

Guide to

# Good Governance Programming



Be the change

## Table of Contents

How to Use this Guide .....	2
Acronyms and Abbreviations .....	3
<b>I. Core Concepts</b>	
<b>1. Framework and Principles of Good Governance .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Mercy Corps' Focus .....	6
1.2 A Framework for Good Governance .....	7
1.3 Principles of Good Governance .....	8
<b>2. Accountable Decision-making .....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Leadership .....	11
2.2 Affecting Policy and Legislation .....	16
<b>3. Civic Participation and Voice .....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Citizen Rights and Responsibilities for Civic Participation .....	21
3.2 Advocacy .....	25
3.3 Partnerships and Networking .....	27
3.4 Access to Information .....	30
<b>4. Responsive Government and Effective Public Service Delivery .....</b>	<b>35</b>
4.1 Working with Community/Village-level Government and other Local Leaders .....	35
4.2 Working with Municipal/Provincial-level Government .....	39
4.3 Working with National/Central-level Ministries and Offices .....	41
<b>II. Tools and Resources</b>	
<b>5. Tools for Good Governance Programming .....</b>	<b>46</b>
5.1 Design and Planning Tools .....	46
5.2 Implementation Tools .....	48
5.3 Monitoring and Evaluating Tools .....	52
<b>6. Design, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation and Resources .....</b>	<b>54</b>
6.1 Design of Governance Programs and Activities .....	55
6.2 Monitoring and Evaluation .....	66
<b>III. Implementation Experience</b>	
<b>7. Impact Examples .....</b>	<b>68</b>
7.1 Colombia and Guatemala: A South-South Model Tackles Land and Governance .....	68
7.2 India: Good Practices in Public-Private Partnerships .....	70
7.3 Southern Sudan: Rights and Responsibilities for Good Governance .....	72
7.4 Global Citizen Corps: Youth Civic Participation for a Better World .....	74
7.5 Kosovo: Strengthening Capacity at the Municipal Level .....	76
7.6 Somalia: Engaging Grassroots Traditional Governance Initiatives .....	78
<b>8. Sector Integration .....</b>	<b>80</b>
8.1 Where Governance Intersects Food Security .....	80
8.2 Climate Change and Governance: Dual "Force-multipliers" .....	82
8.3 Youth: Fostering Civic Participation Today and in the Future .....	84
8.4 Women, Gender and Good Governance .....	86
8.5 Economic Development and Good Governance: The Public and Private Sectors .....	88
8.6 Healthy Societies Depend on Good Governance .....	90
8.7 Disaster Risk Reduction: The Central Role of Good Governance .....	92
8.8 Conflict Management/Peacebuilding: Good Governance in High Risk Environments .....	94
8.9 Learning for Effective Aid Policy and Practice .....	96
<b>IV. Annexes</b>	
A Mercy Corps Capacity Statement: Good Governance Programming .....	98
B Relevant Resources by Mercy Corps and Others .....	102
C Glossary of Terms .....	110
D Mission Metrics Indicator Guidelines for Theme #10, Accountable Governance .....	112

## How to Use this Guide

Mercy Corps' *Guide to Good Governance Programming* is a resource for designing, planning, implementing and evaluating governance programs and activities with governments.

**Audience** – This guide is designed for use by program teams, experienced hands looking for new approaches, team members new to Mercy Corps and our partners bringing governance into their relief and development work. Program teams will find field-proven tools and practical lessons about implementation. Technical support teams and other advisors can draw on the capacity statement and impact examples to identify best practices and inspire new program design. For country and regional leaders, the guide illustrates the role of good governance efforts in the context of larger strategies and is useful for representation and outreach. The guide is also a civic engagement resource for communities themselves.

### You Might Be Wondering...

- *Governance is such a broad area! What does Mercy Corps focus on?* See the Governance Framework in [Section 1.2](#).
- *I'm designing a monitoring plan – where do I start?* Find governance sector indicators in [Chapter 6](#).
- *Can development organizations really influence laws and policies?* See [Chapter 7](#), Impact Examples from the field.
- *How do I integrate governance activities in current programs?* Find out in [Chapter 8](#), Sector Integration.

**Outline** – In this guide, [Chapter 1](#) presents Mercy Corps' framework for good governance programming. [Chapters 2-4](#) discuss three interrelated categories of programming, with diverse examples and practical methods developed by program teams. [Chapter 5](#) presents relevant tools – useful for many stages of the program cycle. [Chapter 6](#) provides advice for design, monitoring and evaluation, including capacity statements, a menu of indicators and resources for further learning. [Chapter 7](#) is a set of Mercy Corps cases written by field-based colleagues that explore the impact of governance activities. [Chapter 8](#) focuses on the critical challenges we seek to address such as food security, climate change and youth programming in which the issues of governance are cross-cutting and good governance activities can be integrated for program sustainability. The guide is informed by lessons from governance programs or activities in every global region – and at various stages along the relief to development continuum. Nearly all of the tools were originally created by field teams.

If you are a Mercy Corps team member, follow the links in this document or go to the Digital Library to find electronic versions of all good governance resources. Otherwise, referenced resources can be requested by emailing Ruth Allen, Director of Community Mobilization, Governance and Partnerships, at [rallen@bos.mercycorps.org](mailto:rallen@bos.mercycorps.org).

**Acknowledgements** – This guide was developed by Ruth Allen with significant contributions from Anna Young, Bill Farrell, Jim White, Gary Burniske, Borys Chinchilla, Kathy Fry, Matthew Alexander, Sebastian Marcucci, Abdullahi Gabho, Michael Gorjin, Allison Huggins, Iveta Ouvry, Mandal Urtnasan, Fransiska Mardiananingsih, Jawad Ali, Sardar Mohammed, Sa'ad Salih Khudair, Steve Haley, Penny Anderson, Heather Hanson, Carron Beaumont, Robert Sherman, Rebecca Wolfe, Dory McIntosh, Sophia Dawkins, John Floretta, Sahar Alnouri, Barbara Willett, Joe Dickman, Sarah Warren, Sharon Morris, Diane Johnson and Kevin Grubb.

### Work in Progress!

Does your team have governance resources or tools that you trust and would recommend to others?

Is there a topic that you would like to know more about or a tool that would be helpful?

If so, we want to hear from you! We will continue to add tools and approaches as annexes available on Mercy Corps' Digital Library. Please contact Ruth Allen at [rallen@bos.mercycorps.org](mailto:rallen@bos.mercycorps.org) or Sanjay Gurung at [sgurung@field.mercycorps.org](mailto:sgurung@field.mercycorps.org).

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ACCCRN</b>	Asian City Climate Change Resilience Network (Indonesia)
<b>BMS</b>	Breast Milk Substitute
<b>BRIDGE</b>	Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services (Sudan)
<b>CAG/CWG</b>	Community Action Group/Community Working Group
<b>CAIP</b>	Community Action Investment Program (Tajikistan)
<b>CAP</b>	Community Action Program (Iraq)
<b>CAR</b>	Central Africa Republic
<b>CDC</b>	Community Development Committee/Council
<b>CDI</b>	Collaborative Development Initiative (Kyrgyzstan)
<b>CIVICUS</b>	World Alliance for Citizen Participation
<b>CPBD</b>	Community Peace-Building and Development (Liberia)
<b>CRDA</b>	Community Revitalization through Democratic Action (Serbia)
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CSRCA</b>	Civil Society Resource Center Association (Ethiopia)
<b>DEBORAH</b>	Development, Rights and Economical Freedom to Victims and Survivors of Domestic Violence (Honduras)
<b>DFID</b>	UK Department for International Development
<b>DM&amp;E</b>	Design, Monitoring & Evaluation
<b>DPC</b>	Disaster Preparedness Committee
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>DRL</b>	US Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>ECHO</b>	European Community Humanitarian Organization
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
<b>FSI</b>	Failed States Index
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based Violence
<b>GCC</b>	Global Citizen Corps
<b>GEO</b>	Global Emergency Operations
<b>GHI</b>	Global Health Initiative
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information Systems
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>IADO</b>	Iraqi Alliance of Disability Organizations
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>ILO</b>	International Labor Organization
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-governmental Organization
<b>INR</b>	Indian Rupees
<b>KDRRI</b>	Kailali Disaster Risk Reduction Initiatives (Nepal)
<b>LEAPP</b>	Learning for Effective Aid Policy and Practice
<b>LGCI</b>	Local Government Capacity Index
<b>LINCS</b>	Localizing Institutional Capacity for Sudan
<b>LNGO</b>	Local Non-governmental Organization
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MFI</b>	Micro-finance Institution
<b>MISI</b>	Municipal Integration and Support Initiative (Kosovo)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental Organization
<b>OCI</b>	Organizational Capacity Index

<b>ODI</b> .....	Overseas Development Institute (UK)
<b>ODM</b> .....	Orange Democratic Movement (Kenya)
<b>PALM</b> .....	Procurement, Administration and Logistics Management
<b>PCI</b> .....	Peaceful Communities Initiative (Kyrgyzstan)
<b>PIA</b> .....	Participatory Impact Assessment
<b>PMP</b> .....	Performance Monitoring Plan
<b>PNU</b> .....	Party of National Unity (Kenya)
<b>PRA</b> .....	Participatory Rural/Rapid Appraisal
<b>PRT</b> .....	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
<b>PWD</b> .....	Persons with Disabilities
<b>RAE</b> .....	Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian
<b>REACH</b> .....	Realizing Empowerment, Advocacy and Communication for Human Rights (CAR)
<b>REDD</b> .....	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
<b>REED</b> .....	Resources for Equitable Development (Colombia)
<b>SEEDS</b> .....	School Environment and Education for Somalia
<b>SDC</b> .....	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
<b>SIPED</b> .....	Strengthening Institutions for Peace and Development (Somalia)
<b>SMS</b> .....	Short Message Service
<b>S/NRM</b> .....	Sustainable/Natural Resource Management
<b>Sphere</b> .....	Sphere Standards in Disaster Response
<b>TCPP</b> .....	Tajikistan Conflict Prevention Program
<b>UK</b> .....	United Kingdom
<b>UN</b> .....	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b> .....	UN Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b> .....	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b> .....	UN Children's Fund
<b>UNIFEM</b> .....	UN Fund for Women
<b>US</b> .....	United States
<b>USAID</b> .....	US Agency for International Development
<b>WHO</b> .....	World Health Organization (UN)



Mercy Corps helps people in the world's toughest places turn the crisis of natural disaster, poverty and conflict into opportunities for progress. Driven by local needs and market conditions, our programs provide communities with the tools and support they need to transform their own lives. Our worldwide team of 3,700 professionals is improving the lives of 19 million people in more than 40 countries. For more information, see [www.mercycorps.org](http://www.mercycorps.org)

Front cover photo credits (clockwise from top left):  
 Ulla Dons/Mercy Corps. Nepal, 2009  
 Miguel Samper/Mercy Corps. Colombia, 2010  
 Michaela Ledesma/Mercy Corps. Eritrea, 2005  
 Cassandra Nelson/Mercy Corps. Iraq, 2003

## Chapter 1. Framework and Principles of Good Governance

**Government** is made up of the structures and systems established for service delivery and ensuring security, voice and protection of all people in a country's borders who fall under authority of the state.

**Governance** is the process of decision-making and how those decisions are implemented. Governance is good when the systems and processes are accountable, transparent, just, responsive and participatory.

*“Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development.”* – Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations

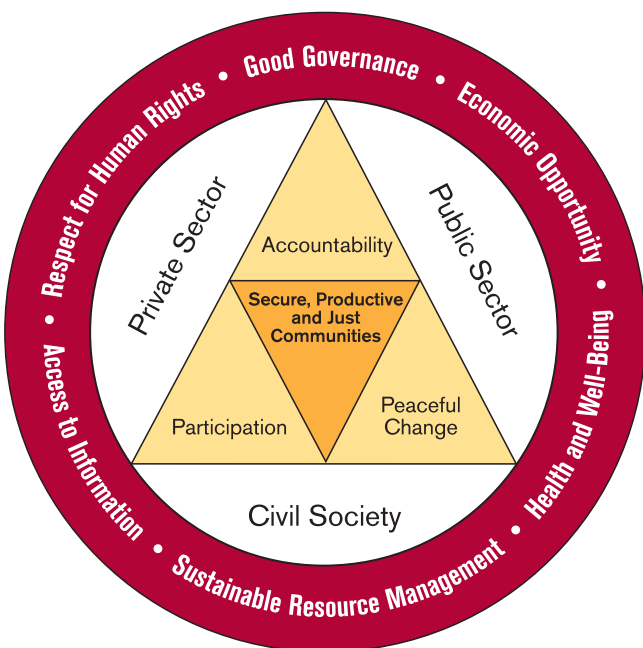
*“Government must be more ambitious than a do-no-harm approach – it must actually be capable of doing some good.”* – Paul Collier, author of *The Bottom Billion*

*“It’s the little things citizens do. That’s what will make the difference. My little thing is planting trees.”* – Wangari Maathai, winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize

The terms “governance” and “good governance” are now fully part of the language of development. Whereas bad governance is broadly recognized as a root cause of poverty, good governance is often seen as a way to cure all ills. Donors and companies are increasingly basing their aid and investments on countries’ governance conditions or plans for reform. Some equate governance failure with global trends such as climate change or the youth bulge as a force able to rapidly undo development efforts, whereas governance success has the potential to quickly leverage and sustain development gains. Governance is thus a central part of the development landscape.

