



LEADERSHIP FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Local Democracy Assessment Guide

Overview

This *Local Democracy Assessment Guide* is designed to provide practitioners and specialists with a tool to evaluate the extent and quality of local democracy in large urban arenas. It consists mostly of a Questionnaire which forms part of a capacity-building programme that will be further developed following a series of pilot tests in the cities of Southern and East Africa in 2003.

The Questionnaire focuses on two areas that are critical to democracy's success in today's complex cities:

Representative democracy

(elections, political parties, and elected officials); and

Participatory democracy (civic engagement, non-governmental and community-based organizations, and consensus-oriented policy making).

In both these areas of local governance, the mapping guide facilitates evaluation of institutions and processes.

The format of the Questionnaire is a series of topical worksheets that encourages users to engage in a systematic analysis of the strengths of local democratic institutions and practices, the most significant problems in each issue area, and recommendations for improvements.

Purposes of the Questionnaire

- To provide a practical resource tool to municipal officials, administrators, partners (such as non-government organizations), and civic leaders as they conduct self-evaluations of democratic life in their city;
- To identify the principal strengths and weaknesses of democratic life and to identify ways to further consolidate strengths and to rectify weaknesses;
- To investigate the contributions that local or city-level democracy makes toward overall consolidation of democracy in democratizing societies;
- To stimulate further thinking on the ways to define and describe the best ways to structure and practice local democracy; and
- To give outsiders such as peer reviewers a tool by which to conduct independent and impartial evaluations of democratic governance at the city level.

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Introduction

The International IDEA *Local Democracy Mapping Guide* is designed for elected officials, civil society leaders, the media, scholars and other public policy analysts, and international agencies, to help them monitor democratic process at the local or city level. It allows a user to identify and evaluate two principal elements of local democracy that are critically important to exploring the quality of rule by the people:

- **Representative democracy** (parties and candidates, elected authorities, and elections);
- **Participatory democracy** (civil society, forging consensus, and civic engagement).

Under these two broad categories, we consider both the institutional aspects (rules, organizations and key actors) and process dimensions (types and methods of practice and implementation).

This democracy mapping guide is designed to supplement national-level assessment instruments, such as the International IDEA *Handbook on Democracy Assessment*. The purpose of the guide is to further enhance the pursuit of high-quality democracy in which public institutions provide a greater degree of responsiveness to social problems, and that offer people a more effective voice in the decisions that affect their daily lives.

