international actors in regime changes in specific countries and of the effects of sanctions and political conditionality. Otherwise, for the most part it consists of largely interpretative essays, some based on extrapolations from the general literature in comparative and international politics and some based on attempts to draw generalizations from the case studies.[23]

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consist of interpretative essays that lack a foundation in comprehensive, empirically-based assessments, controlling for all the variables that might factor in the "normal" and "deviant" cases.

[21] This kind of approach has been proposed by the authors of *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research*, *op. cit.* as a means to improve methods for evaluating the impact of international assistance projects. (See sub-section 1.3 below)

[22] For this analysis we have excluded discussion of cases in which there has been any form of military intervention.

[23] *Cf.* Skrede, Gleditsch, and Michael; Ward "Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization," *International Organization,* Vol. 60, Fallk 2006, pp. 911-933 This is one of several articles that refer to a diffusion effect in the "third wave" of democratization, arguing that: "The scope and extent of connections with other democratic countries in a region can strengthen support for democratic reform and help sustain institutions in transitional democracies." (911)

The most extensive empirical work has been done on the use of political conditionality. Based on observations of its effectiveness in the process of accession to the European Union,[24] a number of researchers have looked at its potential for wider application.[25] While most of this research consists of case studies of limited application, one study is based on a comparative analysis that includes controls for the strength of incentives. Using regression analysis of data from 36 countries Frank Schimmelfennig and Hanno Scholtz looked at of the EU's democracy promotion policies in neighbouring states including both states for which the incentive was membership or association and states for which some form of association was not on offer.[26] The authors concluded that the effects of conditionality "become weaker and inconsistent if the EU offers less than membership or association."[27] While this is hardly surprising, it underscores the importance of factors other than the specific material benefits of conditionality in promoting democratic reform.

Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way have suggested a way to identify these factors. In attempting to explain why some exercises in international diplomacy have been effective in influencing reform while others have failed, they distinguish between "Western *leverage* (governments' vulnerability to external pressure) and *linkage* to the West (the density of a country's ties to the United States, the European Union, and Western-led multilateral institutions)."[28] The strength of linkages, they argue, will be a significant variable in determining the effectiveness of leverage. While there have been a few attempts to build on this insight, there has been no systematic empirical research to test it further.

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[24] *Cf.* Diane Ethier,, "Is Democracy Promotion Effective?" Comparing Conditionality and Incentives," *Democratization*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Spring 2003, pp. 99-120

[25] *Cf.* Cavatorta, Francesco, "The International Context of Morocco's Stalled Democratization,**"** *Democratization* Vol. 12, No. 4, August 2005, pp. 548–566**;** Güney, Aylin and Aslihan Çelenk, "The European Union's Democracy Promotion Policies in Algeria: Success or Failure?" *The Journal of North African Studie*s, Vol. 12, Issue 1 March 2007, pp 109 – 128; Ethier, Diane, "Promotion de la démocratie dans les Balkans: L'efficacité inégale de la conditionnalité et des incitatifs," *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique* (2006), 39: 803-825

[26] Schimmelfennig, Frank and Hanno Scholtz, "EU Democracy Promotion in the European Neighbourhood," *European Union Politics,* Volume 9 (2), 2008, pp. 187-218
[27] *Ibid.* pp. 189-90,

[28] Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A. Way , "International Linkage and Democratization" *Journal of Democracy* 16.3 (2005) p. 20 They say "(t)here are at least five dimensions of such ties: 1) *economic* linkage, which includes credit, investment, and assistance, 2) *geopolitical* linkage, which includes ties to Western governments and Western-led alliances and organizations; 3) *social* linkage, which includes tourism, migration, diaspora communities, and elite education in the West; 4) *communication* linkage, which includes cross-border telecommunications, Internet connections, and Western-media penetration; and 5) *transnational civil society* linkage, which includes ties to international NGOs, churches, party organizations, and other networks. " (p.22-23)

This reflects the general state of the field. As one group of researchers, led by Michael McFaul, has pointed out, "the dynamics of international influence on democratic transitions are poorly understood."[29] They say the questions that need to be answered include:

> Do international factors, including democracy promotion policies of Western actors, play a significant role in encouraging or discouraging transitions to democracy? If so, when and how do external incentives, financial and technical aid, socialization techniques, diplomacy or demonstration effects influence domestic decision-makers to attempt to transition to democracy? What combination of domestic conditions and foreign "interventions" are most likely to lead to the weakening of non-democratic regimes and their replacement with democratic governments? What are the pathways of external influence on domestic change and what does the nexus of interaction between external and domestic variables look like in reality?[30]

In addition, commentary literature says questions need to be addressed about how democracy promotion diplomacy is best practiced. Democracy promotion involves a form of intervention that is uniquely intrusive and poses delicate questions about respect for the national sovereignty of target states. Moreover, if it is to be effective it must be understood by populations in partner countries to be in their best interests. For this reason it is imperative that intervention be seen to be legitimate. This means first that how the case for intervention is justified is vitally important.

Further, legitimacy requires that external actors meet certain standards of conduct. Gordon Crawford in his presentation to the Democracy Council's "policy day" in 2007 argued that they need to be consistent in their actions toward different countries and regions, avoid double-standards between the practices they advocate and the practices they observe themselves, and take an even-handed, impartial, approach in the countries in which they work.[31] Crawford warned that the legitimacy of external democracy promotion, always a sensitive matter, has become a current issue because of the conflict in Iraq. In making this point he cited an article by Thomas Carothers in *Foreign Affairs* in 2006, about what Carothers called "the backlash against democracy promotion." Carothers ascribed this backlash at least in part to the weakening of the legitimacy of democracy promotion since the intervention in Iraq: "Some autocratic governments have won substantial public sympathy by arguing that opposition to Western democracy promotion is resistance not to democracy itself, but to American interventionism."[32]

Another issue is the question of whether intervention is best done through bilateral or multilateral engagement. One of the findings of existing research is the significance in effecting and stabilizing democratic reform of the diffusion of democratic values through neighbouring states.[33] For this reason the effect of external intervention may be enhanced if engagement occurs through multi-lateral regional organizations like the OAS and OAU.

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[29] McFaul, Michael, Amichai Magen and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, "Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development: Working Paper" entre on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, 2007 p. 1

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] Crawford, Gordon," Facilitating Democratic Reforms: Learning from Democratic Principles'' Ottawa, February, 2007

[32] Thomas Carothers, "The Backlash Against democracy Promotion" *Foreign Affairs*, March-April 2006.

[33] Larry Diamond provides interesting anecdotal examples of this factor in *The Spirit of Democracy*, *The Struggle to Create Free Societies Throughout the World,* New York: Henry Holt, 2008, pp 107-111

The role of international assistance in democracy promotion

Although these larger issues of policy have yet to be explored, the main emphasis in the case-study and commentary literature is the need for applied research on the effectiveness of democracy assistance. For example, a join project of FRIDE and the Democratic Coalition Project concludes that

> While debates amongst the international community of democratic governments have rightly focused on the macro-level questions of diplomacy and political dialogue, the case studies here reveal that much remains to be done in fine-tuning democracy assistance projects at the micro-level. While these are rarely the subject of high-profile attention, the shortcomings of existing on-the-ground support can undermine the efficacy of overall international democracy promotion efforts.[34]

Research on assistance policies has emphasized the consequences of the fragmentation of effort that results from the large number of international actors providing support to democratic development. Counting multiple agencies within the governments of individual donor countries, multi-laterals, and privately-funded foundations, the democracy promotion community has grown into a complex array of largely unconnected entities, with separate administrative structures and separate programs. These actors disburse funds[35] through hundreds of individual projects and grants. Decisions about their allocation within particular countries are made discretely by donors, on a project by project basis, with little or no regard for the coordination of their activities with other donors. It is argued that the multiplicity of sources of funding and lack of effective coordination among them has led to a dysfunctional system of program delivery resulting in unnecessary duplication of activities, wasteful allocation of resources and the neglect of significant needs.

This fragmentation of effort is reinforced by the fact that programming decisions tend to be made without reference to any overarching conception of how best to achieve reform. Within most programs assistance is administered through separate streams of support to "good governance", "human rights", "civil society", "the rule of law" and "democratization". All five of these terms are recognizably part of the vocabulary of democratic development. Yet in most donor policies they are treated as distinct categories. Although there has been some recent movement toward finding a more all-embracing concept of "democratic governance", these conceptual distinctions persist in the administration of assistance.

In this context decisions about the kinds of assistance to be given are based on individual donor assessments or preferences and there is a perception that many project decisions are driven by supply-side concerns originating from interests within the donor countries or constituent communities that donors represent. Further, both case studies and reports from roundtable discussions say that the choice of projects and project implementation are not adequately informed by consultation with affected interests in recipient countries.

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[34] Piccone, Ted, and Richard Youngs, eds. *Strategies for democratic Change, Assessing the Global Response,* 2006, FRIDE and the Democratic Coalition Project, p. 19, accessed at http://www.fride.org/publication/250/strategies-for-democratic-change-assessing-the-global-response

[35] Estimates of annual public sector spending range from $5-billion to 9-billion (US). Private entities are an additional source of funding with expenditures at least in the range of $700-million.

The consensus from the case-study and commentary literature is that there is a lack of effective strategic planning in the delivery of assistance.[36] As Gordon Crawford observed in commenting on the EU's assistance to good governance "the overall impression is of *ad hoc* policy implementation, lacking conceptual clarity as well as a carefully considered and explicit strategy…" [37]

 The weakness of strategic planning is compounded by a lack of knowledge about lessons learned. Few donors publish detailed reports that would be helpful in assessing the effectiveness of the projects they support and it appears that few do this kind of assessment.
At least in part this is because of attitudes and practices among those who engage in democracy promotion. As Thomas Carothers has pointed out, democracy promoters are "action-oriented people and organizations, much more inclined to throw themselves into the next challenge than to take time to analyze carefully and critically what they did last. Funders of such work create few incentives for probing retrospection, pushing implementing organizations to deliver rapid results and rush from one assignment to the next."[38]

Further, a recurring theme in the literature is the fact that the evaluation protocols established by donors don't provide information that would be useful in strategic planning. As is apparent from the five sector reviews reported in Section 2, much of the evaluation research is concerned with process issues in the delivery of assistance. There are good reasons for the singling out of process issues since both funders and independent critics say there is not sufficient accountability for work on the ground. Some suggest these issues are simply management problems of the kind that are constantly referred to in the literature on all forms of international assistance. Others argue that many of them arise from the political nature of democracy assistance which imposes constraints very different from those under which other forms of aid operate. Whatever the explanation, the consensus among analysts who have looked at this issue is that evaluation research, as it is currently done, is too narrowly focused on administrative accountability in project delivery.[39]

1.3 Evaluation Research

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[36] *Cf.* Carothers, Thomas, *Critical Mission. Essays on Democracy Promotion*. Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace., 2004 and Youngs, Richard. (ed.) *Survey of European Democracy Promotion Policies 2000–2006*. Madrid: Fundación par las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior, 2006

[37] Crawford, Gordon. "European Union Development Cooperation and Democracy, in Peter Burnell. ed*. Democracy Assistance, International Co-operation for Democratization*. London: Frank Cass, 2000, p. 111

[38] Carothers, Thomas, *Confronting the Weakest Link, Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies,* Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006, p. 15
[39] Crawford, Gordon, "Promoting Democracy From Without – Learning From Within (Part I)", *Democratization*, Vol.10, No.1, Spring 2003, pp.77-98 and "Promoting Democracy From Without – Learning From Within (Part II)", *Democratization*, Vol.10, No.2, Summer 2003, pp.1–20

The need for a new approach

The need for better information about the effectiveness of assistance has become a major concern of both researchers and donors.[40] At issue is how program activities affect the complex and system-wide processes of long-term change that are required to produce enduring political reform. The question, as the authors of a recent article in *World Politics* put it, is "Does democracy promotion work?"[41] The authors note that "Despite the steadily increasing level of democracy assistance programs from the U.S. since the end of cold war, we know very little about whether such programs achieve their goals."[42]

In the view of independent researchers who have looked at the field as a whole there is a serious lack of analysis assessing how well particular forms of assistance may contribute to the larger enterprise of democratic development.[43]   In part, this is seen to be a function of a lack of effective measurement criteria (as will be noted below). It is also to be explained by the absence of incentives or funding to support independent scholarly research. Some donors do support this kind of research, notably DFID, SIDA, and USAID, but it is on a limited scale and tends to be developed *ad hoc*. What is needed, as Peter Burnell points out, is evaluation research that will lead to improvement in the design of democracy promotion strategies.[44]

For this purpose it is widely agreed that the first requirement is for research that will deepen understanding of the nature of democratic development and how it may be affected by external intervention. This is the central recommendation of the team of leading American scholars commissioned by USAID to recommend how best to evaluate democracy assistance programs. As noted above, the report, published by the National Academy of Science in March, 2008, argues that the methods for ranking countries on scales of democratic development using aggregate indicators such as those employed by Freedom House, are seriously limited in their explanatory power.[45] It concludes that there is a need for the creation of a new set of indicators that will better fit the needs of evaluation research:

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[40] *Cf*. Green, Andrew T, and Richard D. Kohl, "Challenges of Evaluating Democracy Assistance: Perspectives from the Donor Side", *Democratization*, 14:1, 2007, pp. 151-165

[41] Finkel, Steven E., Anibal Perez-Linan and Mitchell A. Silgson, "The Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990-2003", World Politics 59 (April 2007), 404-39. To answer their question the authors did aggregate analysis, using levels of USAID expenditure on democracy promotion activities as an independent variable and country scores on the Freedom House and Polity 4 rankings of countries on their democracy scales as dependent variables, They found statistically significant relationships in some but not all of the cases they examined. The fact that they must use this kind of analysis points to the limitations in the state of knowledge about the effectiveness of democracy promotion.

[42] *Ibid*. p. 404

[43] See, for example, Burnell, Peter, "From Evaluating Democracy Assistance to Appraising Democracy Promotion," in *Political Studies*, Vol. 56, No. 2, (June 2008), pp. 414-434.

[44] Burnell uses the term "strategy" to refer to all of the instruments of democracy promotion policy, not just technical assistance. *ibid*, p 411 *passim*

[45] Committee on Evaluation of USAID Democracy Assistance Programs, National Research Council, *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research*, National Academy of Science, Washington, 2008, Chapter 3 "Measuring democracy", pp. 61-84

USAID and other policymakers should explore making a substantial investment in the systematic collection of democracy indicators at a disaggregated sector level— focused on the components of democracy rather than (or in addition to) the overall concept. If they wish to have access to data on democracy and democratization comparable to that relied on by policymakers and foreign assistance agencies in the areas of public health or trade and finance, a substantial government or multilateral effort to improve, develop, and maintain international data on levels and detailed aspects of democracy would be needed.[46]

The report proposes that these indicators be created and tested through a series of comparative studies that will take account of differences in the context and circumstances under which democratic development occurs:

…Without some way of analyzing the quality of democracy through time and across countries, there is no way to mark progress or regress on this vital factor, to explain it, or to affect its future course. To gain knowledge of the world, and hence to make effective policy interventions, comparisons must be made" [47]

In emphasizing this approach, the report points to another major deficiency in existing research. While the case-study literature provides evaluation of progress on particular aspects of democratic development in specific countries, there have been very few attempts to do comprehensively inclusive country-specific assessments.[48] The need for this kind of "whole of system" country-specific assessment is explained in International IDEA's critique of existing measurement techniques:

Scholars and practitioners have adopted a number of strategies to measure democracy, including categorical measures (democracy vs non-democracy), scale measures (e.g. a rating on a 1 to 10 scale), objective measures (e.g. voter turnout and party share of the vote), hybrid measures of democratic practices, and perceptions of democracy based on mass public opinion surveys. In certain instances, measures have been developed for particular needs and then used for other purposes, while in others general measures of democracy have been developed for a wide range of application by the academic and policy community (e.g. the Polity data set developed by the University of Maryland). The quest for comparability and broad temporal and spatial coverage, however, has meant a certain sacrifice of these measures ability to capture the context-specific features of democracy, while the turn to good governance, accountability and aid conditionality among leading international donors has created additional demand for measures of democracy that can be used for country-, sector- and programme-level assessments.[49]

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[46] Committee on Evaluation of USAID Democracy Assistance Programs, National Research Council, *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research*, National Academy of Science, Washington, 2008, p. 39
Accessed at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12164#toc

[47] *Ibid.* p. 70

[48] International IDEA's "democratic audit" assessments have been applied in five countries— Bangladesh, El Salvador, Kenya, Malawi, and Peru—that are recipients of democratic development assistance, but we have not been able to find any evidence that these assessments have been used to create strategic plans by donors. There has been coordination of planning in post-conflict situations, such as Bosnia, but even in this kind of situation, there does not appear to have been any reference to a strategic plan based on a comprehensively inclusive concept of the requirements for effective democratic development.

[49] Landman, Todd, ed., n.d., "Assessing the Quality of Democracy: An Overview of the International IDEA Framework," p 8, retrieved September 9, 2008

The need for conceptual clarity

The need for some basic agreement on a theory of democratic development is an essential requirement for effective assessment and strategic planning. The difficulty is that many questions about what such a theory would encompass, as we have already noted, remain subject to debate. In part this is because the literature in comparative politics has focused on conceptions of democratic development based on attempts to compare and categorize existing regimes.[50] Despite the proliferation of definitions to which this has led, there is an emerging consensus around the notion that "(a) democracy exists only insofar as its ideals and values bring it into being."[51] Accordingly, most definitions of what a fully-developed democracy would look like now emphasize the connection between institutions and processes of governance and the realization of the values of freedom, equality, and justice as they have evolved in the tradition of liberal political thought. In this view democratic development should be understood as the establishment of a system of governance that promotes and protects liberal-democratic values.[52]

So far there has been only one attempt to build the kind of assessment framework which is needed—a model proposed by International IDEA and tested in eight countries. " It defines a democratic political system as one that is "inclusive, participatory, representative, accountable, transparent and responsive to citizens' aspirations and expectations."[53] It sets out criteria that can be used as benchmarks for assessment based on these "mediating values". The IDEA approach is broadly inclusive of the constitutive elements of democratic development, but it lacks an explicit theory of how these elements are related to one another and how democratic development occurs and is sustained.

Section 4 proposes an alternative model that addresses these issues. It describes the elements of a fully-developed liberal democracy[54] understood as an ideal type and incorporates

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http://www.idea.int/publications/aqd/upload/AssessingOverviewWeb.pdf

[50] *Cf.* Storm, Lise, "An Elemental Definition of Democracy and its Advantages for Comparing Political Regime Types," *Democratization*, Volume 15, Issue 2, April 2008, pp 215-229

[51] Sartori, Giovanni. 1987. *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*. Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House, p. 7

[52] For example, Larry Diamond in his 2008 book *The Spirit of Democracy* rejects as inadequate "thin" concepts of democracy that focus on the choice of political elites through free and fair elections. Instead he defines democratic development in terms of a "thick" concept that includes (among other things) a recognition of and protection for the basic freedoms, protection for minority rights, political and legal equality, and the practice of the rule of law. (pp. 22-23) Diamond identifies the first as "electoral democracies" and the second as "liberal democracies." The problematic nature of definitions that do not include a reference to liberal values is reflected as well in Fareed Zakaria's trenchant critique of "illiberal" democracies in his 2003 book *The Future of Freedom, Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad.*

[53] Beetham, David, Edzia Carvalho, Todd Landmann, and Stuart Weir, *Assessing the Quality of Democracy, A Practical Guide*, International IDEA 2005. pp.15-19

[54] There has been some resistance among aid providers to the use of the term "liberal-democracy" and a preference for the use of the term "good governance". However, in one way or another even definitions of "good governance" now incorporate elements characteristic of developed liberal democracies. For example, the worldwide governance indicators measures of the World Bank include two with clear reference to liberal-democratic values." Voice and Accountability", which is described as measuring political, civil and human rights, and the "Rule

propositions about the conditions necessary to establish and sustain an enduring system of democratic governance.

The model is intended to meet the need for an overarching framework in which to design country-specific strategies for democracy promotion and to evaluate progress toward their realization. It provides a theoretical basis for integrating all of the forms of assistance associated with democratic development.

> The model represents what a developed liberal democracy **should** look like not in terms of characteristics of established regimes, but as an **ideal standard**. It is intended to serve as a reference point for evaluating where a particular country may be on the path to democratic development, for identifying areas where assistance may contribute to democratic development, and for assessing the probable effectiveness of particular forms of intervention. It establishes indicators that can be used to identify discrepancies between real political practice in a particular system and the most desirable forms of political practice. By seeking to explain these discrepancies, the analyst can assess their significance for overall system performance in realizing democratic development and evaluate the utility of potential methods for improving system performance.

> Analysis based on this conception of democratic development has the virtue of recognizing that there are likely to be many different paths toward democratic development reflecting the differing economic and social conditions in and political and cultural experiences of countries embarked on its achievement.[55]

The need for local engagement

A recurring theme in the research calling for country-specific strategic plans is the need for full local engagement in their design and implementation. Gordon Crawford has used the term "local authorship" to describe what is needed. He elaborated on this point in his presentation to the Democracy Council's "Democratic Dialogue" in Ottawa in 2007:

> The process of democratic reform must be locally-driven. This principle is based on the fundamental point that democratization is an endogenous process. It cannot be imposed from outside. It is my view that the concept of 'exporting democracy' is an oxymoron. Democracy can neither be exported nor imported. It has to be developed from within. There can be a role for external actors, certainly, but one that facilitates and supports country-driven processes….

