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## Political Party Assessment Tool

Scott Morgenstern  
University of Pittsburgh

Andrew Green  
DGMetrics, Inc. and Georgetown University

With special guidance from Barry Ames and Lou Picard  
and support from Miguel Carreras  
University of Pittsburgh

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## **Executive Summary**

This tool is intended to provide guidance for assessing the nature of a country's political party system and the political parties themselves, in order to gauge how to best take advantage of technical assistance or other strategic opportunities. Towards that goal, this document directs analysts to collect and consider both qualitative and quantitative indicators in assessing the nature of political parties and potential programming directions.

An assessment requires two basic tasks: collecting information and then interpreting and synthesizing it in order to inform policy makers about strategic opportunities. Collecting data requires a catalog of issues to research and specification of indicators. Interpreting development indicators requires care, because their meanings are context contingent and development goals often conflict.

To assist in this difficult process, this tool first guides the analyst to collect relevant data on political parties, as well as the socio-economic, historical, and institutional factors that influence their form and behavior. It then provides a method for structuring the analysis in order to help identify development priorities as well as program opportunities and constraints.

### **Research Strategy and Logistics**

A comprehensive assessment of needs requires collection and synthesis of multiple types of data. Success in this complicated venture thus requires careful planning and the collection of some of the data prior to the assessment team's trip to the country of study. In terms of planning, the pre-departure work should yield decisions about what aspects of party development to study, how many parties are feasible to study, and which ones the team will analyze.

In developing their research plan, teams must consider several issues. First, no small team on a short-term mission can collect information about all the subjects that we discuss in this document. We recommend gather smatterings of data about as many subjects as possible. Second, because many countries are large or have many parties, assessment teams cannot study them all. Analysts, then, need a strategy for choosing a sample of study parties. Next, the team will need to determine in which regions they will collect information (and which regions they will ignore). Generally program implementers work in several of a country's regions, but time will preclude the team from analyzing all regions.

To support these analyses, the team should consider the types of data that they will collect. Which experts can provide insights into the party system and development needs? What types of quantitative data can help to classify a country's level of democracy or show recent advances? What kinds of information might program implementers, the electoral authority, NGOs, or other government agencies provide?

## **The Political Context**

The first step in defining a context-specific strategy for aiding political parties is to characterize a country's democracy and analyze the role of the party system in contributing to development. The goal of this analysis is to go beyond a description of the political actors by explaining the institutional context and socio-economic factors that help determine who holds power, their degree of power, why the institutions exist as they do, and the behavior of politicians and citizens. In so doing, the analysis will help to define opportunities and constraints for programming.

The contextual analysis has three parts; the broadest part focuses on the level of democracy, the next level considers the constitution and other parts of the institutional framework, and the third considers the party system and traditional patterns of coalitions. Much information necessary for this contextual analysis is readily available, and should be completed as part of the pre-trip planning. This is a necessary pre-departure step in order to effectively use (expensive) in-country time and to develop the research strategy and plan logistics.

Having described the party system, analysts can turn to the individual parties. Collecting party-level information will help programming teams to design programs in accord with specific challenges that each party faces. This part of the assessment will require more on-the-ground collection of data than the previous aspects of the context, but the intention in this part of the analysis is to build a broad picture that will drive further analysis, not to develop a detailed description of each party characteristic.

### **Assessing Parties and Party Systems According to Democratic Development Characteristics**

Party development aid is justified on the idea that democracy is unworkable without effective political parties. The primary goal of the in-country work is to collect information necessary to inform an assessment of democratic deficits and resulting program recommendations from the point of view of parties and party systems. In this section we discuss four potential areas where assessment teams might focus.

- **Accountability, Representation and Participation.** These three interlocking and overlapping concepts define the level of a society's democracy. Parties and party systems are central players for multiple aspects of these three concepts.
- **Governability and Good Governance.** Democratic governance requires not only majority rule, but also minority participation in the policy process. Sustainable democracy, then, requires that parties cooperate to foster an open and cooperative policy process that supports coalition formation and oversight.
- **Stable and Peaceful Contestation.** Democracy requires strenuous competition among parties, but exceedingly large swings in support from one election to the next implies that parties have failed to develop deep roots in society. Competition thus should be strong but responsible.
- **Rule of Law and Fair and Honest Elections.** Democracy is based on rules shaping the actions of leaders and citizens, and democracy gains credibility when votes are counted fairly and losers graciously accept their defeats. Parties can support this aspect of democracy by supporting a non-partisan electoral authority and working acting within the constraints of laws, regulations, and even broader democratic norms.

In order for parties to play their important democratic roles, they must develop their structures and capacity. Programming, as a result, must put an important emphasis on this intermediary development characteristic:

- **Organizational and Technical Capacity.** There is a clear tie between these aspects of development and many USAID party programs. As a result, party assistance programs necessarily focus on these types of issues. These programs, however, are a means to an end, and assessments and programming should maintain a focus on how deficits in the parties' organizational development relate to democracy. This is of particular for program design, since the parties will be more interested in aid that promotes their electoral advantages regardless of its effects on democracy.

Assessment teams must develop indicators of each of these development characteristics. To guide this effort, we provide lists of both quantitative and qualitative data related to each concept. Teams will not be able to collect all the relevant information, but will need to choose particular themes on which to focus.

### **Analyzing Data and Defining a Course of Action**

In order to define and defend a course of action, assessment teams need to filter their information by identifying party and party system weaknesses as well as opportunities and constraints. To this end we suggest a five-step process.

- First, teams should review the analysis of the development characteristics to identify particular vulnerabilities that should be prioritized and addressed. It is likely that the team will identify weaknesses in many areas, and they will be forced to confront tradeoffs among aid priorities, such as the inherent tradeoff between representation and governability. Assessments, therefore, have to consider not just individual goals, but the potential conflicts among them.
- The second filtering step is to merge the contextual analysis with that of the development characteristics. By combining these two analyses, the team will identify the opportunities and constraints that are vital to the design of a successful aid program.
- Third, having considered the contextual variables, the team should continue searching for opportunities and constraints by examining how system and party level factors influence the development characteristics.
- Fourth, identify unique opportunities for constructive engagement and reform. Aside from the context and factors influencing the function of the system and individual parties, there may circumstances that provide clear opportunities for engagement.
- Fifth, the assessment should identify whether and how party development programs fit into the larger DG framework. It is important to consider how political party programs could contribute to broader democracy and governance objectives.

## **Writing the Assessment Report**

Assessment reports are read by several audiences: top mission and embassy management, mission technical staff, Washington technical staff, and perhaps USAID's program partners. The need to communicate the assessment effectively implies a need for a careful structure that emphasizes recommendations grounded by the research. In addition to an executive summary, we recommend three main sections structured around 1) an analysis of the political context, 2) development concerns based on the analysis of the political institutions, the parties, and the party system, and 3) recommendations for development programming based on opportunities and constraints. The report should also include an appendix that lists data sources and an interview list.

## **Introduction**

USAID's Political Party Assistance program provides intends to build democracy in developing countries through aiding political parties and the party system. This tool is intended to provide guidance for assessing development needs and determining opportunities and strategies for the assistance programs. Towards that goal, this document directs analysts to collect and consider both qualitative and quantitative indicators in assessing the political context, the parties, and the party system to determine where USAID's program could further democratic development.

An assessment requires two basic tasks: collecting information and then interpreting and synthesizing it in order to inform policy makers about strategic opportunities. Collecting data requires a catalog of issues to research and specification of indicators. Interpreting development indicators requires care, because their meanings are context contingent and development goals often conflict. Similar to situation facing stock market investors, development analysts and program designers must synthesize their data and make judgments about policy directions; formulae and computer programs cannot replace experience and insight. To assist in this difficult process, this tool first guides the analyst to collect relevant data on political parties, as well as the socio-economic, historical, and institutional factors that influence their form and behavior. It then provides a method for structuring the analysis in order to help identify development priorities as well as program opportunities and constraints.

While we draw on the "USAID Political Party Development Assistance," and the "Democracy and Governance Assessment Framework," this tool is meant to accompany our document "Democracy, Parties, and Party Systems: A Conceptual Framework for USAID Assistance Programs." That document offers much more detail about many the concepts discussed here, and we thus refer to the relevant parts of the conceptual framework with designation CF and the section number.

This assessment tool is organized in five sections plus several appendices.

**Analyzing the Political Context and Identifying DG Challenges.** The first section provides direction for conducting an assessment of the socio-political context, perhaps as a truncated version of the Democracy and Governance (DG) Assessment Framework. It is based on analyses of:

- the democratic context,
- political institutions,
- the party System and coalitional context, and
- party attributes.

**Developing a methodology for interviews and case selection.** Many countries have too many parties or are too large for analysts to study all parties or talk with all relevant players. The first task, then, is to define which parties will be targets of study and identify other political actors who can contribute to the study.

**Assessing parties according to characteristics of party development.** This part of the document details quantitative and qualitative indicators to help assess the role of parties and party systems with regard to different aspect of democratic development. These concepts are:

- Organizational and Technical Capacity,
- Accountability, Representation and Participation,
- Governability and Good Governance,
- Stable and Peaceful Contestation, and
- Rule of Law and Free and Honest Elections

**Analyzing Data and Defining a Course of Action.** This section provides a method to aid the assessment team in synthesizing the data and promoting a course of action for future programming.

**Writing The Assessment Report.** Using the data analysis and filters, the final section suggests organizing the assessment report according to a) vulnerabilities and larger program goals, b) data analysis, socio-political context and constraints, and c) opportunities and strategies for development programming.

The document also includes several appendices. The first is a lengthy questionnaire that is meant to direct the data gathering efforts that will help in the contextual analysis. Not all questions are relevant for all countries, and some contexts will surely require different emphases. Still, this questionnaire is meant to help standardize the data teams collect in different countries. Note that the questionnaire is divided into two pieces. The first indicates information to collect prior to departure and the second is meant to structure data collection after arriving in the target country. The list of questions is ordered similar to our suggested organization for the report. Each of the two sections thus begins with questions about the political context, then focuses on the institutional context, and then moves to questions based about the party system. Throughout our discussion we highlight the relevant section of the questionnaire with the designation QNR followed by the outline number.

The second appendix is a table of program-level goals based on the concepts of development and suggested indicators for each. That table, too, is divided according to system and party-level concerns. Such a list cannot be comprehensive, but it does provide a detailed list of programs that will aid the assessment team in devising their recommendations.

The third appendix is a technical guide to some analytical concepts. It explains, for example, how to compute the Effective Number of Parties and provides sample survey questions to facilitate analysis of retrospective voting.

The fourth appendix is a consolidated list of data needs. It is intended as a basic checklist for the research team.

## I. Research Strategy And Logistics

A comprehensive assessment of needs requires collection and synthesis of multiple types of data. Success in this complicated venture thus requires careful planning and the collection of some of the data prior to the assessment team's trip to the country of study. In terms of planning, the pre-departure work should yield decisions about what aspects of party development to study, how many parties are feasible to study, and which ones the team will analyze. Similarly, the strategy will require decisions about regional analysis. The other logistical concerns are about which government agencies and non-governmental organizations to investigate, and the division of labor among team members. Finally, the team should collect reports from USAID and its partners about previous programs and work from them to develop development indicators (as we

discuss later in this document). Of course these planning issues are in addition to planning about translation, transportation, budgeting, etc (issues that we do not discuss in this document).

In addition to these research design issues, the assessment team can collect much contextual information (which we detail in Section II) about the country prior to departure. This not only reduces the cost of employing the team, it should improve the quality of the in-country research by helping the team to focus its analysis.