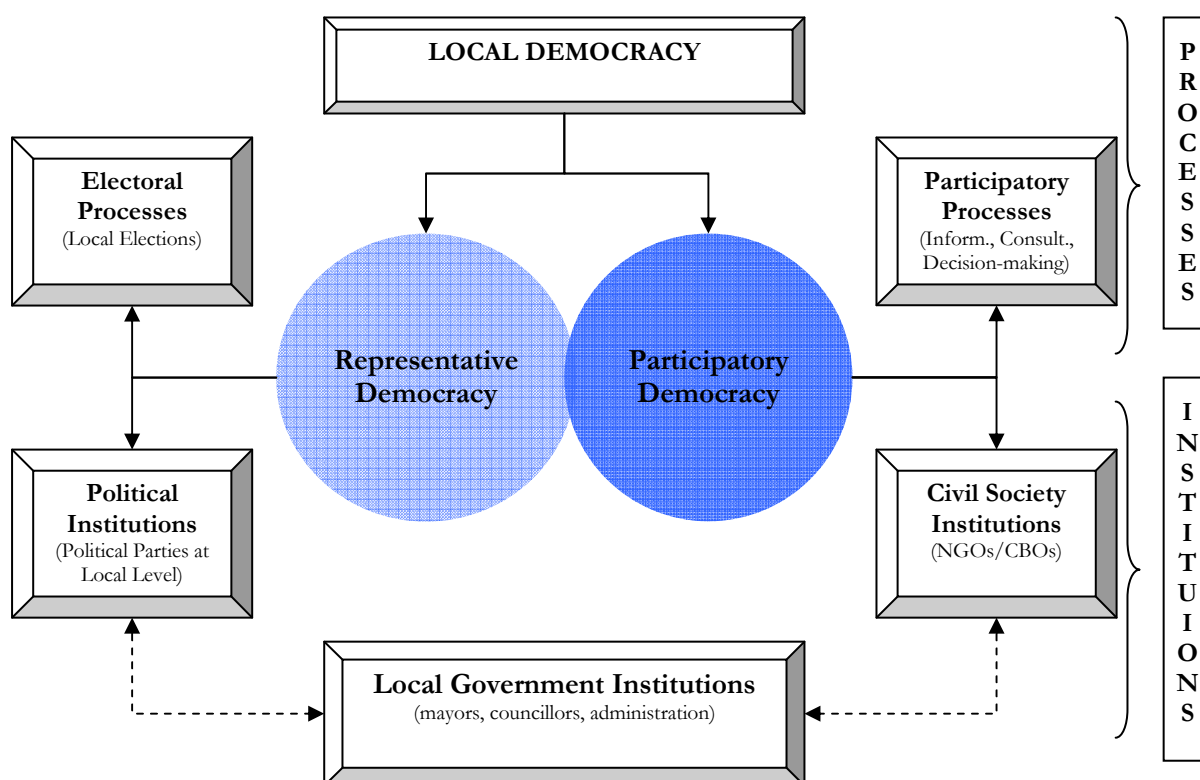


Diagram 1: Conceptual Composition of the Capacity-Building Programme.

In sum, the Questionnaire seeks answers to the following questions:

- What are the elements of democracy that are presently excellent, satisfactory or failing?
- How effective have previous reform efforts been and what lessons could be learned from the past?
- What actions can be undertaken by city/local authorities and other stakeholders to develop and sustain more democratic governance?

Steps and Tips for Using the Guide

The Guide is designed for use by practitioners of local democracy – public authorities and private civic leaders – that involves participatory research on their part and which relies on their intimate knowledge of local situations. Thus, the instrument should be used as a form of interactive questionnaire, together with the guidelines at the end of the Guide that facilitate the cross-walks between findings about aspects of local democracy and recommendations for further enhancing its meaning and practice.

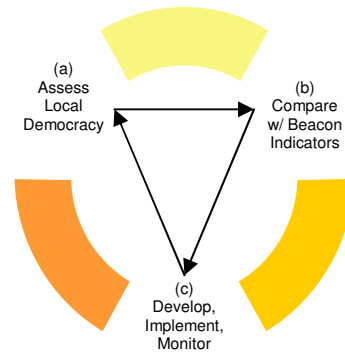


Diagram 2: Steps in Conducting Mapping Exercise

A common approach is to link the mapping exercise as an integral step in the design of strategic objectives and future courses of action to improve the institutions and processes of local democracy.

Steps to conducting a comprehensive mapping of local democratic governance include:

- completing the questionnaire, either by individuals or in teams, and comparing the results;
- writing an assessment report that synthesizes the findings;
- critically reviewing the report, discussing findings on which there is consensus among the evaluators and identifying points of contention; and
- comparing the results of the research with other knowledge, and creating a set of ‘beacon indicators’ that articulate strategic objectives for improving local democracy, together with an implementation plan to include monitoring of progress towards the indicators or objectives.

1. The City in Context

Democratic governance takes place in a specific context of the historic, social, geographic and economic setting of each country and city / village. Certain features related to these settings must be either protected and further developed for community integration and democracy to succeed or dismantled because of the divisive / obstructive effects. In addition, the age and socio-economic status of population and income / employment opportunities are important aspects as they affect good governance and democracy at all levels. This section seeks to identify both the positive and the negative features of the city in this context.

1.1 Geography and Spatial Features

- 1.1.1
- a) In what ways do the city's physical situation and spatial layout create features that give it a certain identity? (For example, geography may intersect with human settlement patterns to define a city centre, determine the relationship between the centre and the periphery / suburbs, affect transport corridors, and create distinctive places, or it may have a strong bearing on the city's economic opportunities or constraints.)
 - b) In what ways do the geographic context and human settlement patterns affect daily life and social relations?
 - c) How, if at all, do human settlement patterns relate to the practice of local democracy?
- 1.1.2
- a) How many public spaces such as parks, public meeting venues, or other facilities exist?
 - b) Are there guidelines and rules for managing public gatherings, protests and demonstrations, town meetings, or other major public events held in these public spaces? Please describe these places in the city and the implications of public activity in them for local democracy.

1.2 Demography, Social Structure and Social Relations / Heterogeneity of Population

- 1.2.1
- a) What is the current population of the municipality (total and by gender)?
 - b) What is the change in population (decrease or increase) in percentage over the last ten years? Please state the change in general, as well as distribution by gender.
 - c) What is the rate of population growth in the city overall for the next ten years?
 - d) What proportion of population growth is a consequence of normal population growth and what proportion is due to migration into the city?
- 1.2.2
- a) What proportion of the city's present population is under 15 years old (providing data by gender)?
 - b) What proportion of the present population is over 65 years old (providing data by gender)?
- 1.2.3
- a) What are the principal home languages spoken in the city?
 - b) What groups speak the languages identified in 1.2.3 (a)?
 - c) What is the language policy envisioned and / or implemented by local government?
- 1.2.4
- a) What are the principal identity groups – e.g., ethnic, religious, racial, etc. – within the population?
 - b) What are the estimated sizes of these groups in terms of proportion of the population?
 - c) Are any of the groups officially recognized by the national or city government, for example, for special preferences (such as affirmative action) or as indigenous groups?