Governance is also a powerful component of integrated programming for Mercy Corps and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Since, at its core, governance is about decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented, its influence cross-cuts all sectors and locations of relief and development programming. Mercy Corps believes that each country needs to decide its own economic and social priorities with leadership from government, in partnership with and accountable to the people who live in the country. Good governance brings the informed will of the people into governments’ decision-making. In this way, good governance is not an end in itself, but rather a means to building and sustaining secure, productive and just communities.

Figure 1. Mercy Corps’ Vision for Change



### KEY: UNDERSTANDING THE VISION FOR CHANGE FRAMEWORK

**The Center:** Mercy Corps’ mission statement – the end result of our Vision for Change.

**The Three Principles:** essential behaviors that guide healthy interaction between everyone involved in the process.

**The Sectors:** the dynamic interaction among stakeholders in these three sectors is critical to achieving positive, sustainable change.

**The Outer Ring:** conditions in the external environment that are necessary to sustain secure, productive and just communities.

## 1.1. Locating Good Governance in Our Vision for Change

As reflected in Mercy Corps' Vision for Change, government or the public sector is one of the actors that contributes to good governance along with the civil society and private sectors. Individuals, institutions and organizations within these three sectors need to be strong, accountable and participatory and able to interact effectively with one another and with their communities and constituents for good governance. Mercy Corps often seeks to build the capacity of one or more of these sectors, while strengthening their capacity to work with one another through:

- **Inclusive and accountable decision-making**
- **Equitable civic participation and voice**
- **Effective public service delivery and government responsibility**

Translating these broad concepts into practical actions and programs is a huge challenge for many organizations. How do you get to good governance from the status quo? Is it possible to ensure the practice of good governance is maintained once it has been started? What is the role of NGOs in working toward good governance? This publication is one among several ways Mercy Corps is responding to growing needs expressed by teams for practical guidance and tools to meet the opportunities and challenges of fostering good governance.

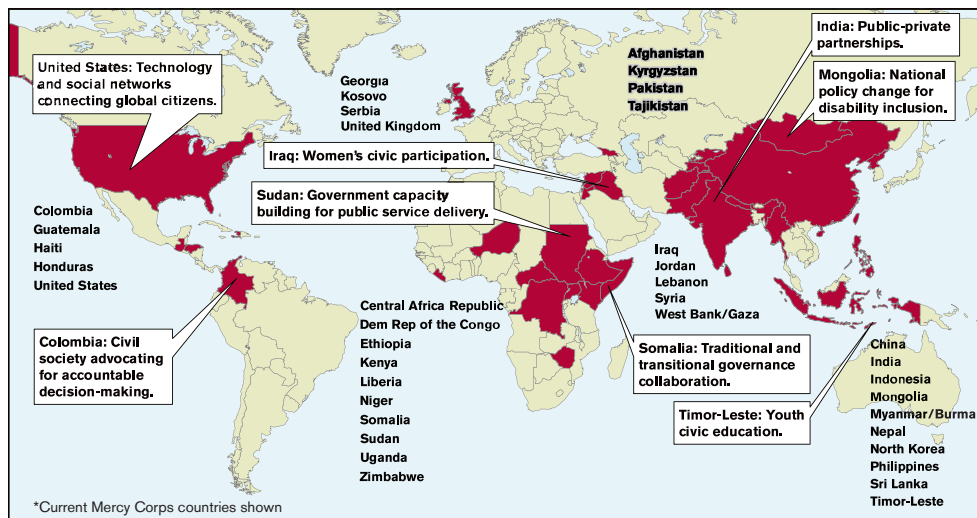
Mercy Corps focuses on transitional environments where populations are wrestling with poverty, conflict, poor resources and weak government. Issues of governance are continuously cited by the majority of country teams in annual analysis of the contextual factors that influence our programming. This includes Mercy Corps' strategic areas, the global challenges of mega proportions particularly for transitional environments – the Youth Factor, Climate Change and Food Security. The teams who have integrated governance components into programming report that it facilitates community-led, market-driven development.

**There are many aspects of governance that different NGOs prioritize. To be consistent with our capabilities, strategy and Vision for Change, Mercy Corps focuses on:**

- 1) Building inclusive partnerships that facilitate diverse groups for equitable civic participation and voice;**
- 2) Modeling effective good governance for accountable decision-making and effective service delivery;**
- 3) Leveraging our wide scope of programming to find creative governance solutions to complex issues; and**
- 4) Acting as a trusted broker to convene diverse actors for agenda setting and positive change.**

*Figure 2. Good Governance Programming Around the World*

Good governance is integral to what we do in every Mercy Corps country and region, including these examples.

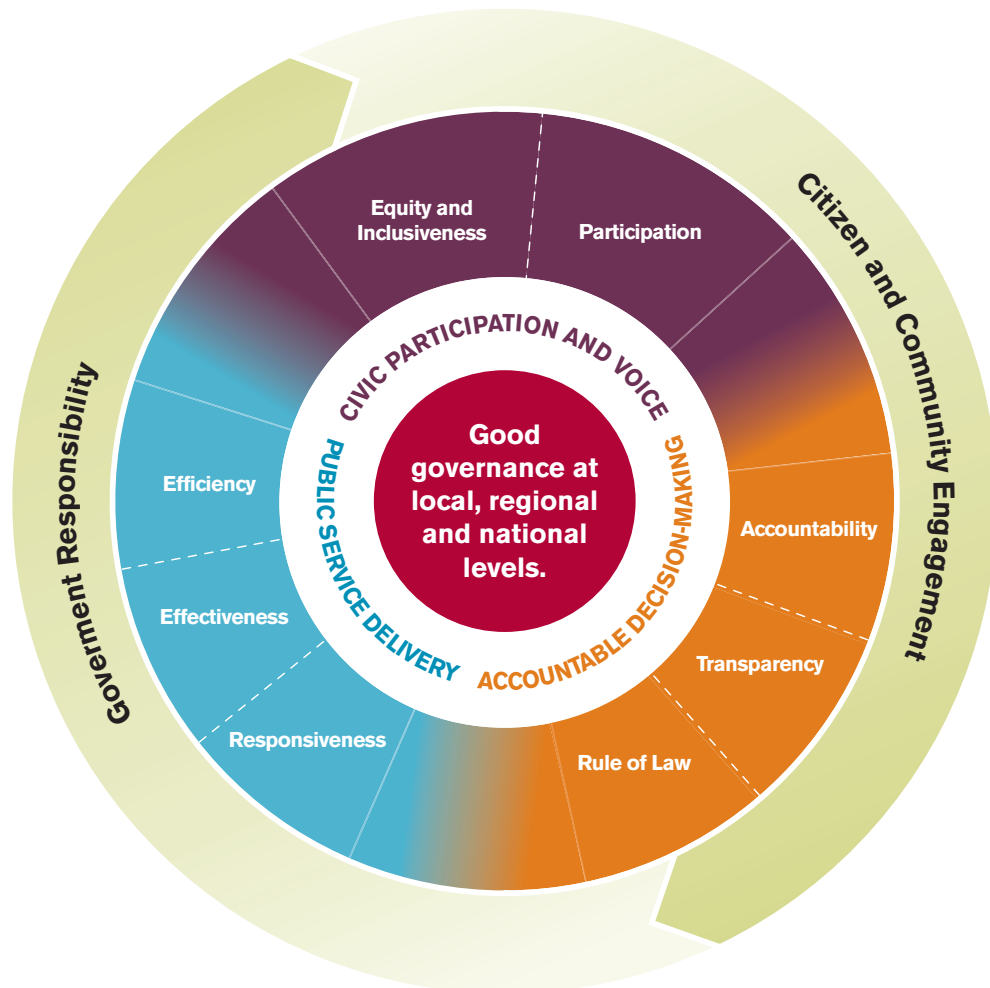


*“Governance is one of the long-term issues in our Vision for Change and we need to be bolder. It’s integral to all of what we do so if we can have impact, it’s a game changer.”*  
– Jim White, Mercy Corps Vice President of Operations

## 1.2. A Framework for Good Governance

*Figure 3.*

The Governance Framework locates programming within the context of Mercy Corps' conception of good governance.



### KEY: Using the Good Governance Framework

By starting at the center, the framework can be read like a logframe and used for program design, planning capacity-building, or evaluating program impact.

**Goal:** The goal reflects Mercy Corps' Mission Metrics Theme #10: *Accountable and capable governance at local, sub-regional or national levels.*

**Objectives:** Mercy Corps' governance efforts focus on three areas: citizen participation and voice, public service delivery and accountable decision-making.

**Principles:** The tenets of good governance are also sub-objectives of programming and can be program activities.

**Actors:** Interaction between citizens, with their communities and organizations, and government contribute to good governance.

**Cross-cutting Sectors:** Promoting good governance often requires integrated programming. For example, women or youth empowerment activities involve civic participation and accountable decision-making, whereas food security and climate change programs often require both public service delivery and accountable decision-making processes. This is reflective of Mission Metrics Theme #8: *Government, civil society, informed citizens, and private sectors successfully interact together.*



## How can I use this framework?

The Good Governance Framework serves as a tool to help program teams dissect governance approaches and surface programmatic hypotheses or “theories of change.” At the design stage, a program team might choose to use the framework as follows:

1. Identify whether a proposed program initiative relates more to government responsibility or individual and community engagement. This will help the team determine whether the program is more relevant to one side of the framework or a particular intersection.
2. Consider the cross-cutting sectors of the program (like women’s empowerment) and look at where these are located on the framework. This exercise will help direct the team to a more specific sector of the framework, and indicate which of the three governance objectives (civic participation and voice, accountable decision-making and/or public service delivery) the program is targeted towards.
3. Identify the relevant sub-objectives of governance (e.g. for the public service delivery objective: efficiency, effectiveness and/or responsiveness) that the program might focus on.

Through these steps, a program team can determine the specific aspects of good governance a program seeks to effect. This information helps teams understand and choose theories of change and types of change that are targeted and relevant to Mercy Corps’ governance approach.

The points of entry differ – sometimes we work more with local civil society organizations (CSOs) to raise awareness or help build their capacity. Other times we focus more on improving the capacity of local governmental officials and institutions. And sometimes we work simultaneously on both. However, the overarching objectives are the same: providing support for those actors in society who believe in the core principles of accountability, peaceful change and participation in order to ensure healthy and vibrant communities that are governed responsibly and justly.

The road to good governance is complex. It often begins with strengthening staff capacity in local institutions. However, the challenge is for individuals to take the next step and collaborate so that good governance becomes habit and part of the whole institution. While it is possible to mobilize communities and CSOs to give voice to their needs, their rights to speak out must also be protected. This guide will help teams find the tools and resources to promote good governance, to deepen our understanding of how best to strengthen inter-communal ties and to involve marginalized community members so they can gain the confidence and resources to participate fully in their communities. These principles are further discussed in the next section.

## 1.3. Principles of Good Governance

There are a number of ideas and principles for making good decisions that affect many people – decisions made by civil society organizations or governmental authorities, at a local, national or international level. These ideas form the Principles of Good Governance and are used by international and local NGOs as well as donors and governments themselves. They are also embedded in the Good Governance Framework.

**Principles: Good governance** is accountable, participatory, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in consensus-oriented decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.

**Accountability** – Accountability is a key requirement of good governance and constitutes the other side of participation. Accountability can take many forms, including accurate reporting of financial data, the publication of annual reports, and the responsible use of resources. One of the basic indicators of accountability within a group is its system of internal review and sharing findings as Mercy Corps requires of beneficiaries. Who is accountable to whom varies depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or institution. In general, an organization or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law. Government institutions, the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders about what they have done, will do or failed to do.

Accountability requires both transparency and the rule of law. Accountability involves reciprocal and full exchange of information. For example, in the case of CSOs, an organization has a responsibility to share information with the

community and other stakeholders. In exchange, community members also have a responsibility to share relevant information with the CSO. Accountability also demands the law, order and legislative environment for individuals to exchange information without threat or obstruction.

