<table>
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<th><strong>Final Report</strong></th>
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<td>International Development Research Centre</td>
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| **Project Name:** | Creating an International Network of Democracy Builders |
| **Centre File:** | 104005-001 |
| **Date:** | August 31, 2008 |
| **Research Institute:** | Centre for the Study of Democracy, School of Policy Studies, Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario Canada |

**Project conducted in:** Costa Rica, Liberia, Palestine

**CSD Research Team:**
- Dr. Thomas S. Axworthy (Advisor)
- Dr. Ging Wong, Lead
- Valerie Ashford, Editor

**Project Leads:**
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- Liberia: Leroy Sua
- Palestine: Nicholas Fogg

**Research Teams/Contributors:**

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**Liberia:**
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**Palestine:**
Abed Abu Arafah Ali A. Salam, Khalil Shikaki, Mathew Johnson, The Right Honourable Michael Ancram, QC, MP., Les Campbell, Chris Doyle, Gillian Watt, Mr. Walid Ladadweh, Ms. Olfat Hammad, Mark Tessler, Amaney Jamal
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Synthesis:

In the democracy case studies of Costa Rica, Liberia and the Palestinian Territories, the Centre for the Study of Democracy provides a record of experience with drama: a lively dialogue between past and present, and a sense of contingency that are the essential elements in a compelling historical narrative. Thematically, these also explore the very complex and difficult “relationship between conflict, democracy and diversity, if only to adopt a more realistic and nuanced approach to democracy assistance.”¹ At the same time, these development pathways critically test the prevailing conceptual model of third-wave democratic transition that assumes a set sequence of stages consisting of democratic opening, breakthrough, and consolidation.² In particular, these national narratives challenge the assumption that democratic transitions “are being built on coherent, functioning states.” Indeed, the case studies describe the “gray zone” of ambiguity, with attributes of democratic political life as well as serious democratic deficits, thereby showing that “state-building has been a much larger and more problematic issue than originally envisaged in the transition paradigm.”³

These detailed case studies also identify general lessons about democratic transitions by examining local and external factors explaining either the success or failure of transition in each one of the country cases. These factors, and their interactions, are context-specific. Factors driving democratization in post-conflict Liberia are not necessarily the same set of factors related to democratic consolidation and quality in Costa Rica or those associated with the transition to electoral democracy in Palestine.⁴ The specific approach to

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³ Carothers, ibid.: pp 9, 16.
⁴ For a methodological discussion on the potential influences on democratic transition outcomes, see Michael McFaul, Amichai Magen and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss (February 2008), Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions: Research Guide for Case Study Authors, (Stanford University: Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law).
identifying general lessons from particular national histories is to situate those histories in a larger, transnational perspective. In this case, the comparative analysis is made possible by adopting the normative framework of liberal democracy – operating principles, necessary conditions and facilitating conditions to achieve and sustain liberal democracy – that was developed by George Perlin, founder of the Centre for the Study of Democracy at Queen’s University.

**Research problem:**

There are considerable complex debates, in both the scholarly and policy literature, about democratic transitions – what works for whom, in what circumstances. Few provide comparative methodology that would help make sense of the experiences and trajectories of the various case studies and provide a justification for application to other contexts.

**Research Findings:**

The Queen’s University approach is to examine the country case studies through a wider lens, one based on normative democratic attainment fashioned by Professor George Perlin as a comparative theoretical framework.

Several observations can be made from mapping the case study results against the Perlin model. In the first instance, such a checklist conveys results only in a binary form – in this case, either yes or no to a particular democratic norm. This raises the question of how to gauge progress towards achieving an ideal democratic standard. No degrees of difference in democratic attainment can be deduced from such a portrait, nor any explanation found in such a matrix. There is no substitute here for the serious historical narratives that are presented here as country case studies. Such is the case with the Palestinian Territories where the emergence of democracy “has laboured under a heavy external burden,” specifically the continued supervision of Palestinians by the Israeli authorities, and the Hamas challenge of the compatibility of violence with democracy.\(^5\) Under these circumstances, the Perlin model raises important questions about the transition to

democracy in Palestine, including the conditions necessary to achieve and sustain liberal democracy. Given the external factors, how does one assess the political engagement of citizens, the democratic political culture and civil society? How does Hamas’ electoral success fit with notions of popular sovereignty in terms of governing institutions responsive and accountable to citizens, free and fair elections, party politics and representative government? More broadly, can the Perlin model incorporate democratic tendencies within Islam? For all these reasons, the authors of the Palestinian case study have not declared the achievement of specific conditions for democracy as outlined in the Perlin model.

Where applicable, however, it should be understood that the Perlin model is diagnostic tool that enables policy makers and analysts to identify key areas of democratic development and non-development, of strengths and weaknesses, which form the basis of any assessment for further policy or research action. For example, this set of results may be used to probe specific areas in country-level state of democracy audits such as conducted by International IDEA. To focus research resources, such results may indicate priorities for evaluation. In any event, it is certainly possible to use the matrix form to structure discussion and explanation, as amply illustrated in Appendix II “Costa Rica Through the Perlin Model Lens” in the Costa Rica case study.