- 1.2.5
- a) What are the principal ethnic, racial and religious groups in the city?
 - b) Is any one group especially dominant in social and political life?
 - c) Are relations among any two or more groups especially troubled, contentious or antagonistic?
 - d) Are any groups marginalized from the rest of society (under-represented in economic or political decision making)?
 - e) Are certain ethnic / racial groups considered substantially:
 - i) richer? (Please describe);
 - ii) poorer? (Please describe).

1.3 Socio-economic Base / Municipal Finance

- 1.3.1
- a) Which sectors of the economy and specific industries are most important to the city?
 - b) How do economic patterns shape society, peoples' livelihoods, and communities?
 - c) What new patterns in economic development have emerged in recent years, for example, in response to globalization?
- 1.3.2
- What are the patterns of employment, unemployment and income earning in the city?
- a) Is there a single manufacturer or economic sector that dominates?
 - b) How many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMSEs) are there in the city per 1,000 people?
 - c) What is the gender distribution of income earning through employment and / or small business ownership in the city?
 - d) Are young women or young men (from 18 to 25) especially likely to be unemployed?
 - e) What is the dependency ratio¹ for a single average income in the city?
- 1.3.3
- a) What is the rate of socio-economic inequality in the city (usually stated as a ratio between number of people in the highest income segment and the lowest)?
- 1.3.4
- a) What percentages of the city's population live above and below the poverty line for basic sustenance and food security? Please state poverty rates (poverty as defined as the lack of income or consumption to meet basic human needs of shelter, food, and health); please use, if possible, the World Bank's 'poverty line' for the entire country, 1 USD per day in purchasing power parity terms.
 - b) Please provide the poverty rate by gender, for young people (below 24 years of age) and for the elderly (more than 65 years of age).
- 1.3.5
- a) How does the city relate economically and socially to the adjoining rural areas?
 - b) How many people who live outside the city commute to work there on an average business day?
 - c) To what extent is the city's economy closely tied to the economic activity that occurs in surrounding rural areas?
- 1.3.6
- a) How many cases of legal disputes over land / property tenure, utilization and access were registered in the last three years (please state number of cases for each year per 1,000 inhabitants)?
 - b) What efforts does the city government make to resolve / manage the land conflicts?
 - c) Were there significant land disputes that were not brought to the judicial authorities or other legal processes?
 - d) What other organizations are involved in resolution / management of the land conflicts?

¹ The dependency ratio is the number of people (in an extended family, for example) who live from a single job or a single individual's work. This ratio is seen as an especially good indicator of poverty and social stress.

- 1.3.7 a) What is the rate of violent crime such as assault, murder, and rape in the city in the last three years? Please state number of cases for each year per 1,000 inhabitants.
- b) What is the rate of non-violent crime in the city in the last three years? Please provide data on non-violent crime such as theft, fraud, burglary or larceny per 1,000 inhabitants.
- c) How many cases of domestic abuse or sexual assault per 1,000 inhabitants were reported in the last 12 months?
- d) How many cases of human right abuses were reported in the last 12 months? Please state the numbers per 1,000 inhabitants:
- i) officially reported by the authorities;
- ii) estimated or reported by non-governmental organizations.
- e) How many cases of political violence² occurred the last three years?
- 1.3.8 a) What is the overall annual budget of the city in terms of revenues and expenditures?
- b) What are the sources of city revenue?
- c) What share of its total revenue does the city raise by itself, for example, from local taxes?
- d) What share of the city revenue is received as subsidies from national or provincial sources of funding? Please state figures/percentages.
- e) How many cases of tax evasion from city taxes were officially pursued in the last 12 months per 1,000 inhabitants?
- 1.3.9 a) How many instances of alleged corruption were investigated in the last three years?
- b) What was the outcome of such investigations?
- c) What mechanisms exist to prevent / curb corruption in city government? Please describe with examples.

1.4 Development and Social Indicators

Answering the questions below, please state data for the last three years:

- 1.4.1 What is the income per capita?
- 1.4.2 What is the infant mortality rate?
- 1.4.3 What is the number of doctors per 1,000 inhabitants?
- 1.4.4 What is the number of kindergartens / nurseries per 1,000 inhabitants?
- 1.4.5 What is the number of teachers per 1,000 inhabitants?
- 1.4.6 What is the life expectancy?
- a) Males
- b) Females
- 1.4.7 What is the literacy rate?
- a) Males
- b) Females

² Violence due primarily to political competition, tension, political party rivalry enforcement of party-political 'no-go zones' and other campaign-related violence, violence during election events, or violent competition among groups over access to government resources.