In developing their research plan, teams must consider several issues. First, no small team on a short-term mission can collect information about all the subjects that we discuss in this document. But because this is a forward-planning assessment rather than a backward-looking evaluation of programs, we recommend gather smatterings of data about as many subjects as possible. Our intention is to provide an overview of themes that should guide the analysis, and some examples of the types of information that could inform the assessment of needs. The team might also take into consideration that some of the data could serve as baselines for future evaluations, so some care should be taken to document sources and clarify whether assessments are based on anecdotal or more solid evidence.

Second, because many countries are large or have many parties, assessment teams cannot study them all. Perhaps all large parties with strong national support can be covered, but it will not be possible to assess all the small and regional parties. Analysts, then, need a strategy for choosing a sample of study parties. Several factors should guide this methodology, including size, ideology, and geographic support bases. We suggest that assessors develop a comprehensive (even if not complete) list of parties, divide them into categories (as discussed in the contextual section above), and then choose a sample that assures variance on primary concerns in the country (be they geographic, ideological, programmatic, or otherwise). We should note that information about the system may be more valuable than assessments of individual parties.

Next, the team will need to determine in which regions they will collect information (and which regions they will ignore). Generally program implementers work in several of a country's regions, but time will preclude the team from analyzing all regions. Further, the team should consider collecting baseline data about parties in regions where there have not been programs, as this information will be important to future evaluations (see "Evaluation Approaches for Political Party Assistance: Methodologies and Tools").

To support these analyses, the team can collect many different types of data. Which experts can provide insights into the party system and development needs? What types of quantitative data can help to classify a country's level of democracy or show recent advances? What kinds of information might program implementers, the electoral authority, NGOs, or other government agencies provide?

Interview targets should include party leaders, chairs of finance committees, heads of outreach and membership activities, and elected officials (legislators, mayors, etc.). In government, potential sources of information include (but should not be limited to) electoral officials, ombudsmen, and bureaucrats in the economics and finance ministries. In the non-governmental community, assessors may have a broad range of groups that deal with political parties and public policy. These might include pro-democracy groups, human rights groups, or those dedicated to particular policy areas. Finally, academics, think-tank analysts, and journalists (some of whom will be in the United States) can provide broad overviews of the situation and

often help with identifying key interview subjects. As with identifying which parties to study, the aim here is to choose a broad and representative sample.

Quantitative data sources help to specify and ground other types of information. The legislature or electoral authorities will maintain some of these data, including the participation of women and minorities in regional and national legislatures, election returns that can show the bases of parties support and volatility, legislative roll-calls that will show coalition tendencies, and publicly-reported campaign spending. From the parties, the team may be able to gather information about the number of women in leadership positions, poll-watchers recruited, or constituents who asked for aid. Finally, surveys conducted by the parties, academics, media sources, or party development teams are valuable sources of information about voter knowledge and the motivation for their voting behavior. Surveys can also help to determine the extent of voter-party contact and voters' views about the validity of elections.

A final logistical concern is the division of work among the team members. There are several possible strategies, each with potential advantages and weaknesses. First the team could split according to the type of work that typically divides IRI from NDI. At least in some countries, NDI focuses on national-level parties and focuses its work in the capital city. IRI, by contrast, concentrates its work at the regional level. Another possibility would be to give each team member one or more parties to investigate. A third possibility would be to have some team members focus on party-level analysis and another to focus on non-partisan actors and system-level analysis. Each of these methods aids the analysis by giving responsibility to a particular person who can then concentrate his or her efforts. The division of labor, however, can lead to a disjointed analysis that misses the larger picture, however, and it is therefore important that team members meet often and synthesize their findings.

## **II. The Political Context (CF 5; QNR I-A; III-A)**

The first step in defining a context-specific strategy for aiding political parties is to characterize a country's democracy and analyze the role of the party system in contributing to development. The goal of this analysis is to go beyond a description of the political actors by explaining the institutional context and socio-economic factors that help determine who holds power, their degree of power, why the institutions exist as they do, and the behavior of politicians and citizens. In so doing, the analysis will help to define opportunities and constraints for programming.

The contextual analysis has three parts: the broadest part focuses on the level of democracy. The next level considers the constitution and other parts of the institutional framework. The third, finally, considers the party system and traditional patterns of coalitions. Much information necessary for this contextual analysis is readily available, and should be completed as part of the pre-trip planning. This is a necessary pre-departure step in order to effectively use (expensive) in-country time and to develop the research strategy and plan logistics.

### **II A. The Democratic Context and the Party System (CF 5.1 QNR IA, IIIA)**

The broadest aspect of system-level analysis will describe the degree of democracy and the resultant opportunities for parties to participate in the political process. More specifically, the purpose of this part of the study is to examine the degree to which the political system allows parties and others to participate in the process (political openness). The analysis should also

consider whether there has been violent conflict in the society and the response of parties and other democratic actors.

As noted most of the necessary information for this part of the study will be available from previous DG assessments or existing documents such as the State Department's Human Rights Reports, Amnesty International's Report, Freedom House's Freedom in the World, Global Integrity Index, Bertelsmann Transformation Index, NDI/IRI reports, election observer reports, and other documents. Of course in-country interviews could help substantiate and update the reports.

The goal of this section of the study is to determine broad programming objectives based on the particular democratic context. Table 1 (a truncated version of CF Table 9) suggests that the team characterize the openness of the system (column 1) and broad aspects of the party system (column 2) in order to begin the analysis. Appendix 1 suggests collecting information about other contextual issues, such as democratic history, geography, and ethnic makeup of the country. Together this information should imply broad program objectives, which the team would refine as the analysis proceeds. The two columns provide basic examples of how the team might summarize this information, but teams may be able to be more specific about a particular context.

Analysis of the democratic and party system context should yield broad development and hence programming priorities. If countries are closed, the clear necessity is to create political space for political parties to operate. Among the closed countries, the next consideration is the degree of violent conflict; if there is conflict, then reducing it will likely take precedence to building political parties. Some closed societies do allow limited competition, and in these cases party programs may find opportunities to work with proto-democratic actors, perhaps helping them to reach out to citizens and voice their concerns. If the political system is already open, then the contextual analysis would require further information. First, are there one or more entrenched parties, or do multiple small parties compete for office? While the latter scenario would suggest similar programs for all parties, the former would suggest a need for a two-pronged approach; working with the large parties to assure that they are representative and do not close the process to others, and working with the small parties to support their participation in the political process. The second consideration is whether there is a violent conflict and how the parties align with or against the armed actors. Violence will condition programming in several respects. First, USAID policy precludes working with parties that do not eschew violence. But, there may be a grey area, where parties can be sympathetic to the claims of armed actors. In this case, coalition building could help build societal consensus. If all the parties align against the conflict, then programs could focus more on party-building activities, perhaps with an emphasis on outreach to societal actors. The goal in this case would be to build societal support for the democratic process by improving representation.

This discussion suggests that the contextual situation will drive programming orientation. While some situations are auspicious for party-level development, others require a greater priority on "system level" changes; in short, programs that focus, for example, on technical details of party organizations will generate little interest in situations of high societal violence or low democratic openness. The contextual environment may also suggest a need for programs to target non-partisan actors, including NGOs, electoral authorities, the legislature, or voters.

**Table 1: Characterizing The Level of Democracy and the Party System\***

<b>Democracy Characterization</b>	<b>Party System Characterization</b>
Open	Multiple weak parties
	Entrenched but un-responsive (1 or 2 dominant parties)
	Violent conflict along partisan lines
	Non-partisan violent conflict (parties vs guerillas)
Closed	Stable Society; Limited Repression (but limited partisan activity)
	Unstable (open conflict) & repressive (with limited partisan activity)

\*See Carothers (2006) Fig 3.1, for a similar framework

## **II B. The Institutional Context (CF 5.3 QNR IB, IIIB)**

After describing the broad context, the next step in the process is to analyze the constitutional and legal framework and determine how it affects parties and the party system. The pre-departure phase of the study should be able to collect basic information about the nature of competition in terms of the ideological spread among the parties and their social support bases. Publicly available information should also make it feasible for the team to characterize the constitution and laws covering elections and parties, and make a preliminary judgment about their effects on parties and the party system.

As described in the CF, institutions are “endogenous” in the sense that they affect parties and party systems, but can also be changed by them. Further, institutional reform can be an aspect of a party assistance programs. The goals of this part of the analysis, then, are to a) develop an understanding of the how institutions might shape party development and hence programs and b) to consider issues of potential reform. .

As the CF suggests (CF 5.3), every institutional choice (e.g. parliamentarism versus presidentialism, federalism versus unitary government, proportional representation versus single-member districts) involves tradeoffs, and each has different virtues. Assessments, therefore, should weigh the current institutional context in an effort to understand how different institutions affect political parties and party systems, and characterize potential alternatives. A pre-departure analysis of the institutional context that places the country of interest into a comparative framework will help to ground assumptions. The CF also provides guidance on the relationship between some aspects of the constitutional and legal framework affect parties and party systems.

An overarching institutional factor driving the political dynamic is whether the system is parliamentary, presidential, or a hybrid (CF 5.3.2). The questionnaire (QNR I-B, II-B) details questions for the analysis. Key among the issues are the following:

- If parliamentary,
  - Does approval of the government require a supermajority? Must the prime minister or any other government minister be a member of parliament?
  - Is there a constructive vote of no-confidence?
  - How can individual members of the government be removed?
- If a presidential system,

- What are the basic powers of the presidency? Is the president relatively strong or weak?
- How are government ministers emplaced and replaced?
- How can a president be removed from office?
- If a hybrid system,
  - In what ways are authorities distributed across the executive and legislative branches, e.g., dissolving parliament, approving executive branch budgets, or control over military and other security/intelligence forces, etc.?

The second defining feature of the polity is the distribution of power between the federal and regional governments (CF 5.3.3). Answering the following questions will help to categorize a country on these dimensions.

- Which subnational units of government have legislative and/or executive authority?
- Do subnational governments have authority to raise revenues?
- How extensive is subnational government spending authority?

Consociational mechanisms<sup>1</sup> will be a central part of this discussion in cases of regional or ethnic conflict. As defined in the CF (5.3.3), these mechanisms provide autonomy for regionally concentrated groups, and may empower those groups with vetoes over legislation that affects their cultural or economic well being. While their goal is to reduce conflict, some criticize these mechanisms for reifying societal divides. The level of conflict or potential conflict, then, must govern the value of consociational institutions.

The electoral system (CF 5.3.4) is particularly key to the analysis, because these laws set up the rules that politicians must follow in their search for power. They thus define an incentive system that explains politicians' strategies and behaviors. Politicians and local experts, therefore, will have strong impressions about how the electoral system affects parties and the party system. The questions, and follow-ons based on the particularities of the country, will allow interviewees to share these opinions.

- Are there single-member or multi-member districts?
  - What does the ballot look like?
  - If proportional representation, are lists open or closed?
  - What is the threshold for parliamentary representation?
- Are elections for executive positions based on majorities or pluralities?
- How often must elections be held for legislative and executive branches?
- Are executive, legislative, and regional elections held concurrently?
- Are there electoral thresholds that parties must reach to attain legislative seats?
- What are the requirements for registering a new party?
- Are there rules about geographic concentration or dispersion of votes?
- Are there term limits?

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<sup>1</sup> Consociationalism refers to power sharing arrangements among parties or between regions and the national government. See discussion in the CF or Lijphart (1977).

- How does the polity regulate campaign finance? Are there public funds for parties?
- Are there quotas for women or other groups?
  - Are they effective? If not, why not?

