

IDRC
Middle East Special Initiative
Middle East Good Governance Fund

Governance and Civil Society
Research Priorities in Iraq

Amman, December 8-9, 2005

IDRC

Strategic Objectives 2005-2010

- ▶ **strengthen and help mobilize the local research capacity of developing countries**
- ▶ **support the use of applied research for changes in practices, policies, laws and technologies**
- ▶ **create and reinforce research partnerships between Canadian institutions and researchers and the developing world**

IDRC Programs

Program Areas:

- ▶ **Environment and Natural Resource Management**
- ▶ **Information and Communication Technologies for Development**
- ▶ **Innovation, Policy and Science**
- ▶ **Social and Economic Policy**

Program Features

- ▶ **Multidisciplinary**
- ▶ **Sustained mentoring by IDRC research managers**
- ▶ **Regional or global scope (not country-specific)**
- ▶ **Emphasis on fostering research networks**
- ▶ **Issues-oriented for policy influence**
- ▶ **Promote ongoing evaluation**
- ▶ **Limited lifespan**

IDRC Projects in the Middle East

- ▶ **Peace, Conflict and Development Program Initiative**
- ▶ **Middle East Special Initiative**
 - ▶ Expert & Advisory Services Fund
 - ▶ Scholarship Fund for Palestinian Refugee Women in Lebanon
 - ▶ Middle East Good Governance Fund
- ▶ **Other Programs**

Middle East Good Governance Fund (MEGGF)

Definition of Good Governance

Two major conditions constitute a prerequisite for good governance:

- a) The existence of a democratic and inclusive public space that guarantees the participation of all the political and social forces of society.**
- b) Government ethics which impose transparency, efficiency and accountability of public managers**

MEGGF: Goal and Objectives

- ▶ **GOAL:** The goal of the Fund is to increase policy-relevant knowledge that is useful for promoting good governance in the Middle East region.
- ▶ **Objectives:**
 - **Analyze the role of civil society as a contributor to good governance;**
 - **Identify potential agents of change within civil society and build their capacity to promote good governance;**
 - **Analyze and promote the linkages between civil society and political movements and broader policy processes;**
 - **Strengthen existing networks of knowledge and encourage the creation of new regional networks which promote good governance as defined; and**
 - **Contribute to developing the research agenda and the research community around issues of good governance as defined.**

Programme Activities

- ▶ **Action oriented research**
- ▶ **Good practices**
- ▶ **Comparative studies**
- ▶ **Visioning exercises and surveys**
- ▶ **Workshops and seminars**

*Civil Society as a Catalyst for
Policy and Good Governance...*

Thematic Research

- ▶ **The role of civil society (including social movements) as a catalyst for change and a promoter of good governance**
- ▶ **Political institutions (including political parties) as an essential link between civil society and broader policy processes**
- ▶ **Gender, Youth and Media as Cross-cutting themes**

The role of civil society as a catalyst for change and a promoter of good governance

- ▶ **General question: Under what conditions can civil society become an effective promoter of good governance, both with people and with government?**
- ▶ **Specific questions:**
 - **What are the experiences of the different components of civil society in promoting good governance and which of their strategies worked and why?**
 - **What are the characteristics of civil society organizations (CSO) that allow them to become effective actors of change?**

Political Institutions (including political parties)

- ▶ **General question: How do political movements (including political parties) contribute to a process of good governance and become effective links between policy-makers and civil society?**

Specific questions:

- **How do political movements mobilize the population and how do they link up to policymakers?**
- **How do clans and tribes act as political units and how is their participation in the political system promote or impede the development of the process of good governance?**
- **How are Islamist movements integrated in political systems, and what is the impact of their integration on moderating these movements? Are the fears around the inclusion of Islamist movements in a political system exaggerated and if so why?**



MEGGF: Policy Linkage

- ▶ **Building knowledge on specific good governance issues (i.e., good practices, lessons learned, comparative studies, etc.);**
- ▶ **Broad dissemination of knowledge**
 - ▶ Identify partners that has potential policy linkage
 - ▶ Contribute to dialogue and exchange experiences
- ▶ **Influencing specific policy within thematic framework (I.e.: ICG, ARI);**
- ▶ **Build Capacity of southern partners**
- ▶ **Feeding into existing networks: i.e., use of ARI as a link between our work and policy makers.**

MEGGF and Iraq

- ▶ Challenges facing civil society in Iraq
- ▶ The role and influence of political institutions
- ▶ The impact of societal structures on existing political systems
- ▶ Political developments and post-constitutional issues
- ▶ Research Capacity building

Challenges facing civil society in Iraq

- ▶ How can Civil Society Organizations(CSOs) promote good governance in Iraq and in a political transition period?
- ▶ What are the laws governing civil society organizations and political associations and which groups are excluded from these laws? How do these laws impact the structure and work of these organizations?
- ▶ How do CSOs promote with people an active concept of citizenship, how do they link to policymakers and how are their efforts policy relevant?
- ▶ How can donors support civil society in their policy planning research and activities?

Middle East Good Governance Fund

Governance and Civil Society Research Priorities in Iraq

Day 2

The role and influence of political institutions

- ▶ How do political institutions mobilize civil society and how do they link up to policymakers?
- ▶ How are Islamist movements integrated in political systems, and what is the impact of their integration on their agenda?

The impact of societal structures on existing political systems

- ▶ How do clans and tribes act as political units and how does their participation in the political system promote or impede the development of the process of good governance and the sense of active citizenship?

Political developments and post-constitutional issues

- ▶ What are the key challenges for the development of political institutions within the existing constitution?
- ▶ What are the laws governing CSOs and political institutions (including political parties) and which groups are excluded from these laws? How do these laws impact the structure and work of these organizations?
- ▶ How do the new constitution impact the structure and work of political institutions and civil society?

Next steps

- ▶ Summary of research priorities
- ▶ Common areas of interest with MEGGF
- ▶ Information on how to submit proposals to the MEGGF