2. Representative Democracy

This section assesses the institutional infrastructure of local democracy. It examines political party and other representative institutions, their functioning and effectiveness. Further it assesses the number of political parties and their functional structure at local level, their representativeness, as well as the extent to which the electoral process is free and fair.

Institutions

2.1. National and Legal Frameworks

- 2.1.1 a) How frequently are local elections held?
- 2.1.2 a) How does the national statutory and administrative framework affect the conduct of local elections? Please summarize and review national laws that establish local elected institutions and / or the processes for electing representatives to them.
- b) Please describe any constitutional provisions that directly address the institutional frameworks for local democracy or the processes for local elections.
- c) To what extent are regional organization norms (such as the gender representation guidelines of the SADC in southern Africa) recognized and addressed in the relevant legislation?
- d) Does national legislation specify the electoral system for use in local elections?
- e) Does national legislation provide details on size and structure of local councils?
- 2.1.3 a) Are foreigners eligible to vote in local elections? Please state provisions and restrictions.
- 2.1.3 a) What measures are taken to increase representation for disadvantaged groups, such as women, the disabled, young people or national minorities, and / or to ensure their inclusion or equal status in local government institutions?
- 2.1.4 a) How are electoral disputes handled?
- b) What electoral disputes have occurred in the last three local elections and how were these disputes resolved?

2.2 Electoral System Design and Performance

- 2.2.1 a) What electoral system applies at council level? (e.g., FPTP, PR List, etc. See Appendix 1 for a full list of electoral systems).
- b) What impact does the electoral system have on the structure of the political party system? (For example, does it provide advantages to bigger parties or to smaller ones?)
- 2.2.2 a) In the past three elections, how did the preferences of voters get translated into ruling majorities in city councils and in the election of mayors (where applicable)?
- b) Did the electoral system produce a disproportion in the allocation of seats of more than 5 per cent for any political party?³ (If so, please provide the level of disproportional outcome.)
- a) Did the electoral system provide for transparency in the process by making clear to voters how their votes would be translated into seats in the city council?
- b) Did the electoral system provide for accountability such that the voters had the opportunity to select among individuals campaigning for office? [That they can

³ Disproportional allocation of seats is calculated by taking the proportion of share of the votes cast for a party out of total votes cast and the share of seats won out of the total seats available. If the disproportion is greater than 5 per cent, the electoral system is considered to have led to a disproportional outcome.

choose between candidates is a given, I guess. Do you mean individuals as opposed to parties?

- c) Did the electoral system serve as a ‘mirror’ of the wide range of social diversity in the city, or does it tend to systematically exclude some important groups?
- 2.2.3
- a) How does the electoral system affect the conduct of election campaigns?
 - b) Did the ways in which votes are translated into seats help determine how political parties and candidates pursued their campaigns?
 - a) How did the electoral system provide incentives for parties to pursue certain segments of the voting population, for example, by making ethnic or religious appeals for support?
- 2.2.4
- a) What were the principal issues that differentiated parties and candidates in the last three local election campaigns?
 - b) Please list five key issues that are commonly raised at local election campaigns (e.g., education, water, etc). How do these issues reflect the city’s agenda for governance?
 - c) Which of these issues are local / city-specific issues and which are more a reflection of national-level, interparty competition?
- 2.2.5
- a) Is the city subdivided into territorial units, usually known as wards, for electoral participation purposes?
 - b) How do wards compare in terms of size and population?
 - c) In the last three years, how many disputes over the demarcation of wards have been brought to the electoral administration or judicial authorities?
 - d) Were there significant ward demarcation disputes that were not brought before electoral or judicial authorities?

2.3 Party System

- 2.3.1
- a) How many and which parties are registered and actively campaign in local political contests?
 - a) Please provide a list and further information about membership of the principal political parties.
 - b) Which parties are represented in the existing city council? Please state the number of their representatives.
 - c) Please provide a brief description of the principal platform (plans, promises and issues for governance) of each political party.
 - d) Are there ethnic or religious parties? (If so, please describe how these parties define their basis of representation in ethnic or religious terms.)
- 2.3.2
- a) How are candidates for local election contests chosen?
 - b) Do national-level party officials have formal or informal roles in approving or rejecting locally chosen candidates?
 - c) Within political parties, how are candidates vetted and decisions made on candidate eligibility?
 - d) What are the rules governing the financing of political parties at the local level?
- 2.3.3
- a) In the past three elections, what proportion of party candidates were women?
 - b) In the past three elections, what proportion of party leaders were women?
- 2.3.4
- a) In the past three years, has the governing majority in the city council changed as the result of councillors ‘crossing the floor’⁴ to join other political parties or by political

⁴ ‘Crossing the floor’ means the defection of councillors from a party’s ranks to join another party, usually resulting in the creation of a new majority coalition within the council.

parties changing allegiances to produce a different majority coalition? (If this has happened, please describe how it occurred, how often, and the effect this change has had on decision making by the city council.)

