

Aide Memoire
Workshop on Democratic Local Governance in Asia: Reforms and Innovations in
Local Democracy (May 13 – 14, 2011)

Proposal to ICLD

Sponsorship and Purpose

The Workshop on Democratic Local Governance in Asia: Reforms and Innovations for Local Democracy will be jointly organized by the Asia-Pacific Governance and Democracy Initiative of East-West Center and the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy, to be held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from May 13 – 14, 2011. The purpose of the workshop is to examine emerging trends, issues and innovations in local governance reform and change processes.

Context and Rationale

Over the past few decades, three shifts in development dialogue have taken place – from economic growth to human and sustainable development with the participation of all segments of the society, from centralization to decentralization to localize the delivery of and access to services, and from government to democratic governance to provide institutional mechanisms for the engagements of the three sets of actors – those from the government, civil society and the private sector. The recent focus on the promotion of local democracy is the result of the above paradigm shifts. It is based on the recognition that governance should be both democratic and effective at both national and local levels.

It is increasingly understood that eradicating poverty needs to be done at the local level and thus requires the involvement of local authorities. Local governments and the local civil society can play a major role in this effort by ensuring more effective and accountable local infrastructure and social service delivery for the poor, and by improving the dialogue among the state, citizens, and their communities. Too often, however, local governments are not adequately involved in consultations on national poverty reduction strategies or sector policies, nor are they given the mandate or institutional and financial capacity to plan and deliver local development interventions such as social services and local infrastructure, and local economic development initiatives.

Democratic local governance provides an institutional framework through which groups and individuals at multiple levels can organize themselves and participate in making decisions affecting them. It helps the development of democratic values and skills among citizens. It allows for greater representation of various political, religious, social and ethnic groups. This enhances active participation of local citizens and, consequently, political legitimacy of the government and national integration.

Democratic local governance is, thus, based on principles of new thinking in development (sustainability, equity, poverty alleviation and inclusion), democratic governance (representation, participation, accountability, transparency, access and rule of law), and decentralization (devolution, civil society engagement, and local partnerships).

As in other regions of the world, countries in Asia have witnessed rapid democratization over the past few decades. Today, an overwhelming majority of Asian countries are electoral democracies, with regular elections, functioning parliaments, active civil society, relatively free media, and systems of checks and balances among different organs of the state. Indonesia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India and the Republic of Korea are examples of democratization. Democratization at the national level in Asia has been accompanied by greater decentralization of financial and political powers to local units of government and administration. Beginning in the mid-1980s, decentralization was broadened to include political power sharing, democratization, and market liberalization. During the 1990s, decentralization was seen as a way of opening governance to wider public participation through the organizations of civil society elections at the local level.

In India, local governments were strengthened with two amendments to India's constitution in 1992 leading to the election of about 238,000 local councils across the country. They are made up of three million elected representatives, one third of which are women. In Indonesia, following months of political protest and turmoil in 1998, a comprehensive new decentralization Law was introduced. The decentralization policy aims at improving public service delivery, increasing community participation and ensuring the accountability of local governments. Decentralization has three key elements – greater weight to devolution than de-concentration; a shift from vertical to horizontal responsibility; and clear provisions for the allocation of funds from central to local governments. Recent democratic transitions in Bangladesh and Nepal will strengthen systems and processes of local democracy.

Over the past few decades, local governments in most Asian countries have tried different mechanisms, tools and instruments of local government accountability and transparency to promote and sustain devolution and strengthen trust between citizens and local governments. These include: transparent and accountable systems of public procurement, participatory auditing, and the promotion of ethics and integrity among local public officials. The Government of Andhra Pradesh in India, for example, established a new electronic system to offer tenders online and handle the procedures electronically. The government of Seoul City adopted the Integrity Pact (IP), by which the city government and companies submitting bids agree neither to offer nor to accept bribes in public contracts. The Public Record of Operations and Finance (PROOF) was launched in Bangalore, India in 2002 to monitor the financial performance of the City Corporation in Bangalore. In this same context, since 1994 the Public Affairs Center has utilized "Citizens Report Cards" (CRP) that rate and compare agencies on the basis of public satisfaction and the responsiveness of public agencies.