The next institutions are laws that govern political parties (CF 5.3.5). These laws may regulate the following issues:

- Internal democracy (including decisions over policy and candidate selection)
- Rules for legislators desiring to change parties
- Independents and electoral alliances
- Party finance

Finally, while they fall below the institutionalization of constitutions or laws, party rules and informal institutions (CF 5.3.5, 5.3.6) can drive politics. A central concern here will be with the rules for candidate choice and other aspects of internal party democracy, but other issues may arise. Note that this final aspect of the framework may be more party-specific than the others, but frequently parties within a given country follow similar procedures.

Table 2 provides an example of how an analyst, using both theoretical knowledge of the institutions and specific information about the country in question, could synthesize the assessment for a presidential country with a unitary government. In this example the country's electoral law prescribes proportional representation with closed lists. Of course other institutions would also merit analysis in some cases, such as legislative powers or consociational mechanisms. The second and third columns, then, require the analyst to describe the positive and negative effects of each institution. As we emphasize in the CF, the choices among institutions are ambiguous, and thus it is necessary to consider the benefits and costs of both existing and recommended institutional frameworks. As an example, in the description of the negative effects with regards to the unitary government, the table notes that federal systems can reify regional differences.

This institutional analysis is only the starting point for an assessment, because most socio-political concerns are driven by multiple causes, and most have roots that go far beyond institutions. Clientelism, for example, has some ties to the electoral system, but is also the result of long-standing political traditions. There are also feedback loops in the sense that the causes and consequences are not always clear. Dominant party leaders, for example, help shape the party rules that sustain them in their positions. Still, this exercise in coding and analyzing the institutions will help the analysts to identify central forces that shape party organizations and patterns of competition. The design of successful programs, therefore, must carefully consider the institutional context.

**Table 2: Single Country Example of Institutions and Effects**

Institution	Positive Effects	Negative Effects
Constitution Presidential; strong powers over policy and budget.	Government efficiency owed to centralized control	Weak legislature harms partisan representation, disables oversight, & can support populists
Unitary	Government efficiency Perhaps unification of diverse groups and interests	Weak representation of regional diversity and interests, Federal systems, however, can reify regional differences
Electoral laws Proportional representation, low thresholds for party formation	Small groups can win representation Avoids gerrymandering Can allow leaders to enforce party discipline (since they name candidates)	Too many atomized parties, harming governability Possible regionalization of parties, harming national unity
Closed lists, high district magnitude	Potential for national programming, coherent party platform; no gerrymandering	Entrenched leadership; limited participation
Party Laws Limited barriers to entry	Ease of entry of new parties	Too many competitors contributes to atomization and harms governability
Limited oversight of campaign spending	Poor laws that are not respected can have negative affect on rule of law	Harms public perception about corruption
Women's quota	Increased number of women in legislature	Resistance by some traditional power holders; concern with importation of Western values
Party Rules Party leaders choose candidates; limited input from party membership	High party unity & loyalty to leadership (thus supporting party program)	Limited participation of women and minority groups Poor representation of varied interests

## **II C. The Party System and Coalitional Context (CF 3.2; QNR IC; IIC)**

The next stage of this analysis is to generate a mapping of the party system. The shape and orientation of the party system should be related to the above institutions, laws, and regulations (CF 5.3), but the factors influencing these patterns may go beyond these laws and rules. Among the questions necessary to characterize the system are:

- How many parties are there in the system?
  - What is the calculated “Effective Number of Parties” (see Appendix 3)?
- Are parties national, regional, or local (see Appendix 3)?
- How volatile is party support in the overall party system (see Appendix 3)?
- How dominant are the parties in campaigns, in comparison to independent or outsider candidates?
- Are any parties concentrated in ethnic majority or minority communities?
- What other socio-economic bases do specific parties have?
- What are the ideological foundations of specific parties, if any?
- Are there any non-democratic parties?
  - If so, what alliances or partnerships do they have with other parties?
- Regarding coalitions:
  - What is the nature of electoral alliances?
  - What parties join governing coalitions?
  - Which parties work together on legislation, and which are generally in opposition?
  - Do particular parties hold “swing” votes?

Each of these questions implies important consequences for the shape of a country’s politics. Some consequences would require significant analysis, such as explaining the role that ethnicity and socio-economics plays in structuring politics. A comprehensive view of the party system context, however, is necessary to assure that aid programs align with needs of the country and in conjunction with rather than against the existing structures.

Based on the analysis of the democratic and institutional context, this part of the analysis should also seek to explain why the party system has taken its particular shape. What role, for example, has the electoral system played in the development of multiple and internally divisive parties? Are legal restrictions or poverty better explanations for the limited access to funding for parties? Are electoral boundaries significant in explaining the rise of ethnic parties?

In developing this analysis, the team will likely encounter informal institutions, such as clientelism, cultural norms that govern relations among different societal actors, or political tendencies that strongly influence the party system. As with formal institutions, the analysis will necessarily have to consider how these informal influences will affect aid programs,

## **II D. Party Attributes (CF 3.1)**

Having described the party system, analysts can turn to the individual parties. Putting the parties into categories will help teams to design programs in accord with specific challenges that each party faces, perhaps based on experience with parties of a similar ilk in other countries. This part

of the assessment will require more on-the-ground collection of data than the previous aspects of the context, but the intention is to use readily-available information to build a broad picture that will drive further analysis, not to develop a detailed description of each party characteristic. As such, while it is necessary that this review consider the most important parties in the system, it is not necessary to cover all parties.

The CF suggests that party types are defined by the following set of characteristics:

- Populism,
- Clientelism,
- Programmatic or policy orientation,
- Inclusiveness and ties to particular social classes or ethnic groups,
- Geographic scope of party support (nationalization or regionalism),
- Level of internal democracy,
- Tolerance and willingness to form coalitions, and
- Age

The CF also includes “institutionalization” as a party characteristic, but it is more of a summary concept than a specific and defining characteristic. It incorporates, for example, age, inclusiveness, and coalition formation, as well as some other issues that we discuss below. Here, therefore, we provide a working table (Table 3) to help analysts summarize the other information. The table offers some of the categories analysts can use to characterize the parties, but each context will lead to different ways to fill in the boxes. Further, while we offer some definitions of these terms in the CF, concepts like “populism” are vague and take different forms in different context. The summary table, therefore, will require an accompanying explanatory description. This part of the analysis can rely on USAID and publicly available documents AND studies, but it is likely to require some evidence from in-country experts.

Table 3 suggests that the analysis should begin by identifying the parties’ ideological orientation, including their views towards democracy. Populists and some other parties are not easily categorized according to an ideological spectrum, but some description can clarify the ambiguities. With regards to left-right ideology, do the parties lean towards the center or try to appeal to the extremes? Next, we suggest that the analyst inquire about how the parties present themselves in platforms and campaign literature. Do they make economic appeals? Do they espouse separatism or nationalism? What are their views toward the United States? The fourth column seeks information about the coalitions that parties form. Which groups typically join together, either to pursue policy goals or in support of elections or a presidential cabinet? The final column, then, asks for information about the parties’ support bases. Are they regional or national? Is their support based in rural or urban areas? Do they pursue voters from across the socio-economic spectrum, or focus on one class?

**Table 3: Characterizing Parties**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Ideology</b>	<b>Defining Policy Positions</b>	<b>Coalitions</b>	<b>Support bases</b>
	Non democratic Personalist Populist Catch-all Leftist Centrist Rightist Ethnic Religious Social democracy	Government ownership vs neoliberalism Nationalism International alignments (views about US) Anti-corruption Social democratic, communist? Agrarian Racist Separatist	Partners for specific policies; Partners for elections or in cabinet	Large or small (% of vote or legislative seats) Volatility (changed support levels) Rural/urban Clientelism Organized (ie labor) or informal sectors Business interests Religious Class (Wealthy or poor) Regional/national Indigenous or ethnic group Geographic distribution

The goal of this exercise is to complete the pre-departure contextual mapping. Combined with the overview of the institutional framework and the description of the party system (and a solid logistical plan) the team will then be ready to proceed to the field and begin to assess the development needs.

### **III. Assessing Parties and Party Systems According to Democratic Development Characteristics (CF 4; Appendix 2)**

The primary goal of the in-country work is to collect information necessary to assess democratic deficits as they relate to parties and party systems, and use the information to provide program recommendations. But how can a team assess this complex and multidimensional topic? Our suggestion is to break down and define the role of parties and party systems with respect to desirable concepts of democracy and then “operationalize” each concept by developing quantitative or qualitative indicators to measuring them. Towards this effort, we focus on the following characteristics that would define an ideal democratic government.

- **Accountability, Representation and Participation.** These three interlocking and overlapping concepts define the level and quality of a society’s democracy. Effective representation cannot exist without broad participation of different groups in the political process. Effective participation and representation, in turn, implies that the representatives—the parties and their leaders—are accountable to citizens (the participants). A developed party, therefore, supports active engagement of the citizenry and represents their interests.

Further, citizens will judge such a party based on how well it addresses citizen through policy positions and management of the government.

- **Governability and Good Governance.** Democratic governance requires not only majority rule, but also minority participation in the policy process. Sustainable democracy, then, requires that parties cooperate to foster an open and cooperative policy process that supports coalition formation and oversight.
- **Stable and Peaceful Contestation.** Democracy requires strenuous competition among parties, but exceedingly large swings in support from one election to the next implies that parties have failed to develop deep roots in society. Competition thus should be aggressive but responsible.
- **Rule of Law and Fair and Honest Elections.** Democracy is based on rules shaping the actions of leaders and citizens, and democracy gains credibility when votes are counted fairly and losers graciously accept their defeats. Parties can support this aspect of democracy by supporting a non-partisan electoral authority and acting within the constraints of laws, regulations, and broad democratic norms.

As we argue in the CF, while each of these concepts is important to defining the quality of democracy, they sometimes imply contradictions. For example, while it may be desirable to promote a multi-party system in order to improve representation, this may come at the expense of governability as coalition building and sustainability become more difficult. Or, instituting a primary to select party candidates would increase the accountability of leadership to party members, but this may lead to less representative candidates at the societal level due to the potential mismatch between the interests of party activists and the interests of average citizens.

The development characteristics present a second problem: parties are generally more interested in winning elections and pursuing power than in obtuse concepts of democracy. Programming, thus, must devise systems that feed the parties' interests as well as promoting development.

A third concern is that in order for parties to play their important democratic roles, they must develop their structures and capacity. Programming, as a result, must put an important emphasis on this intermediary development characteristic:

- **Organizational and Technical Capacity.** There is a clear tie between building parties' organizational and technical capacity and democratic development. Without proper organization and training programs, for example, parties would not be able to develop outreach programs that are important to participation and accountability. Improper accounting, further, would hinder development of the rule of law. As a result, party assistance programs necessarily focus on these types of issues. These programs, however, are a means to an end, and assessments and programming should maintain a focus on how deficits in the parties' organizational development relate to democracy. This is of particular for program design, since the parties will be more interested in aid that promotes their electoral advantages regardless of its effects on democracy.

Based on the four development goals plus the intermediary goal of parties' technical and organizational capacity, in what follows, we detail the information that assessors should gather in their attempt to characterize the state of political party development. In order to be comprehensive (though still incomplete), this list is long, but assessors can truncate it to fit their country context. In some cases we have described where the requisite information, both

quantitative and qualitative, might be found, but we have not always identified how interviewers should ask delicate questions. In some cases direct questions will yield the requisite information, and for others researchers should develop indirect techniques, perhaps asking Party A about Party B.