**Participation** – Good development programming promotes equitable participation, the chance for all members of society to have an informed and consequential voice in decisions that affect them. Participation by men and women, girls and boys is a cornerstone of good governance. Participation can be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives. Even representative forms of government do not necessarily ensure that the concerns of the most vulnerable in society are taken into consideration in decision-making, but that is something Mercy Corps programs strive to support. Participation mechanisms can provide the opportunity for transparent feedback so local governments can hear from a broad diversity of people regularly. Participation needs to be informed and organized – freedom of association and expression on the one hand and an organized civil society on the other. As there is often little political will for such participation in many countries, Mercy Corps and our partners can also play a role in helping governments see how it could benefit them.

***“Participation can involve consultation in the development of policies and decision-making, elections and other democratic processes. Participation gives governments access to important information about the needs and priorities of individuals, communities and private businesses. Governments that involve the public will be in a better position to make good decisions, and these decisions will enjoy more support once taken. While there may not be direct links between democracy and every aspect of good governance, clearly accountability, transparency and participation are reinforced by democracy, and themselves are factors in support of democratic quality.”***

– LINCS program manual, Sudan

A related concept is **consensus orientation** – the process of establishing mutual understanding among diverse stakeholders about what is in the best interest of the whole community or society and the general direction for achieving that vision. Every community and society incorporates people and groups with distinctly differing points of view and goals. Sustained good governance requires mediating different interests and establishing broad consensus in order for government and citizens to be able to take actions and the society to function without frequent conflict. Such consensus honors differences and is strongly influenced by historical, cultural and social contexts and the values of communities and societies over time, which can be drawn on to create a shared vision appropriate for the given group. Decisions and policies that have the support (or at least the understanding) of the majority are more likely to be effective and sustained.

### **Supply and Demand vs. Rights and Responsibilities**

Organizations around the world are currently having a robust debate about language related to governance.

Development approaches that focus on citizens as the main stakeholders for better governance represent the so-called “demand side” of the good governance equation – people advocating for their needs. Activities in this category include strengthening civil society capacity, working with the media, local communities and private sector groups to hold authorities accountable for development results. Examples include: Pro-poor approaches to justice reform, “bottom up” civic engagement, Social Accountability and Demand for Good Governance (DFGG) programs. The so-called “supply side” efforts support governments to provide effective and efficient services, including security, market regulation and management of common resources.

While supply and demand have been convenient ways to discuss governance, this formulation somewhat limits the roles of citizens versus government. Similarly, looking at the rights of citizens against the responsibilities of government is overly simplistic. Citizens, too, have responsibilities if good governance is to be achieved.

A term that encompasses both these concepts and is gaining popularity is “participatory governance” defined as *a social contract between citizens and leaders, involving ample opportunities for civic engagement and mutual accountability.*

**Equity and inclusiveness** – A society's wellbeing depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it, do not feel excluded from the mainstream, and therefore want to participate. This requires that all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.

**Transparency** – Transparency means that decisions, and their enforcement, follow established rules and regulations. It also means that *all* people who will be affected by such decisions have access to easily understandable information – in local languages and accessible to illiterate and blind/deaf community members.

Transparency means sharing information and acting in an open manner. It promotes access to information. Information, however, must be timely, relevant, accurate and complete for it to be used effectively such as through community radio. Transparency is also considered essential for controlling corruption in public life. Through public financial accountability and transparency, CSO and government can learn to more efficiently allocate resources. A lack of transparency can lead to inefficiencies and hinder development.

### What's the difference between accountability and transparency?

Accountability and transparency are indispensable pillars of good governance. They oblige states and civil society to focus on results, seek clear objectives, develop effective strategies, and monitor and report on performance. Transparency contributes to accountability.

*Accountability* = The responsibility and capacity to answer for actions and decisions to people affected by those actions or decisions.

*Transparency* = The act of sharing information openly; a characteristic of accountability.

**Rule of Law** – Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially. This concept is embedded in Mercy Corps' Vision for Change with "respect for human rights." It requires full protection of citizens and in many countries non-citizens too, such as refugees. Impartial enforcement of laws requires an independent judiciary and responsible police force.

**Effectiveness and efficiency** – Good governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at the society's disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

**Responsiveness** – Good governance requires that institutions and processes seek to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe and have mechanisms for soliciting ideas and giving updates to constituents. This is a key issue in many societies in transition where governments often pursue competing goals, and a lack of responsiveness can quickly erode trust in government despite its good works.

The following chapters show how these principles work in reality and how they can be integrated into programming in any sector.

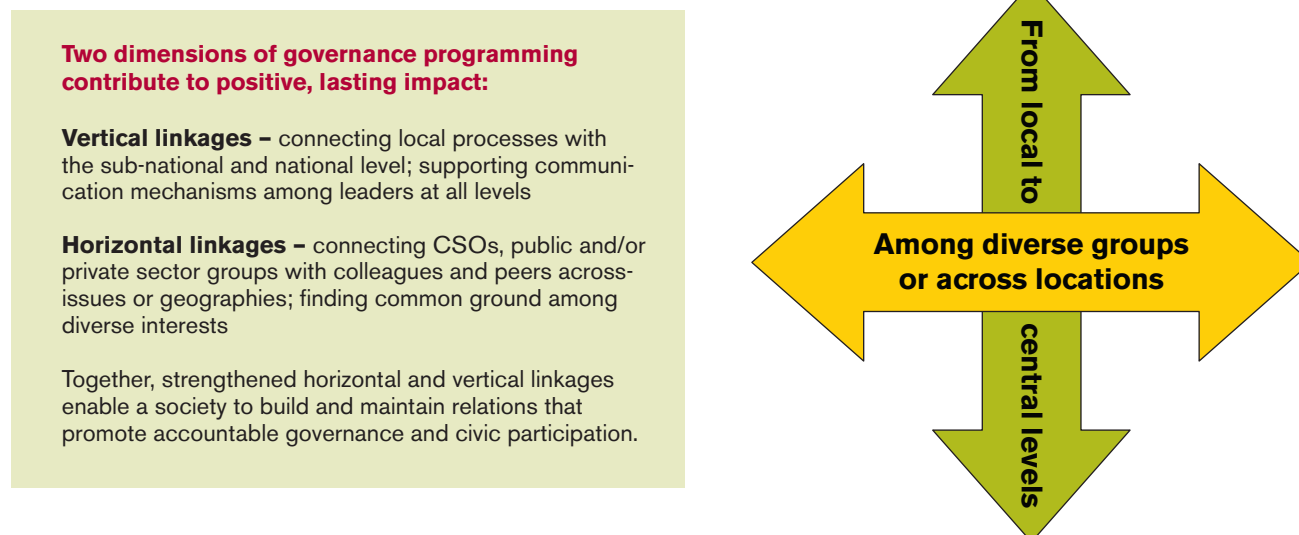
## Chapter 2. Accountable Decision-making

Good governance requires that decision-making processes are accountable and transparent. This includes economic governance, political governance with decisions about policy-making, and administrative governance decisions about policy implementation. Such processes are significantly shaped by the quality of leadership and the sustainability of decisions often dependent on laws and policies. This chapter examines the role of leadership and how people and their leaders interact, as well as how non-governmental groups can affect laws and policies.

### 2.1. Leadership

Governance programs often strengthen one or two dimensions of governance and leadership.

*Figure 4. Horizontal and Vertical Linkages*



Effective leadership plays an important part in good governance on both the vertical and horizontal levels:

- Leadership includes working vertically to connect citizens and local levels of government with national and international issues to ensure that decisions benefit citizens.
- Leadership also involves working horizontally. For example, municipal officials from several areas can collaborate to bring policy solutions to problems such as water management that affect a whole region. An example of horizontal leadership from CSOs is when groups from across sectors work together to educate voters to promote participation in local elections.
- Connecting vertically and horizontally means establishing a common language so that government can engage citizens in policy decisions and communities can get support from government for community plans.

Elected or appointed leaders drive governments' abilities to support an enabling environment for community-led, market-driven development. As a complement, leaders from civil society or the private sector have powerful and diverse perspectives that are invaluable to government agenda-setting and other decision-making. We have found that working on both dimensions is most effective for local ownership and the sustainability of program goals. This is sometimes accomplished through one program, but more often by multiple programs in a country portfolio that are designed to work closely together toward complementary goals.

Where appointed leaders and civil society actors collaborate, they can support citizen participation in the political process, protect citizen rights and ensure accountability. Good leadership embraces these partnerships to strengthen government capacity and promote sustainability. Conversely, poor leadership actively supports or passively allows corruption, the violation of citizen rights or the backslide of societies into instability.

Poor governance is characteristic of many of the 60 failed or failing states that are home to the so-called “bottom billion.”<sup>1</sup> Mercy Corps works in 19 of the 21 countries that top the Failed States Index.<sup>2</sup> In these places, economic growth has stagnated for decades, internal and interstate conflict is frequent, public health threats uncontrollable and populations vulnerable to abrupt shifts in global markets, impacts of climate change or natural disasters and devastation from conflict. The countries trying to change these trends have built alliances among government, businesses, and civil society, and embrace standards for transparency and accountability in governance.

**“What of the governments of the countries at the bottom billion? The prevailing conditions bring out extremes. Leaders are sometimes psychopaths who have shot their way to power, sometimes crooks who have bought it, and sometimes brave people who, against the odds, are trying to build a better future.”**

– Paul Collier, in *The Bottom Billion*



**Tip:** For good general guidance on leadership, see Mercy Corps’ *Cornerstones of Leadership* guide.

Mercy Corps’ Conflict Management Group also has a wide range of negotiation and leadership training materials that are adapted for use in conflict and post-conflict environments.<sup>3</sup>

### Legitimacy of Leadership: Lessons from the Do No Harm Project

The concept and methodology of “Do No Harm” – finding ways for relief and development work to not worsen tensions, but rather help people leverage local capacities for peaceful change – is widely used. But does it apply to good governance? The answer is yes, and particularly when it comes to understanding legitimacy of government leaders. In places such as Liberia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Iraq, communities familiar with the Do No Harm concept cited three things – again and again, across diverse contexts – as the main factors that contribute to their feeling that government leaders are working in the society’s best interest: 1) that leaders do not inflict violence on their people and actively try to prevent violence; 2) that leaders provide services; and 3) that leaders provide mechanisms for citizens to have a voice in decision-making, welcoming their voices to the process.

When working with leaders, Do No Harm methodology suggests encouraging the ABCs...

**Attitude + Behavior = Consequences.** As partners with government, Mercy Corps and the CSOs we work with are in important positions to work with decision-makers to understand that both what they do and how they do it matter for their long-term legitimacy and effectiveness.

### 2.1.1. Governance and Democracy

There are many forms of government, including: communist states (dominated by the Communist party, as in China); monarchies (ruled by a king or queen, as in Jordan); theocracies (where religious leaders rule, as in Iran); and military junta states (committee of military leaders, such as in Myanmar/Burma). Since most countries in which Mercy Corps works are governed through democracy in its various forms, including Indonesia, Colombia and Uganda, this form of government merits specific discussion here. Many also have a combination of both traditional and elected governance, often working in parallel.

Definitions of democracy generally focus on two principles: 1) equality of all citizens before the law and 2) freedom, which is secured by rights and liberties protected by a constitution. Democracy assumes different forms and shades, including:

- *Representative democracy* – people elect a small number of other people to represent their views and interests in a congress/parliament or through municipal councils.
- *Direct democracy* – decision-making takes place through systems that engage the majority of the people.

<sup>1</sup> Collier, Paul. *The Bottom Billion: Why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/06/21/2010\\_failed\\_states\\_index\\_interactive\\_map\\_and\\_rankings](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/06/21/2010_failed_states_index_interactive_map_and_rankings)

<sup>3</sup> Find out more about Do No Harm and related projects at [http://www.cdawww/project\\_profile.php?pid=DNH&pname=Do%20No%20Harm](http://www.cdawww/project_profile.php?pid=DNH&pname=Do%20No%20Harm) or about how the concept relates to international statebuilding at [http://www.oecd.org/document/30/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33693550\\_44408734\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_37413\\_00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/30/0,3343,en_2649_33693550_44408734_1_1_1_37413_00.html)

- *Deliberative or participatory democracy* – focuses on debating local issues in an open, honest and tolerant atmosphere, in which the process itself is important, providing opportunities for people to express their opinions and contribute to decision-making either through collective or individual forums.

Mercy Corps supports the right of people everywhere to choose the system of government that best reflects their culture and values and supports the core principles of good governance as outlined in the framework in [Chapter 1](#). While our programming approaches often most closely reflect the characteristics of deliberative democracy, elements of the Good Governance Framework are found in many of the different forms of government.



**Tip:** *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook: Strategies for Effective Civic Engagement in the 21st Century* has been used by a number of Mercy Corps teams, from Colombia to Indonesia.