> The rationale for domestic authorship of donors' country assistance strategies is that local perspectives provide a better understanding of the distinctive problems of democratic reform faced in a particular context. Essentially, external actors must listen to local voices. These will be plural voices. There will be different and even contradictory voices, but such processes of deliberation and debate are themselves fundamental to what democracy is about.[56]

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of Law"
http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANC E/0,,contentMDK:21050333~menuPK:2643817~pagePK:64020865~piPK:149114~theSitePK:286 305,00.html

[55] Perlin, George, "A Working Definition of Democratic Development", presented at the *Democratic Dialogue,* Ottawa, February, 2007.

[56] Crawford, Gordon," Facilitating Democratic Reforms: Learning from Democratic Principles" Ottawa, February, 2007

The importance of local authorship is emphasized as well in IDEA's guide for country assessments.

1.4 Sector research

Our reviews of research in the five specific sectors on which we were asked to report underscore the findings from our assessment of the wider issues in the field. The detailed reports for these sectors are provided in Section 2. Here we want to relate their collective findings to the overall project of promoting democratic development.

Research about the process of development in each sector consists predominantly of micro-level case studies within individual countries and reflects the limitations of this approach. Studies have not been replicated on a system-wide basis in individual countries or in inter-country comparisons. As a result of these deficiencies, generalizations remain at the stage of hypotheses that need to be tested in a variety of different contexts to control for differences in political experience, economic conditions, social structure, and culture.

The possibilities for theory-building are further limited by the fact that research in these studies rarely moves beyond the individual sectors to consider sector development in the context of other elements in the process of democratic development. There are very few attempts to deal with inter-sector relationships and almost none that explore the implications of findings from the case studies for the process of democratic development as a whole.

Policy research in each of the sectors consists mainly of donor-funded evaluations of technical assistance projects. One unfortunate feature of this body of research is that most studies are concerned only with detailing project outputs. To the extent that evaluations give any consideration to impact, the tendency is for the inquiry to be based on anecdotal evidence as opposed to inferences based on sound empirical methods. Almost universally, the evaluation research has failed to explore questions related to the impact of activities on the longer term or the wider process of systemic transformation. Moreover, few of the findings from these case studies are ever subsequently tested in comparative research. The general validity of case-study findings is further limited by the fact that most evaluations in each of the sectors are sourced from the limited number of organizations that have adopted a policy of publishing their evaluations.

A number of factors also limit the usefulness of evaluation research. The exercise of evaluation has been donor driven, and the findings it has generated focus largely on donor programming strategies. Indeed, not only has the evaluation literature neglected to consider development activities that are wholly domestic in their initiation and implementation, it has largely neglected to offer information of use to domestic partners involved in implementing internationally-sponsored support activities.

Beyond the need for more and better research that evaluates activities in the context of the larger enterprise of supporting democratic development, each of the reviews points to a shortage of primary research and documentation on a variety of topics necessary for the advancement of research.

First, there is no comprehensive and continuous source of information on what is being done to support democratic development, and where. Each of the literature reviews identifies reasons for which no such source exists, but none points to any significant effort to overcome the problem. If researchers are to better understand how democratic development can be most effectively supported, they will require a fuller understanding of what has been attempted to date, and where.

Second, while a few studies have mapped support activities in each of the sectors, several features render these studies less than useful for analytical purposes. For one thing, no study has attempted to map activities comprehensively, and the various sector mapping exercises cannot

be pieced together to offer such a picture due to the different underlying methodologies and program definitions they employ. In addition, sector mapping exercises have been one-off projects, and have not been re-applied, thus limiting their potential use in cross-time research. Further, although these studies offer insight into the content of activities from one region to another, no study has been sufficiently detailed to provide data on activities at the country-level.

The sector reviews also point to a shortage of primary data measuring sector development, and a complete absence of primary data that measure sector development in the context of a comprehensive overview of progress toward democratic development within a country. While donors have begun to design assessment tools for measuring country progress, instances of these being applied, or of the results being disseminated are rare. Thus, in every sector there is a clear need for the collection and dissemination of data on country-level progress within the sector, as well as for more comprehensive and detailed data about how activities within the sector are contributing to democratic development.

A report summarizing research priorities for each of the five sectors is presented in Section 2

1.5 Donor and practitioner use of research

Commentaries on assistance policy say policy-makers, administrators and practitioners have made very little use of academic research related to their work. Most of this kind of research has been done through independent research centres or through funding from conventional academic sources, rather than through the policy community. Donor funding appears to be primarily directed at issues of evaluation related to administrative accountability.[57]

The communications between academic researchers and practitioners in the field of democratic development have never been as strong as those between academic researchers and practitioners in the field of economic development.

One reason for this is that while the academic community has an active interest in the process of democratic development, there has been little academic research about democracy support policies.[58] Very few academics do work on policy and most of the studies that have a policy focus are generated by donors or research organizations with aid-specific mandates.

Another reason for this disjunction is the fact that academic researchers and practitioners operate within very different cultures. As the recent report on evaluation commissioned by USAID notes, practitioners have tended to describe their work as "doing democracy" which, in practice, has involved little time for "thinking about how to do democracy". Conversely, few academics have taken time to familiarize themselves with the problems faced by practitioners.[59]

It is further suggested that the usefulness of academic research for practitioners is limited by the distinctive domains in which academics and practitioners operate. Whereas academics place great value on parsimonious explanation, the abstraction that this entails often means that academic research findings are seen to be of little use by practitioners who confront very specific questions and challenges in their work on the ground.[60]

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[57] For example, the National Research Council report *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research*, *op..cit.*, which was commissioned by USAID.

[58] There are some notable exceptions in Europe such as the program at the University of Warwick.

[59] *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research*, *op..cit.*, p.227

Representatives of the Southern research institutes and networks interviewed for this report noted their interest in the impact of their research, both in influencing policy-makers and activists and in shaping public and academic debate. They said they attempt to reach these audiences by focusing on research questions that are timely and either of very general interest, or else of specific interest to particular individuals and organizations. They also try to build credibility for their work by recruiting well-known researchers and working with major Northern research institutes.

They also engage in substantial outreach efforts to the policy and practitioner communities.. Some hold conferences aimed at bringing together scholars, policy-makers, and activists and some circulate bulletins to policy-makers, and development practitioners, which include summaries of their research.

The use of the Internet in communications strategies varies considerably across regions. Few of the main democratic development institutes identified in the Middle East and Africa, have quality, or even regularly updated websites. This problem is less common in East Asia and Latin America, where web presence is used both as a branding device, and as a platform for research dissemination.

Notwithstanding these communications efforts, it appears that only a very limited amount of Southern-authored research enters the public domain. While most leading centres of research on democratic development in the North make their publications available electronically free of charge, this practice is less common among Southern research institutes. While the need to recoup project expenditures appears to underlie this practice, one unfortunate consequence of it is to limit access to and use of knowledge.

1.6 Applied research in Canada

Research and teaching on democratic development are still very limited in Canada. A survey of curricula in political science and policy studies departments shows that most Canadian universities deal with this subject through studies of regime change in particular countries or regions. In some cases it forms the organizing focus for an entire course. In others it is dealt with as one of several topics in the politics and governance of a country. Only five universities—UBC, Waterloo, Concordia, Queen's and the University of Ottawa—have regularly offered general courses on democratic development and only three—UBC, Ottawa and Queen's—offer courses of this kind for graduate students.. Most others deal with democratization through one or two classes as part of their area studies courses in comparative politics.

There are two research centres devoted to the study of democracy: the Centre for Studies of Democratic Institutions at UBC and the Centre for the Study of Democracy at Queen's. Some research on particular countries is done through area studies centres and programs. There are fewer than a dozen specialists whose work deals primarily with democratic development.

The approach to the subject through area studies is fairly common in American and European universities. However, there are major programs that treat democratic development as a specialization in both the United States and Europe. Section 3 contains reports on two of these: one at the University of Warwick and one at Stanford University. Warwick offers specialist concentrations on democratization in both the MA and the PhD and faculty in its Centre for Studies in Democratization have published 72 articles and books on democratization and related subjects over the past four years. Stanford's Centre on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law has active projects on, among other things, "democratic consolidation and quality,

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[60] *Ibid.* and Sarles, Margaret. In Peter Burnell, ed., 'Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of USAID's democracy and governance programmes' in *Evaluating Democracy Support: Methods and Experiences*, 2007, Stockholm: International IDEA.

"liberalization of authoritarian regimes," "post-conflict democratic development," and "transitions to democracy."

In addition, a number of democratic development research programs have grown up in research centres outside the universities. Examples are the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in the United States, the Clingendael Institute in the Netherlands, and the Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE) in Madrid.

Compared to Europe and the United States Canadian research capacity is significantly under developed.

1.7 The research capacity of partner countries

Constraints on research in new and emerging democracies

Most partner countries have only limited capacity to contribute to research that would assist in their democratization. One reason is that post-secondary education in relevant subjects in many emerging or potential new democracies, even those with well-established post-secondary institutions, is under developed. This is primarily because education in these subjects is discouraged or suppressed under authoritarian regimes. As a result, the foundation for training researchers does not exist. Even after restraints have been removed, curricula in political science and cognate disciplines are slow to develop because of shortages of resources and the competition for allocation of these resources from disciplines that often are deemed to be of greater practical value.

This shortage of resources contributes to two other problems. The first is a lack of local funding for research. To the extent that this kind of research is supported, the funding comes largely from international donors or through relationships with researchers in donor countries. The second is the fact that there is little infrastructure to support the kind of scholarly communication which is necessary to build a strong research community.

While in some countries there are well-developed communities of scholars who work on relevant subjects, they, too, are constrained by limited funding.

Criteria for assessing research capacity

We established a stepped series of criteria to assess research capacity which we applied through searches of journals, web sites of institutes and centres, and the CVs of researchers in centres and institutes and of faculty in departments of political science and cognate disciplines.

- Level 1: evidence through publication of active research on subjects related to the components of democratic development.

- Level 2: evidence through publication of active research on subjects that could be deemed relevant to the study of democratic development

- Level 3: evidence that university faculty or independent researchers had appropriate education in political science

- Level 4: evidence that university faculty or independent researchers had education in a cognate discipline that would provide them with knowledge and skills to engage in research on democratic development

How the review was done

The review consists of separate reports for each of four regions: Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East. In preparing these reports we have focused on countries designated as priority partner countries for Canadian assistance, but we have also included a review of wider regional capacities. The reports were prepared by looking at the published work of individual scholars, universities, and research centres in each country and region. We also did searches of a sample of relevant international journals and the web sites of international research centres that publish on these regions. The reviews focused on research about the specific subjects identified in the terms of reference.

The information was gathered through web searches in each region, using regional/country identifiers and a range of general and sector terms likely to generate results for research networks, institutes, departments, scholars and/or publications and by following up on references to Southern researchers, organizations or publications identified during the literature review. To explore more fully the information available from these sources, interviews were done with a sample of representatives of major regional southern research networks.
The detailed reviews for each region are reported in Section 3.

1.8 Opportunities for Canada

There is a clear sense among those who have viewed it with some critical perspective that research in this field needs to be taken to a new level. We have gone as far as we can with existing research methods in explaining how democratic development occurs. To enhance understanding of the process of democratic development in a way that will serve both democracy activists and international donors who want to support their activities, there is a need for more systematic comparative research. The body of propositions accumulated through existing research methods needs to be tested through inter-country comparative research that incorporates system-wide analysis and effectively controls for a wide range of variables. This is essential to develop explanatory theory which can permit more effective strategic planning, more effective monitoring of progress, and more effective evaluation of the impact of support activities.

The scope for engagement is broad. However, Canada will have to be careful in deciding how best to participate. The kind of research that is needed is expensive. If a Canadian research program is to add significant value, it must be focused on a limited number of realistically-attainable objectives. Towards this end we identify three options for Canadian engagement.

One approach would be to focus on one or more themes in the five sectors on which we report in Section 2. As the literature reviews indicate, there are important questions as yet unanswered in the research on these sectors. Canada could support research that builds on or contributes to comparative studies already underway in a particular sector, such as the African legislatures project, or it could develop a similar kind of comparative project in a different region or sector. A drawback with this approach is suggested by the Terms of Reference which note that while these five sectors are to constitute the focus for the report, "attention to the operational linkages between democracy support and rule of law, human rights and accountable public institutions will remain important."   While we were not asked to review the other sectors intensively, we note that there are important themes that could be usefully investigated in these sectors. Further, in narrowing a comparative research agenda to a specific sector, there is the risk that the analysis generated will not adequately control for causes and consequences outside the sector.

A second approach would be to undertake research to develop primary data about one or more of the component dimensions of democratization. This would permit the testing and refinement of various indicators that could be used for measuring the impact of democracy promotion assistance. As the report on evaluation commissioned by USAID recommends, evaluation research in the field of democratic development needs indicators similar to those used in measuring economic and social assistance. Primary research of this kind would also serve the purpose of generating data to support secondary analyses of such issues as sequencing. Since

this kind of research is likely to be very expensive, Canada would probably need to engage in it through partnerships with other donor countries.

A third approach would be to support research to create whole-system assessments of the condition of democracy in a comparative sample of partner countries. These assessments would serve three purposes. They could be used for strategic planning both by internal actors and donors; they could help donors make decisions about where their interventions may be most helpful; and they could provide benchmarks for donors to use in monitoring and evaluating the impact of their activities. In addition, since whole-system assessments do not restrict themselves to a particular sector, the knowledge they generate promises a more realistic and inclusive understanding of the current challenges facing democracy promotion. Further, since assessments would be based on the principle of local authorship, this approach has the advantage of providing the best opportunity for developing research capacities in partner countries.

Given the limits on the resources available, Canada would significantly diminish the value of its research program if it were to distribute its funding broadly across all of these approaches. Since other donors appear to be giving more attention to the need for research, as a next step we would recommend consultations with these donors to establish their priorities and explore the possibilities for cooperation. These consultations should also include the independent foundations dedicated to research on democratic development, such as FRIDE in Spain and the Clingendael Institute in the Netherlands. Canada should also try to leverage its investment in research by taking a more active role in defining the research agenda of multi-lateral research and donor organizations that it supports, such as International IDEA.

Section 2

2.1 Introduction to the sector reports

The terms of reference specified the need for reports on research in five sectors: political parties, elections, civil society, parliaments, and the media.

This posed some definitional problems because there is a lack of agreement both within the donor community and the independent research community about what is embraced by many of the core concepts associated with democratic development. This is reflected at the most general level in the differing definitions of the concept of democracy itself, but it is true as well of other concepts such as "civil society". A broad understanding of this concept is reflected in USAID's statement of how it measures success in achieving the objective of promoting "increased development of a politically active civil society." The measures include an "enhanced free flow of information" and "a strengthened democratic political culture." Accordingly, USAID incorporates in its program of support to civil society both the category of support to media that we are treating here as a separate category and the development of programs of civic education that we don't deal with.[61] Other donors work with much narrower definitions that focus exclusively on support to civil society organizations.[62]

The research assistants who were engaged to prepare these reports were asked to do searches in all accessible published sources. Given the time constraints, most of their work had to be done on-line. This presented no problem in searching periodical literature and the work of research centres, nearly all of which is available in electronic form, but it meant that there could not be an exhaustive review of monographs and collections. Nonetheless, we feel reasonably confident that the reports fairly represent the general state of work in each sector.

Each report is introduced with an overview of the kinds of theoretical issues which research about that sector raises. These introductions are based on the model of democratic development that is proposed as a framework for country-specific assessments as outlined in Section 3. They are intended to establish some criteria to help identify questions that research in that sector might investigate.

The research assistants were asked to focus on the questions listed below. There are some variations in the way in which their reports are presented which reflect both variations in the scope and scale of work in each sector and the way in which they chose to organize their reports.

1. On what subjects has research been done?

2. If research has been done about the effectiveness of support, what lessons have been learned from it?

3. If research has been done on how assistance is delivered (best practices or criticisms of the way in which assistance has been delivered), what lessons have been learned from it?

4. Does the research refer to questions that need to be further investigated. If yes, what are they?

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[61] *Handbook of Democracy and Governance Program Indicators*, pp 119-120 et *passim*.

[62] In part this reflects differences in the role that donors ascribe to civil society support. While some identify it a component of their democracy assistance programs others see it as a separate category related to the delivery of other forms of aid.

5. Are there subjects on which research has <u>not</u> been done but needs to be done ? (as identified in the literature or by you)

6. Identify specific geographical areas where research has been done.

7. Are there obvious omissions among geographical areas where research should be done?

8. Does the research refer to particular issues or challenges confronting assistance in this sector in general? If yes, what are they?

9. Does the research refer to particular issues or challenges confronting assistance in particular areas (regions or countries)?

10. Is there any research critical of assistance in this sector? If yes, identify by whom and what issues are raised?

11. Are there any issues about the methodology used in research in this sector?

2.2 Summary of principal sector-specific issues requiring further research

The executive summary at the outset of this report identifies a range of research priorities common to all five of the sector reports presented in this section. Beyond these, each of the reports identifies sector-specific questions on which further research is needed. The following summarizes the most important of these questions. Additional context for each of these sector-specific questions can be found in the relevant sector report.

Research on Support to Political Parties

Recent literature has emphasized the weak performance of parties in developing democracies. Many of the problems identified in these analyses are similar to problems observed in research about parties in the established democracies. Accordingly, there is a need to relate research on the role of parties in developing democracies to the wider literature of party studies. Specifically, it is important to establish whether the causes of these problems are the same in the established and developing democracies or whether there are distinctive causes for the problems observed in the developing democracies. This requires comparative research, involving both more cases from a wider variety of contexts in developing democracies and explicit reference to what has been learned about parties in the established democracies. It also requires much more explicit attention to theories about the functions of parties in contributing to effective democratic governance.

With respect to external support to party development, research is needed on the extent to which forms of support based on practices in the established democracies are appropriate in new and emerging democracies. The review points further to the need for comparative evaluations of activities aimed at supporting party development, noting that although party support is a burgeoning area of assistance, it is one in which evaluation is particularly under-developed. In addition, because work with parties is so intimately connected with the direction of public affairs in partner countries, there is a need for research that deals with the effects of external intervention on the perceived legitimacy of parties. This research needs to inquire into the effects of the differing approaches of external agencies supporting party development. Is it more effective to deliver external assistance through non-partisan systemic forms of support or through party-to-party support?

Research on electoral processes

Most of the applied research on this sector takes the form of election monitoring reports and evaluations linked to specific national elections. These, for the most part, assume the efficacy of international election monitoring practice. However, the secondary literature questions whether this assumption has been adequately tested. The literature points to the need for research on fundamental questions about the effects of externally-managed election monitoring. Among things, it suggests the need for assessment of the impact of election monitoring on the perceived legitimacy of electoral processes and on the incidence of electoral fraud (controlling for the fact that monitoring is not only a means to deter election fraud, but is also a means by which election fraud is detected).

Research on civil society

The review of applied research on civil society identifies a need for further exploration of the role of civil society in the process of democratic development. Above all, priority is placed on further exploration of the relationship between the spread of civil society organizations and the nature and extent of civic participation. A second priority for future research consists of studies of the relationship between political culture and democratic consolidation, including the extent to which civil society organizations can effectively nurture a political culture amenable to democratic consolidation.

With respect to research on assistance, it is widely observed that external support can give rise to NGOs that are too responsive to the interests of external donors. The review identifies a need for further research into strategies that might mitigate this problem and ensure that externally supported NGOs give voice to salient domestic concerns. A second common and well-documented problem with donor funded initiatives is that they often give rise to NGOs that are forever dependent on external support for their existence. In view of this, the review identifies a need for additional research into strategies to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives over time.

Research on parliamentary strengthening

The review of applied research on parliamentary strengthening notes that there is no clear understanding of when and why legislatures evolve into significant political institutions. To the extent that these questions have received attention, it has been largely based on the experience of established democracies.

A major barrier to research on internal and external factors that contribute to "parliamentary strengthening" is the absence of agreement on what concepts are encompassed by the term "parliamentary performance" and how these concepts can be effectively measured. One unfortunate consequence of this is that primary data collection has been delayed, leading to complaints among both researchers and practitioners about a shortage of data for secondary research, strategic planning, and program evaluation. Whatever benefit there is in arriving at a single agreed upon conceptualization of parliamentary performance, there is room for assessment research based on concepts and indicators common to the vast majority of parliamentary assessment frameworks and necessary for secondary research, strategic planning, and program evaluation. One example of this sort of undertaking is the African Legislatures Project. Further details on this promising project are provided in the body of the report.

Research on the development of an independent media

There is a limited base of applied research on media development and, as a consequence, research priorities in this sector are quite general. With respect to process, the review suggests a need for rigorous comparative research into the pre-conditions necessary for the development of an independent media, into the factors that sustain an independent media, and into the manner in which development in this sector benefits or detracts from development in other democratic sectors. This research needs to be located in the expansive theoretical and empirical literature on political communication, as well as the broader field of communication studies.

Research concerned with external support has been largely confined to single-project case-studies of dubious empirical validity. To the extent that comparative research exists, it consists largely of detailing what is common across these single-project case-studies. Thus, there is a particular need in this sector for systematic inter-country comparative research.

2.3 Research on support to political party development

Democratic theory on the role of parties

Liberal-democratic theory sees a vigorous system of competitive party politics as being essential to the well-being of democracy. As institutions that compete for control of the offices of government, parties are the connecting link between citizens and government. If they are to be effective in contributing to the health of democracy they must perform six critical functions:

1. As they seek to develop electoral and legislative majorities, parties perform the important function of *representation.* It is through their agency, as they consult the public, nominate candidates for office, engage in electoral competition and form governments, that the various interests in society find expression in the political process. If parties perform this function well they will collectively ensure that no significant interests are permanently denied political voice.