- 2.3.5
- a) What is the impact of the party system in the performance of the institutions of the mayor, council, or other aspects of local authority?
 - b) Does the electoral system produce a strong-mayor system in which the mayor is fairly autonomous from the council or from political parties?
 - c) How many times in the last 12 months has the council been deadlocked (unable to reach consensus through bargaining) on a major policy issue because of disagreements among political parties?
- 2.3.6
- a) Does the city council feature a significant opposition party or group of councillors?
 - b) Are opposition or non-governing parties able to put forward alternative policies and programmes and have their alternatives debated by the council?
 - c) Are opposition parties able to freely criticize and oppose the ruling majority?
- 2.3.7
- a) Are there identity groups in the community – ethnic, racial, or religious groups or those such as women, young people or the homeless – who are not represented in proportion to their estimated population size through formal channels of representation such as political parties?
 - b) If so, how have these groups organized outside the formal channels to represent their interests?

2.4 Evaluating Elected Officials

- 2.4.1
- a) How is a mayor chosen?
 - b) Does the way in which the mayor is chosen lead to his / her being an executive mayor with authority over policy formulation and implementation, or is the post more ceremonial?
 - c) What rules exist for structuring the relationship between the mayor and the city council?
- 2.4.2
- a) What are the mechanisms and processes for holding the mayor accountable to legislative powers such as the council or directly to voters in between elections?
- 2.4.3
- a) What orientation do newly elected and other council members receive on the roles, functions and operations of the city council? Please describe with examples.
- 2.4.4
- a) Please describe briefly the size and functions of the city council and its internal decision-making procedures.
 - b) In the past three years, have there been public criticisms of the size of the city council from political parties or the media?
 - c) In the past three years, have there been significant public criticisms about the internal decision-making rules of the city council?
- 2.4.5
- a) What are the powers and functions of the city council for overseeing the work of administrative agencies or appointed administrators?
 - b) Does the city council have investigative capacities for obtaining information on the work of city departments and agencies?
 - c) In the past three years, has the city council exercised its oversight capacities to investigate or censure the operation of departments or agencies?
- 2.4.6
- a) What are the methods for ongoing public evaluation of the performance of elected officials in between elections?

- b) Does the city have a system in place for ongoing measurement of performance, such as yardsticks, benchmarks or targets in the delivery of local government services?
 - c) When performance measurements are not met, what procedures are in place for review of current practices and methods for improving performance?
- 2.4.7
- a) What are the procedures for formal censure or recall of elected officials? Please describe with examples.
 - b) In the last three years, have the procedures for formal censure or recall of a city official been invoked?

Processes

2.5 Election Administration

- 2.5.1
- a) Please describe the overall administration of local government elections, from keeping the voters roll, accrediting parties and candidates, designing and counting ballots, voter information, and certification of results.
 - b) Specifically, how and by whom is the electoral management body chosen and supervised?
- 2.5.2
- a) Were outside observers able to monitor and fully assess the freeness and fairness of elections in the last three elections?
 - b) Among these, how many local, national, regional (e.g., the African Union), or international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and official bodies are engaged in electoral observation?
- 2.5.1
- a) In the last three elections, has the administrative framework for elections led to the conduct of free, fair and legitimate local elections?
 - b) Was the outcome of the election challenged by any of the parties or candidates that sought public office?
 - c) How many complaints or allegations of fraud or abuse were received by the electoral authorities?
 - d) What electoral administration practices – in areas such as voter or candidate registration, ballot design, voting processes, precinct management, counting and verification processing, and election dispute management -- have been identified as successful and which have been identified as in need of improvement?

2.6 Evaluating Voter Participation

- 2.6.1
- a) What are the voter turnout rates (ratio of actual voters to eligible voters) in local elections?
 - b) How do they differ from national voter turnout rates?
 - c) What is the minimum voting age?
 - a) Are there significant (i.e., more than 5 per cent) differences in the rate of voter turnout between women and men?
- 2.6.2
- a) Please describe voter information and education programmes in the city.
 - b) Are any special measures taken to help voters who may face additional barriers to participation, such as the disabled or elderly, during the elections?
 - c) What measures are in place to ensure equal access by all eligible voters to voting and electoral participation?