In this same capacity, the Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) is an independent, non-profit media agency specializing in investigative journalism. The PCIJ

provides training for investigative reporting to full-time reporters, free-lance journalists and academics. The Philippines Report Card on Pro-Poor Services, a pilot project, was supported by the World Bank to get feedback from citizens concerning the performance of government services, including basic health, elementary education, housing, potable water and food distribution.

Objectives

The objectives of the Regional Workshop on Democratic Local Governance in Asia are to:

- assess the effectiveness of local democratic governance reforms and change processes in the selected Asian countries
- promote the sharing of experiences and local governance reform and innovations
- identify factors that influence the quality of local democracy
- examine systems and processes of local democracy with a gender perspective
- improve our knowledge and understanding of methods and tools for organizational change for democratic local governance
- facilitate national and regional networks for implementing democratic local governance reforms and change processes, including important roles of local government associations in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Content and Issues for Discussion

Local democracy is both a means to an end (such as delivery of and access to services) and an end in itself (i.e. a process which is characterized by such principles as participation, accountability, rule of law, subsidiarity and transparency). Democratic local governance, therefore, needs to be both democratic in terms of processes and effective in managing local public affairs. Within this framework, the following themes and sets of issues will be covered in the regional seminar.

1. Decentralization policies and programs: components of the policy; responsibilities and resources of local governments; implementation issues; local government capacity; systemic impacts and factors influencing the design and implementation of decentralization; impact of national political system and power structures on democratic local governance; country case studies and emerging regional trends and practices.
2. Service delivery and access: roles of local governments in service delivery and access; mechanisms for coordination and integration of government programs at the local level to achieve the MDG goals; country case studies and emerging regional trends and practices.
3. Gender and rights perspectives in democratic local governance reform and change processes: review of gender inequalities; impact of political processes and power

- structures on gender equality; tools and methodological issues in gender mainstreaming; country case studies and emerging regional trends and practices.
4. Participation: quality, regularity and fairness of local elections; civil society engagement; roles of media in local governance; mechanisms for "local-local dialogue" among urban and rural local governments, civil society and the private sector in the process of making local decisions; country case studies and emerging regional trends and practices.
 5. Accountability and transparency – right to information; community-based initiatives; participatory budgeting; CSO auditing of government programs; anti-corruption programs at the local level; ethics and codes of conduct; procurement procedures and processes; country case studies and emerging regional trends and practices.
 6. Access to justice: fairness and accessibility of mechanisms for groups and individuals to resolve their local disputes; responsiveness of the judiciary and police to protect human rights of the poor, women and minorities; paralegal aid for the disadvantaged groups provided through CSOs; raising the awareness of citizens about their rights and their capacity to use legal process; country case studies and emerging regional trends and practices.
 7. The role of Local Governments associations for strengthening the local governments and their effectiveness. ICLD commissioned research report will be presented; regional trends and practices

Participants

The selected participants will be those who are engaged in the issues related to decentralization, local democracy and local government change processes and reforms. Each country delegation will consist of two participants - one representative each from decision-makers in the central government ministries or local governments, and civil society organizations working on democratic local governance. The participants will also include those from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos and Vietnam who have already been engaged with ICLD in the 2010 Advanced International Training Programme. Two representatives each from the Philippines and Pakistan not engaged in the Advanced International Training Programme will also be invited. Other participants will include seven resource persons/context presenters and the staff of ICLD and East-West Center involved in this workshop.

Organization

After the opening session, each of the seven sessions of the workshop will include a context presentation by a resource person, followed by one discussant and general discussion including the presentation of country perspectives on the selected topic. The final session will sum up the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop generated by the participants. The workshop will be organized as a facilitated dialogue, without presentation of papers. Outlines of the context presentations will be made available to the participants before the workshop

Expected Outcomes

The regional workshop will contribute to our understanding of the processes and effectiveness of democratic local governance in Asia and elsewhere. It will provide a regional forum for the sharing of innovations and good practices in local democracy, promote the capacity building of local governments, training and research institutions, and support the network of institutions in the region engaged in democratic local governance.

The two deliverables from the workshop will be the Policy Brief on Trends and Innovations in Local Democracy in Asia, and a book on Democratic Local Governance to be published (subject to peer reviews) as a part of the United Nations University Series on Trends and Innovations in Governance.