2. While emphasizing the virtue of open competition and debate among differing interests, liberal-democratic theory recognizes the need to provide for the mediation of conflicting group interests and the forging of alliances among diverse interests in order to achieve stable and effective governance. This is a further role of the party system. If individual parties are to be successful, they must appeal to many different interests—to bring them together in a minimum winning coalition. In the process they must find a means of achieving some accommodation of group differences. Thus in formulating policy goals and electoral platforms, parties contribute to the process of *accommodation* and *compromise* that is needed to harmonize the divergent claims that are made on government. The more effective their attempts to incorporate diverse points of views, the more effective they can be in ensuring that the policies of government have the support of a majority of citizens.

3. At the same time, in developing alternative sets of policies and presenting them to the electorate, parties are responsible for *educating* the public about the nature of the problems that government must deal with and the kinds of options that are available to solve these problems.

4. Parties are the agents through which the principle of the accountability of political elites is made to work. Through the activities of opposition parties in legislatures and the competition among parties for office, governing elites are subject to the critical scrutiny which is essential in achieving accountability.

5. By opening their internal decision-making processes to members outside the immediate circle of political elites, parties can provide opportunities for citizens to have a more direct role in public affairs and strengthen the linkages between political leaders and citizens. Parties, thus, can serve the valuable function of encouraging citizen *participation* in politics.

6. Finally, by the way in which they perform all of their functions, parties can affect the degree of public confidence in the political system. To the extent that they perform their functions well and by widely-accepted standards of good conduct, parties can contribute to the building of legitimacy for the democratic system. Conversely, if they fail to meet expected standards of performance, their failure may weaken commitment to political institutions and the political process.

Overview of research on political party development

Research output is difficult to measure in terms of "scale", since any such measure would have to take into consideration such factors as volume, quality, innovativeness, diffusion and impact.

With respect to the first of these considerations, no measurement of research volume on the subject of political party development exists, and the time and resources available for this literature review simply could not permit us to answer this question in a compelling manner. Nevertheless, during the course of the literature and research capacity reviews, several related insights have been gleamed. First, the accumulated knowledge regarding political party development—as reflected by sources cited within leading articles and publications, whether Northern or Southern—is principally the work of Northern scholars. There is, to be sure, research taking place in the Southern hemisphere, supported by a number of Southern-based networks and institutions that fund and publish democratic development research of Southern scholars. The review of Southern research capacity in the main report identifies major sources of research output on a regional basis and, for each of these, notes where the study of political parties is a focus area, or at least an area in which some research has been previously been conducted.

As with measures of research, no estimate of support given to this research can be offered—although whatever this amount is, it clearly pales in comparison to practical support to parties. These broader efforts to support the development of political parties constitute an expanding category of assistance to democratic development, involving a growing number of organizations. Although the origins of party support can be traced to the 1950s, not until the last two decades did this work involve more than a handful of party internationals, and the German party foundations, or Stiftungen (Carothers 2006, p. 85). Beginning in the mid-1980s, and accelerating during the 1990s, the field has expanded as a number of industrialized nations (including the United States, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Finland and Norway) have established foundations to deliver party assistance, and as multilateral organizations (including the UNDP, the OAS, the OSCE and International IDEA) have widened their democracy assistance activities to include this crucial area of work. As with democracy support in general, party support programming is funded chiefly by Western governments, through official development agencies (Caton 2007, p.13). Based on a tally of the party assistance spending of all major players in the field, total funding for political party aid was recently estimated at $200 million per year, or equivalent to roughly 7 percent of all democracy support funding, estimated at between $3 and $4 billion by the same source (Carothers 2006, p. 86).

Surveys of activities aimed at political party development have discerned four primary types of support, defined by their objectives. These consist of 1) support aimed at developing political parties to be effective, well-managed entities that are publicly engaged, and internally democratic (organizational aid), 2) support aimed at assisting parties to run effective election campaigns (electoral aid), 3) support aimed at reforming the legal and regulatory context in which parties operate (party system aid), and 4) support aimed at developing party capacity to legislate and govern. As much of this support is delivered by international actors, a second classification of party support relates to the way in which aid providers engage with parties in the partner country. There are two main approaches in this respect. One involves the pairing of a party or party foundation from the donor country with an ideological sister party in the partner (recipient) country, while the other involves the assistance organization working with all, or at least all "significant" parties in the recipient country. At a very general level, the pairing approach is most commonly associated with the European party foundations, and the multi-party approach is most commonly associated with the work of multilateral organizations and the US party institutes.

Until recently, the scale and scope of political party support was a largely unstudied phenomenon. With activities to support the development of political parties on the rise, a literature is emerging that studies the nature of this assistance. Among the more ambitious contributions is Van Wersch and de Zeeuw's (2005) mapping of the activities of European political foundations. Although their research does not cover the significant party work being done by multilateral organizations, or by the US party institutes, it does shed light on the activities of a majority of the actors in the field. Among the key findings of their study is that organizational aid constitutes by far the most common form of assistance (roughly twice as common as electoral aid), and that the main method of delivering party support takes the form of training activities and seminars

(approximately 70 percent of all party support programming). Van Wersch and de Zeeuw also track the allocation of party support across regions and determine that, at least with respect to the European foundations, assistance is most concentrated in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, followed by Central and South America and Sub-Saharan Africa. North Africa and Asia were found to receive the smallest share of foundation support. Other mapping exercises are confined to a smaller subset of organizations, or to specific regions. Among these are a global mapping of UNDP party support work (UNDP 2005), a mapping of German party foundation activities in Africa (Erdmann 2005), and a review of international party assistance in Central America (Umana Cerna 2007). Although no mapping of the activities of the US party institutes was identified, the work of these organizations is discussed extensively by Carothers (2006), and described indirectly within a number of internal programming guides and handbooks on party assistance (USAID 2003; NDI 2007). Drawing on these and other sources of information on party support, several scholars have pieced together reasonably comprehensive overviews of party support, including its regional allocation, and the activities it comprises (Caton 2007; Carothers 2006). As with Van Wersch and de Zeeuw's (2005) findings with respect to European foundations, these surveys observe that Central/South America and Eastern/Central Europe have received the largest share of party assistance, followed by Sub-Saharan AfricaCarothers (2006) includes a history of party support over the past four decades, with some discussion of trends in the regional allocation of support over time. In addition to mapping studies, several reports offer general profiles of the main organizations and their work (Amundson 2007; Carothers 2006), and one compiles the programming rationales and mandates underlying their work (River Path Associates 2005).

While some attempts have been made to document and account for international support to party development, none of these has mapped resources going into research. Still, it is clear that support for this area of research is crucial for its growth.

Applied research on political party development

A review of the literature on political parties identifies four broad streams of research with clear relevance to individuals working in the area of political party development. Described in brief, they are:

1. Research related to the roles/functions of political parties in democratic systems;

2. Research concerned with identifying barriers that limit the extent to which parties fulfill these roles/functions effectively;

3. Published evaluations of party support activities;

4. Assessments of political parties and party systems.

These four streams of research constitute the main sources for this literature review. The sections that follow draw on these sources to answer questions regarding lessons learned, the geographical coverage of research, methodological shortcomings, and major questions as yet unanswered.

Lessons learned

There is general agreement among students of democratic development that political parties, by means of the functions they perform, are indispensable to representative and accountable government, and thus to the process of democratic consolidation (Burnell 2004; Carothers 2006; Kumar 2004; Amundson 2007). As Schattsneider put it, "political parties created democracy, and modern democracy without parties is inconceivable" (1942, p. 1). Among the responsibilities assigned to parties that give them such importance in democratic systems include aggregating societal interests and giving voice to these interests in party platforms, nominating and fielding

candidates for election, mobilizing voters behind party platforms and, ultimately, filling the roles of government and opposition assigned to them respectively by the voting public. These responsibilities, being so fundamental to the operation of democracy, mean that the manner in which political parties fulfill them determines not only their own legitimacy, but that of the democratic system itself. As Kumar suggests, "political parties find themselves at the heart of democracies" (2004, p. 7).

While theory points to the necessity of political parties within modern democracies, the general consensus (among both scholars and practitioners) is that political parties are failing to function in the manner that democratic theory expects (Burnell 2004). Most striking of all is the extent to which the problems exhibited by parties are very similar from one region to the next, leading one scholar to refer to the list as 'the standard lament' (Carothers 2006). And yet, while it is true that the problems referred to in the "standard lament" are often levelled against parties in established democracies, it is in the world's consolidating democracies (and particularly those of the "third wave") where they are most severe. As a general matter of fact, parties in these democracies are characterized by limited engagement with the public, sparse party membership, weak ideological orientation, limited internal democratic processes, and a general failure to provide substantive choice to voters, or else to follow through on the choices presented to voters during campaigns. In light of these problems, as well as the public disillusionment to which they have given rise, political parties have captured the attention of the democracy assistance community, and have become an increasingly common target of democracy support programming (Kumar 2004; Burnell 2005; Carothers 2006; Amundson 2007).

There is a very limited base of published evaluations of party support activities, or of studies that consider how the development of political parties can be most effectively encouraged (Carothers 2006; Power 2008). In fact, of the main international players, only the Netherlands Institute for Multi-Party Democracy publishes evaluations of all of its major programs. Considering this, it is not entirely surprising that, of the various fields of democracy assistance, evaluation practice is frequently said to be least developed in the field of party support (Carothers 2006; Power 2008). One reason for this is that the field itself remains a relatively new one (Carothers 2006). A second and equally compelling reason is that party support activities are widely perceived as posing greater political risk than other forms of democracy support, which raises donor concern about full disclosure and public review (Power 2008). In any case, the irregularity of evaluation means that rules of best practice are based on limited and often tenuous empirical ground.

It should be noted that concern about how party support is being perceived has begun to push donors towards establishing clearer standards and greater transparency in the party support they provide (Power 2008). Furthermore, a number of high-profile conferences, bringing together leading academics, practitioners, and policy-makers have been held to discuss the aims of party assistance, and to elaborate evaluation frameworks and indicators against which support can be evaluated.

In reviewing published evaluations of party support programming, one striking finding is that the recommendations they offer draw heavily on those found throughout the broader democracy assistance literature, and are almost wholly tied to delivery approach, as opposed to issues of programming content, timing, sequencing, or sustainability. These prescriptions appear frequently in the literature, and they seem best summarized in point form. They include:

- the need for better informed management, and country expertise among donor agencies;
- the need for more resources to conduct country assessments to ensure that programming is responsive to partner needs;
- the need for more consultation with country partners;
- the need for more attention to partner country context;
- the need for more co-operation and coordination among donors;
- the need for greater clarity and transparency regarding objectives;
- the need for clearer indicators of programming effectiveness;

- the need for more resources to conduct program evaluations;

In addition to these prescriptive findings, the literature provides a detailed treatment of a variety of strategic decisions related to programming. Among these are the respective strengths and weaknesses of the pairing, multi-party, and party-system approaches (Carothers 2006; Caton 2007; Burnell 2004; Kumar 2004; Power 2008; Amundson 2007), considerations when selecting or excluding parties for assistance eligibility (USAID 2007; IMD 2004; Spoerri 2007; Kumar 2004; Carothers 2006); the relative advantages and disadvantages of the main delivery methods (e.g. training, seminars, study tours, technical assistance, as well as financial and material support) (Kumar 2004; Carothers 2006; Amundsen 2007; Caton 2007; Burnell 2004); the strengths and weaknesses of various strategies to mitigate political risks associated with party support (Ohman et. al. 2005; Carothers 2006; UNDP n.d.; SIDA 2005; Burnell 2004; Kumar 2004); strategies for ensuring broad public impact and reach within programming[63] (Carothers 2006; UNDP n.d.); and the advantages and disadvantages associated with different delivery organization structures (e.g. types of mandate, extent of field presence, oversight and autonomy, funding mechanisms) (IMD 2004; River Path Associates 2005; SIDA 2005; Carothers 2006). However, even in these discussions, the analysis often remains more theoretically than factually grounded. For example, the pairing approach is said to offer an advantage over the multi-party approach since it is thought to provide a more trusting working relationship between donor and recipient. At the same time, this approach is said to present a disadvantage over the multi-party approach, because the very trust that it generates may in fact be detrimental to programming, as it can lead the donor to be overly sympathetic to the short-term interests of the recipient party at the expense of its longer term development (Carothers 2006). While intuitively appealing, this discussion, and most of the others on party support strategy, would benefit from more rigorous empirical testing.

As an expanding area party support activities, as well as one whose implementation relies heavily on the actions and advocacy of domestic partners, it seems appropriate to review research related to party system reforms. Party system reform refers to "modifications of the underlying legal and financial framework in which parties are anchored" intended to "foster changes in all of the parties in a country at once" (Carothers 2006, p. 190). Until recently, research in this area was extremely limited, and largely confined to policy analyses and comparative legal studies (IFES 2006). Absent insight into the political conditions necessary for changes in legal provisions to be enforced and complied with, early efforts to support party system reforms had a tendency to be overly formalistic in approach and, as a result, frequently failed to influence party behaviour in practice (IFES 2006; Carothers 2006). Increasing donor interest in this subject has since spurred research, some emerging from inside of the donor community itself, and some from within academia. International IDEA has been a leading source of research relevant to work on party systems, and especially in the field of party finance, which it has identified as a key challenge facing political parties in emerging democracies, and as a serious barrier to their development. IDEA has sponsored research into all aspects of party systems in a series of regional studies published under its *Research and Dialogue Process* (Salih and Nordlund 2007; Stojarova et. al. 2007; Suri 2007; Chege 2007; Marlosa 2007). Prior to this global assessment project, IDEA undertook a major regional study of party finance issues and regulatory approaches in Latin America (Griner and Zovatto 2005). In addition, it has produced a handbook assessing existing party finance provisions worldwide, including extensive analysis of issues on a regional basis, and a critical and comparative review of policy responses available (IDEA n.d.). A second significant source of party finance research is IFES, whose recent publications include a case-study based review of lessons learned through its Money and Politics Program (Carlson and Walecki 2006), and a study that addresses the sensitive area of political finance in post-conflict

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[63] There is a growing body of research concerned with strategies for reaching 'hard to reach' constituencies in programming. This has traditionally covered outreach strategies in relation to socio-economically disadvantaged groups, as well as women and youth. A more recent line of research focuses on transnational migrant groups, and provides insight relevant to donor strategies to engage these groups (Vermeersch 2003; Koopmans 2004; Ostergaard-Nielsen 2006).

countries (Fischer et. al. 2006). One of the important features of these contributions is that, in addition to reviewing the merits of different regulatory frameworks, and to addressing issues of adherence, they recognize the fact that parties require funds to fulfill their functions, and give due weight to this in the analysis. Several academic publications provide similarly nuanced reviews of regulatory approaches (Johnson n.d.; Williams 2002).

Compared to the considerable research done on party finance reform, applied research has been comparatively sparse in the areas of party and electoral law. One reason for the relative paucity of research in these two areas is that they do not enjoy the close relationship to the well-resourced "good governance" agenda that political finance reform does (Carothers 2008). On the other hand, part of this inequality in research priorities may also be explained by trends in party support activities. While the wave of democratic transitions that occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s prompted considerable support for the development of electoral laws in states without them, the difficulty of modifying these laws once in place has limited the amount of work in this area since. However, no such explanation helps to explain the relative scarcity of research assessing impact of reforms to laws governing party formation and conduct. Studies of this sort are nearly non-existent (Niesen 2008, Karvonen 2007). In fact, there is even limited comparative documentation and review of the types of party laws that exist. As Janda suggests, most cross-national surveys of party laws are, in fact, focussed primarily on issues of political finance (Janda n.d.).

Questions for further research

There is a considerable body of research documenting the problems of political parties, both in emerging and established democracies. However, as Carothers suggests, there is a glaring absence of reflection on the origins of the problems that afflict parties, on the reasons for the ubiquity of these problems, or on what can (and cannot) be done to address them. Rigorous empirical studies into any or all of these topics would help in filling a serious gap in research. In light of the fact that these problems are widespread, and can be seen not just in the South, but also in the North, an internationally comparative methodology could help in discerning systemic sources from domestic ones.

A second gap in research relates to the actual consequence of the problems exhibited by political parties. There is, for instance, a complete absence of any empirical research exploring the relationship between party performance, on the one hand, and the perceived legitimacy of parties in public opinion. Instead, this relationship seems to have been assumed. This is alarming, not least because most programming materials produced by practitioners suggest that it is public dismay with political parties, even more so than the problems themselves, which serves as the principal cause for concern within the development community, and as the pretext for action. Drawing on the growing body of public opinion surveys collected in emerging democracies, such research could explore this relationship by exploiting differences along key dimensions of party performance across countries, or by exploiting changes along key dimensions of party performance within a single country over time, or else some combination of both.

The latter points to the absence of research that evaluates the various accounts given to explain Western interest in the party systems of foreign countries. The rise of party support has, for instance, been portrayed as the outcome of lessons learned in the early years of democracy assistance, much of which focussed on implementing elections, and mobilizing and empowering interest groups by means of aid to civil society (Burnell 2005). The assumption underlying these activities was that providing avenues for citizens to exert demands would result in a virtuous cycle of subsequent changes, as all public institutions were reshaped to conform to popular demands (Burnell 2005, Menocal, Fritz et. al. 2007). When the "fallacy" of this assumption was realized, efforts were broadened to include activities which tackled the necessary institutional reforms directly instead of by proxy. Other accounts portray the rise of party assistance primarily as a response to the changing dictates of promoting democratic development. According to these,

party assistance has risen in response to a shift in focus, away from democratic transition and towards democratic consolidation. As the social unity exhibited in opposition to authoritarian regimes fades, and is replaced by discordant interests without outlet, parties have borne the brunt of popular disdain, and the urgency of helping them to perform their functions effectively has increased. A final variety of explanation, voiced commonly within partner countries, and documented in a number of surveys of the field, is that the rise of party assistance is tied to realpolitiks, reflecting Western interest in developing relationships with key political actors in partner countries (Carothers 2006), or else linked to an emerging informal imperialism, adapted to the post-colonial world, and bent on the spread of a procedural form of democracy that will facilitate continued Western expansion and control (Ayers 2008).

While each of these may be plausible accounts, no study has weighed their relative merits. The absence of a literature tackling rationale, limits Western governments from developing a deeper understanding of the imperative that drives them to expend on party assistance and other forms of democracy support, curtails attempts to evaluate these support efforts, and limits the ability of partner countries to shape assistance programs in a way that maximizes both partners' interests. Furthermore, to the extent that the ostensible purpose of assistance is consistent with the manner of its implementation and effect, the absence of such research simply permits some of the negative myths regarding Western motives that currently circulate. Perhaps more than other fields, these myths are especially common with respect to party assistance. As Peter Burnell suggests, "although some of the democracy-assistance agencies are now supplying more information about themselves, and their effectiveness is being subjected to the critical gaze of academic inquirers more than before, closely informed analysis of what might be called the 'high politics' of international democracy promotion seems to have lagged behind... As attention turns increasingly to the high politics of democracy promotion the chances of detecting confusion and contradictions increase, and not just over questions of strategy and means but more fundamentally in terms of the ends and the vision of state-level and world order that is held by leading actors" (Burnell 2005). This view is seconded by Ayers who notes that "despite a vast literature on 'democratisation', there has been a paucity of analysis which interrogates the Great Power-defined agenda of democratisation"(2008, p. 1). Research of this sort would benefit both domestic and international constituencies supporting political party development. Furthermore, it is a line of research that might be most credibly undertaken by Southern scholars.

One of the barriers to political party development is the extent to which it relies on the proper functioning of other democratic institutions. To date, there has been some empirically grounded research into the role of effective civil society in the development of political parties (Doherty 2003; Bevis 2004; Gershman 2004). As noted in the review of research into party systems, scholars have also begun to consider the relationship between the rule of law and party development, linked to the realization that many of the deficiencies identified in political parties are tied to shortcomings in national legal and regulatory frameworks governing party organization and conduct (Carothers 2006; Janda n.d.). Nevertheless, there is considerable room for additional research that looks at party development in a more comprehensive manner. Indeed, the failure of research to convincingly assess the causes of and potential solutions to the list of problems ascribed to political parties seems, in part, to be a consequence of the assessment methodologies used to date. As is true of assessment work in other democratic sectors, assessments of political parties most commonly adopt an approach that look at parties exclusively. As a result, most assessment work abstracts political parties from the national context in which they exist and operate, and their analysis thus focuses heavily on variables related to political parties themselves. Just as the general literature review suggests that whole-country strategic assessments are needed to inform democratic development strategies at a national level, a further defense of their merit is that they are needed to inform more nuanced theory and empirical work concerning the drivers of and impediments to sectoral development—in this case, political party development.

Beyond research assessing the quality of political parties and party systems, there is a need for further comparative inquiry into real opportunities that exist for agents (whether domestic or

international) to encourage party development. Indeed, most of the literature investigating strategies is based on national case-studies. To the extent that comparative research exists, the findings often sweep over significant differences in the national institutions, and states of social, economic and democratic development among comparison countries. Genuinely comparative research, based on a selection of comparison countries tailored to the research objective is extremely rare. Consequently, the amount of truly generalized knowledge concerning strategies for supporting party development is scarce. As Kumar suggests, "the available guidelines and manuals 'tell us little about the relevance and effectiveness of assistance programmes, their impacts on party development and the factors affecting them…This shortfall in both information and analysis poses yet one more challenge for political science to address and especially the sub-discipline that specializes most extensively in the study of political parties (cf. Burnell 2005, p. 54).