3. Participatory Democracy

Overall, democratic local government could be characterized by four essential features: its openness towards the citizens, its fairness in treating them, the transparency of its structures and procedures, and its responsiveness to the needs of its citizens. This section examines these requirements for a functioning and effective system of participatory democracy at the local level.

Institutions

3.1 Local Authorities and Participatory Democracy

OPENNESS

- 3.1.1 a) What types of the local government bodies' meetings – council meetings, hearings, etc. – were open to the public in the last 12 months? Please describe the ways in which the public has the opportunity to convey its views to elected representatives on matters of local governance.
- 3.1.2 a) What announcement methods are used to inform the public about the local government meetings that are open for citizens' participation?
- 3.1.3 a) Are the methods by which citizens can provide input to mayoral or city council decision making widely distributed to the public?

FAIRNESS

- 3.1.4 a) What policies and programmes exist in the municipality to promote inclusion of different interests, including those of identity and specific-interest groups? (These outreach programmes may also be reflected in the responses to section 3.3; if these policies and programmes exist, please provide an illustrative example here.)

TRANSPARENCY

- 3.1.5 a) Which local government documents can citizens access and how?
b) Does the city have a web site for communication through the Internet to provide information about the city, its governance, its administration, and its economy?
c) Do citizens regularly use these technologies to access information or for other purposes?
- 3.1.6 a) What rules exist in ensuring transparency in discussing and adopting the local budget?
- 3.1.7 a) What rules exist in ensuring transparency of public decision making and other processes (such as soliciting contracts for city purchases)?
- 3.1.8 a) How are vacancies in local government advertised (including method and period of announcement)?

RESPONSIVENESS

- 3.1.9 a) What types of system are in place to hear and address citizen concerns about issues of service delivery or other functions of the local government?
b) How many complaints about service provision were submitted by citizens in the last 12 months?
c) How many complaints did the local government act upon in the last 12 months? What is the percentage of recurring complaints?
d) What percentage of citizens is satisfied / dissatisfied with the provision of a service?

3.2 Civil Society, the Private Sector, the International Community and the Media

Modern management of public affairs is increasingly taking the form of a public–private mix as the best strategy for success. This section assess the extent to which city officials, political parties, civic leaders and citizens regularly work together outside official and electoral contexts to forge a common vision for the city, to engage in information sharing, consensus seeking, and collaborative decision making.

- 3.2.1 How many civil society groups are estimated to exist in the city?
- How many NGOs⁵ are registered?
 - How many community-based organizations (CBOs)⁶ are active?
 - In what ways do local NGOs and CBOs contribute to policy formulation and implementation?
- 3.2.2
- How many public–private partnerships exist between the city and private-sector firms for delivering services or responding to community needs?
 - Have these partnerships received high praise or have they been the subject of sharp criticism within the city, for example, in the council?
 - Have these partnerships received high praise or have they been the subject of sharp criticism by external sources such as community groups or the media?
- 3.2.3
- How many partnerships exist between the city and CBOs for delivering services or responding to community needs?
 - Have these partnerships received high praise or have they been the subject of sharp criticism, for example, within the city council?
 - Have these partnerships received high praise or have they been the subject of sharp criticism by external sources such as community groups or the media?
- 3.2.4
- Do private corporations provide essential services such as water or electricity?
 - Have these privatized arrangements received high praise or have they been the subject of sharp criticism, for example, within the city council?
 - Have these partnerships received high praise or have they been the subject of sharp criticism by external sources such as community groups or the media?
- 3.2.5
- Is there a regularly scheduled meeting, a forum or other routine ways of communication and cooperation between the city and NGOs / CBOs?
 - Do NGOs and CBOs have programmes to resolve the underlying root causes of conflict that may give way to violence, such as systematic exclusion of population groups, gross inequalities, or patterns of discrimination in employment or other opportunities?
 - Are religious organizations active in social, humanitarian or charitable services?
- 3.2.6
- Are international donors and international NGOs active in the city?
 - How much have international donors contributed to city-level programmes for development aid and / or humanitarian assistance?
 - How many international NGOs are active in the city?

⁵ NGOs are usually defined as those associations, advocacy groups, charitable organizations, research institutes, or other social-service or public-good oriented organization. Closely related is the concept of civil society, or the forms of association among people in a democracy around common interests, beliefs or values.

⁶ CBOs are more directly focused on very local-level issues in the areas in which their members live, with social service, improvement, and the enhancement of the neighbourhood-level environment the principal aims.