### **III A. Parties' Organizational & Technical Capacity (CF 4.1)**

Many aspects of parties' organizational and technical capacity (OTC), such as the effectiveness of a party's policy analysis, its candidate training processes, its outreach program, its poll monitor training, and its system for fund raising are all clearly tied to characteristics of democratic development. For example, developing funding sources is an aspect of parties' organizational capacity, but it also relates to the development characteristics "Rule of Law and Fair and Honest Elections." Therefore, in order to maintain the focus on the larger purposes of party aid, we discuss financing and other organizational issues in the sections that focus on the development characteristics. Still, recognizing the need for healthy organizations in order to carry out these higher roles should lead the assessment to review some aspects of OTC that do not easily fit in these other categories.

Parties that lack organizational and technical capacity may not plan campaign timelines well, know how to develop strategic plans, and they may also lack experience in developing campaign messages, conducting or analyzing surveys, or dealing with the media. As a whole, these types programs may be essential to a complete party development program, and they have secondary benefits such as helping USAID partners build rapport and support with the parties. Further, the parties are more receptive to trainings that have this instrumental impact, and they are also more active during campaign seasons. As part of an assessment of needs, however, it is important to maintain a focus on how these short-term campaigns needs foster democratic development.

Assessment teams can analyze these organizational and technical deficiencies by asking questions about the parties' organizational structure and their training processes. Are there funds dedicated to training and bill analysis? Are there regular meetings with regional officials? How are regional offices maintained? Party statutes and organigrams may also inform the analysis. Box 1 summarizes some of types of evidence that would aid the assessment.

#### **Box 1: Partial list of Assessment Data: *Organizational and Technical Capacity***

- Party by-laws to describe organizational structure
- Description of party training and analytical wings
  - Example of policy development process
- Description of party strategic planning operations
  - Examples of strategy development
- Description of internal party communication practices
- Description (perhaps quantitative data) on maintenance of regional offices

### **III B. Accountability, Representation, and Participation (CF 4.2)**

The CF describes several aspects of accountability, representation, and participation. Specifically it suggests breaking this broad topic into five main themes:

- Accountability of parties in government for policy.
- Accountability of party leaders to rank-and-file
- The effect of the array of voter choices on accountability of parties and individual legislators
- Representation based on ascriptive characteristics of voters (delegate vs trustee)
- How parties can improve citizen participation through outreach

#### **Accountability of Parties for Policy**

This aspect of party development focuses on the degree to which parties focus on policy issues in their campaigns, and, in turn, whether voters judge the parties for these policy stances. The first part of the assessment would focus on the degree to which parties detail their policy positions in their platforms and campaigns. Assessors can judge the parties on this characteristic using platforms (if available), campaign materials, and expert judgments.

The second measure of accountability for policy is based on the degree to which citizens make their voting choices based on proposed policies, policy outcomes, and performance, versus ethnic identity or patronage considerations?

Voters assessing parties based on their policy positions can be informed by the unity of parties. The degree of party discipline on legislative votes helps to indicate the parties' ability to put forth comprehensive legislation with a national focus. Assessments can ascertain the degree of voting discipline through an analysis of roll call votes and interviews. It would be pertinent to ascertain whether there are penalties a party's legislators who break with the leader's directives.

Important to this part of the assessment is citizen access to information about party activities. Are there public reports concerning party financing? Does the party publicize information on its legislative activities, e.g., text of proposed bills or amendments, committee assignments, or voting by member-legislators?

Research teams can assess availability of information and campaign themes through stakeholder interviews and by reviewing literature and publications from the parties and the legislature. Surveys, however, are the best means to judge the degree to which voters judge parties based on policy positions and legislative behavior (see sample questions in Appendix 3). First, surveys can help to identify the degree to which voters know about party platforms and policies, and the degree to which these assessments are important in electoral choices (i.e. retrospective voting). The surveys can also help to show whether parties' support is concentrated geographically or among particular sectors of society. While assessment teams have not traditionally implemented their own surveys, existing surveys might be available from USAID partners, news services, academic studies, or other sources to address these questions.

#### **Accountability of party leaders to rank-and-file**

The second aspect of accountability is internal to the party: to what degree are leaders responsive to the rank-and-file? What role do party members have in choosing candidates for public office

or party leadership positions? To what degree does the membership have a role in formulating policy? In short, this aspect of accountability reflects democratic practices internal to the party.

Leaders are likely to suggest that they listen to their members and the recruitment processes are fair to everyone, so assessing the level of internal democracy will require interviews with lower-level party members. These interviews can focus on how people rise in the party hierarchy and how decisions are made. Reviews and discussions about party rules are also necessary. As an example, some parties rank their members according to experience in order to allocate leadership posts. This seemingly meritocratic system, however, can hinder the rise of women and other traditionally excluded groups.

In considering this part of the assessment, analysts can ask a number of questions about the internal workings of the parties. These would include the following:

- How does the party recruit candidates?
  - Is the process transparent and objective?
  - How does the process work to encourage (or discourage) participation of women or members of other traditionally excluded groups?
- Is the leadership selection process transparent and fair?
- How are the party's campaign platform, legislative agenda, and policy positions developed?
  - How does the party consider and approve proposals about to join government coalition?
- Does the party have standing committees or working groups tasked with exercising policy expertise and working up proposals?
  - If so, how are party members placed in these groups?
  - How do these groups, party leadership, or party members select among policy alternatives?

Establishing whether parties both have and follow rules to manage their personnel and affairs will help to determine whether and how leaders control the processes. If the parties have a managerial secretariat separate from the party executive's office, the types of reports that that secretariat produces, and who oversees the management will help to define whether the party is a bureaucratic organization or a machine tightly controlled by political leaders.

### **Accountability and the Array of Voter Choices**

While the former two types of accountability focus on party practices, the third is concerned with whether the system provides voters the opportunity to hold parties and legislators accountable. There are two primary questions: Do voters have clear choices among parties? And, can the voters choose among a party's candidates, or can they only choose among parties? The answers are dependent on the electoral system, party practices, and voter knowledge of party or legislator actions. The electoral system, first, can support or discourage the formation of new parties and can affect how broad a coalition is necessary to form a party. To offer just the simplest example, high-magnitude proportional representation (assuming no other thresholds)

allows much smaller parties to gain representation than would single-member district systems.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the former encourages more parties to form than the latter. As part of the assessment, the team can count the “effective number of parties” (see Appendix 2) and consider the factors that contribute to this number.

Second, through the list-mechanism, the electoral system determines whether voters have intra-partisan choice. Open lists (in any its many variants) give voters the opportunity to rank a party’s candidates, while closed lists mean that the voters can only choose among the different parties’ pre-determined lists. Parties can give voters a say, however, by holding primaries, which are seldom mandated by law. Some parties, it should be noted, tightly control who competes in the primaries, thus only giving an illusion of voter choice.

To be able to hold their legislators and/or their parties accountable, voters need information. The assessment, therefore, should consider whether voters have access to information about policy as well as non-policy actions of legislators. Do legislators have local offices? Do they hold local events? Do the legislators have a system of publicizing their activities? Does the media report on legislators? Do NGOs or other groups publish information about legislative activities? Do the legislators or the parties support a constituency-services system?

## **Representation**

An important concern of USAID programs is improving “ascriptive” representation, by increasing the participation of women, minorities, and others groups that are traditionally excluded from the political process. To advance, the groups need information and training, and the parties need the political will to change their practices. Quota laws are another means through which women and other groups have advanced their representation in party hierarchies and legislatures.

Data on the gender and ethnicity of legislators, regional representatives, and party leadership, as compared with information about the population, allow assessment of ascriptive representation. Electoral data from national or sub-national elections will show how well the parties gain support from different regions and how these patterns have changed over time. Statistics that measure “party nationalization” (see Appendix 3) partially captures this concept.

To assess the causes for low or changing representation of these groups, teams might consider investigating quotas and political will. Quotas guaranteeing women and ethnic groups a minimum of legislative seats have become common, but they are sometimes ineffective due to loopholes or lax requirements. To consider political will, assessments should consider the extent to which women, youth, minorities, or other disadvantaged groups are the target of membership drives. To what extent are they recruited for leadership development? Have members of these groups been in leadership roles at the national and sub-national levels? To what extent does their participation carry weight in decisions about broad policies that go beyond the group’s special interests?

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<sup>2</sup> District magnitude refers to the number of legislative seats allocated to a particular district. See CF section 5 for a discussion of electoral systems and their effects.

## **Participation**

Because participation builds trust, parties can support democracy by reaching out to, informing, and engaging voters. Parties are likely to focus on get-out-the-vote campaigns, but the assessments should consider efforts to engage voters at non-election time, too.

To assess parties' efforts at improving participation (which is also pertinent to assessing representation), several pieces of statistical and qualitative data will be useful. At the party level, assessors can interview party officials about their outreach programs. How much effort does a particular party make to ascertain citizen interests and issues? Does the party use polling data and/or focus groups during campaigns and between elections to identify issues, support for policy alternatives, future concerns, etc.? Analysts could also ascertain whether the party has a unit staffed with experts to regularly identify citizen interests, attitudes, and behavior through focus groups or surveys, as well as to provide useful analyses to party leadership? Do parties respond to citizen complaints, comments, or concerns that are gathered by regional or district constituency service offices? What initiatives has the party taken to encourage citizens to participate politically, or even just to understand the democratic system? What links has each party made to societal groups as a means for communicating with large numbers of citizens through a single channel? How well does the party maintain and utilize records about voters?

Assessments of participation also require data about the citizenry. Public opinion surveys can show the levels of trust in the parties and elected officials, and determine how voters make these judgments by asking about voters' knowledge of party platforms and activities. They can then ascertain how actively engaged citizens are in politics, whether they have participated in rallies or contacted their representatives, and can ask about obstacles to political participation. Importantly, surveys can identify the extent to which trust or participation are marked by regional, ethnic, gender, or class differences.

Finally, there are objective sources of data on voting turnout and other forms of political participation. Turnout data is usually broken down by region, and sometimes there is information about gender. Other data sources can offer information about labor and political strikes and demonstrations. Some countries, finally, have useful information about the size and activities of different membership groups, NGOs, and social movements.

### **Summary: Accountability, Representation, and Participation**

Box 2 provides examples of the types of data necessary to assess the different aspects of accountability, representation, and participation. It includes evidence that can be gleaned from quantitative (as found in surveys or electoral returns) as well as qualitative (e.g. interviews) sources. The suggestion is to divide the analysis into concerns that characterize the system as a whole and those that affect individual parties.

#### **Box 2: Partial list of Assessment Data: *Accountability, Representation, and Participation***

##### **System Level Concerns:**

- Historical electoral returns for legislature and executive to calculate trends in the effective number of parties (Appendix 3)
- Electoral and party laws to assess voters' ability to choose among a party's

candidates

- Survey data on trust, political views, political engagement, and modes of political participation
- Electoral returns, preferably at the district level, to measure nationalization and electoral volatility (Appendix 3)
- Information about membership groups, NGOs, and social movements
- Availability of records on legislative activity (roll call voting)
- Survey data to gauge whether voting is based on retrospective or policy-based evaluations rather than ethnic or regional identity (Appendix 2)

**Party Level Concerns:**

- Semi-structured interviews with party staff, political analysis on interest identification, civic education, societal support issues, outreach efforts, and policy activities of members from marginalized groups
- Interview data & party by-laws to detail systems for recruiting candidates and leadership selection,
- Party membership data on gender, youth, and minority groups
- Examples of information disseminated by parties to voters; interviews about the process of informing voters
- Legislative roll-call votes to assess party unity

### **III C. Governability and Good Governance (CF 4.3)**

**Governability and Good Governance** refers to the ways in which parties contribute to effective democratic decisionmaking, regardless of election results. Parties contribute to this goal through their support of an open policy process that facilitates oversight, and their willingness to work for consensus and compromise in the search for policy advancement. While democracy presumes majority rule, it requires minority rights to assure that the politically weak do not turn towards other methods for advancing their political goals. Building democracy, then, requires an inclusive political environment and compromises among political parties. In turn, governability requires that the opposition participate in the legislative process.. It can do so at the level of the executive, the legislature, and/or local- or regional-level governments.