Finally, although explicit references to the geographical coverage of research in the literature are few and far between, the few credible sources identified suggest that applied research related to party development has given most extensive treatment to countries in regions where party support has been concentrated—namely, Eastern/Central Europe, Central/South America, and Sub-Saharan Africa (Burnell 2005; Kumar 2005). This generalization merits several qualifications. First, research that evaluates strategies for supporting party development is particularly limited in Central and South America. In fact, during the course of this review, no study was found which evaluated lessons learned (either from the vantage of a domestic or foreign actor) about how to best support party development in the region using a comparative approach, or even a rigorous case-study of experience within a particular country. In contrast, there is a considerable evaluation literature in Eastern and Central Europe, which includes both donor and academic publications. The most recent contribution, and the sole example of a genuinely comparative party support evaluation, is a USAID-commissioned review of political party assistance in a sample of four countries (namely, Serbia, Romania, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan). The primary aim of the study is to review structural, strategic and implementation issues that helped and hindered USAID programs. The main conclusion that emerges from it is that support strategies must be adjusted to regime type: election assistance has its greatest effect in the immediate aftermath of transition, during which time organizational assistance and other attempts to promote internal reforms within parties have tended to fall short. The latter forms of assistance tend to be more effective in democracies that have previously held competitive elections. By this stage, ``political entrepreneurs are beginning to understand the value of voter outreach, platform development and other features of advanced parties. In these situations, assistance probably should focus on reforms that parties are less likely to adopt entirely on their own initiative, such as in areas of internal democracy`` (USAID 2007, iii). There are also a number of academic studies of party assistance in the region, although most focus on the activities of the US party institutes (Spoerri 2007; Ucen and Surotchak 2005; Glenn 1999; Babus 2002). Most of the evaluations of strategies for promoting party development in Sub-Saharan Africa take the form of one-off project evaluations (IMD 2004; IMD 2005; IMD 2006). Examples of evaluation research drawing on a broader range of experience are rare (one exception is Erdmann 2005).

2.4 Research on support to electoral processes

Introduction

Perhaps more than any other institution, elections have come to represent democracy. Such is their significance, that by simply holding elections, once authoritarian states are said to have undergone 'transitions' to democracy. Definitions of democratic consolidation also attribute central importance to elections, identifying the 'institutionalized uncertainty' associated with a commitment to electoral processes as the key attribute of a consolidated democracy. It is thus hardly surprising that election assistance has featured prominently in international efforts to support democratic transitions and consolidation in the developing world.

A wide variety of assistance has been offered to assist emerging democracies to hold elections, and to improve the quality and legitimacy of their electoral processes. Towards this end, the international community has provided technical advice and assistance on designing and implementing legal frameworks to govern elections, support to create domestic election management bodies and to train staff, assistance to register voters and to create and maintain voter lists, civic education and voter-outreach activities to raise voter knowledge and turnout, the provision of funds and supplies necessary for the purpose of holding elections and, finally, monitoring elections to ensure that they are 'free and fair'. In addition, election assistance frequently includes support to social actors that have a direct bearing on the quality and legitimacy of the electoral process. Most commonly, this includes political parties, the media, and civil society groups.

As is true of democracy assistance generally, Western governments are the principal funding source for election assistance activities, with most of this support allocated through multilateral organizations and bilateral aid agencies (*ACEproject* 2008). Among multilateral donors, the UNDP is the largest single funding body for election assistance, followed by the European Union (Pereira 2006). Among bilateral donors, USAID is by far the largest (Fritz et. al. 2007, p. 34). Although most Western governments have provided funding for election assistance, these three organizations have consistently been the three largest contributors (*ACEproject* 2008).

It is frequently observed that, after peaking in the mid-1990s, the democracy assistance community's focus on electoral processes has gradually waned, as funding has shifted towards supporting other areas of democratic development (Burnell 2005). This inference appears to find some support in the literature. Youngs (2002, p. 28) estimates that between the mid-1990s and 2001, the European Union's spending on election assistance as a share of its total democracy assistance funding fell from 50 percent to 15 percent, and to an even lower share of its members' bilateral democracy assistance funding. However, a recent review of USAID spending (Seligson et. al. 2007) is less supportive of the common belief. It finds that election assistance has generally represented a small proportion of total USAID funding for democracy assistance activities, and has not changed dramatically over time—estimated at 14 percent of total USAID democracy assistance funding between 1990 and 2006.

With respect to implementation, the field of international election assistance is inhabited by a wide range of actors, and this is particularly true of election monitoring. Multilateral organizations, including the UNEAD, EU, OSCE, OAS, AU, EISA and Commonwealth are among the most active in the field of election monitoring, as are a number of non-governmental organizations, most notably the Carter Centre. Increasingly, these international monitoring groups work alongside domestic monitoring organizations, themselves usually a product of international assistance (Lean 2007).

Most bilateral aid agencies with a significant involvement in democracy assistance have provided direct funding and material assistance to partner countries to support elections. Technical assistance and civic education, by contrast, is generally channelled through organizations with

specialized knowledge and experience in this area (*ACEproject* 2008). By far the largest of these implementing agencies, in terms of scale and scope, is the UNDP. Given the absolute size of USAID funding, US-based NDI and IRI, as well as IFES have each gained prominent status in implementing election assistance programs. The European party foundations have also been involved in the provision of election assistance (Fritz et. al. 2007, p. 31; *ACEproject* 2008). A recent survey of the main European party foundations by Van Wersch and de Zeeuw (2005) finds that roughly 10 percent of the total project funding of the European political foundations goes to election related activities.

The scale of election assistance varies from one project to the next although, as a rule, the most extensive aid programs take place in countries holding their first elections (Reilly 2003, ACE*project* 2008). Few international election assistance programs today consist of mere election monitoring (Reilly 2003), though most tend to be initiated in relation to a particular election, as opposed to representing longer term commitments (*ibid)*.

No existing studies evaluate the scale of support to research into electoral processes, and neither an estimate of what this total amount is, or of how it is broken down across sub-fields can be offered here.

Subjects of research

A review of donor and academic publications suggests that research output on election assistance peaked in the mid- to late-1990s, at which time it was primarily concerned with the subject of monitoring. Generally speaking, no subject has received greater attention in the applied literature on election assistance than monitoring, with much of this research concerned with developing standards for "free and fair" elections, and elaborating rules of best practice for election monitors. One factor that favours research and reviews of election monitoring is that the activities of international and domestic election observers are well documented, as nearly all organizations involved in this work publish post-election reports, detailing their presence and activities in-country. Accordingly, scholars and practitioners have a wealth of information to postulate strengths and weaknesses of programming.

As noted, applied research on election monitoring has focused extensively on establishing guidelines for what constitutes "free and fair" elections. A number of donor organizations, including International IDEA, the UNDP, and UNEAD, have been active supporters of this research agenda, driven by a belief that common agreement on the conditions that make an election "free and fair" will lessen differences in interpretation among observer agencies, and contribute to a greater degree of unanimity in election evaluation reports (IDEA 2006). However, it is not clear that such a standard is plausible (or even desirable). As Elklit and Svensson suggest, the complexity of electoral processes, and the very different constraints under which they take place, make it exceedingly difficult to imagine what a universal standard for free and fair elections would be (cf. Pereira 2006). Moreover, as Kohnert (2004) notes, the drive to standardize the practice of election monitoring, while beneficial on the level already mentioned, has also been associated with a tendency among monitors to overlook the many distinctive social, economic, and cultural features within countries that either directly, or by means of their manipulation by interested parties, detract from the quality of electoral processes. Indeed, Bjornlund (2005) identifies a lack of attention to country context and, in particular, to structural constraints, as a key flaw in election monitoring and assessment practice. In any event, even if a formal framework for electoral quality assessment were to be elaborated, implementing it in an impartial way would pose further challenges, since the various actors engaged in election observation often have different mandates and agendas. To date, efforts to overcome this have focused upon developing codes of conduct for election observation, and upon increasing coordination between international monitoring organizations. In both of these areas, International IDEA and the United Nations have assumed leading roles.

Although election monitoring has been the main interest of applied research into election assistance, there is a growing body of research concerned with the role of electoral management bodies (EMBs) in raising the perceived legitimacy and quality of elections. Despite being a relatively new field of inquiry (Parsot 1999; Hartlyn et. al. 2008), research into the institutional underpinnings of legitimate electoral processes is already quite advanced. Among the research conducted to date are national case studies exploring the contribution of EMBs to electoral legitimacy in Mexico (Eisenstadt 2002) and Costa Rica (Lehoucq and Molina 2002), as well as comparative studies exploring the relationship between EMBs and the legitimacy of elections regionally in Africa (Elklit and Reynolds 2005) and Latin America (Hartlyn et. al. 2008). Lyons (2004) explores the contribution of EMBs to the demilitarization of politics in a variety of post-conflict countries. Echoing a growing consensus within the policy community, these studies point to a significant improvement in the perceived legitimacy of electoral processes and outcomes conducted under transparent, non-partisan, and legally independent EMBs (Elklit and Reynolds 2004; Hartlyn et. al. 2008; Reilly 2003). Donor assistance strategies, and issues related to cost and sustainability of support for electoral management bodies also receive thorough treatment in several publications (Fischer and Lopez-Pintor 2005; Reynolds et. al. 2005).

Research looking at logistical and material support for electoral processes has focused principally on cost and sustainability issues. Approaches to ensuring sustainability, both with respect to material support and especially technology transfers receive a thorough treatment (Fischer and Lopez-Pintor; Reynolds et. al. 2005; *ACEproject* 2008). Voter registration, a major expense involved in holding elections, is also addressed here (IDEA 2007; Reynolds et. al. 2005; Fischer and Lopez-Pintor). Increasingly, these studies point to the benefit of maintaining a permanent voter list, and a permanent staff to update it regularly, in lieu of the hugely expensive task of enumerating voters for each election.

Lessons learned

One frequent criticism of the considerable work aimed at supporting electoral processes in emerging democracies is that, although fundamental to democracy, elections alone do not create democracy (Kohnert 2004, p. 6). As one observer suggests, you cannot have democracy without elections, but you can have elections without democracy.   However, just as the intense focus on supporting electoral processes during the 1990s reflected an unwavering faith in the potential contribution of elections to democratic consolidation, much of the research related to this line of assistance rests on this same assumption. Indeed, the vast majority of it addresses issues of programming strategy, cost and sustainability, taking for granted the contributions it makes to democratic consolidation.

A number of process-oriented lessons have been identified in research assessing election observation. One of the most common prescriptions is that election observation requires a presence during the pre-election, election, and post-election periods. The practice of sending observers for short-term visits, centered around events on election day is seen not only to limit the opportunity for observers to familiarize themselves with the context in which they are operating, but makes it wholly impossible for observers to provide an account of events leading up to elections that impact on their quality. A second consensus within the literature is on the need for greater professionalism in the field. At present, election observation missions often include individuals who know very little about the country in which they are operating or worse, who do not even speak the local language[64]. Finally, it is generally agreed that observers should be granted maximum discretion to assess elections based on their merit, and should be free from

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[64] Beyond pointing to the need for staff to be familiar with country-context, reviews of monitoring missions have also encouraged greater uptake of technology. In particular, this includes supplying election monitoring missions with advanced systems for sending, receiving and processing data from personnel on hand at polling stations, as well as software and analysts able to conduct statistical testing of data received to identify potential irregularities (de Jong 2008).

any pressure to consider external diplomatic interests. This prescription arises from a recognition that nothing undermines the legitimacy or potential impact of election monitoring more than instances when election monitoring organizations render wholly incompatible assessments of the same election. As several scholars have suggested, these differences can generally be explained by the interests of donors behind the separate missions (Pereira 2006, Kohnert 2004; Fritz et. al. 2007).

International observation is a very expensive undertaking and, absent assistance to develop domestic capacity to observe elections, must be repeated for each election. Although its provision has been indispensable to the conduct of first elections, and remains particularly applicable in polarized domestic contexts where no group can claim to be above the fray, practitioners and scholars are increasingly pointing to the merits of having permanent domestic observer groups on the ground (Lean 2007; Bjornlund 2005). Domestic observation has several advantages that international monitoring does not. First, a permanent domestic observation group provides ongoing assessment of developments in-country that are likely to impact future elections, and thus provide a heightened degree of vigilance. Second, although international observers may contribute to democratic consolidation by raising the standard of elections, and reassuring citizens of the legitimacy of elections, their contribution is limited to this. In addition to this, as networks of citizens concerned with the integrity of the democratic process in their country, the growth of domestic observation groups represents a concrete contribution to civil society development. Third, in contrast with international monitoring missions, staff of domestic observation groups have a natural appreciation for country context. Thus, both for reasons of cost and sustainability, as well as synergies with other objectives of democratic development, studies of election monitoring are increasingly favouring a shift in focus towards developing domestic observation capacity. This contrasts with a consensus that Carothers observed in the late-1990s, characterized by a distrust in the impartiality of domestic observers, and a general enthusiasm for the profile, and supposed impact of international monitoring missions (1999).

Questions for further research

Despite the extensive research into best practice in election monitoring and observation, rigorous empirical testing of the extent to which election observation contributes to democratic consolidation is sparse. Most notably, no authoritative comparative research into the relationship between election monitoring activities and public views concerning the legitimacy of elections was identified during the course of this literature review. Nor has there been much rigorous research into the impact of election monitoring on the incidence of electoral fraud. Hyde's (2007) study of the 2003 presidential elections in Armenia, using a natural experimental approach to study voting irregularities between those polling stations visited and not visited by election observers, is one exception.

The paucity of research into the effects of election monitoring is worrisome, as its supposed contribution to democratic consolidation may not exist, or may not be as strong as hoped. Among the primary reasons for believing that observers do contribute to democratic consolidation are that 1) observers (domestic or international) reduce the incidence of electoral fraud and thus enhance the integrity and legitimacy of the electoral process and, 2) election observers are impartial and by means of their coverage on the ground, their endorsement of an election can enhance the legitimacy of the election process and its outcome. The relationship may, however, be more complicated. Indeed, as the shift of election assistance away from monitoring activities suggests, the legitimacy of electoral processes rests on far more than the simple absence of fraud (Bjornlund 2005). Moreover, to the extent that it is how key political actors and the public perceive the integrity of the election process that matters most, an argument could certainly be made that the arrival of the international election monitoring community into a country might actually raise concern among citizens about the extent to which elections are legitimate, and give cause for doubting the extent to which one's fellow citizens are committed to the electoral process.

Unlike the observation literature (which is heavy on case studies, and limited on rigorous comparative research), the reverse appears to be true with respect to EMBs. As Reynolds and Elklit (2005, p. 16) suggest "studies and analyses of individual electoral processes and their administration are needed to validate and enrich broader comparative studies and analyses. In turn, the latter are also needed to get beyond the conclusions based on [their] pilot study and scattered evidence from other countries".

2.5 Research on support to civil society

Introduction
The concept civil society describes a dynamic and broadly-based matrix of autonomous, private associations that citizens voluntarily form for the promotion of their diverse interests.
The existence of a vibrant civil society is held to be an essential trait of liberal-democracy for at least three reasons.

First, since the associations of which it is comprised can be freely formed, they are seen to constitute the means through which individuals can exercise the freedom to choose which aspects of their individuality they wish to pursue. They give the individual an opportunity to find self-expression in association with other like-minded members of society.

Second, it is argued that these associations protect the sphere of individual liberty because they "are able to balance excessive concentrations of power" (Hall 1993, p. 282). In particular, the dense and complex network of private associations in civil society is seen as a bulwark against excessive state intrusion into the sphere of private relations (*Cf.* Keane 1988, p. 15).

Third, participation in these associations is seen to help citizens "to cultivate the virtues of democratic citizenship: prudence, judgement, eloquence, resourcefulness, courage, self-reliance, sensitivity to power, common sense" (Keane 1991, p. 146).

Arguing in a similar vein, Robert Putnam, sees civil society as a source of "social capital"—a term he uses to describe both "social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam 2000, p. 19). He believes that social capital contributes to democracy by teaching political skills, by creating "community bonds (that) keep individuals from falling prey to extremist groups," by serving as "forums for thoughtful deliberation over vital public issues" and by teaching "civic virtues" (Putnam 2000, p. 338-9).

The pluralist theory of political representation

The focus on group life in the concept of civil society helps to explain one of the more difficult problems posed by the individualist premises of liberal-democratic theory: how can the individual be meaningfully represented in the governing of political communities with populations of millions of people? This problem is addressed by focussing not on the representation of individuals, as such, but on the representation of their *interests.* In this view all members of society share interests with some other members—interests defined by such characteristics as their gender, age, ethnic identity, language, income, occupation and religious beliefs. Public policies (government decisions with general application) address the concerns of these interests rather than those of particular individuals.

These ideas provide the underpinning for a more specific interpretation of the requirements for a healthy liberal democracy, an interpretation put forward by American pluralist theory. The pluralist theory of politics sees society as a collection of groups defined by differing interests. Individuals participate in politics through the group interests they choose to emphasize. They act in the political arena by giving their support to organized groups advocating these interests.

Pluralist theory holds a healthy democracy to be one in which
1. there is widespread citizen participation in group life,
2. groups can freely form and compete for political influence,
3. there is fair and equal competition among groups in the political arena,
4. no one group possesses a disproportionately large share of resources to influence government decisions, and
5. public policies accurately reflect the balance of power among groups (cf. Connolly 1969, p. 3-4).

The importance of multiple group memberships

Pluralist theory emphasizes the importance of multiple and overlapping group memberships in creating a strong foundation for democracy. It is argued that this will make citizens more sensitive to the interests of others and more willing to enter into compromises and to reach accommodations with other groups. There are two reasons underlying this. First, citizens who are members of more than one group will grow accustomed to working within each group with fellow citizens who share their views about at least one issue but not necessarily about others. This will encourage them to see their fellow citizens, not as either friends or enemies, but as potential allies on some issues and potential opponents on others. This in turn will encourage the practice of tolerance and mutual accommodation, as citizens learn to "agree to disagree" with one another on some issues in order to build alliances on others. Second, citizens with more than one interest will learn that success on one front requires making concessions on another. They will come to see that by making compromises they can achieve at least some of their goals. Politics thus will be seen as something other than a "zero-sum" game in which one is either a winner or a loser.

By contrast, citizens who seek to advance only one interest or whose several interests are essentially subsets of a single overarching concern, are less likely to see what could be gained from compromise. They are equally less likely to be brought into close contact with those with whom they may both agree on some matters and disagree on others. In a society in which differing group interests tend to reinforce one another so that citizens are polarized into opposing camps, rather than divided into a multiplicity of intertwined groups, conflicts are more likely to become intractable.

The extent and nature of civil society support programs

There is a good deal of variation in donor definitions of the concept of civil society which makes it difficult to establish the scale of international investment in this form of assistance. These conceptual variations often obscure the line demarcating civil society aid from other types of democracy assistance, such as election monitoring or institution-building and, as a result, there is no precise, consistent or uniform method of reporting program expenditures. In general, civil society organizations (CSOs) are the most common recipients of democracy assistance funding. As Jeroen de Zeeuw writes, "civil society is the most preferred channel and recipient. The majority of international democracy funds are directed, either directly or indirectly via intermediary international NGOs, to the creation of electoral, human rights and media NGOs" (2004, p. 123).

Harry Blair identifies improving participation, accountability and contestation as the major goals of civil society aid (2004). To meet these ends, most projects focus on two basic tasks: a) development of the necessary legal and institutional framework within which CSOs can freely and successfully mobilize, and b) cultivation of the awareness, skills and values necessary for democracy's deepening and survival. The broadening of citizen engagement in public affairs through involvement in grassroots community organizations, the development of consultative forums that facilitate closer interaction between citizens and political leaders, the dissemination of information and knowledge about particular policy matters and governance issues such as the rule of law, corruption and accountability, and the practical know-how required for voting and the

execution of other key aspects of democratic citizenship are the most common program objectives. Of the 19 civil society development projects launched by the UN Democracy Fund during its inaugural year, eight focused on strengthening advocacy and public input in policy-making processes (especially by commonly marginalized groups, such as women), another six focused on civic education (including tolerance-building exercises in post-conflict societies such as Kosovo), three emphasized the "thickening" of civil society or enhancing cooperation among organizations through networking, and the remaining two dealt with aiding independent media outlets (UN Democracy Fund Projects Database, 2008). These varied activities reflect trends in the civil society aid community more broadly.

Applied research on civil society

Applied research on civil society development has primarily been concerned with two kinds of questions: does civil society aid serve to strengthen democracy, and how would we know? And what factors make the success of aid programs more or less likely? Each of these themes is discussed in turn below.

Assessing the effectiveness of support to civil society

The development of civil society is a major component in "big picture" assessments of democratic development by donors and donor-supported research. For example, the recent IDEA guidelines identify "civil society" as the "third pillar" of its assessment framework, noting that:

> Democratic institutions depend for their effective functioning both on guaranteed rights upheld by the legal process and on an alert and active citizen body. Key elements contributing to the latter are independent and pluralistic media of communication, and a vigorous network of voluntary associations of all kinds, through which citizens can act to manage their own affairs and influence public policy. The vigor of associational life is in turn an important condition for securing the responsiveness of government policy, and ensuring that the delivery of public services meets the needs of the population, especially at the most local level (Beetham et. al. 2008, p. 28).

The eight IDEA country assessment studies have used a series of questions based on this statement to assess civil society development.

USAID uses "increased development of a politically active civil society" as part of its individual country assessments, and in its *Handbook of Democracy and Governance Indicators* proposes five measures of progress toward this goal:

- a legal framework to protect and promote civil society,
- increased citizen participation in the policy process and oversight of public institutions,
- increased institutional and financial viability of CSOs,
- enhanced free flow of information, and
- a strengthened democratic political culture (1998, p. 13).