### Elected Leadership – People collectively choose

People collectively choose who holds official offices through a decision-making process – elections. This is the usual mechanism by which modern democracy fills positions in the legislature or parliament, and sometimes in the executive and judiciary, as well as in regional and local government. This is also often the case in a wide range of other private and business organizations, from clubs to voluntary associations and corporations.

In political theory, the authority of the government in democracies derives from the consent of the governed. The principal mechanism for translating that consent into governmental authority is the holding of free and fair elections. Jeane Kirkpatrick, scholar and former United States (US) Ambassador to the United Nations (UN), has offered this definition: “Democratic elections are not merely symbolic... they are competitive, periodic, inclusive, definitive elections in which the chief decision-makers in a government are selected by citizens who enjoy broad freedom to criticize government, to publish their criticism and to present alternatives.”

Electoral systems refer to the detailed constitutional arrangements and voting systems which convert the vote into a decision about which individuals and political parties are elected to positions of power. The first step is to tally the votes, for which various vote counting systems and ballot types are used. Voting systems then determine the result on the basis of the tally. In most countries, the current government has agreements with international observers from NGOs and representing other governments to witness the process of voting and counting ballots. These observers report publically whether the elections can be deemed “free and fair” or are suspect for fraud.

Civil society groups can also serve as important observers. In places such as Zimbabwe and Guatemala, CSOs have worked as citizen observers as well as generated parallel tallies of votes to compare with official counts. These civil society activities provide a crucial “check” on government to confirm or challenge the credibility of elections.

No country is perfect! American citizens and organizations are often election observers in other countries. However, during the 2000 US presidential election, countries such as Kenya joked that it should be them sending election observers to the US due to major problems with tallying votes. Eventually a court decision was needed to finalize the election.

**Who can vote?** The “electorate” does not generally include the entire population; for example, many countries prohibit anyone judged mentally incompetent from voting, and all countries require a minimum age for voting. In some countries, voting is required by law; if an eligible voter does not cast a vote, he or she may be subject to punitive measures such as a fine. Helping eligible voters register and participate in elections is something Mercy Corps has done in several countries. For example, in Georgia our programs provided small grants to local NGOs to hold voter education seminars and distribute

information on election issues in rural communities that often felt disenfranchised from parliamentary elections.

**Who can be elected?** Not all government positions are elected. Some officials are appointed by an elected administration. The sorts of positions that require election depend on the specific political system. In a representative democracy, positions that require a certain skills-set are not filled through elections. For example, judges are usually appointed rather than elected to help protect their impartiality.

 **Tip:** Many people who have gone on to elected positions have built their skills through Mercy Corps programs. For example, women in Iraq who participated in trainings conducted by the Community Action Program are now members of their Provincial Council, using their positions to influence government institutions so that they recognize the serious role that women play in peacebuilding and reconstruction. Maintaining relationships and finding ways to collaborate with such influential leaders can create new program opportunities.

### Spotlight on Iraq: A Mercy Corps team prepares for contentious elections

By Sahar Alnouri, Mercy Corps-Iraq. Excerpts from blog posts in March 2010.

*Intense is the word I use most often to describe the 2010 election period in Iraq – not just Election Day itself, but all the build-up and preparation leading to the big day. For those of us based in Baghdad, we knew if there was trouble it would most likely be in our backyard. Trouble in Iraq could mean anything from car bombs and explosions to kidnappings and the return of sectarian violence. It could mean being cut off from roads, airports and most telecommunications. Roughly six weeks before the elections, a car bomb exploded about two blocks from the Mercy Corps office, driving home the reality that anything could happen during the election period.*



Photo: David Evans/Mercy Corps. Iraq, 2010

*Preparations ranged from completing lectures on democracy and elections in our women's literacy centers to prepping other projects for temporary closure and decreasing field visits.*

*On the morning of the elections, the explosions started at 6:45 am. They continued for about 3.5 hours – reports say there were over 100 explosions in Baghdad that morning. The Iraqi people, refusing to be intimidated by the violence and determined to have a say in their future, swarmed the polling stations shortly after the explosions stopped, including many of my colleagues (photo above).*

*The elections in Iraq were declared free and fair by the UN, but the extremely close results are being contested. I thought that once the elections were finalized, the security situation would stabilize. Instead, we are now operating in the power vacuum of the post-election period, waiting for a new Iraqi government to be formed.*

#### 2.1.2. Encouraging Accountable and Responsive Leadership

***“There goes my people. I must follow them, for I am their leader.” – Mahatma Gandhi***

**Giving Leadership Training** – A number of Mercy Corps programs, including in Mongolia and Sudan, have created trainings about leadership traits to encourage good governance in diverse contexts. Topics include:

- Attitudes toward others – seeing value in diverse perspectives can present leadership options and encourage civic engagement.
- Commitment to values – identifying what a group or society believes in and using these beliefs as a basis for decision-making.
- Measuring achievement as development of human potential – creating ways to measure achievement and productivity.
- Patience and perseverance – leaders need courage, patience, dedication, perseverance and endurance to learn how to face hardship and grow through adversity.
- Teamwork – helping others learn and achieve through collaboration. Teamwork involves respect for others, appreciation of diversity and generosity at the individual level. It also demands the ability to resolve conflict and bring people together in decision-making.

- Managing power and responsibility – taking ownership for decisions and follow-through is part of being an effective leader. “The ends do not justify the means” is a well-known principle of ethical behavior across the world. Leaders should not use their power to achieve goals without respect for processes of decision-making or accountability.
- Communication – strong, regular, two-way communication builds trust and effectiveness.
- Integrity and “leading by example.”



**Tip:** Find the “bright spots” – In every group or context there are people working hard for positive change. Regardless of how complex, corrupt or challenging the situation is, they are trying to tackle the important issues in an honest and effective way. To find these leaders, ask a variety of people in a community who they think is accountable and responsive and see which names come up over and over. A major success factor in Mercy Corps’ governance work is identifying these “bright spots”, or agents of change, helping them have the confidence to act and motivate their colleagues, and finding ways to work with them.<sup>4</sup>

**Coaching and Mentoring Leaders** – The above leadership principles are easier to learn than they are to put into practice. A number of program teams have found it invaluable to continue the relationship with trained leaders so they can exercise their skills. In Afghanistan, trained Mercy Corps teams provided on-the-job coaching for local staff of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. This helped the Ministry lead development of alternative livelihoods initiatives and mobilize community members in prioritization processes. Debriefing sessions allowed observations from Mercy Corps and self-reflection on the part of Ministry staff, drawing on lessons learned to identify challenges, areas for improvement, and successful approaches. The result was improved community mobilization, as well as further opportunity for hands-on learning to expand on the more formal initial leadership training.

**Holding Seminars and Exchanges** – Through seminars and exchanges, leaders build their technical knowledge and establish relationships for addressing complex issues. Mercy Corps regularly holds seminars for leaders about existing or emerging policy issues. We also facilitate government and other leaders to visit programs to see the impact of policies (or the lack thereof) and good practices from the private sector and civil society. Such approaches help link leaders at the local, municipal, national, and international level – an example of horizontal and vertical linkages working together as discussed in [Section 2.1](#). When planning seminars or exchanges, do choose participants and take other precautions that such activities are used, not just perks. See [Chapter 4](#) for how this approach applies to public service delivery.

### Women and Minorities in Leadership

Election or appointment provides the opportunity, but is not sufficient, for leadership. Women and minorities face major hurdles to election, and even successful candidates experience challenges to exercising their official responsibilities. Many struggle to win time in discussions and debates and are only assigned to official committees that deal with traditional womens’ roles, such as health care, education or cultural affairs. For this reason, there is particular need to promote training for female and minority leaders in negotiation, policy analysis, communication and technical issues, like written and unwritten procedures for constructing a political agenda. There is need to work with male leaders and other power-holders in majority groups to understand and value the perspectives offered by female and minority colleagues. With self-confidence and self-assessment skills, women and minorities can overcome obstacles and fulfill public roles effectively. Coaching, mentoring and support networking help individuals sustain that confidence and find their personal leadership styles.



Photo: Thatcher Cook/Mercy Corps. Indonesia, 2009

4 More ideas about finding and leveraging bright spots can be found in *Switch: How to Change When Change is Hard*. By Chip and Dan Heath (2010).



**Creating Action Agendas** – For governance to be good, learning must lead to action. Leaders and communities can develop plans and programs that address the needs of the society, building consensus around the proposals and alignment behind the steps they put forward. Agendas have a high likelihood of sustainability in the face of change when they include a positive vision for the community, region or society and reflect widely-agreed priorities. In a number of countries, Mercy Corps has helped national NGOs contribute to national vision statements and agendas. Mercy Corps has also helped local governments in numerous countries establish action agendas that translate national goal statements into municipal and city level visions. We have also seconded, or temporarily transferred team members to government offices to provide technical assistance or strategic planning support.

In 1999, Mercy Corps seconded a team member to the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMiK), which was acting as the government after the NATO bombing. Her role was to assist UNMiK to develop a social welfare system which evolved out of the humanitarian aid that had been provided for years. For over six years, the NGO community had been providing humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable, given that there was no functioning welfare system. They were therefore the most experienced actors in welfare provision at the time. As the region moved out of crisis, the challenge was to sustainably embed the skills for this service into the emerging government.

**Modeling Leadership/Fostering Trust** – While citizens sometimes have reason to distrust government, capable governments can struggle to gain the confidence of communities. It is a particular challenge for governments to nurture trust among people not regarded as citizens but who rely on the government for services, such as refugees. Mercy Corps' long-standing program for support to the Afghan refugee community has evolved from relief assistance to include community education about accessing public services. Mercy Corps has also collaborated with the Afghan Ministry of Health to support this refugee population and their Pakistani host communities. Under Ministry leadership, community awareness events inform populations about prevention of water-borne diseases and what to expect when visiting clinics in Pakistan. With Mercy Corps' support, the ministry has also trained district health officials in the technical and social dimensions of issues prevalent among Afghan refugees. Through observing national and local government leadership, refugees' trust in government health services improved significantly. This translated to an initial posture of trust when refugees encountered subsequent government-led initiatives.

**Building Transparency** – Leaders can also build trust through practicing transparency. [Chapter 3](#) discusses how media can be a partner in reinforcing government transparency and [Chapter 4](#) presents approaches governments can take to make service delivery transparent. In addition, Mercy Corps' partners have conducted assessments of the implementation of laws by executive leadership, legislative institutions and judicial governing bodies. Program teams have used these assessments to plan trainings and help leaders gauge how citizens and institutions view them.

## 2.2. Affecting Policy and Legislation

As [Chapter 1](#) states, good governance requires fair legal frameworks that governments enforce impartially. Legislation can play a role in ensuring rights, outlining the responsibilities and establishing the rules by which a society is governed. This is referred to as “the rule of law.” For citizens to voluntarily accept laws and policies, these must derive from processes that follow principles of good governance, including participation, transparency, consensus-orientation, inclusion and government responsiveness. As we know, these principles do not always shape law and policy and, in many societies, a wide range of laws, policies and regulatory practices hinder economic opportunities, access to information and some human rights. Resulting distortions in resource allocations carry high development costs.

There are three main components of most legal systems:

- 1) *the substantive component* – the topics and content of laws, which is often negotiated at the national level;
- 2) *the structural component* – how administrations, courts and police/security services promote policies and enforce laws, often implemented at the municipal, state or other sub-national level; and
- 3) *the cultural component* – the attitudes and behaviors regarding the law, which affect people on a daily basis at the community level.

Understanding these components helps Mercy Corps and our partners support communities to inform and contribute to policies and be recognized, protected and empowered under their laws.

[Chapter 3](#) discusses approaches for putting public pressure on government actors to create and implement laws and policies, including advocacy, networking, collaboration with the media and other strategies which are applicable for all three components. This chapter focuses on some of the examples of policy-level impact that Mercy Corps programming has supported.

**Influencing the substantive component of policies and legislation** – In Bosnia and Herzegovina, during the design of a program to support the socio-economic reintegration of mine victims, Mercy Corps realized that the activities being proposed would be impossible without the country adopting missing legislation on disability rights. After program approval, Mercy Corps and our partners raised the issue with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, which agreed to co-sponsor round table discussions about the preconditions for adopting a Law on Professional Rehabilitation, Training and Employment of Persons with Disabilities. The meetings reestablished dialogue among relevant institutions and initiated key steps towards adoption of the law.

### Referenda and Citizen Initiatives

New democracies or those recently undergoing significant social, political or economic change often use referenda, where people vote for or against a specific proposal, law or policy, rather than for a particular candidate, party or general policy platform. Referenda may be added to an election ballot or held separately. They may yield either binding or consultative outcomes, dependent on the constitution or national policy. Governments usually call referenda via the legislature. However, many democracies allow citizens to petition for referenda directly. These are called “citizen initiatives.” A famous example is the referendum of January 2011 in southern Sudan, which was a negotiated condition of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that helped end that country’s 22-year civil war. On a more local level, referenda can be called for mayoral elections – as has been done recently in Honduras – or to polling the population ahead of decisions on a piece of legislation.