Parties can demonstrate their commitment to good governance when in or out of power. When a party is in a ruling coalition, it must hold not just its partners to coalition decisions, but its own member-legislators, too. What are the formal and informal limits on how it actively supports a coalition policy directive? How can the party enforce elements of the coalition agreement that benefit it at the expense of coalition partners? Parties in opposition tend to have limited avenues for holding ruling coalitions accountable to standards of good governance, but there are a number of watchdog tasks that parties could perform, most pertaining to the legislature's rules of order. Are policy proposals being submitted properly by the government and considered by the most appropriate legislative committees? Are requests to government ministers for information

made and monitored for response? Does the party scrutinize nominees for judicial, civil service, or other governmental unit positions to ensure they are qualified? When in opposition, do parties participate in a shadow government? Are there legislative committees that allow party leaders who are outside of the governing coalition to gain access to information? Does the opposition put forth constructive alternative policy proposals, or does it simply oppose and reject the government's actions? Box 3 lists some of the pertinent information pertinent to the assessment.

**Box 3: Partial list of Assessment Data: *Governability and Good Government***

- List of government ministry heads by party
- List of shadow government ministers and committee membership
- Examples of opposition policy proposals and statistics on passage rates of opposition sponsored bills
- Semi-structured interviews with party staff, political analysts on opposition role in government, coalition dynamics and important policy compromises, party leadership dynamics, party discipline, and party policy goals
- Background information from the Global Integrity Index and the Open Budget Project

### **III D. Stable and Peaceful Contestation (CF 4.4)**

**Stable and Peaceful Contestation** refers to the goal of developing a healthy competition among parties. Competition should be vigorous, but campaigns should eschew themes or strategies that threaten democracy. This topic also implies that parties develop roots in society, such that some voters shift their support in response to policy positions or governmental performance, but volatility is limited.

The first task is to assess the degree to which campaigns are vigorous, but responsible. A review of electoral returns will show whether there is rotation in office, and country experts will be able to provide analysis of whether parties behaved responsibly during campaigns. If parties have signed codes of conduct, reviewing which parties signed the document and the process by which the code was developed may indicate the parties' dedication to democratic practices.

Next, the assessment can inquire about the how support has shifted between elections. Does one party continue to dominate nationally, or in any particular region? How does the governing party's support vary in response to economic changes or other national events?

The Pedersen index (see Appendix) provides a statistical methodology for comparing volatility rates among countries, and it can be easily computed from readily-available data as part of the pre-trip preparation. It has two important weaknesses, however. First, it gives a party system rather than a party-specific value. It fails to show, therefore, which parties are rising or falling, and whether voters are responding differently to the governing party. Second, it fails to show how voters are shifting their support. Volatility has different consequences in situations where voters shift among existing parties than where the shift is towards new parties. Similarly, the assessment should determine whether voters' shift is among ideological neighbors or towards (or away from) parties that make different types of appeals.

To assess the depth of party roots in the society, assessors have available several types of data (Box 4). First, if new parties develop frequently, then by definition parties have shallow roots. This implies collecting information about the age of parties (and perhaps rules about party formation). Second, the team can assess party roots by considering the operations of field offices and the amount of time legislators spend in their districts. The team can also discuss partisan ties with citizen groups and community leaders. Finally, surveys can assess voter ties, though it is important to disentangle short-term affinities from more stable identities.

**Box 4: Partial list of Assessment Data: *Stable and Peaceful Contestation***

- Expert interviews about campaigns. Were the campaigns vigorous but responsible?
- Codes of conduct and list of signatories
- Electoral data to calculate volatility and assess shifts in parties' support
- Rules for formation of new parties & interviews about them
- Interviews with community leaders to assess parties' societal roots
- Surveys measuring voter partisan identification

### **III E. Rule of Law & Fair and Honest Elections (CF 4.5)**

The final theme is the degree to which parties support the **Rule of Law and Fair and Honest Elections**. Assessment of this goal will focus on interviews with parties—perhaps about their competitors—and political analysts. Surveys of voter perceptions, however, would add a view of how the population views the legitimacy of the electoral process. The main areas of concern are whether parties support a non-partisan electoral administration, their work to validate electoral outcomes, the credibility of their internal elections (primaries), their methods for financing party and campaign activities, and the means they use to mobilize voter support.

The first area is whether and how parties support a non-partisan electoral administration. This implies a consideration of the match between de jure and de facto adherence to legal standards on transparent campaign financing, non-abuse of state resources, and fair access to media. It also

implies that the parties support the electoral administration's efforts to create valid voter lists and oversee the electoral process. A part of the assessment would necessarily consider whether the relevant authorities have sufficient resources and authority to investigate and enforce the laws. Of course, a part of this analysis would consider whether the election administration system is impartial or controlled by a ruling party or coalition.

These themes yield a number of assessment questions. Are cash and in-kind donations reported in an accurate, timely manner according to the law? Are there examples of attempts to get around the laws, e.g., donations routed through a third party or another country's financial system? Are state resources used for partisan advantage, e.g., municipal personnel putting up campaign posters or ministry personnel forced to donate a portion of their income? Are parties or candidates subject to arbitrary, trivial, or suspicious legal proceedings that block their political activities? Do political parties enjoy fair access to mass media, particularly state-owned media? Are some media outlets owned by political parties or their leaders? Do any of the media exhibit sharp political views?

Next, USAID supported programs sometimes help parties recruit and train their own poll watchers. Evaluation of the parties' ability to cover polling stations, then, is an important part of assessing the validation of electoral outcomes. The assessment might ascertain whether the parties were successful in recruiting enough poll-watchers to cover most polling places and investigate the financial and other difficulties that limit the recruitment. As part of this process, assessors could also investigate how the parties used information they received from their poll watchers. Did they validate results? Did they submit formal complaints? How were those complaints handled?

While the electoral administration runs general elections, the parties themselves generally run their own primaries and other candidate selection mechanisms (e.g. conventions). In some cases, however, these do not meet democratic standards and therefore harm credibility in the process. Reviews of media coverage about the internal elections, surveys, and discussion with experts would help to assess these processes.

Next, adherence to the rule of law and support for an honest electoral process implies that the parties finance their activities through valid means. Are the parties required to submit financial reports? Does the electoral authority have the means (de facto and de jure) to sanction parties? Important to this assessment is whether the parties reported fundraising matches the actual accounting. While parties may be reluctant to explain their own sources of funds, they may be very willing to describe systems that their competitors (allegedly) use. Interviews with experts may help to validate these stories. Such discussion might also uncover allegations of misuse of state funds for partisan advantages.

Finally, rule of law requires parties to refrain from nefarious means of influencing voters. Do the parties use clientelism or other unseemly practices in influencing voters? Surveys that ask voters whether they have received payments from parties have been useful in identifying such practices, but watchdog groups and experts may have better sources for this type of information. Individual legislators might reveal such practices when questioned about their methods in contacting voters. Here too party officials may also offer useful information (though not always reliable) about their competitors. Box 5 reviews some of the data needs for assessing parties' contribution to the rule of law and supporting fair and honest elections.

**Box 5: Partial list of Assessment Data: *Rule of Law and Fair and Honest Elections***

- Laws on campaign financing and partisan use of state resources
- Parties' public financial reports
- Data about poll watchers, for the electoral authority and parties
- Information about how the electoral authority reviews reported complaints
- Materials detailing the composition and authority of the election administration body
- Semi-structured interviews with party staff and political analysts about campaign financing, use of state resources, access to media, privatization efforts or procurement, budget allocation decisions, and the work of the central election administration body.
- Surveys that focus on perceptions of parties in terms of corruption and legitimacy of the electoral processes; also about whether voters received specific benefits from parties

## **IV. Analyzing Data and Defining a Course of Action**

In order to define and defend a course of action, assessment teams need to filter their information by identifying party and party system weaknesses as well as opportunities and constraints. To this end we suggest a five-step process.

**First, teams should review the analysis of the development characteristics to identify particular vulnerabilities that should be prioritized and addressed.** It is likely that the team will identify weaknesses in many areas, and they will be forced to confront tradeoffs among aid priorities, such as the inherent tradeoff between representation and governability. Assessments, therefore, have to consider not just individual development goals, but the potential conflicts among them. We suggest that assessors develop a synthesis of the parties' needs, and defend a particular approach. In so doing, however, assessments should put forth – and perhaps criticize – alternative views. For example, if they defend programs that increase representation by encouraging parties to open their nominating processes, the assessment should counter criticisms that internal competition can harm party unity and perhaps breed fragmentation. As another example, working to strengthen regional parties could harm attempts of small parties to extend their appeal. Adding parties to the legislature would also affect efficiency.

It is insufficient, however, to define needs. The next step in the analysis is to consider how the context and other factors shape the parties and affect program opportunities. For example, evidence of shallow party roots in society and/or difficult coalition dynamics may reflect parties' response to particularities of the electoral laws. Therefore, the **second filtering step is to merge the contextual analysis with that of the development characteristics.** By combining these two analyses, the team will identify the opportunities and constraints that are vital to the design

of a successful aid program. In short, they will help the team filter the information such that they can determine which development concerns are amenable to outside aid.

Table 4A provides an outline of how an assessment team could organize and synthesize the information, based on addressing how the contextual factors affect the four different development characteristics plus organizational and technical capacity. Table 4B below continues by incorporating system and party level influences. Of course an actual assessment would require much more space than is indicated in this small table, and it would have to be expanded to incorporate the multidimensional nature of each constraint and democratic characteristic. Even so, this task is complex. The intention of the table, however, is to encourage the team to conduct the necessary research to fill the boxes in this table. As such they will produce a well-grounded and comprehensive analysis.

**Table 4A: Assessment Worksheet: Context**

Salient Factors	Organizational and Technical Capacity	Accountability, Representation, & Participation	Governability and Good Governance	Stable Peaceful Contestation	Rule of Law & Free & Honest Elections
Democracy					
Institutions					
Party System and Coalitions					
Party Attributes					

Table 4A considers the four aspects of the context discussed in Section I, democracy, institutions (including the constitutional and legal framework), the party system and coalitions, and the party attributes. Here, however, the analysis will have to go beyond identifying and characterizing the contextual factors by assessing how each affects the different development characteristics.

To aid in making the connections between context and development the team could formulate questions such as the following:

- From the analysis of the level of democracy: Do restrictions on freedom of assembly limit voter participation or hinder trust of parties? Alternatively, does an independent electoral authority support efforts to limit electoral corruption (hence improving rule of law)?
- In terms of institutions: How do the electoral laws, which affect the number of parties and encourage parties to pursue support in particular ways, affect representation or the patterns of competition? Does a closed list electoral system reduce the incentives for legislators to concern themselves with constituency service (another aspect of representation)? Does federalism yield opportunities for the parties to develop leadership in regional strongholds (participation)? How do presidential powers impact accountability of the parties? Does the executive-legislative balance of power also affect the rule of law? Do term limits or executive control of the budget hinder legislative professionalization and hence representation?