The United Nations Development Program, borrowing from the CIVICUS[65] Civil Society Index asks questions about structure (i.e. "What is the internal make-up of civil society? How large, vibrant and representative is civil society in terms of individuals and organizations?"), environment (i.e. "What is the political, socio-economic and legal environment in which civil

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[65] *CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation* is "an international … network of organisations at the local, national, regional and international levels…(that)has worked for over a decade to strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world, especially in areas where participatory democracy and citizens' freedom of association are threatened." http://www.civicus.org/who-we-are

society exists? Are these factors enabling or disabling to civil society?"), values (i.e. "Does civil society practice and promote positive social values?"), and impact (i.e. "What is the impact of civil society? Is it effective in solving social, economic and political problems, and in serving the common good?"), to get a sense of how civil society aid influences the democratic "bottom line" (http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/Policy-Pub-Indicator%20Sources.pdf).

There is little information about attempts by donors to apply these frameworks and concern has been expressed about how they can be operationalized. (See below for a further expansion of this point.)

Some independent researchers have also been attempting to find methods for assessing the effectiveness of assistance in this area.

For example, in studying the effectiveness of projects in Southeast Asia, Harry Blair developed a template of four basic questions:

1) What institutional strengths were civil society organizations (CSOs) able to build, and how well-equipped were they to engage in civil society activity?
2) What did the CSOs do, individually and collectively?
3) Did these activities have any effect on changing state policies?
4) Did changes in state policy have any effect on democratic development? (1997, pp. 37-38)

Blair expanded this framework in subsequent works, zeroing in on the key performance indicators of participation, accountability and contestation (2004; 2007, pp. 173-175). He found that while efforts to strengthen civil society in India and the Philippines failed to achieve some of these stated objectives, they were successful in expanding participation (2007, p. 171).

This kind of "independent" scholarly assessment scheme differs from those of donor organizations and evaluation specialists, whose frameworks are designed primarily for looking at value for money (cf. Bollen et. al. 2005, p. 189-203). While useful for administrative purposes, these frameworks do not pose the kinds of questions necessary to assess the wider impact of civil society assistance.

Research on the effects of intervening variables

A second area of research has examined how "situational" variables may affect project outcomes. Schatz (2006) looks at how variations in authoritarianism, particularly in degrees of insularity or the susceptibility of institutions to international influences, affects levels of openness required for civil society aid to succeed in a given country. In the same vein, Junemann (2002) has explored different strategies for engaging directly with autocrats in cases where civil society aid cannot be administered to NGOs free from government interference. In such instances, "the unpredictable and potentially repressive behaviour of the [authoritarian] state makes it a 'high maintenance' partner, and CSOs [set up as partners of the state] are often reluctant to engage in any activity that could trigger government suspicion," as Chaplowe and Engo-Tjega note (2007, p. 264).

Lisa McIntosh-Sundstrom has noted how variations in opportunity structures, as defined by political cultures, the instrumental logic of political elites and the configuration of institutions, produced significant regional variations in the outcomes of civil society projects in Russia (2006, pp. 2-3), while other scholars have considered the influence of civil society aid in post-conflict situations, even testing the ability of projects to reduce the likelihood of a return to violence (MacLean, 2004; von Hippel, 2002). Julie Mertus and Sajjad Tazreena have argued that civil society promotion can undermine processes of state-building, citing the popular participation in truth commissions as a detriment to state capacity and autonomy in Kosovo as evidence, a claim which also suggests that civil society aid is likely to have the desired and intended effects only where sufficiently strong institutions are already in place (2004).

Finally, contributors to Mendelson and Glenn's volume on support to NGOs in Eastern Europe and Eurasia underscore the importance of political history and culture for the success of civil society assistance, criticizing donors' insensitivity to local contexts. Specifically, the editors complain that "Western groups tended to rely on practitioners with little knowledge of the region, such as political activists from U.S. communities or British civic organizers, to implement strategies for building democratic institutions that were developed in Western capitals. These technicians were often poorly prepared to anticipate how local activists, given local historical legacies, were likely to receive recommendations" (p. 3). Accordingly, authors in this collection view moving beyond the barriers that local contexts can impose as a major task confronting donors of civil society aid.

While political culture is undoubtedly important, research on this subject remains in its infancy. Valuable though the contributions of Mendelson et al are, further investigations in other parts of the world have the potential to reveal the implications of larger variations in authoritarian pasts, and more clearly specify how local culture operates as a causal mechanism.

Lessons learned

Analyses of donor experiences have thus far yielded a number of important lessons. One of the most important is that outputs are not the same as outcomes. Most policy-makers are interested in knowing whether or not civil society aid works—that is, whether it enables or constrains democracy—but outputs refer only to the uses to which donor aid was actually put, or "what comes directly out of the pipe" (Gilley, Inboden and Noakes, p. 275). For many working in the field of civil society aid, linking the results of individual projects to broader trends of democratization has proven difficult, with some even suggesting that the connection between the two is based more on theoretical or ideological conviction than sound empirical research (Burnell, 2008; Blair, 2007, 2004; Edwards and Hulme, 1996). Indeed, most appear to simply accept the premise that "successful" civil society projects contribute to democratization, without any attempts to gauge whether this is in fact the case.

Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers point out that "when they attempt to strengthen civil society as a means of promoting democracy, aid providers from the United States and most donor countries end up concentrating on a very narrow set of organizations: professionalized NGOs dedicated to advocacy or civic education work on public interest issues directly related to democratization, such as election monitoring, voter education, governmental transparency, and political and civil rights generally" (2000, p. 11). This practice carries two major consequences. First, the difficulties of assessing the overall impacts of localized civil society-building efforts on democratization create the sense that such projects do not work, in turn breeding disaffection with international aid strategies. To combat this problem and promote more realistic thinking on what can be accomplished through civil society aid, Ottaway and Carothers recommend redefining success by paying greater attention to project impacts at the micro and meso-levels (pp. 298-302). They note that whereas macro-level results are hard to ascertain, "at the micro-level, the impact of civil society assistance has been nothing short of dramatic," helping to create and keep alive thousands of grassroots organizations (pp. 298-299). While the record of success at the meso-level is more varied, authors like Quigley and Petrescu do report some successful attempts to influence policy, even if these nevertheless fell short of donor expectations (pp. 207-209; 232-235). Gordon Crawford speaks to meso effects as the "missing link" that can help researchers better attribute individual project impacts to overarching political effects (2002, pp. 922-923).

Second, the provision of aid to professionalized groups has led some promoters to conceptualize success in civil society-building in terms of NGO proliferation. Of the European Commission's efforts to promote civil society through human rights initiatives, Crawford has written that "the most significant impact is judged as its contribution to the growth of a lively NGO sector in all nine countries examined" (2002, p. 916). However, the creation of new organizations does not automatically imply that democratic values are taking root among the general public, that citizens are seizing opportunities to participate in advocacy in greater numbers, or that NGOs actually

speak to the concerns of ordinary citizens. In fact, quite the opposite may be true. In his 2005 study of NGOs in the Czech Republic, Adam Fagan concluded that "the development of professionalism and elite proximity amongst the larger organizations has occurred at the expense of closer linkage with communities, largely as a result of the dependency of NGOs on foreign donor revenue. The lack of an immediate financial incentive to cultivate closer linkage has translated into a political dislocation" (2005, pp. 535-536). Chaplowe and Engo-Tjega have noted that "the influx of donor funds has helped spawn a savvy, civil society elite who speak western languages and often have limited support in society and weak or nonexistent internal democratic mechanisms for making decisions" (2007, p. 263).

In other words, foreign funding can sometimes cause organizations to fall out of touch with the needs of civil society at large, and create incentives for them to pursue their own agenda's independently. Of course, there are perfectly acceptable operational reasons why funding should go to those organizations that have a trained, professional staff well-versed in donor languages: such characteristics are essential for project reporting, evaluation and needs assessment. Nevertheless, aid to NGOs on the ground has sometimes created distance between these groups and the public, and given rise to the false impression that proliferating NGOs and a blossoming civil society are one and the same thing.

A further lesson concerns the use of recipient CSO experiences—as in the "participatory" method advocated by Crawford (2002)—versus the "objective" views of donors and third parties in program assessment. Several authors complain that research on project impacts does not take local experiences sufficiently into account. For example, Benoit Challand has written of how excessive reliance on donor perspectives has contributed in part to the failure of international programs to generate an autonomous civil society in the Palestinian territories (2008, pp. 397-400).[66] The World Bank bases its civil society and governance indicators on the opinions of local experts and NGOs in recipient countries because, as Kaufmann, Kray and Mastruzzi put it, "perceptions matter" and, in many cases, there is simply no alternative to relying on perceptions (Governance Matters VII, p. 3).[67] Virtually no one would dispute that processes of democratization are driven primarily from within, even when they are funded by donors abroad. But at the very least, one gets a sense that the inclusion of local knowledge in assessing and evaluating civil society projects can provide donors with resources not always available in research that relies on outside views alone.

Geographical coverage of civil society applied research

To date, research has overwhelmingly favoured post-communist systems, with the ex-Soviet states in Eastern Europe and central Asia making up the bulk of the literature. Mendelson and Glenn (2002), McMahon (2004a, 2002), Richter (2002), Powell (2002), Adamson (2002), Weinthal and Jones Luong (2002), Sundstrom (2005, 2002), Quigley (2000), Petrescu (2000), Vari (1998), Henderson (2002), Fagan (2006, 2005), Schatz (2006), and Celichowski (2004) all discuss the trials of civil society development in this part of the world. Works by Sundstrom (2006) and Henderson (2003), both of which look at international funding to Russian NGOs, are the only two book-length investigations discovered on civil society aid. There has also been considerable attention devoted to the former Yugoslav territories. Notable contributions here have been made by Chandler (2004), Sampson (2003), Gagnon (2006, 2002), Nuti (2006), and Sneed (2006). The overcoming of authoritarian legacies and the development of public trust, a condition which itself is mitigated by factors such as political culture and history, is a central

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[66] Though an assortment of other factors have obviously contributed to failure in this case.
[67] On the other hand, Kohl and Green note that "stakeholders who are not active in a particular field may simply lack knowledge when asked to evaluate specific project impact or overall changes in a specific [civil society] programming area" (207, p. 159).

theme of this literature, and the challenge is deemed particularly acute in post-conflict situations typified by inter-ethnic and inter-religious violence.[68]

That is not to say that research has focused exclusively on these areas. Writings on Sub-Saharan Africa comprise the second-largest bloc of research, as the works by Robinson and Friedman (2007), Mercer (2004), MacLean (2004), Igoe (2003), Hearn (2000, 2001), Kasfir (1998), Chaplowe and Engo-Tenga (2007), Ottaway (2000), Fioramonti (2005), and Landsberg (2000) suggest. Less commonly, authors have concentrated on Muslim North Africa and the Middle East (Junemann 2002; Cumming 2002; Brouwer 2000; al-Sayyid 2000; Cavatorta 2008; Challand 2008, 2005; and Toros 2007), and Latin America (Shifter 2000; Basombrio 2000; Encarnacion 2002; Lean 2003; and Gruben 2007).

Golub (2000), Racelis (2000), Blair (2004) and Hughes (2007) have all written on Asia but, in general, research on civil society aid in this part of the world has been thin. Golub makes some references to projects in Bangladesh and Nepal (pp. 150-153), but otherwise all of the authors focus on Southeast Asian countries. As noted in the previous section, parts of Asia have been overlooked in the provision of civil society aid, but civil society development is often the art of the possible. Donors take a "triage" approach to assistance, often choosing to target support where it seems likely to be most fruitful, a tactic that reflects a conscious, if not explicitly stated consideration of local contexts including authoritarian receptivity. As such, it is not surprising that the closed, resilient regimes in China and Myanmar have garnered little outside aid, let alone analytical coverage. Nonetheless, with a total population encompassing half of humanity, as well as the largest concentration of people living under authoritarianism, researchers might consider branching out to explore the lessons that certain corners of the Asian continent not yet discovered might provide.

Methodological considerations in existing research

Existing research is constrained by a series of methodological challenges. First, as the unevenness of its geographical coverage implies, this research is often guilty of claiming too much. Although Mendelson and Glenn use what they call a "comparative social science method, which examines similarities and differences across contexts" (p. 9), it is unclear exactly how far their findings can travel. Aside from the rather bland insight that "context matters," research on a wide assortment of contexts around the world is insufficiently developed to establish the importance of factors affecting civil society assistance. Simply stated, the hypotheses gleaned from the most commonly explored cases need to be tested more broadly if researchers are to have license to generalize.

Second, the definition of core concepts—including the usage of civil society as a dependent and an independent variable—remains a key challenge, a task Volkhart Finn Heinrich likens to "attempting to nail a pudding to a wall," due to the vast array of actors and behaviours of which the concept admits (2008, p. 9). Larry Diamond describes civil society as "the realm of organized social life that is voluntary, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or shared set of rules" (1996, p. 228), a definition that closely resembles the one employed by donors of civil society aid, like the Swedish International Development Agency. It considers civil society to be "an arena, separate from the state, the market and the individual

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[68] A number of obstacles to civil society development, such as the severity of an authoritarian past or endemic corruption, are commonly raised in the literature on post-communist systems and Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet surmounting these challenges is a major task before democratizing societies, not just civil society promoters, and mention of them in the scholarship is of little practical help in program design since there would be little need for foreign aid to civil society if they did not exist in the first place. The targeting of these challenges as project goals may be …part of what has contributed to the unrealistic expectations of many donors and the corresponding rise in disaffection when individual projects fail to meet them.

household, in which people organize themselves and act together to promote their common interests" (as cited in Blair 2004, p. 9).

However, there seems to be little consensus among scholars for this interpretation of the concept. Jean Grugel distinguishes between the liberal model of civil society, as exemplified in Diamond's work, and a more radical position that "criticizes the liberal assumption that civil society is automatically inclusive and identifies how unequal economic, social and cultural resources shape the contour of civil society itself" (2002, p. 94). Likewise, Hanberger offers an in-depth discussion of what he calls the libertarian, communitarian, mediating, and feminist models of "ideal types" of civil society (2001, pp. 213-215). The choice for one definition over another—and the use of that definition in designing civil society aid policies and programs—is inseparable from its normative implications.

Third, there are problems in assessing the effectiveness of support to civil society which is intended to promote democratic development because not all civil society aid is expressly intended to support or create groups which "engage the political system." Though they are not always included under the heading of 'democracy promotion' projects, organizations active in such areas as species preservation, poverty eradication or HIV/AIDS awareness may nevertheless participate in civil society development when they become recipients of aid for other express purposes.[69] In such cases, donors may contribute to civil society—and hence democratic development—without knowing or intending to do so.[70] It may be necessary to bracket certain kinds of groups and activities for the sake of analytical ease, but research that automatically excludes these other kinds of CSOs or dismisses those projects that may have had unintended consequences run a much higher risk of encountering selection bias issues.

Moreover, evaluators may attribute the effects of civil society assistance on democratization to the wrong causal element. Properly assigning causality is identified by Blair as one of the biggest problems before evaluators because, as he says, "donor support is scarcely the only factor affecting state policy and democratic development. The wider society, economy [and] polity all have an impact as well...collectively much more strongly than donor support working through CSOs. And even within the range of what donors do, there are many influences at work besides support for CSOs" (1997, p. 32). Bollen et al suggest the use of treatment and control groups, one of which receives the benefits of donor support while the other does not, to help isolate the effects of civil society aid from other relevant factors (2005, p. 1999). However, no evidence was uncovered to suggest that this method has yet been put into practice, and working towards a solution to the attribution problem thus remains a task for future research.

Other critical perspectives and challenges

Given the nature of the lessons learned and the aforementioned methodological challenges, it is little wonder that most writings on civil society aid are critical of it in some respect. In addition to the specific critiques already mentioned, several others bear mention here.

Pointing to the multiplicity of causal factors at play in the democratization process, Ivelin Sardamov expresses doubts that civil society has much to do with democratization at all:

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[69] For example, while an environmental NGO may be more concerned with cleaning up a dying river than in altering the electoral system or exposing corruption, they can make potentially important contributions to democratization by demonstrating the value of civic participation and the productive potential of collective action through institutions, or by teaching individuals the skills and attitudes necessary to function in a democratic system. Or, NGOs working in areas such as environmental protection may push for policy change on these issues from time to time.
[70] Hanberger cites examples of healthcare advocacy projects that gave rise to CSOs almost by accident.

Much of the scholarly literature, as well as policy papers and grant proposals, posit a strong correlation between the strength of civil society and democratization. Such findings are assumed to imply a causal relationship between civil society and democracy. Building a robust civil society is therefore postulated as a precondition for democratization and democratic consolidation. In fact, the correlation between 'civil society' and democracy may be spurious, both phenomena being shaped by deeper social processes related to modernization and individualization (2005, p. 30).

Several others have explored the possibility that civil society is not always an asset to democratization efforts. Lauren Shapker points out that in Russia, "bad civil society," including the rise of organized crime syndicates and lagging public trust, have impeded democratic deepening (2006). In the same vein, Barbara Wake-Carroll cautions that the involvement of some groups with strong ethnic and tribal affiliations can complicate the development of a democracy-supporting civil society (2004, pp. 13-15). The same risks are present anywhere obviously illiberal groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan or al-Qaeda, become heavily involved in public affairs.

While much research has criticized donors for ignoring the insights of local experts, others raise questions about the appropriateness and applicability of a universal evaluation framework or model of civil society for all contexts. As Chaplowe and Engo-Tjega put it, "Western normative approaches to civil society straitjacket the concept's ability, and those who wield it, to identify and address critical political and economic realities as perceived and experienced in locally distinct contexts" (2007, p. 263). Nelson Kasfir makes the case that accepted models of civil society make little sense in Africa, which has "long been rich in associational life but poor in democracy" (1998, p. 124). And a few others, like David Lovell, make an even more explicit connection between contemporary civil society promotion and neo-colonialism (2007).

Questions for further research

There is scarcely any area of inquiry on civil society aid and development that does not require further research. Still, a few stand out as particularly deserving of study.

First, the literature makes specific reference to issues surrounding civil society's sustainability. Blair asks, "how can a civil society best sustain itself and in the process sustain democratic development" (1997, p. 38-39)? For that matter, how can individual CSOs become self-sustaining once the flow of donor funds has stopped? Many CSOs do not have long-term impacts on policy processes (Robinson and Friedman 2007) and, at any rate, determining the longer-term results of projects is very difficult at present because, "donor emphasis is often on time-fixed projects rather than processes" (Van Rooy 1998, p. 206). If the question of sustainability goes unanswered, recipient CSOs could even become donor-dependent in some cases.

Second, research needs to be done to better understand and foster competition among CSOs and other social groups. As Blair writes, "unless groups energetically compete with each other, the polity faces serious dangers, either (1) that a few CSOs will dominate the policy terrain and skew things in their own interest, or (2) that a larger number of CSOs will simply collude to divide benefits among themselves at public expense, resulting in a kind of 'interest group gridlock' that hobbles the political system" (Ibid., p. 39).

Third, although recent work has made strides toward understanding how variation in authoritarian or semi-democratic regime types might affect project outcomes, much is left to learn. The question of corporatism and how donors can most effectively engage dictatorial governments is particularly important. If repressive leaders use foreign aid as a means to bolster their own authority, civil society-builders may end up engaged in autocracy promotion, rather than democracy promotion. State involvement may be particularly tricky in post-conflict

'consociational' contexts, since leaders representing a specific community may be more likely to exploit the resources of civil society for their own gain, reinforcing existing social cleavages rather than mitigating them, as Blair points out.

Researchers also need to address the related question of when civil society matters. Scholars like Diamond clearly depict civil society development as necessary for democratic consolidation (1999), but to what extent is it important at the earlier stages of a transition? In cases with long political histories of inter-communal conflict or where armed forces are working to establish civil peace, aid to civil society may be more effective if it is postponed somewhat, until after the necessary institutions have been created. It may also be the case that sequencing has no discernible impact on macro-level outcomes, or that close observation of a sample of countries reveals no particular pattern. But the timing of civil society aid versus other types of democracy assistance merits deeper research for the sake of better-targeted donor strategies.

Finally, it must be noted that researchers have shied away from larger cross-national comparative investigations that might enable a body of coherent theory to develop. This is probably due either to a conviction that circumstances in a given country are unique and that what works in one country might not work in another, or to a lack of resources that a larger project would demand. In either case, the absence of an over-arching theory is perhaps the greatest deficiency of the field and of democracy promotion studies in general. Just as there are dangers associated with inattentiveness to national or local particularities, there is also a price to be paid for failing to draw upon the more widely applicable lessons a case or set of cases might provide. Testing a larger number of cases at once may be a good way to rectify this, and researchers in the field of civil society aid should give fuller consideration to the benefits of general theory development and systematic knowledge accumulation. They need not forget about context-specific knowledge— but the tradeoffs in terms of parsimony and generality accompanying such an approach should be more carefully weighed.

Users and use of applied research

Explicit references to the use of applied research by donors in the design or evaluation of projects appears to be quite rare. As such, it is unclear what if any lessons have been extrapolated from research and integrated into practice. In a few scattered instances, well-known students of civil society development have been directly involved in shaping policy and procedures for democracy promotion agencies—witness the role of Beetham's evaluation framework in IDEA's best-practice guide. But the extent to which their expertise trickles down to the state bureaucracies ultimately responsible for funding and administration remains in doubt. Indeed, there seems to be a general disconnect between applied research and policy development at its source.

Given that the evaluation scheme of most agencies is a general one for use on aid programs in sectors other than governance, it seems probable that the input of specialists in the area of democracy-promoting civil society would form only a small component of the overall framework if it played any role at all. A canvassing of the major donor agencies suggests that they have their own research tools and evaluation procedures though, in many cases, the specifics of these are not made available to the public. A release by the US State Department indicates that USAID's program evaluation plan draws information from no less than seven sources, but the nature and extent of dialogue with outside parties is not known (http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/dosstrat/2004/23511.htm).