- d) What are the principal ways in which international actors such as donors and NGOs affect governance in the city?
- e) Are there formal or regular processes or forums in which the international community is involved in policy formulation and decision making in the city?

3.2.7 Please describe the structure, editorial arrangements and independence of the local news media.

- a) What sources of news do people turn to for information on local affairs?
- b) Are the principal sources of news owned and operated by the government?
- c) Are the editors of the sources of local news editorially independent of government authorities?
- d) Do the local news media have ombudsman or other procedures for investigating and responding to allegations of inaccurate or irresponsible reporting?
- d) In the last three years, how many significant allegations of government interference in the reporting of local news have occurred?
- e) In the last three years, how many times have the news media been criticized by government or the community for seriously inaccurate or irresponsible reporting?

Processes

3.3 Forms and Methods of Citizen Outreach

Which of the following forms of citizen outreach were used in the last 12 months?		RATING please mark with X		
		Not used at all	Used 1 to 3 times	Used more than 3 times
PUBLIC INFORMATION				
3.3.1	Distribution of printed materials (leaflets, newsletters, etc.) to the public			
3.3.2	Regular media briefings			
3.3.3	Public presentations and exhibitions			
3.3.4	Scheduled programmes in local media			
3.3.5	Computer-based applications, e.g. web sites and e-mail			
3.3.6	Other(s) - Please specify			
PUBLIC CONSULTATION				
3.3.7	Consultative meetings			
3.3.8	Community forums			
3.3.9	Public surveys			
3.3.10	Other(s) – Please specify			
PUBLIC DECISION MAKING				
3.3.11	Working and focus groups			
3.3.12	Public workshops			

3.3.13	Other(s) – Please specify			
COOPERATIVE IMPLEMENTATION				
3.3.14	Public–private or public non-governmental partnerships			
3.3.15	Other(s) – Please specify			
OTHER(S)				
3.3.16				
	Please describe other forms:			

3.4 Evaluating Citizen Outreach

The concept of vision has become a useful pace-setter and framework for organizations and their members. This section evaluates the extent to which local officials and civil society leaders share a sense of common responsibility for governance and engage in thinking together about ways to advance joint action for addressing community problems or realizing opportunities.

- 3.4.1
 - a) Are evaluation and assessment methods built into the design of community outreach processes conducted by local officials?
 - b) Is there a process for using the evaluation findings when introducing policy or other changes to improve local governance?
 - c) Which forms and methods of community outreach have been evaluated as being especially effective, and which forms and methods have been evaluated as being less effective?

- 3.4.2
 - a) Are evaluation and assessment methods built into the design of community outreach processes conducted by NGOs and CBOs?
 - b) Which forms and methods of NGO/CBO community outreach have been evaluated as being especially effective, and which forms and methods have been evaluated as being less effective?
 - c) What are the rates of participation in community outreach processes?
 - d) What are the principal barriers to citizen participation (for example, literacy, apathy, access, time, or culture)?

- 3.4.3
 - a) Does the city have a statement that describes its longer-term vision, goals, and aspirations?
 - b) Has the city conducted a community ‘visioning’ process by which alternative futures for city are systematically designed and considered through a process of community consultation?
 - c) Does the city have a charter or policy document that establishes a strategic plan for realizing long-term goals and aspirations through community outreach and engagement?

3.5 Referenda and Citizen's Initiatives

- 3.5.1
- a) Are referenda or direct ballot initiatives used to resolve difficult policy issues in the city?
 - b) What are the procedures for drafting, presenting and finalizing referendum questions?
 - c) Are referendum questions decided during normal elections or are special elections held?
 - d) What is the decision rule for the approval or rejection of a referendum question (e.g., 50 per cent, 66 per cent, or higher)?
- 3.5.2
- a) What are the processes for citizens to organize and place referendum questions before the community?
 - b) Are there instances in which referenda are required by local, provincial or national legislation?
 - c) Are there instances in which referenda have resulted in major conflicts or disputes among social groups?
 - d) Are there instances in which referenda have successfully resolved major issues before the community?

4. From Mapping to Recommendations

The recommendations from the local democracy assessment are the most important part of responding to this questionnaire. Participants in the assessment process offer general and specific suggestions for enhancing governance.

Six Steps to Derive Recommendations

Below are tips for translating the findings of the assessment questionnaire into recommendations for improvements in local democracy.