- Concerning the party system and coalitions: How do the traditional patterns of coalitions affect participation of small or regional parties? How does the number of parties affect governability and the patterns of competition?
- From the discussion of party attributes, does excessive personalism preclude the opportunity of implementing internally democratic practices (accountability)? Do catch-all parties, perhaps, aid the possibility of building broad coalitions? Do small parties control important swing blocs of legislative votes—and if so, how does this affect governability?

The table includes a column for organizational and technical capacity, and this requires special consideration. Each aspect of the political context surely affects this variable; restrictions on democracy would clearly hinder party development and poverty can limit a party's training and communications systems. To give one more example, parties operating in federalist systems are likely to require a more decentralized organizational system than are parties in unitary systems. At the same time, since it is an intermediary variable, Table 4B, which focuses on system and party level factors, incorporates organizational and technical capacity as an effect on the other development characteristics.

The discussion about context above, as well as the more extensive discussion in the CF, will provide analysts a starting point for uncovering the links between each development characteristic and the institutions and other aspects of the framework in which the parties operate. But, because of the particularities of the each country's constitution, electoral system, party laws, and array of informal institutions, assessment teams will need to discuss the impact of context with experts and stakeholders. These respondents may not readily recognize the context in which they are working, but proper questions about how each institution functions should lead to discussions about how the context drives or constrains political action. A necessary part of this discussion should focus on the process necessary to bring about change; if the number of parties or executive powers are rooted in constitutional provisions, what is the method for reform and how would coalitions align in support of different proposals?

**Third, having considered the contextual variables, the team should continue searching for opportunities and constraints by examining how system and party level factors influence the development characteristics.** The goal of the analysis in Section III was to identify strengths and weaknesses in development characteristics, but it should also have uncovered constraints and assets that could determine programmatic opportunities.

Table 4B provides a method for conceptualizing the analytical efforts, but again we imagine a team requiring much more space for the analysis than is suggested here. The first section of this table focuses on system-level assets and constraints. At this level we have identified three types: political actors, civil society groups, and electoral support patterns. By political actors, we are concerned with the executive, the military, and the judiciary. For the civil society grouping, the analyst would consider how non-state actors, such as social movements, business groups, and NGOs impact on the different aspects of development. The final category, electoral support patterns, refers to the partisan alignments of unions, classes, regions, or ethnicities. It could also consider the stability in electoral competition.

**Table 4B: Assessment Worksheet, System and Party Level Assets and Constraints**

Salient Factors	Organizational and Technical Capacity	Accountability, Representation, & Participation	Governability and Good Governance	Stable Peaceful Contestation	Rule of Law & Free & Honest Elections
<b>SYSTEM-LEVEL POLITICAL ASSETS &amp; CONSTRAINTS</b>					
Political Actors					
Civil Society Groups					
Electoral Support Patterns					
<b>PARTY-LEVEL ASSETS &amp; CONSTRAINTS</b>					
Leadership					
Formal and informal rules					
Basis of Electoral Support					
Organizational and Technical Capacity					

Analytical questions related to political actors and civil society could include:

- In terms of accountability, representation, and participation: Who would oppose—and who would favor—bringing more democratic practices (i.e. representation) to the parties? Why? Are there social groups supporting, for example, quotas to increase the number of women in the legislature (i.e. participation)?
- Related to governability, does the executive show willingness to work with the opposition? How does the media portray coalitions?
- For the application of free and honest elections, are the judiciary and electoral administration independent of the government or the ruling party? Also, are unions or other groups tied to the governing party in ways that inhibit the rule of law or free and honest elections (e.g. through illicit use of public funds)?

Some questions that would help to query how the parties' patterns of electoral support affect their organization and functioning include:

- Are parties tied to particular ethnic or regional groups able to effectively represent their supporters? Do such parties campaign in ways that support peaceful contestation?
- Do the parties have support in different regions of the country—and how has this affected their communication with regional branches?
- Do parties with rural support compete against those with a basis in the cities, and if so are there battles that threaten democracy or peaceful contestation?
- Does poverty or a lack of education lead (or allow) parties to use clientelistic rather than policy-based appeals to voters?

The lower part of the table asks the team to consider party-level constraints, such as electoral exigencies, party ties to social or ethnic groups, particular party leaders, and perhaps factional politics. If proposed programs could have negative consequences for the party as a whole or the leaders in particular, politicians will clearly resist them. Efforts to enhance internal party democracy in terms of selecting leaders or candidates, for example, will face stiff resistance from leaders worried about maintaining their authority. Further, encouraging actions that the party is ill-equipped to fulfill, perhaps owing to financial concerns, will also be unsuccessful. These concerns suggest three types of party-level influences: leadership, rules, and the bases of support.

First,

- Do leaders tightly control their parties, and if so what types of internal democracy might they support?
- How might the party's ties to a particular group limit its willingness to cut deals with other parties?
- Similarly, does a party's strident ideology affect cross-party compromises and governability?

The parties' rules, next, have direct impacts on accountability, representation, and participation, as well as the party's organizational structure.

- Do the parties' systems for choosing candidates and leaders allow effective participation of voters or party activists? Do formal rules or informal practices exclude women from leadership positions?
- Similarly, do rules encourage or discourage broad participation in decisionmaking about strategies and policy?

Parties' practices are not always guided by formal rules. Informal practices also affect participation of different groups, and financing schemes affect the degree to which elections are free and honest. As noted, access to financing also affects the parties' professionalization and the types of structures it can put into place. As in the discussion of context, part of the analysis at this level should query about the rules (formal and informal) for changing these practices.

The penultimate row of the table asks about the parties' support bases. At the system level we asked about the inter-party competition, but here the questions refer to how individual parties win support.

- What traditional alliances has the party maintained and how does this affect representation of different groups? Are there opportunities to extend the party's reach?
- How does the party's ideological orientation or the militancy of its support shape contestation? Has the party historically appealed to separatist groups thus challenging the rule of law?

To this point this section of the analysis has focused on explaining the factors that contribute to development as well as organizational and technical capacity. The final row in the table, which is highlighted to add emphasize its distinct nature, addresses organizational and technical

capacity as a cause, not an effect. Organizational and technical capacity is a necessary focus of programs, but as noted, it is important that the assessment link this intermediary variable with higher-order development characteristics. While this schemata provides just one row in the table for this, the description will require significant effort. Examples of some analytical questions are:

- Do the parties' by-laws hinder significant participation of women or underrepresented groups?
- Do the parties' have technical wings that support analysis of policy proposals (important to good government)?
- Are parties' funding sources sufficient to finance basic functions? Does the funding subvert or support the rule of law?
- Do the parties train their candidates in ways that support policy-oriented campaigns (important to accountability)?

In sum, steps two and three of the analysis are intended to push the assessment team to consider the many factors affect development, and, in turn, how they affect programming. If institutions are problematic, then the assessment must consider how programming can proceed, and perhaps whether there are opportunities to support reform efforts. If political will is a concern, then perhaps there are ways to influence key decision makers (changing political will) or to build a broad consensus for reform. To reiterate, consideration of context, institutions, and other factors that determine party development is a necessary step in an assessment, because some constraints will reduce, if not eliminate the effectiveness of otherwise valuable programs.

**Fourth, identify unique opportunities for constructive engagement and reform.** Aside from the context and factors influencing the function of the system and individual parties, there may circumstances that provide clear opportunities for engagement. Questions the assessment could ask include:

- Does the electoral calendar create opportunities?
- Are there pockets of political will on particular issues? For example, is there a study group in the legislature considering electoral reform? Is there a governors' conference at work on reforms that would affect the relation between regional and national parties?
- Are there local NGOs or other groups working towards reform?
- Are there potential synergies with other international donors?
- Have regional developments created an impetus for change?
- Have recent legal changes forced parties to re-assess their structures or strategies?

**Fifth, the assessment should identify whether and how party development programs fit into the larger DG framework.** It is important to consider how political party programs could contribute to broader democracy and governance objectives. For example, if a country is emerging out of violence, program design might emphasize reconciliation and dialogue, rather than party organizational strengthening. In other contexts, DG priorities might be inclusion of marginalized groups such as women. In other words, program design should not only consider the needs of political parties themselves, but should also consider how they can contribute to meeting priority DG objectives in a country. For example, if civil society is a focus of other DG programs due to perceived opportunities, then party programs might also put emphasis there rather than a dormant legislature. If, alternatively, a legislative strengthening program has

achieved some success, then perhaps the party program should seek to shore up party caucuses, bill analysis, or constituency service.

These five filters provide preliminary means for assessment teams to prioritize among the many needs that will doubtless emerge during an assessment. The goal of the analysis of vulnerabilities, constraints, and opportunities is to help the team and USAID define the strategic direction of a program and prioritize among the vast range of programmatic choices.

## **V. Writing The Assessment Report**

Assessment reports are read by several audiences: top mission and embassy management, mission technical staff, Washington technical staff, and perhaps USAID's program partners. The need to communicate the assessment effectively implies a need for a careful structure that emphasizes recommendations grounded by the research. In addition to an executive summary, we recommend three main sections structured around 1) an analysis of the political context, 2) development concerns based on the analysis of the political institutions, the parties, and the party system, and 3) recommendations for development programming based on opportunities and constraints. The report should also include an appendix that lists data sources and an interview list.

Section I of the report should lay out the research methodology, and then discuss the socio-political context of the country, identifying particular vulnerabilities and overarching development concerns. By discussing the degree of democratic development, this section identifies the framework within which the programs will operate.

The bulk of the report, Section II, will use the quantitative and qualitative data to highlight party and party system development strengths and limitations, and the related program opportunities and constraints. We recommend structuring this section around Tables 4A and 4B to first describe each development characteristics (Accountability, Representation, and Participation; Governability and Good Governance; etc.) with respect to the party system and the individual parties. For example, in what ways do parties contribute to good governance (and what are the indicators for the analysis)? Do parties train and recruit women to become party leaders (and how many women have entered the national or regional legislatures)? While we do not intend the analysts to fill in every box in those tables, the analysis should explain the operationalization and measurement of each concept to specify how the team made conclusions about development needs. It should identify the effects of the context as Table 4A suggests. The final step would be to use the party and party system level assets and constraints (as detailed in Table 4B) to explain the level of development. This will lead directly to Section III of the report, which would first summarize the development deficits and then discuss the opportunities and constraints in creating a list of programming priorities.

# **Appendices**

## **Appendix 1: Data needs and Questions for Contextual Analysis**

### **PRE-DEPARTURE**

- A. Democracy and General (structural) context**
  - 1. Level of democracy (openness) (Freedom House)
  - 2. History of democracy; time democratic
  - 3. Ethnic, regional, or other societal divisions
  - 4. Country size & geography; how does this affect party organization?
  - 5. Social development; literacy impacts on voting and outreach
  - 6. Assessment; challenges for party development
  
- B. The Institutional Context**
  - 1. Constitutions and Legal Framework
    - a) Presidentialism vs Parliamentarism
      - (1) Strong or weak president?
      - (2) Formal and informal power? (e.g. use of decrees)
      - (3) Coalition history in cabinets
      - (4) System for change in constitution
      - (5) Evaluation: advantages and disadvantages of system
  - 2. Unitary and Federal Systems
    - a) Powers of regions
  - 3. Electoral Systems and Party Laws
    - a) Single member districts, open or closed lists, hybrid system
    - b) District magnitude
    - c) Thresholds for winning seats and maintaining registration
    - d) Registration requirements (ease of party formation)
    - e) Party and Campaign Finance: Laws and Rules
    - f) Quota laws
    - g) Assessment: Impact of electoral system on number of parties;
  
- C. The Party System**
  - 1. Forms of Parties: Number, Size, Geographic Distribution, and Ideological Spread
  - 2. List of parties represented in legislature
  - 3. Sub-national data? What parties compete and where?
  - 4. Vote percentages, seat percentages
    - a) Percentages divided by regions
    - b) How is this support distributed across the country, i.e., how nationalized is each party (see Appendix 1)?