A final observation is that such a checklist is an assessment of current conditions for democracy that are dynamic and fluid. This is notable in the case of Liberia where gains made in certain essential and facilitating conditions for democracy in the 2005 election are tenuous for a post-war state. These are inextricably linked to the Johnson-Sirleaf administration’s ability to undertake effective state reforms and the continued presence of international peacekeepers and donor organizations to assist in conflict-prevention and economic reconstruction.
Fulfillment of Objectives:

Objectives:

To produce three case studies on democratic transitions in Liberia, Costa Rica, and Palestine, which, together with seven other case studies, will form the basis for a teaching tool, grounded in comparative research.

Specifically:

#1: To draw out lessons from the three cases that can be applied to transiting states throughout the globe.

#2: To partner with local educational organizations in the countries of study to provide local context and expertise.

#3: To work with Canadian experts affiliated with the Centre for the Study of Democracy

CSD completed a three-nation study on conflict, civil war, and potential transitions to democracy. Our method for the three countries chosen – Costa Rica, Liberia and Palestine – includes a western/North American viewpoint complemented by another from local experts in the nation under discussion.

Following a brutal civil war ending in 1948, Costa Rica eliminated its army and thus moved toward a consolidated democracy. Volume 1 describes and assesses the implications.

Volume 2 focuses in Liberia, which has undergone decades of brutal violence, largely ignored by the world community. With the recent the election of President Johnson-Sirleaf, Liberia may finally be turning the corner to stability. It is a good example of the immediate steps toward democracy being taken in rebuilding after a war.

Johnson-Shileaf’s election and the current hopeful signs of democratic progress may be analogous to Palestine, 1993-1996, when optimism was prevalent. Volume 3 outlines the particular difficulties that Palestinians have laboured under, as they have sought to end an occupation and create a country. The current conflict with Hamas also raises a question often discussed in the democratic literature about what the appropriate response should be
when a fair election returns a party that itself rejects many of the definitions of liberal-constitutionalism.

#2: and #3:

Educational Organizations involved in the study:
- Institute of Social Studies, University of Costa Rica
- Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research
- University of Liberia's Department of Political Science

North American Experts:
- New York University: Patricia De Gennaro
- Princeton University: Amaney Jamal
- University of Michigan: Mark Tessler
- University of Toronto: Tim Sayle
- Queen’s University: Mathew Johnson, Michelle Rogers

Democracy Builders Network Affiliates
- Leslie Campbell, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
- Nicholas Fogg, formerly of Marlborough College
- Wilhelm Vossenkuhl, University of Munich
- Chris Doyle, Council for Arab-British Understanding

Stakeholder Engagement

Liberia:
- Office of the Superintendent for Nimba County
- Sua Foundation
- University of Liberia's Department of political science

Costa Rica:
- Arias Foundation
- Estudios para el Futura
- Observatory of Democracy in Central America
- Institute of Social Studies, University of Costa Rica

Palestine:
- Council for Arab-British Understanding
- The Arab Thought Foundation
- Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research
Project design and implementation:

Research Methods:

Secondary

- Literature reviews were produced for each region to identify key themes in the transition to democracy
- Draft papers were distributed to experts and interested parties to garner feedback for final cases

Primary:

- A survey was used to reach 432 voters in Liberia’s last election
- Interviews were conducted with stakeholders in each region of study as well as with ex-pats in Canada and USA

Project outputs and dissemination:

The purpose of this study is to describe and place different types of democratic transition in a comparative and historical perspective.

Outputs:

- 3 case studies that provide a comprehensive historical perspectives of transitions to democracy:
  - Liberia: Assessing the Conditions for Liberal Democracy in a Post-conflict State
  - The Palestinian Territories: Optimism with Information / Democracy in the Islamic World
- The study concludes with a summary assessment of lessons learned and positions the research results in the further planned phases of creating an effective policy and practice-oriented international network of democratic builders.

Dissemination:

- CSD will issue press release via Queen’s media service to announce the on-line availability of the studies
- CSD will broadcast the availability of the resources on their website; listserve and through School of Policy Studies, Queen’s University networks
- CD-roms have been distributed to all the research partners (President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and The National Elections Commission of Liberia have received a copy of the entire report
- 25 hardcopy versions will be send to IDRC for distribution
- CSD intends to have mediated on-line discussions on the issues raised by the papers involving both Canadian students and Costa Rican students [or a wider audience]. On-line teaching cases are going to be developed from the case studies to aid in the discussions.

**Capacity building:**

- The project lead in each region has become familiar with the “Perlin Model” — a list of criteria for evaluation that will serve as a framework to assist in future democracy studies
- The work of research assistants in Costa Rica, Liberia, Palestine, Canada and USA has been compiled to create a comprehensive bibliography of democracy resources for public use
- The completed case studies will be used to develop teaching cases. These will be used in the planned delivery of democracy education training in Canada and abroad. They will be shared with all the organizations involved in the study with encouragement to promote these as tools for all interested groups.