At the moment, the incorporation of research findings, particularly by academics (even those who moonlight in the policy world), seems not to be a major priority for designers of civil society aid programs, and a concerted effort should be made to bring these actors closer together. No instances were discovered in which donor states had invested in the kind of assessment matrices proposed by Blair and Beetham. Instead, donors are more concerned with improving aid to CSOs as deliverers of foreign aid in general, and have made little effort to bracket the issue of their role in democratic development as one for which a distinct toolkit should be developed.

Roundtables between donors and recipient organizations have become commonplace. And yet there is little evidence at present that local CSO feedback is being integrated into project design. Van Rooy's assertion that "the new Commission for Africa appears not to have recognized the importance of NGOs in the democratization of Africa in their recommendation to donors not to undermine African governments through their funded programmes" suggests that in some instances at least, dialogue with partner CSOs may be secondary to the diplomatic imperatives of inter-state relations (http://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/fund/2005/05ngospeak.htm). Nor are there many references to research on civil society by local researchers within partner countries. Indeed, the multiplicity of conferences, multilateral projects and forums for donors and practitioner agencies indicate that most of the genuine dialogue occurs between these actors. To the extent that applied research is shared, it is passed around primarily in these circles.

2.6 Research on parliamentary strengthening

Introduction

Three objectives underlie the vast majority of parliamentary strengthening programs: countering the supremacy of the executive branch, building the capacity of legislatures to function effectively, and increasing the representation afforded to citizens within their legislatures (SIDA 2002). In pursuit of these objectives, international assistance has relied on four main activities (Carothers 1999, see also Powers 2008). The first, and by far the most common, is training and technical assistance. This includes training legislators in such areas as legal drafting, policy analysis and research, on the workings of committee systems, and on effective constituency outreach as well as training parliamentary secretariats and support staff in matters of parliamentary administration. The second activity, and one that is subject to considerable scrutiny, consists of foreign exchanges and study tours that enable legislators in emerging democracies to travel to Western countries to observe the manner in which their legislatures function first hand. Third, international donors have provided material support to legislatures. Material support has included major infrastructure (e.g. construction and provisioning of parliamentary libraries), as well as more routine materials (e.g. supplying legislators and legislative staff with office equipment and supplies). A fourth category of assistance is indirect, and consists of supporting other democratic sectors that contribute to the improvement of legislatures (e.g. training members of the judiciary and/or civil society to provide legislative oversight). Legislative programs have been supported by most bilateral donor agencies, a wide range of multilateral organizations, as well as a number of specialist organizations.

Although there are a variety of studies that detail the parliamentary strengthening programs supported by individual donors (Huyghebaert 2007; Hudson and Wren 2007; Hubli and Schmidt 2005), few studies have assessed international assistance a whole. As is true in other democracy assistance sectors, one barrier to such research is that donors use different definitions for their parliamentary strengthening programming, and often collapse these activities into other categories (Power 2008, p. 7). As a result, "it is difficult to find any reliable figures which give a more tangible sense of the scope of parliamentary activity" (ibid, p. 7). In any case, it is observed that parliamentary strengthening has comprised a relatively small share of overall democracy assistance to date, though it is growing quickly (ibid p. 7).

No references were found in the literature regarding the levels, or distribution of donor support for research into parliamentary strengthening.

The review identified two principal themes in the applied research, which serve as the main content of the review that follows:

1. Research evaluating parliamentary strengthening programs, and identifying best practice;

2. Research concerned with developing and applying assessment frameworks to measure parliamentary performance.

Research evaluating parliamentary strengthening programs and identifying best practices

There has been growing attention paid to evaluating parliamentary strengthening programs of late, but the field remains grossly under-serviced. As Hudson and Wren put it,

> there is very little systematic or comprehensive data on parliamentary strengthening and its impacts. This must change. Greater efforts must be put into developing and employing frameworks for assessing parliamentary performance, and systematically evaluating the impact of parliamentary strengthening (2007, p. 16).

A recent donor consultation involving most major actors in parliamentary strengthening identified two primary reasons for this shortage: the time and expense of conducting evaluations, and the lack of meaningful indicators or of baseline data (GSDRC 2007). Analogous to evaluation practice in other sectors, the body of evaluation work related to parliaments consists predominantly of program reviews which focus on accounting for what was done as opposed to assessing its impact. During the past five years, however, some attempts have been made to redress this, and a number of donors have funded comprehensive evaluations of their programming, with a view to assessing overall effectiveness, and identifying rules of best practice.

Although program evaluation has been predominantly a donor sponsored line of research, a limited number independent scholars have also reviewed these efforts. Lee (1995) examines British international assistance to parliaments, focusing primarily on those in Eastern Europe, while Ware (1995) studies the development of parliamentary institutions and procedures in Russia. Ware finds that contact between a recipient country and donor countries can "lend confidence and authority to those who are working to build democratic habits", although he concludes that viable solutions must find their basis in the political culture and traditions of the recipient country. Although not an evaluation per se, Olson and Norton (2004) explore the factors that determine effective legislative performance, identifying a country's extent of exposure to, and adoption of foreign practices as a key explanatory variable.

While the publications cited above represent the major works evaluating parliamentary strengthening in relation to democratic development, it is interesting to compare this to the extensive research that, in the course of five years, has studied the role of parliaments and parliamentary strengthening in enhancing the effectiveness of financial accountability and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs). Mostly funded by donors, this body of research includes publications by Wehner, Brösamle and Dimsdale (2006), Mfunwa (2006), Hubli and Mandaville (2004) Draman and Langdon (2005) and Eberlei and Henn (2003). Furthermore, a number of studies have assessed the role of parliaments and parliamentary strengthening as a contributor to gender accountability ("gender- mainstreaming") in budgetary allocations and PRSPs (Galvez 2003; Eberlei and Henn 2003; Wehner 2004).

Research to establish assessment frameworks to gauge parliamentary performance
As it stands, there is no generally recognized approach to assessing parliamentary performance (Nijzink et al, 2006 p.4; Hudson and Wren 2007), despite considerable effort to establish one. Indeed, an array of different assessment tools have been put forward, and argued for.

Among agencies involved in this project, USAID is widely recognized as a leader for its efforts to establish indicators of parliamentary performance aimed at both parliamentary assessment as well as program evaluation. While its work in this area continues, USAID has published a

handbook on democratic development indicators suggesting a number of measures to capture the extent to which parliaments are effective, independent and representative. In application, the USAID indicators call upon a range of data, through desk study, executive interviews, review of public records, and public opinion surveys. According to USAID, one difficulty that has slowed progress towards their objective is the challenge of finding broad assessment measures that are also sufficiently sensitive to capture and analyze change (GSDRC 2007). The Inter-Parliamentary Union is another organization involved in this capacity. Its contribution to assessment has focused on identifying generally accepted rules of best practice for legislatures. As part of this project, the IPU consulted members from seventy-five parliaments worldwide, seeking their views on how parliaments contribute to democracy, the fundamental characteristics of a democratic parliament, as well as the challenges confronted by parliaments and the responses available to them. IFES has been involved in a similar capacity, recently publishing the results of an extensive study intended to identify generally agreed upon standards for parliamentary conduct, and functions that parliaments are expected to perform (IFES 2005). IFES also sketches out an approach to evaluating and monitoring parliamentary performance, which it hopes to use as the basis for country assessments. A second organization, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), has developed a "drivers of change" methodology for assessing parliamentary performance. The objective of the "drivers of change" approach is to move beyond basic stakeholder analysis towards a more in-depth "understanding of the processes through which interests are mediated, decisions made and resources allocated". Ultimately, the intention is to identify how political choices and demands influence policy outcomes and institutional incentives, rules and patterns".   Other international organizations have been involved in developing assessment frameworks for niche areas of parliamentary performance. Examples of this are Dfid's checklist published in *Helping Parliaments and Legislative Assemblies to Work for the Poor* (Dfid 2004), and the Canadian Parliamentary Centre work in producing a tool to assess parliamentary performance with respect to budgetary process.

While the development of assessment methodologies has been driven first and foremost by international donors, academic contributions have also been made. One example of this is the Parliamentary Power Index (PPI), created by Steven Fish of the University of California at Berkeley, which is a simple survey-based assessment tool based on country-expert responses covering four aspects of parliamentary performance (parliamentary control of the executive, autonomy from the executive, parliamentary prerogatives and enumerated powers, and institutional capacity).

Although there have been numerous publications proposing assessment frameworks, the body of published country assessments is extremely limited. To be sure, most parliamentary strengthening programs and final reports offer an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of parliamentary performance in the programming country, but these rarely provide more than a brief overview. The African Legislatures Project (ALP), to our knowledge, is the only undertaking to apply a detailed assessment framework in a systematic fashion, in multiple countries, with the ultimate objective of publication (CSSR, forthcoming). Based on an extensive review of the literature, the ALP identified 400 variables of relevance to understanding the development and performance of African legislatures, and is now in the midst of collecting data on these variables in eighteen Sub-Saharan countries where democratic consolidation is likely, or promising (ALP 2008). Data collection is scheduled to be completed by mid-2009. If funding is secured, the intention is to extend data collection to the remaining twenty-five countries in Sub-Saharan Africa with extant legislatures and, once completed, to conduct a second wave.

The evaluation literature on parliamentary strengthening has produced a number of guidelines regarding donor approach. Most of these echo the findings that appear generally throughout the democratic development literature, including:

- The need for increased donor coordination
- The need to integrate legislative programs into broader democratic development assistance efforts (e.g. working with parties, or civil society);

- The need for programs to secure political support within the partner country;
- The need for programming to be more flexible to demand within partner countries, and to take the form of longer term commitments;
- The need to focus on institutions, rather than individuals;

Subjects for further research

As scholars and practitioners begin to develop frameworks for assessing parliaments based on an understanding of their proper form and function within democratic systems, there is a need to inquire into the process by which parliaments adopt (or do not adopt) these forms and functions. A recent review of the literature by Barkan (2008) notes that there are few systematic, cross national studies of the process of parliamentary development within 'third wave' democracies. As he describes, "few scholars have delved into the questions of when and why legislatures evolve into significant political institutions in nascent democracies, or why this happens in some countries but not in others … there is a great deal of literature on legislative development and capacity of American and European parliaments. Less developed, agrarian and culturally divided societies have, historically, been neglected" (2008, p. 3). Indeed, neither the Journal of Democracy nor Democratization has published a single article studying parliamentary development in the 'third wave', or its relationship to the process of democratization. As Nijzink et al (2006, p. 6) suggest, "the literature is still dominated by analyses of parliaments and parliamentarians in the established democracies of Western Europe and the U.S".

One factor that restricts inquiry into parliaments and their role in democratic development is a severe deficiency of primary data relevant to this research. Calls to address this shortage of primary data are repeated throughout recent publications. Noting the potential to encourage scholarly research, Bromale et. al. (2007) recommend increased resources for "rigorous and standardized data collection". Pointing to the same problem in relation to African parliaments, the recent survey of the AAPGA makes the same recommendation. Nijzink et. al. (2006, p. 6) advise the same. Beyond scholarly research, this shortage of primary data is identified as a major barrier to evaluation of efforts to support parliamentary development and to identify avenues for improvement in this support. Indeed, a recent meeting of the major international donors identifies this shortage of data as the most significant challenge to program evaluation, and points to the need for substantial resources to archive parliamentary transcripts, reports, budgets, private member bills and media coverage, as well as data in the form of parliamentary scorecards, and public and opinion leader surveys (GSDRC 2007).

To the extent that the above is true, then the potential benefit of primary data collection is difficult to overstate. As Hudson and Wren put it,

> if donors and others are to make well-informed evidence-based decisions about whether and how to move forward with parliamentary strengthening work, they need to be able to assess parliamentary performance. This is important, first so that they can identify whether a particular programme of parliamentary strengthening is warranted, and, later, to assess whether a programme of parliamentary strengthening has worked. Without such assessments, there is little scope for learning about what works, for improving subsequent programmes, or for accountability to those who pay for and/or those who are intended to benefit from parliamentary strengthening (Hudson and Wren 2007).

In any event, the benefits to be had from additional information on parliamentary capacity, operation and performance extend beyond scholarly research and international assistance. As the recent AAPGA survey into parliaments in Africa suggests,

> policymakers and members of civil society have limited sources to draw on when seeking current information and analysis about the actual capacity, operation and performance of their own legislatures…African policy makers and practitioners seeking to learn from the experiences of other African countries by consulting systematic regional or continental

comparative studies of legislatures encounter even greater gaps in research. Development partners endeavouring to build their approaches to parliamentary strengthening on a strong evidence base confront the same problem (2007, p. 25).

2.7 Research on support to an independent media

Introduction

This report summarizes main findings of the review of applied literature related to the development of a free, independent and pluralistic media.

Media-assistance is guided by the principle that a country's media should be 'free, independent and pluralistic'. While most organizations recognize that the these traits constitutes a condition for democratic development, other rationales also underline activities in the field—including the media as a means to economic development, to combating corruption, to preventing conflict, to promoting human rights, or as a contributor to broader social and human development (Sida 2004, p. 66).

Activities undertaken to support the development of an independent media commonly include Journalism training,
- Direct support to news organizations,
- Efforts to aid media law reform,
- Support for professional journalism and broadcast associations,
- Support for developing financial sustainability of media outlets, and
- Initiatives designed to transcend national, religious, or ethnic barriers in the media
- Efforts to transform state broadcasters into public service networks
(Oxford 2002; Sida 2004; GAO 2005; Kumar 2006; Sida 2006)

Both total support for media assistance, and the manner in which it is allocated across these different activities is exceedingly difficult to estimate because media assistance is frequently subsumed under other sectoral labels (e.g. assistance to electoral processes, assistance to civil society) rather than as a sector in its own right. This poses serious challenges for researchers seeking to develop a clear picture of the field, either in a given country, or globally. Nevertheless, a few clear findings have emerged. First, media assistance constitutes a relatively small share of broader democracy assistance programming. For instance, in 2000, USAID (the largest donor in this sector) allocated US$38 million worldwide toward support for an independent media (less than one percent of its total assistance spending) (Oxford 2002). Second, among the various activities supported, journalist training and professional development are by far the most common, with smaller shares going to promote ethics in journalism, to develop competent management and media organization capacity, to support legal and regulatory reforms, and to develop media networks and associations (Oxford 2002; Sida 2004; Dfid 2004).

Overview of applied research on the development of an independent media
As with applied research covering other sectors of democratic development, we are unable to offer a figure on how much support is provided for applied research on the development of independent media. Nevertheless, analyses note that relative to the extensive practical assistance that has been given, very little research—whether donor supported or academic—has evaluated these programs.

A brief excerpt from a recent survey of media support provides a general overview of the state of research on the field:

Despite the fact that international media assistance to transition and post-conflict societies is almost two decades old, international donors and intermediary organizations have published relatively few policy documents, independent evaluations or other studies on the subject. Consequently, much of the information about media assistance, its intended and unintended impacts, and its contribution or lack of it to democratization processes remains hidden in the files of donor agencies or embedded in the memories of practitioners who have shown little inclination to share it….The academic community has also ignored media aid, as scholarly books, articles in professional journals, and doctoral theses on the subject are almost negligible (Kumar 2006, p. 17).

A survey of the literature points to three sources of research of particular relevance to individuals engaged in supporting the development of independent media. These consist of:

1. Case-studies of media assistance projects;
2. Global, or regional reviews of how to effectively support media development;
3. Assessments of the state of media in a country/region;

Research into how to best support the development of an independent media has most commonly entailed case-studies, and the purpose of these has been largely to advise the strategies adopted by international donors. Furthermore, since USAID appears to be the only major donor that has adopted a policy of releasing most of its project evaluations into the public domain, a majority of the case-study literature is either authored, or sponsored by it. As a rule, published case-studies of media assistance programs follow a standard approach, and share common deficiencies. In a short introduction, they describe the status of a country's transition to democracy, along with a context and rationale for the media support program undertaken. A listing of a program's successes and failures follow, along with anecdotal evidence regarding the causes for these. Finally, they conclude with recommendations to advise donor strategy in future programming. Unfortunately, the absence of empirical rigour that typifies these case studies, or else the absence of any details on methodology whatsoever, means that the knowledge generated by the vast majority of these is of unknown validity. Indeed, a review of USAID case studies published on the Development Experience Clearinghouse found that most provide little or no information about the questions evaluators asked, or how they went about answering them. In short, their findings must be taken on faith, as they cannot be replicated, nor can they be refuted.

A second research subject, albeit one that draws largely from the body of case studies already in existence, is the study of lessons learned about supporting media, either as a general matter, or in the context of a particular region. Given the weak empiricism that characterizes case-studies, the ground for the lessons posited by these whole of field surveys is also tenuous. For instance, *Journalism Training and Institution Building in Central American Countries* (Rockwell et al 2003) provides no methodology, and draws on sources of unknown validity. At one point, it cites the authority of a "major assessment" of programming which, in fact, turns out to be a book that refers to USAID programs only once in passing.

A third research subject of obvious relevance to actors supporting the development of an independent media is assessment research. Distinct from evaluations of media support, this research is concerned with assessing the state of media within a particular country, at a particular point in time. Of the sources of assessment research that exist, two stand out in terms of authority: the Global Integrity Index (GII) and IREX's Media Sustainability Index (MSI). As the leading indices in the field, a brief review is appropriate here.

The GII assessment of "media" centers on seven criteria (Global Integrity, 2007):

1. Are media and free speech protected?
2. Are citizens able to form print media entities?
3. Are citizens able to form broadcast (radio and TV) entities?
4. Can citizens freely use the Internet?

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5. Are the media able to report on corruption?
6. Are the media credible sources of information?
7. Are journalists safe when investigating corruption?

Each question is conditioned by between two to five indicators each, the latter of which fall under law or practice, depending on the nature of the question. For instance, the question "are the media able to report on corruption?" seeks indication once in law and twice in practice:

- In law, it is legal to report accurate news even if it damages the reputation of a public figure.
- In practice, the government or media owners/distribution groups do not encourage self-censorship of corruption-related stories.
- In practice, there is no prior government restraint (pre-publication censoring) on publishing corruption-related stories.

While it is a valid tool to advise program design, and to call attention to problems facing media development in particular countries, the GII does not provide the sensitivity necessary for use as an evaluation tool.

The MSI is based on five principles (IREX 2006):

1. Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information.
2. Journalism meets professional standards of quality.
3. Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable and objective news.
4. Independent media are well-managed business, allowing editorial independence.
5. Supporting institutions function in the professional interests of independent media.

Each principle relies on between six to ten indicators. Like the IREX index, the MSI is too blunt for use in program evaluation. As one scholar describes, "these country-level indicators do not provide empirical data with which we can directly assess the effectiveness of particular media assistance activities (which are usually targeted to narrowly defined populations)".

Lessons learned

The absence of rigorous program evaluation practice is beginning to receive notice in some quarters. Illustrative is a recent US Government Accountability Office assessment of the US State Department's assistance programs wherein it criticizes the department for its failure to establish "specific independent media development performance indicators for overseas missions or for specific media projects or activities", noting that "anecdotal examples, rather than quantifiable measures, are frequently used to demonstrate success" (GAO 2005). An evaluation of Sida's activities to support media similarly states that, on the whole, projects "have not formulated sufficiently clear goals to allow for a straightforward assessment" (Sida 2004). A recent Clingendael study notes the deficiency of evaluation practice, as well, recommending that:

> When evaluating media assistance, analysts must try to determine the impact of media-directed programmes on the media sector (outcome) instead of recording the short-term results of executing a singular project (output). In other words, instead of recording how many journalists were trained, or how many laws were changed, it is far more important to determine to what degree the standard of reliable journalism was raised and the extent to which the fairness of regulatory decisions was enhanced. (Howard 2003)

Given that evaluation research has been funded by, and responded to donor agencies, the lessons that have been learned through evaluation are primarily relevant to donors. Of these, one of the most common issues addressed in the literature is that of program sustainability. Sustainability poses a problem in large part because although the objective of assistance is to develop capacity not dependency, "the two processes tend to be concomitant" (Kumar 2004, p.

10). A recent review of USAID programs points to a number of strategies that appear to be more likely to generate sustainable outcomes. Among these are approaches that focus on local initiatives, and that include training in business management and technological proficiency. It is further suggested that longer-term programming, wherein the completion of one objective leads not to the withdrawal of support, but to its redirection into new areas, has produced more sustainable contributions than short-term programming that concludes on completion of a single objective. While these might be considered lessons learned, one might also question to what extent sustainability can be addressed in the context of assistance programs, since neither the interest nor logic underlying assistance has proven fixed over time. In a recent assessment of media assistance in the Balkans, Kumar notes that program sustainability became a major issue only when, in step with development orthodoxy, initially generous donors became increasingly reluctant to "compete with the market" (2004, p. 20). Kumar also notes that the sustainability problem was aggravated by a simultaneous re-assessment of the strategic importance of media outlets that had been seen as essential to country stabilization in the early post-conflict phase (*ibid,* p. 20).

As is the case in the democracy support literature generally, donor coordination is often cited in the media support literature as a means to greater consistency in programming logics between countries, and over time. On this matter, there is near unanimity in the literature that coordination of donors has been and remains a serious problem. The impact this has on programming is described by Aidan White, Secretary General of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ):

> …Resources have been allocated on an arbitrary basis usually driven by political and strategic considerations… The European Union and the United States, for instance, have significantly different opinions about media. Apart from different interpretations of freedom of expression (First Amendment principles of press freedom cf: Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights) there is a long-standing argument over the right mix of public and private interests in the definition of national broadcasting policy. In Eastern and Central Europe, and particularly the Balkans, political groups and major donors inability to agree on a coherent broadcasting strategy has led to expensive, confused and contradictory assistance policies applied in the broadcast sector. (White n.d., p. 2)

Similar views are expressed in recent reports published by the Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA 2007), USAID (2003), and the Knight Foundation (Hume 2004). Of course, identifying this problem and addressing it are two very different matters. It is also worth mentioning that group action problems are present throughout all areas of international development assistance and, indeed, all aspects of international relations. For this reason, one might wonder whether demands for greater coordination in the area of media assistance are likely to find satisfaction. Certainly the rhetoric stressing the urgency of coordination has not been matched by substantive action.