- c) How volatile is each party's support (see Appendix 1, Technical Guidance)?
- 5. Map of parties by ideology
  - a) Left, right, ethnic ties, regional ties,
    - (1) What policies do such parties advocate?
    - (2) Attitudes towards United States.
- 6. Assessment I: Is the system polarized or centrist on left-right issues?
- 7. Assessment II: Is the system centralized or divided regionally?
- 8. Assessment III: Are there too few or too many parties?

## IN-COUNTRY

### **A. Democracy and General (structural) context**

- 1. Verify information from desk study on ethnic, regional, or other societal divisions
- 2. Media access—regional or national media? Costs of access?
- 3. Assessment: Challenges for party development. (Did the desk study miss important challenges?)

### **B. The Institutional Context**

- 1. **Constitutions and Legal Framework**
  - a) If Presidential
    - (1) Strong or weak president?
      - (a) Are executives successful in imposing policies when there is (majority) legislative dissent (for example, through decrees)?
    - (2) Formal and informal power?
      - (a) How does the president impose policy choices?
    - (3) Coalition history in cabinets
      - What powers do cabinet ministries have? Are these considered valuable assets for parties?
  - b) If Parliamentary
    - (1) What is the base of the executive's support? Is that support variable?
    - (2) Coalition history in cabinets
      - (a) What powers do cabinet ministries have? Are these considered valuable assets for parties?
  - c) Degree of satisfaction with constitutional/institutional framework system—Are there ongoing debates about change?
    - (1) What is the system to change the constitution?
  - d) Evaluation: advantages and disadvantages of executive system
  - e) Unitary and Federal Systems
    - (1) Powers of regional governments

- (a) Weaknesses—eg relations between regions and national government; training and expertise; bureaucratic bottlenecks; corruption
  - (b) Has the federal government dealt fairly with all regions (or are there real or imagined political biases)?
  - (c) Is the national-level government promoting or undermining the power of the regions? How?
  - (2) History of decentralization (if any); causes? Is the process moving forward? How far has it moved?
  - f) Electoral Systems
    - (1) Confirm impact of electoral system on number of parties and other issues
    - (2) How do the quota laws work? Why or why are they not effective (at the party or legislative level)?
    - (3) Are there regulations and oversight over primaries?
    - (4) Assessment; strengths and weaknesses of electoral system
  - g) Party and Campaign Finance: Laws and Rules
2. Political role of the media in the country
- a) Is the media independent and critical of the governing party?
3. Party Rules and Informal Institutions
- a) Processes for making policy decisions; Is there internal party democracy?
  - b) Formal Rules for candidate choice (again, internal party democracy)
    - (1) Are primaries open or closed?
  - c) Informal Institutions
    - (1) How well are formal processes followed? What are the typical procedures?

### C. The Party System and Coalition Politics

- 1. What divides the parties?
  - a) Map of parties by ideology;
  - b) Left, right, ethnic ties, regional ties,
- 2. Are there regional/local parties or movements competing at the regional/local level (e.g. regional governments or mayors)?
  - a) How present are the national parties at the regional/local level?
- 3. Define terms for non-ideological “populist” or “nationalist.” Are there antidemocratic parties? Separatist parties?
  - (1) What policies do the populist parties advocate?
    - (a) Attitudes towards United States.
  - b) Assessment: characterize the party system;

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- (1) Challenges to democracy?
  - (2) Policy orientation with respect to major issues
4. Coalition Politics
  - a) Cabinet coalitions
    - (1) Current and past arrangements
  - b) Electoral coalitions
    - (1) What laws define electoral coalitions? Do they foster or hinder coalition formation?
    - (2) Which parties join together for elections? Which parties are excluded?
  - c) Legislative
    - (1) Which parties commonly support the president on critical policy issues (eg the budget)?
      - (a) Any legislative voting data? How public are these data?
      - (b) Are the coalitions stable—or do some parties swing from opposition to support?
    - (2) Are opposition parties successful in blocking executive initiatives?

## Appendix 2: Development Characteristics, Program Objectives, and Indicators

Program Objectives	Indicators or Research Questions
<b>Organizational and Technical Capacity</b>	
Parties develop structures and processes for outreach, candidate training, oversight, and bill analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organograms and qualitative indicators of bureaucratic structures in parties</li> <li>• Experience of party functionaries/analysts</li> <li>• Funds dedicated to training, analysis, etc.</li> <li>• Interviews about breach of party rules and informal practices</li> </ul>
Parties raise funds through transparent processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicly available finance reports</li> <li>• Interviews about financing practices</li> </ul>
Parties have effective means to maintain communication among activists and regional branches	Interviews with mid-level and regional party officials
<b>Party System</b>	
<b>Accountability , Participation, and Representation</b>	
<b>Accountability</b>	
Voters identify with parties, and demand services and responses to policy concerns	Surveys or focus groups testing voters' attachment to and knowledge of parties (beyond electoral choices). Questions also about contact with parties and about constituency service.
Transparency in government activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publications of legislative roll-call votes.</li> <li>• Activities of ombudsman and legislative watchdog groups.</li> <li>• Interviews with experts.</li> </ul>
Allow voters diverse choices among parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of parties, by region.</li> <li>• Electoral data showing geographic and ethnic support bases of parties.</li> </ul>
Voters evaluate parties based on policy performance (retrospective voting)	Survey data or focus groups
Electoral system allows voters to hold leaders accountable	Expert analysis of electoral system design
Voters support democracy and trust the democratic processes	Survey data and focus groups
<b>Representation</b>	
Number of parties balances representation and governability	Effective and raw number of parties (registered and competing), by region/district
Allow voters choice among candidates within parties	Analysis of candidate selection system and ballot system
Range of parties balances regional or ascriptive identification with nationally-oriented catch-all parties	Electoral and survey data capturing ethnic and regional voting patterns
<b>Participation</b>	
High level of voter knowledge and participation with limited polarization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys &amp; focus groups testing voter knowledge of parties, politics, and government</li> <li>• Surveys asking voters' about their</li> </ul>

	discussions about politics and participation in politics beyond voting
High citizen trust in government decisions	Survey and focus groups
Limited electoral volatility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electoral data (index of volatility)</li> </ul>
High participation of women and underrepresented groups in legislature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender and ethnic composition of regional and national legislature</li> <li>Similar data for committee assignments &amp; leadership positions</li> </ul>
Multiparty caucuses (eg of women) form in the legislature or as civil society organizations to advance policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of legislative caucuses and their activities.</li> <li>Lists of politically-oriented NGOs.</li> </ul>
<b>Governability and Good Governance</b>	
Coalitions form in the legislature to pursue policy objectives; includes proposals of legislation and engaging the executive in substantive policy debates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Composition of cabinet;</li> <li>Roll call votes &amp; studies of budget or other important bills to indicating role of opposition in supporting (or denying) legislation</li> <li>Success rate and importance of legislature-initiated bills</li> </ul>
Legislature forms multipartisan coalitions and other structures to oversee executive (or other party) actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passage of transparency laws, freedom of information acts, and informal practices regarding these systems;</li> <li>Questioning of ministers;</li> <li>Legislative role in exposing government corruption or decisions</li> <li>Budgets for congressional oversight committees or bureaucratic offices</li> </ul>
Legislature has mechanisms for bill analysis	Review of technocratic support of legislature in committees or party offices (budgets for technocrats)
<b>Stable and Peaceful Competition</b>	
Vibrant multiparty competition, but with limited electoral volatility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective number of parties</li> <li>Index of volatility or measures of change in support of major parties</li> </ul>
High voting participation (but limited polarization)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electoral participation</li> <li>Surveys indicating level of disagreement among voters</li> </ul>
Increasing information to voters to counteract effects of volatility	Importance of incumbency (partisan or legislator) and local issues in comparison with national politics in electoral choices
<b>Rule of Law and Free and Honest Elections</b>	
Voters accept national electoral outcomes	Degree of protests after elections & party leader involvement in support of protests
Parties help to validate and then accept electoral results and support peaceful transition of power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change of partisan control of government</li> <li>Interviews concerning previous transfers of power</li> </ul>
Voters (correctly) perceive parties as adhering to rules of the game (limited corruption)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surveys and focus groups</li> <li>Corruption indices</li> <li>Expert interviews</li> </ul>
There exists & parties support an impartial legal framework for elections and political	Parties debate weaknesses in party or electoral law and propose improvements

parties	
There exists sustainable, indigenous capacity to effectively administer elections	Expert interviews about election authority (national and regional)
Parties all support local, regional, and international efforts to monitor electoral processes	Coverage of polling stations by individual parties; participation (and level) by NGOs and international organizations
Parties support electoral authorities attempts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Develop comprehensive and impartial voter lists</li> <li>o deploy non-partisan electoral observers</li> <li>o run transparent electoral process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parties' statements about voter lists</li> <li>• Numbers of non-partisan poll watchers</li> <li>• Explanation of dispute settlement system, penalties (and enforcement) for breaking finance or other rules;</li> </ul>
Parties support campaign finance system that provides them and their competitors a legal and transparent way to raise funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules of campaign finance</li> <li>• Interviews with parties, electoral authorities, and observers about common sources of funds, abuses, and oversight</li> </ul>
<b>Party Level</b>	
<b>Accountability , Participation, and Representation</b>	
<b>Accountability</b>	
Base platforms and seek votes based on policy positions and policy effectiveness, not (only) identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey data to evaluate extent of retrospective voting</li> <li>• Party Platforms;</li> <li>• Interviews about policy focus of campaigns</li> </ul>
Disseminate information about policy positions and activities to constituents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number, organization, and budgets of regional offices</li> <li>• Data on contact with voters or other activities in those offices</li> </ul>
Open their decisionmaking processes	Surveys with mid-level party officials
Mobilize voters to press demands without systemic destabilization	Interviews with local experts
Respond to local-level and national citizen concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Party nationalization;</li> <li>• Policy proposals to evaluate regional targets of programs</li> </ul>
Develop transparent methods for selection of qualified candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal and informal rules for candidate choice (interviews and by-laws)</li> <li>• Competitiveness of primaries or conventions</li> <li>• Background data on candidates and elected officials (diversity)</li> </ul>
Leaders held accountable to membership via use of transparent selection methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electoral rules</li> <li>• Leadership turnover in party and government posts</li> <li>• Reelection rates of leaders vs rank &amp; file</li> </ul>
Party members cohere around ideology and policy positions (and its legislators thus vote in a unified manner), but are tolerant of dissent. Positions are not dictated by a leader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of legislative roll-calls (Rice scores)</li> <li>• Interviews about leaders' powers to enforce discipline;</li> <li>• Elite interviews to assess degree of ideological or policy agreement among party's legislators</li> </ul>
<b>Representation</b>	