### Shaping the structural component of policies and legislation

– In Guatemala, the 1996 Peace Accords called for agrarian reform and land dispute resolution. For centuries, unfair land distribution lay at the heart of armed and civil conflict, pitting business elites with unrestricted control over communal lands against farming families and indigenous groups (photo to right). While some legal structures were in place by 2003, Mercy Corps found many people had difficulty accessing their rights regarding land dispute resolution. With local partners we established a number of mediation centers, where trained teams provided legal support. The initiative included public education on land reform outlined in the Peace Accords. The aim of this activity was to increase government and public will for implementation. More information on this program is included in [Section 7.1](#).



Photo: David Evans/Mercy Corps. Guatemala, 2006

### Millennium Development Goals and National Policies

In September 2000, 189 UN member states adopted the Millennium Declaration on cooperation in development, human rights, good governance, peace and security and environmental protection. The Declaration laid the foundation for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – a series of inter-related targets, indicators and timeframes to be achieved by 2015. All 189 states thus have an individual and collective responsibility for the MDGs. In order to do so, the MDG action framework outlines how developing countries must adopt *pro-poor policies* and developed countries must adopt *pro-development policies* in order to achieve the MDGs.

Developing country governments face many challenges to upholding their side of the MDG bargain. Among other requirements, governments must improve governance processes and promote accountability in the use of donor assistance toward the Goals. They must also encourage and maintain all stakeholders' participation in actual realization of the Goals. At the national policy level, this includes integrating the Goals into country-wide development plans and budget systems. At the local policy level, civil society and local government leadership have responsibility for ensuring community ownership of strategies and allocation of resources to achieve the Goals. If such policies can attain the MDGs,

- More than 500 million people will be lifted out of extreme poverty;
- 250 million will no longer suffer from hunger;
- 30 million children will be saved who would otherwise die before reaching age five;
- Two million maternal deaths will have been averted;
- 350 million people will have access to safe drinking water; and
- 650 million people will have access to basic sanitation.



**Tip:** Learn more about how national policies in your country are helping or hindering progress toward the MDGs at [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/).

**Implementing the cultural component of policies and legislation** – Mercy Corps is working in partnership with Niger's *communes* (local-level administrative districts) to promote the participation of municipal officials in the design, implementation and monitoring of development activities as part of a nation-wide decentralization process. Throughout the process, religious CSOs, women's groups and other civil society partners receive trainings in the legislative process and advocacy. They are now sharing social and cultural considerations with policy-makers, as well as helping communities understand anticipated changes. For example, a health planning initiative helped community members find methods acceptable to parents and religious leaders for youth to participate in activities like HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns.



**Tip:** See [Chapters 3, 4 and 7](#) for more examples of policy-level impact that Mercy Corps programs have helped create.

## Chapter 3. Civic Participation and Voice

Every day there are news stories about citizen protests and rallies, people aching to have their voices heard about issues that affect their daily lives. Polls show that in some countries trust in the legitimacy of governance is increasing, while others are experiencing widespread public withdrawal from debate due to intimidation or growing skepticism about leaders' enthusiasm and ability to represent their interests.<sup>5</sup> Civil society is increasingly engaging because groups recognize that “politics as usual” in many countries does not meet the fundamental objectives of good governance.

Governments alone cannot achieve good governance. For governance to be good, citizens and CSOs must actively claim and affirm rights, and initiate efforts to stimulate broad participation in governance processes. Good governance requires local groups closest to citizens to voice pressing social, economic and political challenges and opportunities, and contribute toward a shared vision for development. Good governance requires collaboration with government to create space and mechanisms for citizens to play a meaningful role in public decision-making. Lack of political will poses a major barrier in some countries, though creative approaches from civil society groups can be successful in inspiring stronger political leadership from government. A major achievement of civil society movements – both internationally and within countries – is that many governments have embraced greater participation as central to addressing complex societal problems. A main theme from this experience is that civic participation often creates concrete benefits for citizens and government actors alike. These benefits can include:

- Greater government transparency, responsiveness and accountability;
- Enhanced development as a result of cross-sector collaboration, better-informed policies and more efficient and equitable public service delivery; and
- Citizen and CSO empowerment through increased information, relationships, experience and influence.

Civic participation is about fostering citizen voices in governance processes. This chapter discusses citizen rights and responsibilities for participation, the role of networking and partnerships for good governance, advocacy approaches for raising issues and holding decision-makers accountable, and the power of improved access to information.

### Political Will

Diverse actors cite “lack of political will” as a reason for everything from poverty to conflict, environmental degradation and ongoing corruption. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) states that political will constitutes the “demonstrated credible intent of political actors.” It will involves the commitment of leaders to take action and allocate the resources necessary to achieve goals. There are many factors that contribute to political will, including whether decision makers *want to act* (based on their and constituents' interests), have the *capacity to act* (the time, authority and resources) and *must act* (a compelling force from society). Citizens can have a significant influence where they show decision-makers why an issue – such as economic reform – is in their interest and that there are untapped resources available to help address the issue. Above all, citizens can stimulate action by mobilizing public opinion. Non-governmental actors have particular power to stimulate public action – a capacity that development actors should factor into strategies for public engagement and advocacy. For more ideas, see [From Political Won't to Political Will](#) by CIVICUS (2009).

<sup>5</sup> The website [www.worldpublicopinion.org](http://www.worldpublicopinion.org) provides information and analysis about public opinion on international policy issues, drawing together data from a wide variety of sources from around the world.

There are four main categories of public participation as illustrated in Table 1 below.

*Table 1. Methods of Public Participation<sup>6</sup>*

<p><b>1. Traditional methods of public participation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– co-option/committee work</li> <li>– question and answer sessions</li> <li>– consultation documents</li> <li>– public meetings</li> </ul>	<p><b>2. Traditional consultation of service recipients</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– complaints or suggestions schemes</li> <li>– service satisfaction surveys</li> <li>– other opinion polls</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Methods for two-way consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– interactive websites</li> <li>– referenda</li> <li>– town hall meetings</li> <li>– focus groups or citizen panels to provide representative input on specific issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>4. Methods of deliberative participation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– community/national plan or needs analysis</li> <li>– visioning exercises</li> <li>– issues forums</li> <li>– public agenda setting, policy making and planning</li> <li>– social contracts for public oversight</li> </ul>

Legitimacy, transparency, and citizen influence are all important dimensions related to civic participation. In addition, civic participation helps build “social capital.”<sup>7</sup> By engaging in decision-making, individuals and groups become more capable of organizing, articulating demands, successfully navigating policy arenas and interacting effectively with public officials and agencies. These skills and experiences are necessary to sustain political engagement on a routine basis between elections and other extraordinary, periodic moments when participation is expected. Skills of participation can give citizens a sense that they can influence change without violence, encouraging a “bottom-up” approach to historically “top-down” ways of decision-making.

Participation, however, can also foster disappointment where participatory processes raise expectations but fail to deliver results. Participation without dividends can create widespread public disillusionment with civic engagement. This guide presents several processes and tools aimed at supporting more broadly owned, sustainable changes for good governance.

CSOs can serve as vehicles for citizens’ voices provided there is an enabling environment on two levels. Firstly, CSOs require a conducive legislative environment, where the law protects their rights and activities. Citizens must feel that they can legally join and register associations with the approval of government.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, CSOs require a welcoming grassroots environment. For CSOs to take root, communities must socially accept participation of all groups. Where possible, CSOs should complement traditional structures and draw on pre-existing decision-making processes. According to these principles, Mercy Corps seeks to enhance both the legislative and social environments for CSOs to flourish.

What laws exist in your country that support civic participation and an enabling environment for civil society and the private sector to collaborate with government? Find out at these websites:

One World Trust [www.oneworldtrust.org/index.php](http://www.oneworldtrust.org/index.php)

International Center for Civil Society Law [www.iccsl.org](http://www.iccsl.org)

The Center for Civil Society Studies [www.ccss.jhu.edu](http://www.ccss.jhu.edu)

Governance and Social Development Resource Center “Development Preconditions” [www.gsdr.org](http://www.gsdr.org)

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from the Council of Europe’s *Capacity Building Toolkit*. 2005.

<sup>7</sup> See Sabatini, Fabio (2008), “Social Capital and the Quality of Economic Development”, *Kyklos*, Vol. 61, Issue 3, 466-499. <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/120779837/abstract>.

<sup>8</sup> Where laws are not implemented or otherwise supported, efforts such as Civil Society Watch can provide resources for local negotiation as well as bring international attention to bear. [www.cswatch.org](http://www.cswatch.org)

## 3.1. Citizen Rights and Responsibilities for Civic Participation

Active citizens take responsibility for their actions and are aware, respectful and sympathetic to the concerns of their neighbors. They welcome people from all backgrounds into the community and lend a hand to those most in need. One of Mercy Corps' key contributions in countries in transition is to strengthen the social bonds which hold communities together. Emphasizing the importance of citizen rights and responsibilities is a large part of this.

Citizen rights include the rights of all people in all societies to be recognized and treated with dignity. They include rights to expression, religion, justice, education and work. In strong communities, the rights of citizens are matched by the responsibilities of citizens to treat other members of society with respect and reach out with empathy and compassion beyond their own families.

Mercy Corps and our partners help strengthen citizen rights and responsibilities in several ways. We support local government and civil society actors to reestablish trust among groups in conflict. The Global Citizen Corps (GCC) initiative focuses on civic education and leadership development to transform the way young people see their role in society and strengthen their ability to influence the direction of their communities. The program stresses the importance of leading community actions as a means of building a sense of civic responsibility. See [Section 7.4](#) for more information on GCC.



Photo: Cassandra Nelson/Mercy Corps. Central Africa Republic, 2009

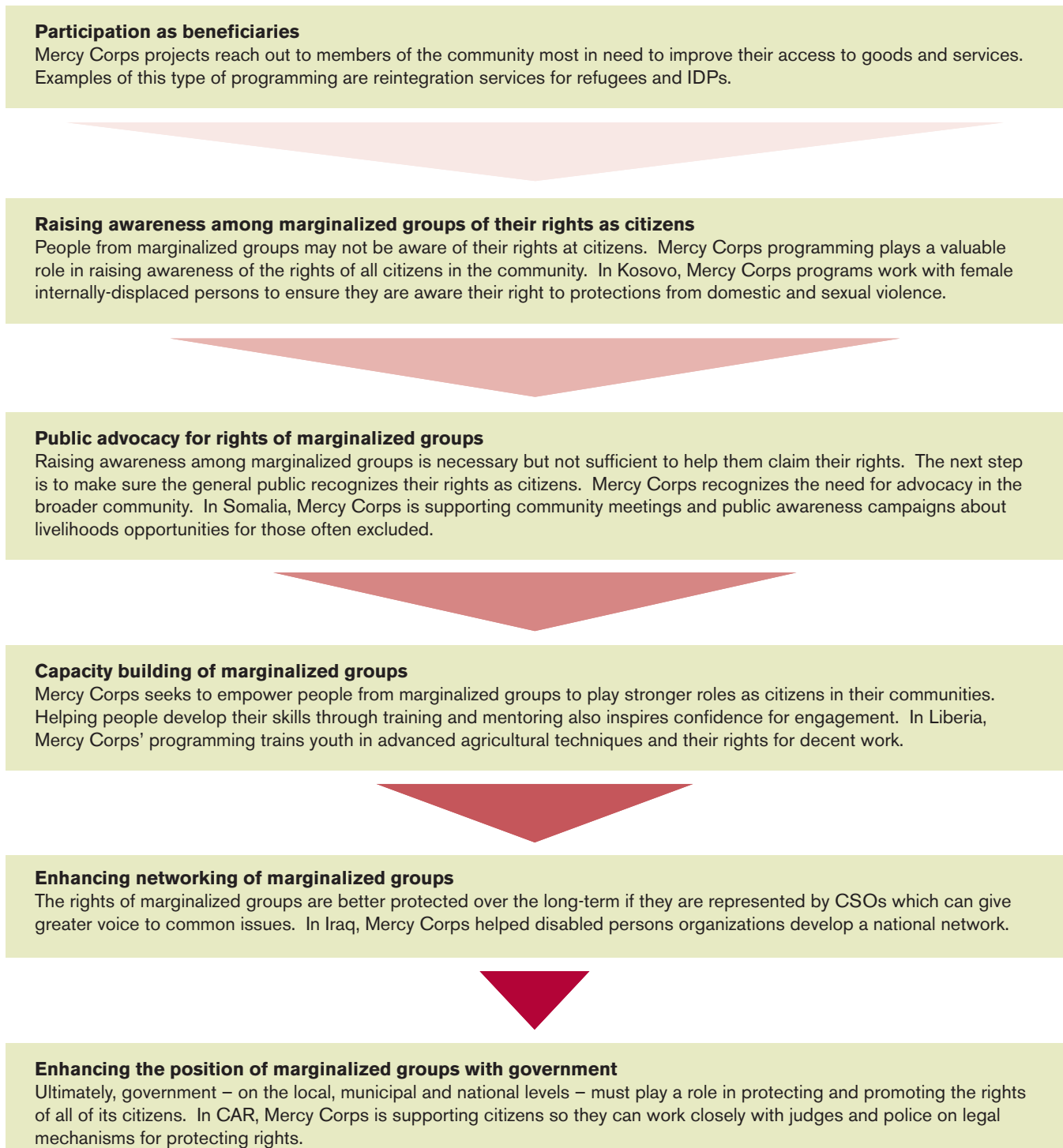
### Citizen Rights and the Rule of Law

In many systems of government, citizens have the right to hold individual beliefs, and to say and write what they think. There is freedom of religion for people to worship and practice as they see fit. Every individual has the right to enjoy their own culture, along with other members of their group, even if their group is a minority. Citizens have the right to associate with other people, and to form and join organizations of their own choice, including trade unions. There is freedom of movement, within the country as well as the ability to leave if a citizen wishes, and the freedom of assembly. Law protects these rights provided that individuals enjoy them in a way that does not limit others to enjoy their rights. All citizens are equal under the law, without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity or gender. No one is above the law, even a king or elected head of state. No one may be taxed or prosecuted except by previously-established laws. Administrations must make laws public and educate citizens about those laws that affect their lives.