Contacts

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10: 20 – 10: 35 *Nepal: Dwarika Nath Dhungel, Aruna Palikhe*

10: 35 – 11:00 *General Discussion*

11: 00 – 11: 15 a.m. COFFEE BREAK

**11: 15 a.m. – 12: 45 p.m. CONTEXT PRESENTATION ON ACCOUNTABLE AND
TRANSPARENT LOCAL GOVERNANCE:**

This session will discuss the effectiveness of tools, mechanisms and instruments for local governance accountability to promote local democracy – including the right to information, role of community – based initiatives, participatory budgeting and CSO auditing of government programs, anti-corruption programs including ethics and codes of conduct and procurement procedures and processes, and factors affecting accountability and transparency of local governance. The context presentation on these and related issues will be followed by a discussant and two or three country examples/perspectives on accountable and transparent local governance.

11: 15 – 11: 40 *Context Presenter: Pauline Tamesis and Daniyal Aziz*

11: 40 – 11: 50 *Discussant: Joakim Öjendal*

Country Perspectives:

11: 50 – 12: 05 *Bangladesh: Das Shadhan Kumar, Banu Naznin Akter*

12: 05 – 12: 45 *General Discussion*

12: 45 – 1: 45 p.m. LUNCH BREAK

Venue:

**1: 45 – 3: 15 p.m. CONTEXT PRESENTATION ON THE ROLE OF LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ON SERVICE DELIVERY AND
ACCESS:**

This session will discuss roles of local governments in service delivery and access including the extent to which access to political decision-making and accountable government and civil society engagement affects access to services, the impacts of economy on service delivery and access to services, mechanisms for coordination and integration of government programs at the local level to achieve the MDG goals, and emerging trends and issues in promoting democratic local governance through effective service delivery and access. The context presentation on these and related issues will be followed by a discussant and two or three country examples/perspectives on service delivery and access.

Chair for the Afternoon Sessions: _____

1: 45 – 2: 10 *Context Presenter:* Kadmiel Wekwete
2: 10 – 2: 20 *Discussant:* Jesse Ribot

Country Perspectives:
2: 20 – 2: 35 *Pakistan:* Shahina Hanif, Arif Hasan

2: 35 – 2: 50 *India:* Mirza Mohd. Asim, Arya Om Prakash, Sheikh
Khatibullah

2: 50 – 3: 15 *General Discussion*

3: 15 – 4: 45 p.m.

**CONTEXT PRESENTATION ON GENDER AND RIGHTS
PERSPECTIVES ON DEMOCRATIC LOCAL
GOVERNANCE:**

This session will discuss gender and rights perspectives on democratic local governance – including review of gender inequalities in structures and processes of local governance; impacts of political processes and power structures on gender equality; tools and methodological issues in gender mainstreaming; rights-based approach to local governance and development and gender dimensions, and emerging trends and issues in effective and democratic local governance through gender empowerment. The context presentation will be followed by a discussant and country examples on gender and rights perspectives.

3: 15 – 3: 40 *Context Presenter:* Kamala Chandrakirana
3: 40 – 3: 50 *Discussant:*

Country Perspectives:
3: 50 – 4: 05 *Bangladesh:* Karmaker Ranjan

4: 05 – 4: 20 *Indonesia:* Pakpahan Maria Benadette Damairia, Sefsani
Ririn

4: 20 – 4: 45 *General Discussion*

4: 45 – 6: 15 p.m.

**ICLD COMMISSIONED RESEARCH: PRESENTATION
ON A GENDERED ANALYSIS OF A
DECENTRALIZATION REFORM.**

4: 45 – 5: 10 *Context Presenter:* Kim Sedara and Joakim Öjendal
5: 10 – 5: 20 *Discussant:* Kamala Chandrakirana

Country Perspectives:
5: 20 – 5: 35 *Cambodia:* Hell Simon, Chan Dara, Tep Chanbora

5: 35 – 6: 15 *General Discussion*

6: 15 – 6: 45 p.m. SUMMATION OF THE DAY’S PROCEEDINGS

7: 00 p.m. RECEPTION
Venue:

SATURDAY, 14 May 2011

WORKSHOP
Venue:

8:30 a.m. TRANSPORTATION

9: 00 a.m. – 10: 30 a.m. CONTEXT PRESENTATION ON THE ROLE OF CITY ASSOCIATIONS IN PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC LOCAL GOVERNANCE:

This session will discuss issues and trends in the role of city associations in local governance, including the current capacities of cities’ associations, the assessment of their effectiveness in performing their roles, the internal and external factors that affect the roles of cities associations including decentralization policies and national political frameworks, and city to city cooperation and its impact on improving the quality of local democracy. The context presentation will focus on an overview of what roles the Local Government Associations (LGAs) might have based on both theoretical reasoning and empirical examples. This will be followed by a discussant and two or three country examples/perspectives from Asia.

Chair for the Morning Sessions: Nancy Lewis

9: 00 – 9: 25 *Context Presenter: Anders Lindstrom*

9: 25 – 9: 35 *Discussant: Nasir Javed*

9: 35 – 9: 50 *Country Perspectives:*
Cambodia: Pok Sokundara

9: 50 – 10: 05 *Indonesia: Wibi Nastiti Sri Indah*

10: 05 – 10: 30 *General Discussion*

10: 30 a.m. – 12: 00 p.m. CONTEXT PRESENTATION ON EMERGING TRENDS AND ISSUES IN ACCESS TO JUSTICE:

This session will discuss emerging trends and issues in access to justice – including fairness and accessibility of mechanisms for groups and individuals to resolve their local disputes; the responsiveness of the judiciary and police to protect human rights of the poor, women and minorities; paralegal aid for the disadvantaged groups provided through civil society organizations (CSOs); and raising the awareness of citizens about their rights and their capacity to use legal process. The context presentation on these and related aspects will be followed by a discussant and country examples/perspectives on access to justice in Asia.

10: 30 – 10: 55	<i>Context Presenter:</i> David Cohen
10: 55 – 11: 05	<i>Discussant:</i> Kadmiel Wekwete
	<i>Country Perspectives:</i>
11: 05 – 11: 20	<i>Bangladesh:</i> Ansari Sanaiyya Faheem, Ahmed Samia
11: 20 – 11: 35	<i>Cambodia:</i> Luon March, Sek Ratha
11: 35 – 12:00	<i>General Discussion</i>

12: 00 – 1: 00 p.m. **LUNCH**

1: 00 – 2: 30 p.m. CONTEXT PRESENTATION ON PROMOTING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE:

This session will discuss structures to promote citizen participation in local governance – including quality and fairness of local elections, local governments as the anchors for citizen engagement in political and developmental processes, civil society’s engagement to promote local democracy, the role of media in the citizen access to information, innovations and good practices of citizen participation and factors influencing the quality of citizen participation. The context presentation on these and related issues will be followed by a discussant and country presentations/perspectives on citizen participation.

Chair for the Morning Sessions: _____

1: 00 – 1: 25	<i>Context Presenter:</i> Tim Campbell
1: 25 – 1: 35	<i>Discussant:</i> G. Shabbir Cheema
	<i>Country Perspectives:</i>
1: 35 – 1: 50	<i>India:</i> Chaturvedi Shalini, Sharma Sibani, Mala Deepa
1: 50 – 2: 05	<i>Sri Lanka:</i> Darini Rajasingham
2: 05 – 2: 30	<i>General Discussion</i>

2: 30 – 2: 45 p.m. **COFFEE BREAK**

2: 45 – 4: 15 p.m.

**ICLD COMMISSIONED RESEARCH: PRESENTATION
ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN A TRANSITIONAL
SOCIETY.**

2: 45 – 3: 10

Context Presenter: Leena Avonius

3: 10 – 3: 20

Discussant: James Manor

Country Perspectives:

3: 20 – 3: 35

Indonesia: Prihatiningtyastuti Endah, Junidar
Theresia, Lestari Siwi

3: 35 – 4: 15

General Discussion

4: 15 – 6: 00 p.m.

**PLENARY DISCUSSION ON KEY POLICY
MESSAGES**

Closing remarks

Anki Dellnas
Shabbir Cheema