- *Identify the most urgent priorities* for making improvements in democracy and craft recommendations that can help address these most urgent issues from an immediate, medium-term and long-term perspective.
- Isolate those *aspects of democracy which city authorities and administrators can address on their own* and those that require the involvement of other stakeholders (such as national or regional officials).
- *Build on the strengths* that are identified in the mapping and don't focus only on the shortcomings that the evaluation has brought to the surface or highlighted.
- *Separate out problems* that require major institutional change, those that involve personalities or individuals, and those that can be addressed through policy change.
- Develop an approach to making recommendations that *links systemic problems with an integrated effort* to ameliorate them over time. That is, rather than developing a simple list of things that could be done to improve city-level democracy, participants are asked to think through a strategy that first addresses why the problems have occurred and then comes up with a series of steps involving political leaders, civic actors, and citizens.
- Sketch out a way in which these steps can unfold over a defined period of time (with the *most critical concerns addressed immediately* while at the same time developing a longer-term approach) and identify methods for monitoring progress on improving democracy.

Short-, Medium- and Long-Term Options

Cities will appreciate recommendations that are grounded in the findings of the assessment and practice-oriented in their application. Recommendations should be feasible, that is, they should be clearly defined in terms of their duration, complexity, outputs and cost. In this regard, it may be helpful to separate out the recommendations in the following way.

Short-Term Options:

- Those steps or actions which are simple and low-cost, require few major policy or statutory changes, and are immediately feasible in the current context.

Medium-Term Options

- Those steps which may require reforms of existing policies and laws, that require major administrative changes, or for which substantial resources will need to be rallied.

Long-Term Options

- Those that require significant reform or restructuring of city-level institutions, significant cost, national approval, or major administrative or financing reforms.

APPENDIX 1

Types of Electoral System⁷

The three main types or ‘families’ of electoral system are: majority, proportional, and mixed (or semi-proportional) systems. Each of them has several distinct variations which are presented below.

1. Majority (Plurality) Systems. The distinct feature of majority (plurality) systems is that they aim to produce a majority winner even if this results in a disproportion between votes cast and seats won.

- **First-past-the-post (FPTP).** The simplest system in which, in single-member districts, the candidate (not party) who receives more votes than any other candidate wins the seat; this does not necessarily mean that the candidate received a majority of votes, simply a plurality.
- **Block vote.** The system is similar to FPTP with one exception – it is used in not single- but in multi-member districts. The block vote allows voters to have as many votes as there are candidates to be elected (e.g., if there are three seats, each voter has three votes). Voting can be either candidate-centred or party-centred, and the candidates with highest vote totals win the seats.
- **Two-round.** If no candidate receives a majority of the votes in the first round, a second round is held between the top two (or, sometimes, more) vote-winners. Whoever wins the highest number of votes in the second round is declared elected, sometimes regardless of whether they have achieved majority support or not.
- **Alternative Vote.** A system in which voters specify their first and alternative (second, third, etc.) preference on the ballot paper; used in single-member districts. A candidate who receives over 50 per cent of first preferences is declared elected. If no candidate receives an absolute majority of first preferences, votes are reallocated until one candidate has an absolute majority of votes cast.

2. Proportional Representation (PR) Systems. Systems in which the vote-to-seat allocation (for example, in city councils) is roughly proportionate.

- **List Systems (List PR).** List systems enable each party to represent a list of candidates to voters who choose among parties. Parties receive seats in proportion to their overall share of the vote. Winning candidates are drawn from the party lists. List systems can be closed (or ‘fixed’, that is, candidates are not changeable by the electorate) or open (voters can indicate their preferences among candidates on the list). In some instances, parties can link their lists together through a mechanism known as *apparentement*.
- **Mixed Member Proportional (MMP).** In these systems, a portion of the council (usually half) is selected by plurality–majority methods, and the balance is elected from PR lists. The PR seats are used to compensate for the disproportion that may occur in non-PR seats, so that the overall calculation leads to proportional outcomes in the assembly as a whole.
- **Single Transferable Vote (STV).** A preferential system used in multi-member districts. To win election candidates must exceed a specified quota of first-preference votes. Voters’ preferences are reallocated to other continuing candidates when an unsuccessful candidate is

⁷ Adapted from the *Democracy at Local Level: An International IDEA Guide for South Caucasus*.

excluded or if an elected candidate has a surplus. The overall effect of this system is proportionality in the assembly with elected officials having a link to a specific constituency.

3. Semi-Proportional (Mixed) Systems.

- **Parallel.** In parallel systems, proportional representation is used in conjunction with a plurality-majority system but the two systems run in parallel, and the PR seats do not compensate for any disproportion (i.e., the variation in the proportion of votes to seats) arising from election of the candidates in single-member districts.
- **Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV).** In this system, FPTP methods of vote counting are combined with multi-member districts, with voters having only one vote. Thus, the largest one, two, three, etc., vote-getters are deemed elected.