### 3.1.1. Rights Programming – Including Marginalized Groups in Full Citizenship

A rights approach to development is based on analysis of the structures, social norms and traditions that perpetuate the exclusion of specific groups of people from participating in society. As Figure 5 shows, some programs work with marginalized groups as beneficiaries, help raise their awareness about rights or raise the awareness of the general public about marginalized groups' role as citizens so that communities support equitable civic participation. Other programming focuses on building the capacity of marginalized groups so that they can collaborate with each other or advocate government for the protection of rights and enabling opportunities.

Figure 5. Progression of Rights Programming



### 3.1.2. Citizen Responsibilities

Civic responsibilities are simply the duties of citizens. Good governance requires an investment of citizens' time and hard work if they are to uphold protection of rights throughout society.

Under some governments, civic participation means that citizens are required to serve on juries, or undertake mandatory military or civilian national service for a period of time. Other obligations apply to all democracies and are the sole responsibility of the citizen – chief among these is respect for law. Paying one's fair share of taxes, accepting the authority of the elected government, and respecting the rights of those with differing points of view are also examples of citizen responsibility.

In some political systems, people unhappy with their leaders can organize and peacefully make the case for change, or try to vote those leaders out of office at established times for elections. To vote wisely, each citizen has the obligation to listen to the views of the different parties or candidates and then make her or his own decision on whom to support.

Countries, however, need more than an occasional vote from their citizens to remain healthy. They need the steady attention, time and commitment of large numbers of their citizens who, in turn, look to the government to protect their rights and freedoms through such actions as:

- Staying informed about public issues through multiple sources of information, watching carefully how leaders and representatives use their powers;
- Debating public issues informally, as well as formally, through community meetings and other events organized by civil society or public officials;
- Using a free press to express their own opinions and interests regarding local and national issues;
- Joining labor unions and business associations that engage in policy-creation and implementation;
- Campaigning for a political party or candidate;
- Standing as candidates for political office;
- Voluntarily participating in CSOs that reflect their interests and support positive social change; and
- Petitioning the government and peaceful protest.

#### Non-citizens

In every country there are people living in communities that are not citizens according to national constitutions or other frameworks. Such groups include refugees, asylum-seekers, migrant workers and some ethnic populations, such as the Roma in Kosovo or indigenous peoples in Colombia. The rights and responsibilities of non-citizens vary from country to country, including access to publicly-funded schools or health care. In most countries, only citizens are allowed to vote, but some countries like Kenya have established special government offices of refugee affairs to solicit feedback about public services and other issues that citizens vote on so that refugees' perspectives are also taken into account. In 2005, the UN passed a resolution declaring that states have “the responsibility to protect” all people residing in their territory.<sup>6</sup> This principle emerged in order to avert atrocity crimes such as genocide and ethnic cleansing, though it has been interpreted to also extend to regular safety and security services for all non-citizens. Since Mercy Corps and our partners often work with non-citizens or groups with partial citizenship (such as the Roma), understanding people's legal status is essential for appropriate programming, insuring inclusion and collaboration with government, particularly if rights promotion or advocacy will be involved.

9 United Nations. 2005 World Summit Outcome. 2005. <http://www.who.int/hiv/universalaccess2010/worldsummit.pdf>



**Civic Education** – Individuals do not automatically become responsible citizens, but learn how societies function through both formal and informal education in schools, from family members, through the media and personal experience. People in many countries – whether they live in a newly-formed state or states undergoing political transformation, or have been marginalized by poverty for decades – are still defining what it means to be a citizen. Youth and adults alike benefit from opportunities to learn about their rights and responsibilities, whether through formal civic education courses or informally as an integrated part of development programming.

Most formal civic education programming is in partnership with schools. School-based civic education methods are shown to have the greatest positive impact if they: 1) use participatory teaching methods; 2) focus on issues that are immediately relevant to the target groups' daily lives; 3) build extracurricular opportunities to learn good governance behaviors; and 4) engage parents, teachers, school administrators and other adults in the success of formal civic education. These translate into greater interest in politics, improved critical thinking and communication skills, more civic knowledge and more interest in public affairs out of school.



Photo: Mercy Corps. Timor Leste, 2009

Additionally, Mercy Corps' experience and global best practices stress that “learning by doing” is the best way to encourage essential good governance values like participation, accountability and following the rule of law. Service learning is a strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities. It particularly capitalizes on *youth passion to make a difference*.



**Tip:** As a hands-on approach, service learning is highly relevant in all societies, though it may take more coordination and support between schools, community members, CSOs, local government and others where there is not already a strong ethic of volunteerism in the society, such as many former Soviet Union counties.

Educating groups about citizen rights and civic responsibilities can also happen informally. For example, many adult literacy programs in Liberia use simple language pamphlets that summarize the national constitution, inheritance laws and procedures for reporting gender-based violence. These pamphlets help increase literacy as well as educate women about their rights. In Kenya, peacebuilding programs with youth in the Rift Valley, where major post-election violence occurred in 2008, are partnering with civic educators to host sports activities that reach thousands of youth. Themes include the major elements of the Kenyan constitution and encouraging youth to register to vote.

**Watchdog Role of Civic Participation** – As discussed above, another aspect of civic participation is holding public sector actors accountable. Both the private sector and civil society have a role as “watchdogs” to promote government accountability. Watchdogs are organizations or networks that monitor specific issues, share information with key stakeholders or the general public and engage government counterparts in constructive dialogue. Many such groups have emerged in countries where Mercy Corps works to track progress toward the MDGs. The work of watchdog groups increases the ability of civil society networks to engage more effectively in advocacy for pro-poor sustainable development. Reports from watchdogs help citizens learn about the effectiveness of their leaders and about barriers to political will or implementation. If their research and reporting is transparent and constructive, watchdog groups can play a critical role in mainstreaming citizen participation in policy development and implementation.

In a number of countries, Mercy Corps and our partners have trained CSOs to collaborate on monitoring service delivery, through mechanisms such as government scorecards (discussed in [Chapter 5](#)). These local efforts, where social accountability has an immediate impact on the everyday lives of citizens, can be supported by small grants in civil society strengthening projects or explicit governance programs. They are an essential first step for CSOs to gain experience in activities at the national level such as monitoring the performance of government officials against their election campaign pledges. These groups often collaborate with independent, but publicly-funded, governance watchdog agencies, such as ombudsmen, which investigate complaints from citizens who feel they have been unfairly treated by government.

## 3.2. Advocacy: Using evidence from the field to give voice to change

Among our greatest assets to turn crisis into opportunity, alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression, are the voices of those with whom we work. Advocacy is about amplifying the voices of the people we serve through ensuring that they have the skills, resources and opportunities they need to make meaningful contributions to public life. Through this process we aim to assist those we serve in their efforts to influence structures, policies, actions, values and attitudes to achieve positive social change.

### Why should we integrate advocacy activities into field programs?

Consistent with the Vision for Change and [Good Governance Framework from Chapter 1](#), Mercy Corps programs work in communities to catalyze change towards more secure, productive and just conditions for those we serve. With this in mind, there are several main reasons to integrate advocacy activities into program design from the outset:

- To increase the effectiveness and impact of programs;
- To ensure that effective programs create the kind of enabling environment that allows them to be scaled up;
- To ensure that programs remain sustainable long after Mercy Corps has ended any given project; and
- To demonstrate to potential funders how we will leverage their contributions to catalyze broader, more sustainable changes.

We have all seen examples of well designed programs that fail because the laws, policies, customs, practices or traditions undermine program goals. We have all seen examples of programs with great impact that cannot be brought to scale because they depend upon the good will and personal commitment of a few partners in local governments, but do not have the support of national government officials. While many of Mercy Corps' programs have achieved a remarkable degree of sustainability, if we are not able to create lasting changes in institutions, relationships and operating practices, then we risk losing the positive impacts of projects after they end. Local people need changes to their policy environments if they are to be empowered and enabled to continue the work of our programs after we are gone.

### Designing Advocacy Strategies

Advocacy should be integrated as an essential part of Mercy Corps' program work. It is helpful to understand advocacy as a long-term process rather than a one-off event. Mercy Corps builds solid outreach strategies by determining concrete answers to the following four questions:

1. What change do we seek?
2. Who will give the change to us?
3. What do they need to hear?
4. How can we ensure they hear our message?

#### The Goal: *What change do we seek?*

The first step of an advocacy strategy is to clearly identify the goal of the campaign. The goal makes clear what must change. For example, in work promoting breastfeeding, Mercy Corps team members in Indonesia identified the provision of infant formula in government-supported health posts as an impediment to their programs promoting exclusive breastfeeding as a way to improve infant nutritional outcomes.

The goal will be a clear statement of the change we seek, based upon a need in an existing or new program. In other words, it should tackle an issue where Mercy Corps' program experience puts us in a solid, credible position to amplify the voices of those we are working with so that they are heard by the government, general public or specific interest groups. For example, the goal in the Indonesia case above might have been to "ensure that infant formula is not provided freely at health centers and outposts throughout the country in order to more successfully promote exclusive breastfeeding."

We should be able to draw on information, data and knowledge from our work to make evidence-based arguments demonstrating the relevance and importance of reaching the goal we have chosen. For example, the Indonesia team might have cited statistics from prior work on impediments they found to adoption of exclusive breastfeeding,

or nutritional benefits they have measured in those cases where they have successfully increased the percentage of women who breastfeed.

### **Analysis of Change-makers: *Who will give the change to us?***

Targeting the right audience is essential to ensuring that our message reaches *those who have the power to help us attain our goal*. We need to think about who will be impacted by the change being advocated, who could help the change happen and, ultimately, who has the power to make the change. This is all part of developing an advocacy strategy that correctly identifies who we need to influence in order to create the change we seek.

After we have identified the target audience, we need to understand them. What do they care about? What do they think about the issue and why? Answers to these questions can be developed by researching the targets' background, experiences, positions and underlying interests.

Because the process of creating lasting change is an inherently political process, successful targeting should always identify those individuals or groups who may gain influence by helping you. Although we work with marginalized communities whose needs are often discounted, it may still be possible to involve those in power who are motivated to demonstrate political will to international actors.

### **Development of Message: *What do they need to hear?***

After determining the targets of your message, the next step is developing the message itself. A good message is tailored to the target and argues the importance and relevance of the issue from the point of view of the target. The message should do two things: 1) show why the problem you are addressing is important to resolve, and 2) provide a solution by clearly stating what needs to be done.



**Tip:** The most effective advocacy messages are evidence-based from Mercy Corps' experience.

It is also best if the solutions proposed in your message are things the person targeted is empowered to act upon. For example, in US advocacy work we usually develop specific tasks that are based upon a contact's position in the political power structure. If our request is about overall policy we will seek out relevant contacts in the Administration (executive branch); if it is legislative we go to the Congress; and if it is country-specific we often go to State Department. While our overall goal may be the same, we develop specific messages and requests for different policy-makers, based upon their interest and upon what they are empowered to do.

Good messages advocate for specific changes in policies, structures or practices, and are able to demonstrate why the specific change being proposed will lead to better results. They are directed at officials, individuals or groups who have the power to influence institutional change.

Good advocacy messages targeting the general public coax people to take action – to be the change they wish to see! They challenge people to consider and change their attitudes and behavior. To be successful, these kinds of messages should provide clear direction and make a compelling emotional appeal.