Questions for further research

To date, donors have been at the forefront of evaluation research. This reflects their obvious interest in understanding whether the activities they support are producing the results intended and, if not, how they might be improved. For this reason, the term evaluation is often construed to mean evaluation for the benefit of donors. As the review of lessons learned suggests, the principle lessons that have arisen from applied research into supporting independent media are drawn from donor sponsored research projects, and are focused chiefly on what donors can do to improve future programming. However, as the terms of reference for this review suggest, the government is interested in supporting research of use to actors struggling to support democratic consolidation, especially those in emerging democracies. Bearing this in mind, it seems important to note that evaluations conducted by, and for the benefit of domestic partners are virtually non-existent. Thus, for instance, while evaluations of international programming point to the manner in which limited international coordination hinders the achievement of donor objectives, they do not offer suggestions to domestic partners on how to deal with, or perhaps

even benefit from, this apparent shortcoming in assistance provision. More telling, there is no body of research that documents and evaluates domestically inspired, resourced and implemented initiatives aimed at supporting an independent media.

Beyond research into support strategies that responds to domestic actors, there is a need for academic research into the pre-conditions necessary for the development of an independent media, into the factors that sustain an independent media, and into the manner in which development in this sector benefits or detracts from development in other democratic sectors. Recognizing the need for such research, the World Bank has begun to document a range of empirical indicators on media (as well as other sectors of democratic governance) in the hope that increasing the availability of quantitative data will encourage more rigorous investigation. Debunking the view that indicators of media development do not exist, Daniel Kaufmann of the World Bank argues that there has been "progress made on governance and media-related indicators, and that the solid empirical analysis based on this data is important…It yields evidence-based lessons, and helps inform future strategies" (2005, p. 11). Kaufmann recommends that quantitative methods developed to analyze economic and financial phenomenon need to be used in addressing questions on the causes and consequences of a free, independent, and pluralistic media.

While comparative research of this sort would certainly benefit those versed in statistical research methods, one wonders the extent to which research of this sort will be understood or even deemed relevant by the vast majority of individuals working in democratic development. Furthermore, considering that a recurring criticism voiced by practitioners is that research on democratic development is poorly contextualized and abstract to the point of being impractical, one wonders whether the quantitative methods used in the economic sciences are in fact the most suitable course. For one thing, most social and political variables are not easily quantified, and attempts to quantify them generally require an extremely high level of abstraction. Second, the findings generated through statistical investigation into relationships between variables on a comparative basis are not valid in a particular country, but only across the sample of countries as a whole. Although the development of generalized knowledge of this sort is important, it seems unlikely that it will satisfy practitioners whose demands are for "contextualized" research.

Section 3

3.1 Research capacity in designated partner countries

In this Section we report the details of reviews of research capacity in partner countries designated in our discussions with IDRC, CIDA, and DFAIT. The reviews are organized by region. They were prepared by looking at the published work of individual scholars, universities, and research centres in each country and region. We also did searches of a sample of relevant international journals and the web sites of international research centres that publish on these regions. The reviews focused on research about the specific subjects identified in the terms of reference.

Criteria for assessing research capacity

We established a stepped series of criteria to assess research capacity which we applied through searches of journals, web sites of institutes and centres, and the CVs of researchers in centres and institutes and of faculty in departments of political science and cognate disciplines.

Level 1: evidence through publication of active research on subjects related to the components of democratic development.

Level 2: evidence through publication of active research on subjects that could be deemed relevant to the study of democratic development

Level 3: evidence that university faculty or independent researchers had appropriate education in political science

Level 4: evidence that university faculty or independent researchers had education in a cognate discipline that would provide them with knowledge and skills to engage in research on democratic development

How the review was done

The review consists of separate reports for each of four regions: Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East. In preparing these reports we have focused on countries designated as priority partner countries for Canadian assistance, but we have also included a review of wider regional capacities. The reports were prepared by looking at the published work of individual scholars, universities, and research centres in each country and region. We also did searches of a sample of relevant international journals and the web sites of international research centres that publish on these regions. The reviews focused on research about the specific subjects identified in the terms of reference.

The information was gathered through web searches in each region, using regional/country identifiers and a range of general and sector terms likely to generate results for research networks, institutes, departments, scholars and/or publications and by following up on references to Southern researchers, organizations or publications identified during the literature review. To explore more fully the information available from these sources, interviews were done with a sample of representatives of major regional southern research networks.

Research in Africa [71]
Our survey of applied research in democratizing countries in Africa found that few academic

institutions have graduate research programs in relevant subjects and the published output of individual researchers is relatively small. These limitations have been addressed in part through the formation of regional networks of researchers and the establishment of research institutes.

The Senegal-based Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) is the largest organization of social scientists in Africa, with a membership base of more than 5,000 researchers, representing nationals from every country on the continent. A review of CODESRIA publications reveals a very high calibre of research generally, and research capacity spanning all five sectors identified in the terms of reference. In its five-year strategy paper which outlines its agenda for the 2007-2012 period, CODESRIA notes its intent to increase its impact on public policy, and identifies democratic development as a crucial area for further research. The five-year plan further stresses CODESRIA's interest in strengthening its partnerships with Northern researchers and research institutes. A second umbrella group of social scientists, the Ethiopia-based Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa has had comparatively limited involvement in supporting and publishing democratic development research. The only relevant research identified was a 1999-2001 project on civil society and good-governance, as well as a handful of working papers produced over the past two decades.

Adopting a slightly different strategy, the Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF) brings together researchers, policy makers, and civil society leaders. Its mandate is to strengthen democratic processes and institutions on the continent, and its principal activity is research, with an emphasis on comparative methods to address critical policy challenges. The calibre of research supported by the DPMF is high, and its sponsors have included a variety of major international donors (e.g. IDEA, IDRC, and the Ford Foundation). In addition to its extensive research into civil society, the DPMF has supported applied research into political parties, elections, and media.

There are three institutes (EISA, AISA and CSSR) with a major involvement in continent-wide democratic development research, though all are based in South Africa. The calibre of in-house research at these organizations is high, and the geographical coverage of their publications is broad. In addition, there are also several African institutes focussed on sub-regional issues. These include the Nigeria-based Centre for Democracy and Development, whose research output is concentrated on countries in West Africa (especially Nigeria), and the Tanzania-based Economic and Social Research Foundation, whose research is focussed primarily on East Africa. Lastly, a number of research institutes focus wholly or primarily on democratic processes within their own countries. These include the Centre for Policy Studies (South Africa), the Centre pour la Gouvernance Democratique (Burkina Faso), the Institute for Education in Democracy (Kenya), and the Centre for Democratic Development (Ghana).

There is a small number of African-based academic journals with content related to democratic development. Of these, the *African Journal of Elections* (AJE), published by EISA, is both the most active and highest calibre publication. AJE serves as a venue for leading African scholars interested in democratic development, giving particular prominence to studies of electoral processes, political parties, and party systems. Although chiefly focussed on international economic and security issues, the *African Journal of International Affairs* has periodically dealt with electoral processes on the continent. The bi-annual journal *Democracy and Development* (published by the Centre for Democracy and Development) is, like the organization, focussed on problems of democratic development in West Africa, and gives most extensive coverage to electoral processes and political parties. The *African Journal of Political Science*—published by the African Association of Political Science—appears to be inactive.

Research in Latin America

The research capacity in the older democracies and larger countries of Central and South America is much more fully developed. There is a stronger institutional base in the universities

with active graduate programs on relevant subjects in many of them comparable to the programs in universities of Europe and North America. The local publications output is larger and many researchers publish in international journals both individually and in partnership with international collaborators.

Among the relevant research networks in Latin America and the Caribbean, the largest is the Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciensias Sociales (CLASCO). Based in Argentina, CLASCO's membership spans all countries in the region, and includes more than 5,000 individual researchers, and more than 100 research institutes. CLASCO provides extensive support to democratic development research through funding and publication. Given its regional character, CLASCO is especially well suited to, and specialized in comparative research methods.

A second major international research network, the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) operates on a mandate to develop and coordinate social science research in its member countries (which total fourteen, including designated countries Bolivia and Honduras). FLACSO, through its national branches, supports a substantial body of research on democratic development, through funding and publication. Indeed, a review of FLACSO-supported publications indicates research experience and capacity that spans each of the five of the priority sectors identified in the terms of reference.

The majority of independent research bodies engaged in democratic development research in Latin American and the Caribbean are nationally-oriented in their research, and tend to specialize in one or two of the five sectors identified in the terms of reference. Among designate countries in the region, major research centres include the Bolivian-based Centro Boliviano de Estudios Multidisciplinarios (CEBEM) whose research touches upon each of the five sectors (although generally focussed on inter-cultural conflict and reconciliation, and indigenous politics); the Peru Economic and Social Research Consortium (CIES) whose research has concentrated on studies of electoral processes and independent media in Peru; the Instituto Presan y Sociedad (YPYS) also based in Peru, whose research work is primarily tied to assessments of media; Congresso Visible (CV) based in Colombia, which specializes in assessment of the Colombian national congress; and the Instituto de Ciencia Politica (ICP), also based in Colombia, which is primarily focussed on research and assessment of Colombian electoral and legislative processes (although it does occasionally conduct similar research on other countries in the region).

Outside the designated countries, two research centres, the Center for Opening and Development of Latin America (CADAL), and Procesos (based in Costa Rica) adopt a region-wide approach to research. Of these, Procesos has supported a limited number of research projects in each of the sectors identified in the Terms of Refernce whereas CADAL's research has focussed principally on independent media and legislative transparency. The majority of other major research institutes outside of the designated countries are primarily nationally-oriented in their research output. Among these, the most active and influential appear to be the Centro de Investigacion de los Movimientos Sociales del Ecuador (CEDIME) and the Mexico-based Centre for Analysis and Research (FUNDAR).

The largest, and most influential academic journals that review research on democratic development in Latin America and the Caribbean are published in the US and Europe, though each does provide coverage for important work by scholars from the region. These journals include the *Latin American Research Review* (University of Texas), the *Journal of Latin American Studies* (Cambridge), and *Latin American Politics and Society* (University of Miami). A more comprehensive survey of academic journals, by topic, using a database provided by the University of Texas suggests that, among the designate countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, relevant academic journals are not currently available. Of the five topical journals identified, four—*Estudios politicos* (Colombia), *Analisis Politico* (Bolivia), *Ciencia politica* (Bolivia), and *Ciencia politica* (Colombia)—have been discontinued. One journal, *Global* (published by the Fundacion Global Democracia y Desarollo in the Dominican Republic) remains active, but its analysis is largely confined to research into Dominican democracy and economic development.

Research in Asia

The university support structure for research in the designated countries in Asia is very limited. The number of university faculty with appropriate training in relevant subjects is small and very few universities have relevant graduate training programs. Further, in the designated countries there is little independent research infrastructure outside the universities.

The Singapore-based Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) is both the most active and highest quality source of research in the region. A review of its publication list reveals extensive work covering all of the priority sectors identified in the terms of reference.

Indonesia has developed in-country research capacity through the Indonesian Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (DEMOS). In addition to producing output across all five sectors identified in the terms of reference, DEMOS has been the main partner for a general assessment of the state of democracy in the country funded by SIDA, Norway, the Ford Foundation, and the EU.

The principal journals covering democratic development research concerned with Indonesia and Vietnam are published externally: the *Journal of Asian Studies*, published by the University of California, Irvine, and *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, published by the Singapore-based Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Capacity for democratic development research also appears to be quite limited in Bangladesh. The Institute of Governance at BRAC University runs policy seminars, provides training, and publishes periodic reports on aspects of good governance. Its main focus is on the structure and effectiveness of governing institutions and it has begun publication of annual reports on the state of governance in Bangladesh. It has published working papers on civil society and the media. The Centre for Development Research, and the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies have active research programs but neither organization focuses principally, or even extensively, on democratic development.

Pakistan's leading centre for research on democratic development is the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT). PILDAT's research is particularly extensive with respect to parliaments and parliamentary strengthening, although it has proven capacity covering each of the five sectors identified in the terms of reference. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute, one of Pakistan's most reputable research centres, focuses chiefly on economic development and good governance.

One major centre for research on democratic development was identified in Afghanistan. Founded in 2002, the Kabul-based Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) has supported research analyzing a wide range of important challenges to democratic development in the country, with particular focus on electoral processes, the roles and functions of the Afghan parliament, the rule of law, and political participation (especially among women). Another Kabul-based institute, the Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies, has been modestly involved in democratic development research, although most of the work it publishes can be best described as commentary and it has had no direct involvement in research related to any of the five priority sectors listed in the terms of reference.

Research in the Middle East

Research capacity in the Middle East is acutely limited compared with other regions particularly in the designated area of the West Bank. We could find no region-wide professional research network active in democratic development studies. Only one professional association, the Centre for Arab Unity Studies (CAUS), approaches the level of organization found in research networks

in the other regions reviewed. However, its main focus is on humanities research. In the area of democratic development research, most of its publications deal either with the applicability of liberal-democracy within the Middle East, or on the challenges facing democratic development (broadly construed) throughout the region. With respect to the five sectors identified in the terms of reference, only political party development appears to have received specific attention in CAUS research. The Centre does publish the *Arab Journal of Political Science* (Arabic only), but we were unable to review its content, or to find secondary information about its focus. A second network, Arab Social Science Research, serves as a hub for social science research centres. Its principal function is to disseminate existing research, and it does not appear to provide extensive direct support to research or publication.

We identified three centres engaged in democratic development research in the West Bank. Two of these, the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) and the Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre (JMCC) make their principal contribution through the collection and dissemination of public opinion research. A third, the Palestine Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), affiliated with the Al-Quds University in Jerusalem, is largely focused on security studies and conflict resolution. In recent years, however, it has published several studies on civil society and civic education, the rule of law, and security sector reform in the Palestinian Territories.

In addition to research centres that are based in the West Bank, there are several centres in the immediate vicinity that have done research on both democratic development and current affairs in Palestine. Although its focus is on Jordanian democracy, the Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Centre (UJRC), based in Amman, publishes extensively on civil society, electoral processes, and parliaments, and has in-house country expertise on Palestinian affairs. A second institution, the Beirut-based Institute for Palestine Studies (IPS), also conducts extensive research on Palestinian affairs, although its research related to democratic development is confined to publications on the peace process, and Palestinian human rights. The IPS is home to the largest library on Palestinian affairs in the Arab world.

In addition to the UJRC, leading research institutes that conduct research on democratic processes throughout the region as a whole include the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies (Cairo), which specializes in the study of civil society, the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (Beirut), which specializes in studies of political parties and electoral processes, and the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies (Cairo), which has published studies of political parties and civil society. The State of Reform in the Arab World Project, sponsored by the Arab Reform Initiative (of which these three organizations are members), offers a detailed and up to date assessment of the state of political liberalization in eight Arab countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia and Yemen). The purposes of this project are both to assess democratic development in the region to inform strategies for reform, and to provide primary data to facilitate secondary research.

The relevant research capacity of universities in the Middle East appears to be very limited. Of the universities reviewed, only the University of Jordan and the University of Cairo were found to give substantial support to political science as an academic discipline.

3.2   Research in Europe and the United States

In Section 1 we pointed out that research on democratic development is at a far more advanced stage in Europe and the United States than in Canada. To illustrate the nature of the work being done there in this section we provide reports on two universities that have major programs: the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom and Stanford University in the United States. The report on the program at Warwick includes a description of its MA and PhD programs as well as a list of publications it has produced. The report on Stanford describes the purpose and current

activities of the Centre on Democracy. These reports have been assembled through extracts from the university web sites.

Centre for Studies in Democratization[72], University of Warwick.

The Centre for Studies in Democratization develops and participates in the teaching program of the Department of Politics and International Studies.

MA

Examples of modules on Democratization are:

MA, optional module on 'Democratization and development'

- MA Module: Democratic Legitimacy and Justification. This module explores recent contributions to the philosophy of democracy. It focuses on the ideal of democratic legitimacy and the demand that state institutions and policies be justified to citizens. It explores questions such as: What is the relation between democratic legitimacy and justice? Does legitimacy require the rational justifiability of democratic choices? If political equality is a fundamental democratic demand, what does it mean in multicultural societies?

Members of the Centre also try to incorporate issues of Democratization in general modules. Examples are

- MA, mandatory module on 'Comparative politics'. Seminar on theories of Democratization
- MA, mandatory module on 'Quantitative data analysis'. Seminars on statistical studies of Democratization and SPSS exercises with replication of existing research.

Members of the Centre strongly encourage students to write about Democratization. Examples of recent dissertations are:

- MA , 'An evaluation of European Union democracy assistance to sub-Saharan Africa since 1989'
- MA, 'The impact of neo-liberal economic development on democratic sustainability in Latin America: socio-economic inequality and political populism with special reference to Argentina and Bolivia'
- MA, 'An examination of the limits to democracy posed by oil rentier states with reference to selected African cases'

PhD

Till now, PhD projects which are related to CSD interests have focused on a wide range of topics, such as building democracy in post-conflict societies, the role of public opinion, policies of the World Bank, civil society, institutional reform, consociational theory and the impact of the media on Democratization processes. PhD projects have focused on countries such as Indonesia, South Africa, China, Argentina, Uganda, Cambodia, El Salvador, Lebanon etc.

All students registered for research degrees follow an extensive training course in their first year of study. The core component of the training course, Explanation and Methodology in PAIS,

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[72] For the sake of consistency, we have amended spelling to conform to usage in the rest of the report.

covers a range of methodological and practical issues of direct relevance to the research process. It is supplemented by modules on the philosophy of social science and specialist options tailored to student requirements. Research training may be continued in a less formal way in the second year of study. The normal registration period for a PhD is three years full-time. MPhil candidates are normally registered for two years full-time study.

Some Recent and Forthcoming Publications

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P. Burnell, 'The relationship of accountable governance and constitutional implementation, with reference to Africa', *Journal of Politics and Law* (forthcoming September 2008, Vol, 1, No. 3).

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P. Burnell, 'Promoting Democracy' Chapter 25 in D. Caramani (ed.) *Comparative Politics,* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008).

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P. Burnell, 'Does International Democracy Promotion Work?' (Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik/German Development Institute Discussion Paper, 17/2007).

P. Burnell, 'Political parties in Africa: different, functional and dynamic?, in Matthias Basedau, Gero Erdmann and Andreas Mehler (eds), *Votes, Money and Violence. Political Parties and Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet and Scottsville: University of Kwazulu Press, 2007), pp. 65-81.

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P. Burnell, 'The domestic political impact of foreign aid: recalibrating the research agenda', *European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (2004), pp. 396-416.

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The Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, Stanford University

The Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law is committed to both academic and practical research that can illuminate the causes of governance failures, and understand how democracy, development and the rule of law can be promoted.

CDDRL Programs & Research Areas

Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development

The program examines the influence of international factors on democratic development around the world since the Second World War.

Democratic Consolidation and Quality

Project
October 2007 -

Do international factors, including democracy promotion policies of Western actors, play a significant role in encouraging or discouraging the consolidation of democracy and the transformation of hybrid regimes and minimalist, electoral democracies into substantive, liberal, "high quality" ones? If so, when and how do external incentives, financial and technical aid, socialization techniques, diplomacy or demonstration effects influence democratic institutions, processes and culture? What combination of domestic conditions and external factors are most likely to shape the consolidation of democratic regimes? What are the pathways of external influence on domestic change and what does the nexus of interaction between external and domestic variables look like in reality?

CDDRL's research program Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the efficacy of available instruments to encourage democratic development, in an effort to learn what has worked, what has not, and under what conditions.

The second of four research tracks focuses on consolidation and changes in the quality of democracy. By exploring a set of successful and failed cases of consolidation of liberal-

democracies since the advent of the Third Wave of democratizations in 1974, the program seeks to gain a better understanding of external influence on domestic democratic development dynamics, and to provide a better guide to future academics and policymakers interested in promoting democracy abroad.

Work on this research track commences in October 2007.

Liberalization of Authoritarian Regimes
Project
October 2008 -

Do international factors, including the democracy promotion policies of Western actors, play a significant role in encouraging or discouraging the opening up of political space in authoritarian regimes such as Burma, China, Libya, North Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria or Turkmenistan? If so, when and how do external incentives, financial and technical aid, socialization techniques, diplomacy or demonstration effects play a role in liberalizing closed regimes? What combination of domestic conditions and external factors are most likely to do so? What are the pathways of external influence on domestic change and what does the nexus of interaction between external and domestic variables look like in reality?

CDDRL's research program Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the efficacy of available instruments to encourage democratic development, in an effort to learn what has worked, what has not, and under what conditions.

This research track, the third of four planned, will focus on understanding the international dimensions of liberalization of authoritarian regimes. By exploring a set of successful and failed cases of liberalization since the advent of the Third Wave of democratizations in 1974, the program seeks to gain a better understanding of external influence on domestic democratic development dynamics, and to provide a better guide to future academics and policymakers interested in promoting democracy abroad.

Work on this research track is scheduled to commence in October 2008.

Post-Conflict Democratic Development
Project
October 2008 -

Societies recovering from traumatic, often prolonged, periods of internal conflict face particular sets of challenges to democratic development. Post-conflict states typically confront a myriad of problems including weak or nonexistent public institutions, ongoing instability, displaced populations, social, political and economic devastation, shattered infrastructure, international military intervention, and a legacy of organized crime or ethnic violence.