Link national and regional constituencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Party platforms and advertisements;</li> <li>• Expert analyses</li> </ul>
Increase participation of historically excluded populations in internal party decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parties' membership data, with detail on gender, youth, and minority groups</li> <li>• Composition (by these groups) of parties' internal committees, leadership posts, and candidates.</li> </ul>
<b>Participation</b>	
Increase voters' identification with parties and demands for party services	Surveys testing voter ties to parties
Seek citizen input and respond to their concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data on constituency service;</li> <li>• Interviews about forms of citizen contact</li> </ul>
Inform and empower citizens to participate in the political process	Interviews about outreach efforts
Increase participation of women, youth, and underrepresented groups as candidates and as party leaders	Data on participation in party-run training sessions for traditionally excluded groups
Parties respond to voter concerns for national level policy reform	Do parties develop and disseminate positions and proposed legislation on national priorities?
Voters identify with parties due to ideological positions and/or support of community issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey data to match voters' partisan preferences voters' ideology, and change in partisan preferences over time</li> <li>• Electoral data on split-ticket voting can also help to distinguish preferences for the party versus a particular candidate</li> </ul>
Citizens and groups contact, request, or demand services from parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parties' records about these contacts</li> <li>• Interviews with social groups</li> </ul>
Parties develop national constituency without ignoring local representation duties	Regional level electoral data to evaluate party nationalization
<b>Governability and Good Governance</b>	
Parties develop capacity for bill analysis and developing legislation	Interviews about how parties analyze policy; experience of party members dedicated to this task
Parties negotiate for compromises (sacrificing ideology battles for policy accords)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll call or other data to show which parties' supported important legislation;</li> <li>• Co-signing of proposals;</li> <li>• Records on participation in policy forums</li> </ul>
Opposition parties participate constructively in policy decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews about development of key legislation</li> <li>• Roll-call and co-sponsorship of bills</li> </ul>
Governing parties allow opposition access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with government and opposition parties</li> </ul>
<b>Stable and Peaceful Competition</b>	
Parties run aggressive but "responsible" campaigns	Interview evidence on parties' campaign practices
Parties develop roots in society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview evidence of parties' participation with local groups</li> <li>• Presence of partisan activities during non-electoral seasons</li> </ul>
Parties build support based on long track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy specificity in platforms;</li> </ul>

record of policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surveys to assess whether voters choose parties who are closely aligned with them on policy issues (policy vs identity voting)</li> </ul>
<b>Rule of Law and Free and Honest Elections</b>	
Internal party elections are run fairly and constituents accept outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role of electoral authority in overseeing parties' internal elections</li> <li>Interviews with party members about competitiveness of internal elections</li> </ul>
Parties deploy trained poll watchers to all polling places	Records on number of partisan poll workers deployed; training programs for those poll watchers
Parties participate in national debates about electoral processes	Number of fora and interview data about substantive role of participants
Parties use exit polls to validate results	Interview or media reports regarding party statements about validity of electoral outcomes
Parties raise sufficient funds for campaigns and non-campaign activities through legal and transparent means	Survey data on perceptions of corruption in parties

## Appendix 3: Technical Guidance

### Calculating the Effective Number of Parties in a System:

The Effective Number of Parties (ENP) is a weighted measure of electoral support (or the number of seats in the legislature). The statistic does not presuppose a “best” type of system; it is simply an analytical tool that supports cross-time or cross-country comparisons. The statistic, then, is meant as a tool to aid the analyst in weighing the governability-representation tradeoff.

The ENP is calculated by squaring the vote percentage of each party, summing those values, and then taking the inverse. For example, if there are 3 parties which won 30, 20, and 50 percent of the vote, the formula is simply:  $1/(.30^2+.20^2+.50^2) = 2.63$ . Formally the formula is:

$$N = 1 / \sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2$$

where p is the party’s vote and i represents each party.

This measure does not always produce an intuitive measure of the number of parties, but it is particularly valuable when considered over time and in conjunction with a description of the party system. This number, further, might be calculated for different regions of the country. Are there a “balanced” number of competitors in some regions but not others? For this reason, the team might consider the raw number of parties registering and competing in different regions of the country.

Note that the ENP gives some indication of both voter and party behavior, while the raw number is simply a measure of elite actions. That is, since the ENP indicates something about voters’ willingness to concentrate their vote among larger parties, the raw number is simply an indicator of elites’ willingness to expend the time and energy to get on the ballot.

### **Calculating electoral volatility (Pederson Index)**

The Pedersen index simply takes the difference (in absolute value) in all parties' support across two elections and divides this number by 2. Assume that in election 1 the three parties, A, B, and C won respectively 50, 28, and 32 percent of the vote, but then these figures changed to 40, 37, and 23 the Pedersen index would yield:

$$(|50-40| + |28-37| + |32-23|)/2 = (10+9+9)/2 = 14$$

These figures are easily compared across time or with other countries. There are more sophisticated techniques, and the numbers should be evaluated to assess the directions of the shift in support.

### **Calculating nationalization:**

There are several ways to estimate a country's nationalization score (Caramani, 2000; Jones & Mainwaring, 2003; Morgenstern, 2009), the simplest of which takes the standard deviation of a party's electoral support across different regions (or other geographical area). If the standard deviation is large, then the support levels are uneven. A second measure is the Gini index, which specifically tests for the degree of dispersion.

An example of the standard deviation, consider a country with 4 districts. If in the respective districts Party A won 30%, 24%, 15% and 0, the standard deviation would be about 13. If party B won 18%, 16%, 21% and 14%, it would have a standard deviation of just 3, which suggests more that it is more highly nationalized. Note that the nationalization score does not account for a party's size. Because the variance among districts would likely be smaller, small party will generally have low standard deviations (implying high nationalization).

### **Party discipline (Rice Scores)**

Rice scores measure party unity in the legislature by calculating the difference between the percentage of AYE and NAY votes for a given party. If most members agree, then Rice scores are high. For example, if a party had 60 yes votes and 10 no votes, the Rice score would be  $60/70-10/70 = 50/70$  or 71.4.

Carey (2008) and others sometimes weight the votes due to the competitiveness of the vote or rates of abstention.

### **Survey questions for analyzing policy based, retrospective, and identity voting:**

Analysis of retrospective voting requires information about the voters' knowledge of party positions, their own ideological perspective, and their support for the different parties. Survey questions will vary for each country situation, based on local issues. Further, while the questions below suggest placing parties and respondents on left-right scales, these are not relevant to all

situations. This following battery of questions, then, provides only a base from which to begin discussions about survey design.

Questions that assess knowledge of parties, particularly with national vs local impacts:

- What is the position of party X with relation to [policy area or issue]?
- On a scale where 0 is far left and 10 is far right, please indicate the positions of the following parties:

Questions that assess respondent's position on such policy areas or issues:

- Would you support [specific position on policy area or issue]?
- On a scale where 0 is far left and 10 is far right, please indicate your political position.

Questions that assess respondent's support of different parties.

- For which party did you vote in the previous election?
- Which parties would you consider voting for?
- Which parties would you never vote for?
- On a scale of 1-10, please rate the following parties: Party A, Party B...

Questions that assess retrospective voting.

These questions can be divided into “sociotropic” and “pocketbook” voting. For the former, the questions would begin by asking how the voter assesses the economic situation either currently or in the previous year. The responses would then be compared with the voter’s electoral preferences or support of the incumbent. If the voter views the economy positively, retrospective voters should view the incumbent favorably, and vice versa. Pocketbook voting is similar, except that questions focus on change in the voter’s own economic situation rather than changes in the overall economy.

## **Appendix 4: Consolidated List of Assessment Information**

<b>Background Materials</b>
State Department Human Rights Reports, Amnesty International Reports, Freedom House's Freedom in the World, Global Integrity Index, Bertelsmann Transformation Index, NDI/IRI reports, election observer reports, Open Budget Project; reports from survey efforts like LAPOP, Afrobarometer, Eurobarometre, and World Values Survey
<b>Voting and Official Data</b>
District or other sub-national level election results Voting turnout Reported campaign expenditures
<b>Survey Data</b>
Support for specific parties, trust in elected officials and political institutions, urgent problems, ethnic tolerance, retrospective voting, knowledge of parties and politics, ideology of voters matched with partisan preferences
<b>Data from or about the National and Regional Legislatures</b>
Roll call data; bill sponsorship; budgets for technical staff; passage rate of executive and party (opposition) bills; reelection rates Seats held by women and minorities Committee and leadership composition, by gender and ethnicity
<b>Information and Political Institution</b>
Electoral laws Quota provisions Threshold requirements Party registration requirements Legislative rules of order Code of Conduct (if one exists) Laws on campaign finance, use of state resources, media access
<b>Data or Interview to collect from Parties and their Officials</b>
Accountability, Representation, and Participation Party rules covering recruitment, platform/agenda/policy development, internal policy expert groups, party selection of strategy/policy alternatives, and discipline Membership data, including information on gender and minority participation Party rules of order; organizational structure; functional units and personnel Plans to mobilize members and supporters for campaigns and voting Party platforms Recruitment, candidate and leadership selection processes How the platform, legislative agenda, and policy proposals are developed, and by whom How polling, focus group, or constituent feedback are used during and between election campaigns

<p>Civic education, get-out-the-vote, or other efforts to boost political participation generally</p> <p>Links to societal groups</p> <p>Outreach to marginalized populations, as well as recruitment, leadership development, and policymaking involvement, at both the national and sub-national levels</p> <p>Public access to code of conduct commitment (where relevant), party financing details, legislative activity details</p>
<p><b>Governability and Good Government</b></p> <p>Dynamics of coalition or opposition partners; dynamics of party leadership; shadow government activities; party discipline</p> <p>Watchdog functions on legislative committees, political appointments, constructive bills and amendments, ad hoc coalitions for single policy issues</p>
<p><b>Rule of Law and Free and Honest Elections</b></p> <p>Past issues with party or candidate registration, or other central election body decisions</p> <p>Characterization of party's political rhetoric and match with party platform; how supporters are mobilized and for what purposes</p> <p>Adherence to and enforcement of laws on campaign financing, use of state resources, access to media; transparency of state privatization, procurement, budget allocations, discretion by officials</p>
<p><b>Organizational and Technical Capacity</b></p> <p>Party by-laws on leadership selection, candidate selection, organization management, development of strategy, policies, and platforms</p> <p>Resources for financial oversight, policy analysis, communication, campaign/poll mobilization</p>
<p><b>Interview Themes with Political Analysts</b></p>
<p><b>Accountability, Representation, and Participation</b></p> <p>Recruitment, candidate and leadership selection processes</p> <p>Extent to which retrospective or identity politics motivates party supporters</p> <p>Civic education, get-out-the-vote, or other efforts to boost political participation generally</p> <p>Links to societal groups</p> <p>Outreach to marginalized populations, as well as recruitment, leadership development, and policymaking involvement, at both the national and sub-national levels</p> <p>How the platform, legislative agenda, and policy proposals are developed, and by whom</p> <p>How polling, focus group, or constituent feedback are used during and between election campaigns; quality of polling and/or focus group data</p> <p>Public access to code of conduct commitment (where relevant), party financing details, legislative activity details</p>
<p><b>Governability and Good Government</b></p> <p>Does opposition participate in policy process in constructive manner?</p> <p>Does the opposition gain access to information about government actions?</p> <p>Is there an effective oversight system—and what is the role of parties in that system?</p> <p>Dynamics of coalition or opposition partners; dynamics of party leadership; shadow government activities; party discipline</p> <p>Watchdog functions on legislative committees,</p> <p>The process of political appointments,</p>

Are policy coalitions ad hoc coalitions or are there more permanent patterns of voting in the legislature?

**Rule of Law and Free and Honest Elections**

Past issues with party or candidate registration, or other central election body decisions

Characterization of party's political rhetoric and match with party platform; how supporters are mobilized and for what purposes

Adherence to and enforcement of laws on campaign financing, use of state resources, access to media; transparency of state privatization, procurement, budget allocations, discretion by officials

**Organizational and Technical Capacity**

Resources for financial oversight, policy analysis, communication, campaign/poll mobilization

Party by-laws on leadership selection, candidate selection, organization management, development of strategy, policies, and platforms

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