### **Communication Strategy: *How can we ensure targets hear our message?***

The final step in developing an advocacy strategy is getting the message out. How do we best get the message to the target audience in a way which resonates with them? Mercy Corps has employed many approaches: private persuasion, issue-specific workshops, best practice case studies, public service announcements, and even festive parades. Choosing the right means of delivering the message is as important as the message itself. In some cases, it may work to your advantage to have a high-level supporter of your work deliver the message to your target. In other cases, you may want beneficiaries themselves to be the spokespeople (a technique employed in Mercy Corps' work with the disability association we helped form in Iraq, or with landmine victims in Colombia).

#### **Guiding questions for targeting the right audience to catalyze positive change:**

- Who has the power to create changes we need to reach our goal?
- What do they need to know to motivate them to help us?
- Why should they listen? Do they have a personal or professional interest?
- Why should they take action?
- What action do you want them to take?

As with all program work, it is important to develop a detailed action plan for your advocacy work. The plan should include credible goals, objectives and indicators to help you track who will hear the message, when, how many times, and what their expected action will be. As the basis for the action plan, it is helpful to map the policy processes of the institutions we are seeking to influence to be sure we are engaging them during strategic time periods. It is also important to map the power relationships within and between organizations to ensure the message is heard by the right people.



**Tip:** See Tool 1: Relationship Mapping.

Finally, it is important to systematically assess the impacts of advocacy efforts throughout implementation and adapt plans accordingly. The field of monitoring and evaluation for advocacy work has increasingly moved toward tracking interim goals and objectives, rather than evaluating the success or failure of work based upon the end goal of the change you seek. In other words, effective monitoring will track the concrete actions taken to support your campaign, but should also seek to develop indicators that help your team understand if the dissemination of the messages is having the desired impact. This information should be reviewed regularly enough that you have time to adapt the targets and messages in ways that bring you closer to your end goal: lasting positive change for those we serve.



**Tip:** See Tool 20: Advocacy Checklist.

### 3.3. Partnerships and Networking

Partnerships are about doing what one group cannot do alone – finding ways to make “the sum greater than its parts.” People who combine their resources and work together are generally more powerful and better able to advance their interests than either would be if working alone.

Partners can collaborate to solve problems, exchange resources and services, and coordinate information. Relationships among partners can be short-term for time-bound projects or long-term for collaboration on broad issues of mutual interest.

Good governance relies on productive relationships between government and citizens, and amongst citizen groups. Therefore, partnerships where parties share common interests are a natural way to achieve governance goals. Examples of partnerships include:

- **Mutual help** – e.g. the Ministry of Education requesting assistance from a local CSO to meet the expressed need of adult education in a particular village, a job that is beyond the capacity of the ministry but relates to its mission.
- **Education** – e.g. government officials asking for training in technical areas such as market-chain development or positive deviance for health programming.
- **Collaboration** – several local businesses working together to form an association in order to have greater influence advocating for market regulation.
- **Consultation** – civil society groups providing advice to researchers studying land degradation to inform future policy.

Ideal partnerships are formed by groups that complement each other's expertise and resources in order to add value to one another's inputs and maximize their collaborative efforts.

### Institutional Partnerships for Good Governance Programming

Mercy Corps partners with local and international groups on governance programs. These relationships link Mercy Corps with organizations that bring unique expertise to complex programming across diverse contexts.

<b>With Ministries</b>	Liberia: Mercy Corps has partnered with Winrock, CARE, ACDI/VOCCA and Africare to collaborate with Liberia's Ministry of Agriculture in a broad effort to move from relief to development. Together, these partners drafted a memorandum laying out the reasons and steps for this transition. The memorandum, which the Ministry of Agriculture circulated on July 9, 2009, called for an end to free inputs so that government and NGOs could strengthen value chains rather than serve as direct service providers.
<b>With International NGOs</b>	In southern Sudan, Mercy Corps has partnered with Internews to help Sudanese people gain better access to information so that they can participate as active, informed citizens. Mercy Corps and Internews have established four community radio stations that broadcast the opinions of Sudanese civil society. Programs are born from the demands of the community and engage listeners in healthy debates about local issues.
<b>With National NGOs</b>	In Ethiopia, Mercy Corps has teamed up with the Council of Nationalities and the Civil Society Resource Center Association (CSRCA) to use local mass media for peace education. Together, this partnership has developed a series of radio programs that address diverse issues, including traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and instances of successful cooperation.
<b>With Universities and Research Institutions</b>	In Nepal, Mercy Corps is working with Rampur Agricultural College, a public university, and the Ministry of Agriculture's Pakrhibas Agricultural Research Station to improve crop disease management research and practices. This partnership with Pakrhibas won a research grant from the Nepal Agricultural Research Council, which supports the Pakrhibas' efforts to improve disease management practices, while Mercy Corps plays a research dissemination role.

### Partnering With Government During Emergencies

During emergencies, existing relationships between INGOs and local partners, including government actors, are inevitably changed. Managing partnerships well during these crises is, first and foremost, important for meeting the needs of the affected populations. It is also critical in order to support local partners' capacity and long-term interests and lay a foundation for a responsible transition to recovery and development. In Pakistan, Mercy Corps' development activities with diverse government and civil society partners have often been interrupted by emergencies. Since Mercy Corps and the Department of Health (DoH) in SWAT Valley had been co-implementing a tuberculosis control initiative for some time, they were well prepared to collaborate in a new way when the worst monsoon-related floods in memory struck in July 2010, causing urgent need for health care, clean water and sanitation. Established partnership agreements facilitated the rapid creation of new memoranda of understanding (MOUs) responsive to the changed environment. The roles and responsibilities outlined were based on a strong understanding of partners' respective abilities so were realistic, which helped with efficiency, avoiding duplication of efforts and conflict over finite resources. With coordination support from Mercy Corps, the DoH was able to bring in trained staff and medications for health facilities in flood-affected areas. This approach also made the DoH, not their INGO partner, the face of emergency assistance in the community, contributing to their interest in local legitimacy for public service delivery.



**Tip:** See [Chapter 6](#) for a list of the INGOs that Mercy Corps has partnered with on various governance projects.

Public-private partnerships are another example. Alliances between business and government can be much more than simply outsourcing a private contractor for a service normally performed by a governmental group. Public-private partnership is about combining resources – cash investment, people, technology, market access, good business practices and policy influence – and sharing risks in pursuit of common objectives. When such partnerships bring scale, impact and innovation to development efforts, they help make aid more effective and can help countries make progress towards MDG targets. Impact [Example 7.2](#) examines how, in India, Mercy Corps is facilitating public-private partnerships to expand markets and create wealth in tea growing communities.

### Networks and Coalitions

*Networks* – Loosely-organized groups of organizations that share values and ideologies, and function primarily on the basis of information exchange. More organized networks, often called alliances, share specific common concerns, synchronize efforts and resources, and have a well-defined understanding about how they will work together. Examples are:

- Networking between women's organizations and gender sensitive politicians.
- Creating an umbrella organization at the national level to coordinate activities of network members and manage communication with relevant government bodies.
- Networking with organizations through remote communication or cross-visits and other exchanges in other countries to learn their approaches to urban governance.

*Coalitions* – Temporary alliances or group partnerships that pursue a common purpose or engage in joint activities. Coalition-building is the process by which parties (individuals, organizations or nations) come together to collaborate. Through forming coalitions with other groups of similar values, interests and goals, members can share resources and act more powerfully together. When individual groups join a coalition, they often require new skills, attitudes and behaviors to face the demands of coordination. Where coalition members acquire these skills, they achieve a critical step in securing good governance.

Building a successful network or coalition involves a series of stages. The early steps involve processes where partners identify common goals and recognize compatible interests. Sometimes this happens naturally. On other occasions, those pushing for network-formation must persuade potential members that forming a network or coalition will be to their benefit. Members of networks and coalitions must then understand the opportunities they face to influence and change their environment. Many of the issue identification strategies discussed in [Section 3.3](#) on Advocacy are helpful.

Networks and coalitions can help groups:

- Combine the limited resources of single organizations to channel goods and expertise towards a common goal.
- Achieve objectives that single organizations or individuals cannot accomplish alone.
- Create a platform for joint action and attract other networks and/or funding.
- Learn collectively from good practices and unsuccessful tactics for promoting good governance that network members have discovered.
- Stay informed of governance issues in other areas so that members can respond locally.

Effective networks and coalitions are well-organized, develop a team identity, function according to agreed-upon norms and procedures, establish systems and structures for decision-making and communication, and use each member's skills and resources to maximum advantage. One type of action that coalitions and networks take is advocacy. As with any concept, advocacy has different meaning for people with different experiences and in different countries, cultures and societies. Before networks commit themselves to any form of advocacy, they must reach a common understanding among their membership of what advocacy means.

### Networking for Disability Rights: Iraq

The Iraqi Alliance of Disability Organizations (IADO) offers a powerful example of a network that has combined the forces of CSOs to protect the rights of people with disabilities (PWD). Mercy Corps brought together leaders of the PWD community from every corner of Iraq in a collaborative process that founded and drafted a constitution for IADO. This landmark mechanism facilitates advocacy for PWD rights. IADO continues to draft new legislation for local government and coordinates community-driven advocacy. IADO is achieving results that contribute to national-level advances for PWDs in Iraq.

To localize the impact of PWD networking and advocacy, Mercy Corps facilitated a week-long workshop in Iraq in May 2008. Internationally-renowned disability advocates shared their expertise with 35 leaders of Iraqi advocacy organizations. Since all leaders were members of IADO, the forum had the additional benefit of strengthening peer-to-peer relationships. At the conclusion of the workshop, the participants led events to impart what they had learned to over 500 local students, fostering awareness and tolerance among the youngest members of society.

## 3.4. Access to Information

*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*  
– Article 19, UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

Governance, from the vantage point of both government and the governed, has always depended on control of information and access to it. Fostering sound public judgment through informed dialogue is central to good governance. To achieve this, governments and citizens depend on information, data analysis and distribution. Information truly is power when resources and access are at stake. And peoples' ability to control and shape information and channels of distribution are important aspects of that power.

### 3.4.1. Facilitating Basic Access

**Literacy and Numeracy** – Illiteracy is one of the most basic barriers to accessing information important for civic participation. Low literacy rates can stem from diverse challenges: lack of educational services in remote rural areas; systematic marginalization of some citizens, such as girls; inadequate educational expertise for non-traditional students like adults or persons with disabilities; or interrupted education due to conflict. In addition to the many social and economic disadvantages, illiteracy limits the ways that people can advocate for their needs, access public services and participate in government processes.

In southern Iraq, Mercy Corps' women's literacy program expanded to include an additional curriculum addressing democracy, elections and human rights. Although Iraq's democracy has been in place since 2005, illiterate women have had little opportunity to learn about their rights and duties as citizens. In the five years since the project began, as part of a large scale Community Action Program funded by USAID, over 26,000 women and teenage girls have enrolled in 353 literacy centers. The centers have helped women to develop higher levels of self-confidence, greater independence and play stronger roles in community decision-making and governance processes.



**Tip: Public Records** – Laws in many countries give citizens access to public records. Examples of public records include: birth and death certificates, property titles, taxes records, and service contracts with private businesses. Such information is also helpful for advocates, legislators, the private sector, academic research and the media, and is an important part of government transparency. In some countries, such as Kenya and Indonesia, there are public information offices that have staff to help citizens or groups find records or use government information. Through access to public records, Mercy Corps Indonesia collaborates with the city government in Jakarta to create maps for participatory urban planning.

### 3.4.2. Media as a Key Stakeholder

Whether the media functions as a business, government organ or part of civil society varies from country to country and among media groups within countries. Since media influences public opinion, it is essential to know how the media itself is influenced. An independent media can play a major role in good governance. As mentioned above, the media can partner with civil society to hold governments accountable for their decisions. The media can also monitor the implementation of government decisions and drive public information campaigns. In addition, media can serve as an ally to government in delivering public goods and services, such as drought preparation materials or response to a natural disaster.

#### Why the threat to press freedom matters

Freedom of the press continues to be threatened all over the world, according to research by INGOs. In the worst ranked counties, independent press does not exist and government tightly controls the media, harasses or imprisons journalists, and bans foreign journalists. The 2009 Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders ranked several Mercy Corps countries in the bottom tier, including (from least bad to worst): Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, China, Myanmar (Burma), Iran and North Korea. Freedom House's own study also found an overall decline in press freedoms for eight straight years.<sup>7</sup> One of the reasons that such rankings matter is that press freedom often serves as an indicator for many other political and social freedoms. Media pluralism – access to multiple sources of credible news and analysis, whether radio, TV, the Internet, newspapers or other sources – gives people the ability to make informed decisions and is essential for the right to information and expression at the heart of good governance.