Do international factors, including the policies of Western actors, play a significant role in aiding or hampering the development of democratic institutions and values in post-conflict states such as Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo, Liberia, Rwanda or Timor Leste? If so, when and how do international military interventions, transitional trusteeships, peace-keeping missions, integration policies, external incentives, financial and technical aid, socialization techniques, diplomacy or demonstration effects influence post-conflict democratic development? What combination of domestic conditions and external factors are most likely to encourage the creation or reconstruction of democratic states post-conflict? What are the pathways of external influence on domestic change and what does the nexus of interaction between external and domestic variables look like in reality?

CDDRL's research program Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the efficacy of available instruments to encourage democratic development, in an effort to learn what has worked, what has not, and under what conditions.

This research track, the fourth of four planned, will focus on understanding the international dimensions of post-conflict democratic development. By exploring a set of successful and failed cases since the advent of the Third Wave of democratizations in 1974, the program seeks to gain a better understanding of external influence on domestic democratic development dynamics, and to provide a better guide to future academics and policymakers interested in promoting democracy abroad.

Work on this research track is scheduled to commence in October 2008.

Transitions to Democracy
Project
Ongoing

Do international factors, including democracy promotion policies of Western actors, play a significant role in encouraging or discouraging transitions to democracy? If so, when and how do external incentives, financial and technical aid, socialization techniques, diplomacy or demonstration effects influence domestic decision-makers to attempt to transition to democracy? What combination of domestic conditions and external factors are most likely to lead to the weakening of non-democratic regimes and their replacement with democratic governments? What are the pathways of external influence on domestic change and what does the nexus of interaction between external and domestic variables look like in reality?

CDDRL's research program Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the efficacy of available instruments to encourage democratic development, in an effort to learn what has worked, what has not, and under what conditions.

The first of four research tracks focuses on transition to electoral democracy. By exploring a set of case studies of successful and failed democratic transitions since the advent of the Third Wave of democratizations in 1974, the program seeks to gain a better understanding of external influence on domestic democratic development dynamics, and to provide a better guide to future academics and policymakers interested in promoting democracy abroad.

Program on Democracy
In the past three decades, the number of democracies in the world has tripled, and democracy has become the only broadly legitimate form of government. But many of the regimes that have replaced dictatorships themselves suffer from many illiberal practices, or hold multiparty elections only as a façade to mask continuing authoritarian domination.

The Program on Democracy at CDDRL examines the comparative dynamics of democratic functioning and change in the contemporary world, with a particular focus on the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the post-communist world that have experienced transitions from authoritarian rule, and with a new interest in the prospects for democratic change in the Middle East.

Among the questions the program explores are the following:

- How can we conceptualize and measure the quality of democracy, and how do we explain changes in the depth or quality of democracy across countries, and over time within countries?

- How do semi-democratic, pseudo-democratic and "hybrid" regimes differ from more established democracies? How can these states become authentic democracies?

- How do people in different societies around the world think about and value democracy? How do they evaluate the performance of their own governments? And how do these public attitudes, values, and evaluations affect the prospect for, and reflect the progress toward, stable, liberal democracy?

- How can the rights of citizens be better protected in formally democratic regimes? What institutional, social, and cultural changes can promote a stronger human rights regime?

- What is the relationship between natural resources, human rights, and democracy? How can countries escape the "trap" of oil wealth, which in most societies has led to massive corruption and abuse of power?

- What types of policies, programs, and practices have been most successful in promoting or fostering democracy and good governance?

- What lessons for fostering democratic political change in the Middle East can we learn from the past two decades of international democracy promotion activity?

- What are the specific challenges of promoting democracy in post-conflict societies?

Rule of Law Program

Today, it is widely recognized that the absence of the rule of law constitutes a critical barrier to economic growth and democratic political development. Increasingly, scholars and policy makers alike are turning their attention toward the concept of economic rights - ranging from broad affirmations of the importance of secure property rights to more particular descriptions of modes of corporate governance - to inform their thinking about growth and development. This broader, more encompassing notion of the rule of law, while welcome in most quarters, creates an entirely new set of challenges, particularly at a time when the very concept of "democratic governance" is undergoing rapid change.

Significant work on the Rule of Law Program has already begun at Stanford, under the auspices of Thomas Heller, Professor of International Legal Studies at the Law School. The effort has been organized around three broad themes: Rule of Law and Economic Governance; Judicial Uncertainty; and Collective Goods and the Social Investment Practices of Corporations.

Within the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, the program is focusing on issues associated with human rights, comparative constitutionalism, judicial reform and oil dependent producer states. The kinds of questions framing faculty research in these areas include the following:

Human Rights

The idea that human rights should transcend national boundaries and cultural differences is a modern concept. Some governments and societies view the spread of the western human rights movement as a threat to their own cultural values and forms of governance. Should the concept of universal human rights override state laws and cultural practices in non-western countries? And if they do, what implications does this have for the sovereignty of that country? Might western intervention in the name of human rights be viewed as cultural imperialism? The complex issue of how to balance the concept of universal human rights with local values and

governance lies at the core of the CDDRL's concern for the Rule of Law and the changing perception of sovereignty.

Comparative Constitutionalism

The demise of communism and colonialism has led to an upsurge in attention to constitutional principles as the exemplar of a state's commitment to the Rule of Law. These new constitutions reflect the background traditions of their location, as well as their aspirations to a new constitutional order resting on the separation of powers, guarantees of representative democracy, and the inclusion of social and economic rights. Why do some of these constitutional orders take firm root, while others are cast aside or ignored? What determines success and failure? What role can and should constitution play in contributing to responsible governance?

Judicial Reform

A decade of experience with programs designed to promote judicial reform in democratizing countries underscores the need for such initiatives to be more solidly grounded in empirical research. What is the administrative capacity of judicial institutions in post-colonial, newly democratized, and re-formed states to implement reforms? To what degree and under what conditions are cultural, religious, and national differences barriers to reform?

Section 4

The following is the introduction to a paper on democratic development which is intended to provide a framework for policy analysis. Some of this text has been used in a presentation to the Democracy Council's "Democratic Dialogue" in 2007. The framework is based on current theories of democracy. The tables summarize points that will be elaborated in the completed text.

What is democratic development?
George Perlin

In donor policy statements there is a singular lack of clarity about the meaning of the ultimate strategic objective of democracy support—that is, about what constitutes a "developed" democracy. Typically aid strategy is described in terms of support to activities related to a typology of discrete objectives. There is no overarching theory of democratic development that informs assistance to democratic reform.

It is perfectly understandable that donors do not work from a theory of this kind because the meaning of democracy has always been subject to varying interpretations.

Accordingly, aid providers may claim with some justification that they have little choice but to find reference points for their work in observations of practice in established democracies. Yet, most policy-makers and practitioners recognize that the export of models from the established democracies is both regarded with suspicion and unworkable in many contexts where their political reform efforts are directed. Where, then, can a useful definition of democratic development be found?

The answer lies in understanding that democracy at its core it is a normative concept. As Giovanni Sartori observed, "What democracy *is* cannot be separated from what democracy *should* be. A democracy exists only insofar as its ideals and values bring it into being." (Sartori. 1987. 7. *Emphasis in the original.*) Democracy as we know it in the established democracies is a system of governance that is organized to give effect to the values embedded in the tradition of liberal political thought that gave rise to the democratic transformations which began at the end of the Eighteenth century. Whatever the particular forms they have assumed, all contemporary liberal-democracies are committed to the values of freedom, equality, and justice as they have evolved in that tradition. Thus, democratic development may be defined as the establishment of institutions and processes of governance that promote and protect liberal-democratic values.[73]

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[73] This understanding of democratic development, although expressed in different ways, is widely reflected in the contemporary scholarly literature. For example, Larry Diamond, one of the leading empirical theorists and analysts of democratic development, in his 2008 book *The Spirit of Democracy* distinguishes between definitions based on limited or "thin" concepts of democracy that focus on the choice of political elites through free and fair elections and "thick" definitions that include (among other things) a recognition of and protection for the basic freedoms, protection for minority rights, political and legal equality, the practice of the rule of law, government institutions that ensure the accountability of political elites, and a vibrant civil society. (pp. 22-23) Diamond identifies the first as "electoral democracies" and the second as "liberal democracies." The problematic nature of definitions that do not include a reference to liberal values is reflected as well in Fareed Zakaria's trenchant critique of "illiberal" democracies in his 2003 book *The Future of Freedom, Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad.*

Based on this definition, I am proposing here a model of democratic development that can be used by policy-makers, program administrators, and practitioners to help define their objectives in particular situations and decide on the means that are most likely to help realize these objectives.

The model represents what a developed liberal democracy **should** look like not in terms of characteristics of established regimes, but as an **ideal standard**. It is intended to serve as a reference point for evaluating where a particular country may be on the path to democratic development, for identifying areas where assistance may contribute to democratic development, and for assessing the probable effectiveness of particular forms of intervention. It establishes indicators that can be used to identify discrepancies between real political practice in a particular system and the most desirable forms of political practice. By seeking to explain these discrepancies, the analyst can assess their significance for overall system performance in realizing democratic development and evaluate the utility of potential methods for improving system performance.

Analysis based on this conception of democratic development has the virtue of recognizing that there are likely to be many different paths toward democratic development reflecting the differing economic and social conditions in and political and cultural experiences of countries embarked on its achievement. Although this approach lacks logically-phased precision in a process of step by step realization of democratic reform, it is what our own experience in the established democracies has taught us.

The first part of the model is derived from the proposition that there are two sets of organizing principles through which liberal-democratic values are given effect.

One is summarized in the concept of liberal-constitutionalism which is comprised of the principles of constitutional or limited government, the entrenchment of enforceable rights, the rule of law (incorporating the principles of the supremacy of law, equality before the law, and the impartial and fair administration of the law), and democratic control of institutions of state security.

The second is summarized in the concept of popular sovereignty under a system of representative democracy which subsumes those principles that give effect to democratic decision-making: the existence of governing institutions and processes that are effective, responsive and accountable to citizens; the selection of political elites through regular, free and fair, competitive elections; the accountability of elites to citizens; a genuinely competitive system of party politics effectively representing a broad spectrum of societal interests and contributing to accommodation of diverse interests; a system of group politics based on the principles of pluralist theory; and a system of political communication providing for a free flow of ideas and information.

Table 1 sketches the elements of a fully developed democracy based on these operating principles.

The second part of the model describes conditions thought necessary to establish and sustain a system of democratic governance. It ventures into more controversial territory because some of its elements incorporate contested propositions. These conditions are set out in Table 2.

The Table distinguishes between conditions that are widely agreed to be an <u>essential and integral</u> part of a stable, self-sustaining, functioning democracy and those that <u>facilitate</u> the realization and sustainability of a functioning democracy. The essential conditions are the political engagement of citizens, a democratic political culture, and a well-developed network of autonomous, private associations as understood in the concept of civil society.

The "facilitating" conditions are more contentious. While not all of the propositions advanced here are accorded general agreement, they are those most widely supported in empirical theories of democracy. They are an open, non-polarized system of social stratification; a functioning market economy regulated to prevent disproportionate aggregations of power and ensure fairness in economic relations; and a political community that is internally cohesive.

It needs to be emphasized that the elements of the model, because they are an ideal standard, do not represent a form of democratic development that is ever actually likely to be realized.[74] This approach acknowledges that liberal democracy is constantly evolving. The practices of democratic governance as they exist in the established democracies today are the result of a constant process of adjustment, reflecting continuing debate about how best to realize the purposes of liberal democracy.

Further, this approach recognizes that democratic governance can be understood to embrace many different sorts of institutional arrangements. There is no universally applicable best way to organize the practice of democracy. Each approach has advantages and disadvantages. What is appropriate in one set of circumstances may not be appropriate in another.

While approached in a different way, most of the indicators in the model are apparent in the criteria used by agencies such as IDEA , Freedom House, and the Intelligence Unit of *The Economist* for measuring democratic development. The claim that I make for the approach proposed here is that it is more inclusive and permits the establishment of some theoretical linkages that can help promote more effective decision-making about aid allocation. I will be elaborating on the elements of this model and connections between the elements of the model and forms of assistance to democratic development in a paper being prepared for publication in early 2009.

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[74] The value of the approach to democratic development proposed here was eloquently summarized by Guillermo O'Donnell in 2006 when he spoke to the International Political Science Association about current problems of democracy: "Democracy is and always will be in some kind of crisis, for it is constantly redirecting its citizens' gaze from a more or less unsatisfactory present toward a future of still unfulfilled possibilities. There is in these crises something that belongs to what is best and most distinctive about democracy. For the crises underline democracy's intrinsic mix of hope and dissatisfaction, its highlighting of a lack that will never be filled. The capacity for hope is the great capacity of democracy, one which under the right circumstances can and should nourish other, more specific capacities that may promote improvements in democratic quality." (O'Donnell, Guillermo, "The Perpetual Crises of Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 18.1 Abstract)

Table 1 Propositions about the nature of liberal democracy

(Some indicators appear in two or more categories.)

Operating Principle: Liberal-constitutionalism	
Element	**Indicators**
Constitutional Government	a) Constitution establishing clear rules for the exercise of authority is relatively settled with amending procedures that do not permit arbitrary changes by incumbent elites b) Constitution is based on the principle of limited government with well-defined and effective restraints on the general scope of government authority c) State personnel know the constitutional limits on their authority and respect the supremacy of the constitution and its principles d) Constitution establishes independence of the judiciary e) Acceptance by elites in other state institutions of judiciary's right to interpret and safeguard the constitution
A framework of entrenched and enforceable rights	a) Constitutional entrenchment of rights, b) Enumeration of fundamental rights includes the protection of the basic freedoms (conscience, associations, speech), political rights (to vote and seek office) and legal rights (due process protections for persons suspected or accused of crimes) c) There are well-defined and accessible procedures to enforce protections of the basic freedoms, political rights, and legal rights d) All personnel in state security institutions know and observe fundamental rights e) Substantive rights to protect and promote equality (e.g. for women, minorities, persons with disabilities) f) Mechanisms for giving effect to substantive rights, including human rights codes and procedures for enforcing them and government policies such as support to affirmative action.
The rule of law incorporating the principles of the supremacy of the law, equality before the law, and the impartial and fair administration of the law	a) Constitution clearly establishes the supremacy of the law and the principle that all persons, regardless of their role or status in society, are subject to the law b) all persons are assured of equal protection from the law c) all persons are entitled to equal treatment in the administration of the law d) Investigative and prosecutorial functions of law enforcement are exercised impartially and fairly e) impartial and fair adjudication of the law through an independent judiciary f) Exercise of due process in criminal proceedings recognizing the right of persons accused of a crime to protection against arbitrary acts and providing persons accused of a crime with the means to provide an adequate defense g) Insulation of agents of state security from arbitrary use by elites in other governmental institutions i) Mechanisms of independent review and appeal for protecting citizens against abuses by law enforcement agencies and personnel
Democratic control of internal and external security institutions	a) Clearly defined and enforceable legal protections against the political use of the military, intelligence services, and law enforcement agencies and personnel b) Clearly defined lines of accountability of military, intelligence services, and law enforcement agencies to democratic institutions. c) Clearly defined limits on authority of all agencies of law enforcement d) Independent mechanisms for reviewing and controlling the activities of intelligence services f) State security agents understand and act in a manner consistent with their responsibilities under a regime of entrenched rights

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">Operating Principle: Popular sovereignty expressed through institutions
and processes of representative democracy</td></tr>
<tr><td>Element</td><td>Indicators</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing institutions that are effective, responsive and accountable to citizens</td>
<td>

1. The allocation of authority among different orders of government provides for governance that is effective, responsive and accountable to citizens
a) Central, regional, and local organs of government have appropriate levels of authority to exercise their responsibilities in a manner consistent with these objectives
b) Central, regional, and local organs of government have appropriate levels of fiscal capacity to exercise their responsibilities in a manner consistent with these objectives

2. The organization of executive-legislative relations within governing institutions provides for governance that is effective, responsive and accountable to citizens
a) The organization of executive-legislative relations is based on settled principles that limit the possibility of inter-institutional or intra-institutional conflict
b) The principle of the legitimacy of opposition in the legislature is recognized, institutionalized and provided adequate resources to be effective
c) Legislature has appropriate procedures and resources for exercising scrutiny of the executive
d) Legislature has appropriate resources to be effective in representing citizen interests in policy-making
e) Members of the legislature are effectively connected to citizens

3. Administrative structures, procedures, and practices within governing institutions provide for governance that is effective, responsive and accountable to citizens
a) Competent, professional public service
b) Merit principle for appointments and promotions within administrative organs of government
c) Policy-making procedures within the executive incorporating consultative mechanisms designed to ensure representation of public opinion
d) Transparency and impartiality in administration of public spending
e) There are institutions and processes to protect citizens from arbitrary actions by the executive (for example, freedom of information and privacy laws administered by officers accountable to legislature)
f) There are processes to provide citizens with the means to appeal administrative decisions
g) There are effective conflict of interest and other "anti-corruption" laws

</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political elites chosen through, regular, free and fair elections</td>
<td>

a) Universal franchise
b) Formal rules and institutions to ensure independence of administration of elections
c) Mechanisms to ensure equality and fairness in system of voter registration
d) Protections for secret ballot
e) Mechanisms for ensuring equality and fairness in tabulation and reporting of election results
f) Regulation of party and electoral campaign finance to ensure reasonable fairness in competition and to establish confidence in the integrity of the system

</td>
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<tr>
<td>A genuinely competitive system of party politics effectively representing a broad spectrum of societal interests and</td>
<td>

a) Absence of barriers to form parties and compete
b) The collective effect of party activity is to give voice to all significant societal interests
c) Through the interaction of parties in electoral campaigns and in government the party system contributes to the process of accommodation and compromise that is needed to harmonize the divergent claims made on government.
d) Internal party processes provide for open access to and fairness in nomination of candidates for office and selection of leaders
e) Systems of Internal party governance are transparent and encourage citizen

</td>
</tr>
</table>

contributing to accommodation of diverse interests	participation f) Election campaigns provide sufficient information to facilitate informed choice by voters g) There is regulation of party and electoral campaign finance to ensure reasonable fairness in competition and to establish confidence in the integrity of the system h) The electoral system produces outcomes that fairly represent the distribution of party support in the electorate i) Acceptance by all participants of the integrity and legitimacy of processes of party politics
A system of political communication that ensures a free flow of information about public affairs	a) News media are politically independent whether state or privately-owned b) The media accept that they have a responsibility to contribute to the public interest in a democracy c) In this regard, the media work constructively to inform citizens about public affairs in a free and impartial way d) Democratic values are embedded in the professional norms of journalism e) There are high standards of professional competence among journalists f) The legitimacy of the role of an independent media is accepted by political actors g). There are effective legal protections for independent journalism h) The media are free of political manipulation i). All significant political interests are accorded access to the media and can freely express their views.
A system of group politics that ensures the representation of citizen interests based on the principles of pluralist theory	a) Absence of barriers to interest group formation b) Recognition by government policy-makers and administrators of legitimacy of advocacy c) Open and equal access to decision-makers for advocacy groups d) Regulation of lobbying to ensure transparency and fairness in competition among groups f) Support to disadvantaged or diffuse groups with weak financial and organizational resources to enable them to compete effectively

Table 2 Conditions necessary to achieve and sustain liberal democracy

NB: The Table distinguishes between conditions that are widely agreed to be an essential and integral part of a stable, self-sustaining, functioning democracy and those that facilitate the realization and sustainability of a functioning democracy. The importance of these "facilitating" conditions is more contentious.

Conditions that are widely agreed to be an essential and integral part of a functioning democracy	Indicators
Political engagement of citizens	a) Citizens participate in politics (minimum requirement is that those who are eligible will vote.) b) Citizens are interested in, attentive to, and informed about public affairs
Democratic political culture	a) State elites and citizens are committed to liberal values: • individual autonomy • the "freedoms" • equality before the law • political equality • equality of opportunity • justice b) State elites and citizen are committed to democratic values: • decisions through discussion and debate • tolerance of dissenting opinion • acceptance of necessity to make decisions through accommodation and compromise c) State elites and personnel know and respect the limits on their authority, understand their duties under a liberal- democratic constitution, and are committed to the legitimacy of the system d) Citizens are committed to the legitimacy of the system: they accept decisions with which they disagree because they recognize the legitimacy of the processes by which the decisions have been made.
Civil society	a) Existence of a substantial network of active, autonomous, organized groups pursuing a multiplicity of diverse individual interests outside the sphere of state authority b) Group participation is voluntary c) Groups are free to form around any set of social, economic, or cultural interests b) There is widespread citizen participation in group activity c) Individuals have multiple group memberships reflecting differing aspects of their individuality
Facilitating conditions	
Open, non-polarized, system of social stratification	a) Large middle class b) Social mobility based on achievement c) Government policies promote equality of opportunity d) Government policies provide some measure of social justice: for example equal access to adequate health services and social

	support for disadvantaged members of society
A functioning market economy regulated to prevent disproportionate aggregations of power and ensure fairness in economic relations	a) There are state policies and laws to establish the conditions necessary to ensure the integrity of market transactions, to preserve competition, and to maintain the stability of the monetary system b) There is state regulation to protect collective bargaining rights for labour c) There is state regulation of workplace conditions d) There is state regulation to protect consumer interests
An internally cohesive political community	a) In societies where there are significant ethno-cultural and/or linguistic cleavages there are effective state policies to promote tolerance and protect cultural minorities b) In culturally diverse societies government policies effectively promote commitment to shared values that underpin social cohesion c) In societies where there are distinctive regional sub-communities, based on a strong sense of regional identity and interests, state structures are designed and function effectively to give representation to and accommodate regional sub-community differences • through adoption of the federal principle or devolution of significant powers on regional governments, • through national institutions that incorporate the principle of regional representation, • through informal practices to ensure that the principle of regional representation is observed in the national government

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