**Project management:**

*Administration by the research organization:* Cultural differences, language barriers and lack of capacity proved challenging, but not insurmountable in completing the project on time. The volatility of the situation in the Palestinian Territories meant that its democratic situation could literally change on the hour. The Liberian survey and analysis was weak, although the credentials of the lead researcher were credible – and the impressive return rate (86%) demonstrated the Liberian stakeholder’s interest in the process. The challenge for CSD then was to what degree do we “improve” the product? While we did do some serious editing, it seems counter
intuitive to “westernize” the work that incorporated travel to 8 of the 15 Liberian counties which included a cross section of Liberians of whom only 20% are literate and 80% are unemployed; speaking 27 different dialects.

*Scientific management of the project:* no issues encountered

*Technical and other support and administration by IDRC:* the forms are well designed; however we had to recreate them, as the PDFs did not allow us to fill in data.

**Impacts:**

The presentation of a comparative analytical framework and a more detailed comparative methodology, together with a review of the relevant literature can be extremely useful, precisely because they capture the nuances specific to each context. CSD has attempted to highlight important similarities and differences making the research useful for policy-makers and democracy activists alike.

Long range plans to include using the web to have both Liberians and Canadians take part in mediated discussions on the issues raised in the papers has not occurred mainly due to the lack of technology access available in Liberia.

Given that the Premier of Ontario has expressed interest in the study on Liberia and requested that Dr. Axworthy meet with officials, we are optimistic that there may be spinoffs from the study.

Using the Internet to connect Costa Rican and Canadian students via on-line teaching cases is also expected to promote President Arias's campaign to prohibit the export of small arms.
Recommendations:

We must invest in local capacity building to ensure that the countries in transition have the necessary tools to plan, implement and assess democracy promotion efforts.

**Train local evaluators**

- As part of the logic of encouraging local input in design and implementation, centers of democracy expertise should be developed in transitioning or emerging democracies. A multi-national team composed of democratic theorists, evaluators, experts, statisticians, and representatives of the field would develop training modules and courses to broaden the field beyond the existing American and European areas of strength.

- Develop research and training programs for public service project managers, civil service training institutes, universities, colleges, and NGOs that will include both pedagogical expertise and practical experience for reworking country strategies; setting guidelines for granting streams; etc. Through the creation of modules that will be available both on-line and at week-long sessions, Canada will be leading the way in addressing the need for training in this area.

**Looking Forward – Consolidating the Network**

In the original CSD proposal “Creating an International Network of Democracy Builders” presented to the IDRC, building local knowledge of democratization and good governance was seen as a three-step process:

- To work jointly with individuals or institutions abroad on research projects of mutual interest that contribute to democratic governance;

- To commit to the local partner to create domestic capacity (a process that often takes years); and

- To use this expertise to jointly teach lessons that applies to other countries.

Four deliverables or outcomes are contemplated. In phase one of the project funded by IDRC, these included three country case studies, conducted by local partners matched with
Canadian experts, on democratic transitions in Costa Rica, Liberia and Palestine that would form the basis for a teaching tool grounded in comparative research. IDRC’s contribution would bring the number of CSD case studies to eleven. (The Department of Foreign Affairs has funded research on Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, China, Ghana, Mexico, Ukraine; two private foundations have funded research on Israel and Taiwan). The experience of the Centre is that ten or more cases are required to mount an international training program.

Looking ahead, the second phase would involve CSD working with civil service training institutes, universities, colleges and NGOs to distil the lessons learned from the eleven case studies into themes for an executive-management course on transitions to democracy. This course would be offered first in partner countries to train senior officials in democratic development for use in their own context. In addition to executive training, the joint team would produce democratic values curricula to be offered in schools, or electronically on the internet. In its final third phase, the project to create an international network of democracy builders would establish a multilateral team of partners to teach officials in other developing countries based on their own experiences.
FR1 — Project Information Summary

Project Title*: Creating an International Network of Democracy Builders

IDRC Grant Number*: 104005-001

Institution Name: Queen’s University Centre for the Study of Democracy

Working Currency: Canadian Currency of Bank Account: Canadian

Commencement Date: 01/02/07

Report No.: FINAL

Period of Actual Expenses From: 01/02/07 to 19/07/08

Certification by the Institution:

We hereby certify that this financial report, and all its schedules, correctly and fairly reflect the expenses of the project, and more specifically the portion supported by IDRC. No expenses charged against the IDRC grant have been, or will be, recovered from another donor.

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<tr>
<td>Dr. Thomas Axworthy</td>
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Date

29.08.08

*The grant agreement contains this information.  

BA200207E
### Detailed Expense and Forecast Worksheets — FR2

#### Budget vs Expense

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#### Explanations and comments:

International travel surplus: $6280
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