Access to accurate and timely information enables people to participate more effectively in the public processes that affect their lives. Responsible journalism helps reinforce accountable behavior and responsiveness. If impartial journalism is, in itself, a means of transparency. The media can drive public perception – coverage can either create or erode support for the work of governments or garner support from government for development programming. Media can manifest itself in many ways – print, radio and television are more traditional forms, with the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) emerging as powerful tools for good governance.

**Community Radio** – Local stations that residents manage and financially support offer greater community information ownership. In Central African Republic, Mercy Corps' Realizing Empowerment, Advocacy and Communication for Human Rights (REACH) program advances governance and respect for human rights, using radio programming and outreach to promote inclusive and responsible engagement of the population in national and local decision-making in preparation for the 2010 elections. The program currently reaches 950,000 people. Media partners, such as Internews, have introduced creative models that promote governance objectives, including live call-in shows where politicians respond to citizens' questions, and real-time public opinion polls about public policy issues where people vote using their cell phones.



Photo: Dan Sadowsky/Mercy Corps. Liberia, 2005

**Listening/Viewing/Reading Groups** – Radio and television broadcasts and print media often require community-based programs to make them useful assets in promoting better governance. For example, Mercy Corps' Localizing Institutional Capacity in Sudan (LINCS) program in Sudan builds capacity for community governance by helping local community radio bring local focus to national issues, and shine a spotlight on ways decisions are made by the national government. Listening groups meet at community centers, where members clarify terms and ideas and discuss the news stories. This forum helps communities absorb the programs in context-specific ways. The same idea has been applied to reading newspapers and watching TV broadcasts in other countries.

**Public Service Announcements** – Another information dissemination tool, TV is now a ubiquitous one-way medium that, along with radio, has particularly helped rural populations and non-readers join national conversations. In some

10 See Reporters Without Borders at <http://en.rsf.org/> and Freedom House at [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org)



regions, such as Central Asia, TV is the main means by which citizens get daily news from outside of their communities. Mercy Corps teams in Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and elsewhere have created public service announcements (also appropriate for radio) as a transparent way to inform citizens about rights and civic duties. These teams have also demonstrated accountability by using TV as a way to report on development activities to wide audiences.

### 3.4.3. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

The ICT revolutions of the last decade have put greater access and power into the hands of community residents working at the grassroots-level to pursue community-building and governance goals. This power derives from access to quickly-available, in-depth and more accurate information. As discussed in the guide’s general framework, ICT helps achieve good governance goals that include more responsive and accountable government, greater transparency and incorporation of diverse community viewpoints, bringing citizens from the margins into the dialogues.

Until recently, information-sharing anywhere, by government or conventional media, was a *one-way street*. Governments or journalists disseminated what they believed people needed to know. Information was “owned” by sources outside community hands. New digital tools of the ICT revolution allow more significant *interaction* and open access to governance processes to a wider population. The one-way streets of information “owned” by the powerful have become multi-lane highways, where those accessing information can interact with it, analyze it and influence outcomes. Online, people at the grassroots and CSOs can create, learn, vote, blog, respond, mobilize, sign, and pass information on to others in targeted ways.

Modern political leaders understand this profound change. In his speech in Cairo in 2009, US President Barack Obama described his vision for how new technology could build bridges between disaffected and suspicious Muslim worlds and the US by employing technology which allows us to know one another. This is the bedrock of effective conflict resolution. Obama described his desire to “create a new online network so a young person in Kansas can communicate instantly with a young person in Cairo.” As the world witnessed in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere in early 2011 new, tech-enabled relationships a rapidly building new political will and alliances from the grassroots to the international level, as an important new parallel to diplomacy.

Many countries are building the capacities for this citizen diplomacy. For example, the European Union’s Youth Regional Network deliberately brings youth councils into direct contact with established country leadership for policy and governance input. This trend is expanding across the globe. USAID has established the [Global Learning Portal network](#), which brings young people from a range of countries together for online deliberation and potential governance. An example with which Mercy Corps has worked extensively is the Palestinian Youth Portal, called [Shabbabgate.ps](#), which unites youth voices in both West Bank and Gaza.

Figure 6 offers a graphic illustration of how widened access to information can build community empowerment, advancing governance capacities.

*Figure 6. Empowerment Process within Knowledge Societies*



Societies with access to ICTs are sometimes called “knowledge societies.” Mercy Corps has made substantial investments in technology infrastructure and training in the places we work. Our efforts in the Middle East provide an instructive example. Years of building Centers for Excellence in Iraq has increased governance capacities at the grassroots and improved the livelihoods of marginalized populations.

Youth beneficiaries in Iraq use these Centers for participation in the previously mentioned Global Citizen Corps, which unites young people from eight Mercy Corps countries in collective leadership development, resulting in youth-led community service and participation. GCC leaders are trained in the use of the full array of web-based tools. Often, these tools help young people analyze and work to improve local policies. As a result, youth leaders have lobbied for improved global education with the US Congress. A range of web-based tools bring lobbying to those who cannot physically appear in Washington DC, but who circulate and sign petitions, and share strategies for influencing government officials.

### Core Digital Tools:

**Computers accessing the Internet:** publically available data, a wide range of opinions, possibilities of seeing how other countries or groups have pursued their similar goals. Computers also allow direct person-to-person interaction across lines of geography and distance, opening worlds up to one another via text, calling and video chatting.

**Cell/smartphones:** capable of sending and receiving SMS text messages. SMS technology allows wide-scale distribution of information, and also interaction back and forth.

**Social networks:** [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [MySpace](#) and others have been popularized by youth, but useful for anyone, these networks link members to one another for communication and information sharing, the power being in the cumulative effect of adding personal networks together into a larger, more powerful whole.

**Sites where video can be shared and sorted:** [YouTube](#) is the best known one of these, a place where videos from anywhere can be accessed by anyone with an Internet connection.

In Lebanon, GCC leaders initiated an online blogging and dialogue around specific governance challenges, stimulating conversation about a provocative proposal: the viability and advisability of working to lower the country’s voting age to 18. As one young person expressed growing public sentiment: “I believe that lowering the limit will help advance the democratic cycle, for it doesn’t make sense that a person can be sent to prison at 18, losing his/her civil rights, but is not able to practice those rights at 18.” Corruption, civil marriage, a proposal to amend the nationality law and rights of migrant workers are also discussed on this good governance blog, amplifying the voices of youth and advancing access to the debate.

Finally, digital tools also allow Mercy Corps and its partners and beneficiaries to work directly with governments, helping them understand how to use interactive and digital research tools to improve their own performance. For example, in Mongolia, Mercy Corps trained local government about ways that strategic planning and community participation improve service delivery outcomes in multiple jurisdictions, focusing specifically on the role of information and communication in effective governance.

### 3.4.4. Application of Information for Good Governance

**Journalism Workshops** – Journalists in many countries do not have the subject-matter expertise to report civil society (or often even citizen) perspectives on the process of lawmaking, current policy reforms or other issues that might affect governance. The investigative reporting necessary to help civil society play a watchdog role on government requires training and resources beyond the means of most journalists in developing countries, particularly in rural areas. Workshops for media professionals or including journalists in workshops for civil society or government officials are a good way to build awareness of potential stories as well as technical knowledge. Workshops are also effective means for journalists to build relationships with civil society and government. Together they can collaborate to deliver timely information to the public such as instructions about where to get help after a natural disaster. Mercy Corps has partnered with organizations like Internews to develop such workshops in countries in Central Asia and Africa.

**Citizen Journalism** – With a computer or smartphone, text and images from the field can be filed directly at any time. Mercy Corps' GCC youth members blogged about their experiences in real time, raising their voices during the 2008 war in Gaza and documenting their experiences – essentially functioning as citizen journalists. [Knight International and International Center for Journalists](#) train young community members in investigative journalism arising directly from community experience, using new digital tools to ensure that the voices of the rural poor are heard. In India, Knight has created the country's first website of previously unreported government data, and trained journalists to use this data for stories. In Liberia, a cohort of criminal justice reporters monitors and investigates the country's new judicial system and courts. [Voices of Africa](#) trains young journalists to create news videos using their mobile phones, which they can widely distribute through social networks such as Facebook.

**Polling/voting/deliberating online and via SMS text messages** – [Souktel](#), a Mercy Corps partner in the Middle East, and a broadening group of technology service providers, are using the easy availability of SMS texting to poll community members on matters concerning their futures. SMS text polls are increasingly used to aggregate the goals or intentions of citizens living in more rural regions. [Soliya](#) uses new technologies (videoconferences, web conferencing, social networks) to facilitate dialogue between students from diverse backgrounds across the globe, hoping that they can share and articulate new viewpoints on pressing global problems, preparing young people to interact with their national governments and the UN.

Election monitoring – preventing corruption and false results – is one cornerstone of governance. With cell phone technology, election monitors stationed at polling places collect and send in data to a central call center which tracks election results in real time. [Transparency International](#) has harnessed “Quick Count” technology in Guatemala, and over 100 other countries. In Guatemala's most recent election, the organization trained over 4,000 volunteers, representing over 210 CSOs in all parts of the country, which reported on voting patterns and maintained election honesty. While Mercy Corps does not lead election monitoring programs, working with organizations such as Transparency International has provided data for Mercy Corps partners to lead community advocacy and public-private decision-making.

## Chapter 4. Responsive Government and Effective Public Service Delivery

Good governance shapes the way services are planned, managed and regulated within a given political, social and economic system. Effective public services – such as health care, education, agricultural regulation, water and sanitation – are vital goals of development. In many countries, essential public services are weak or failing, with major implications for the well-being of millions of citizens.

The World Bank, UN and a number of INGOs focus on providing the physical and technical support for central governments to establish national systems of service delivery. Organizations like Mercy Corps more often focus on collaborating with government officials at the local and municipal levels. Such efforts include instilling the skills, relationships and values necessary for the process of service delivery to be efficient, effective and equitable, with an emphasis on accountability to citizens and communities. This requires facilitating collaboration among the private sector, civil society, traditional governance structures, policymakers and service providers. Efforts to enhance public service delivery include helping all these groups generate and access information that can ensure communities and societies make wise use of resources and fair decisions.

The previous chapters of this guide focused largely on programming with citizens and communities as the main stakeholders for better governance, strengthening their capacity for civic engagement and to demand better services from providers. This chapter focuses on the structures of government – elected, appointed and traditional – and the approaches governments can take to strengthen their capacity for effective supply of services and public accountability.



**Tip:** In addition to the examples throughout this chapter, see [Chapter 8](#) for specific information about how public service delivery is an integral part of various sector programming, such as food security, health and disaster risk reduction.

### 4.1. Working with Local/Village-level Government and other Local Leaders

Local government – at the village, town, city and district level – is the foundation of local governance, linking with state and non-state institutions, to represent and deliver goods and services to citizens. Local government is also the most frequent entry-point for citizens to express their interests and needs, exercise their rights and responsibilities, and manage differences. This is arguably the most personal level of government since leaders are also members of the very communities they govern.

Good governance at local levels stands for *effectiveness and efficiency of local administration and public service delivery, the quality of public policy and decision-making procedures, their inclusiveness and accountability, and the way power and authority are exercised at the local level.* As discussed in [Chapter 3](#), citizens also have responsibilities to make local governance work.

**Constituency and Representation** – In every village, town, city and district there are different groups of people such as majority and minority ethnic groups, women and men, people registered with different political parties and other identities. In democracies, elected and appointed representatives have a responsibility to all individuals as their constituents. This is a challenging concept in some places that have a history of leaders only representing members of their tribe, clan or ethnic group; or countries emerging from conflict like Sudan, where today's leaders generally come from a military command structure and are learning what accountability to constituents requires. In both these countries, Mercy Corps has helped establish ways for local government to communicate with and get feedback from its constituents.

#### 4.1.1. Protecting Rights

The local level is also where, on a daily basis, people exercise their rights. Local governing bodies generally do not determine rights of citizens and may disagree with national laws or policies. However, in their service delivery role, local government must honor and protect those rights. These rights include freedom from intimidation, equitable distribution of resources and publicly accessible records. These functions make it possible for citizens to enjoy their full rights and facilitate citizen participation in local decision-making about services and other government functions.

In order to demonstrate that such participation is welcome – and even helpful – local authorities can adopt a number of ways to make participation as accessible as possible. These include forming neighbourhood or community councils. While there are many examples of local officials developing creative and successful mechanisms that are unique to their village or city, the demands on other officials with limited exposure to these concepts mean that there is a role for development organizations and other actors working on governance to offer ideas.

Mercy Corps is often in the position to help strengthen the capacity of local authorities and encourage the representation and participation of citizens at all stages of the policy process. The two examples below also show how local efforts can successfully link with national priorities and processes.

### Ethiopia.

As part of the DFID-funded program “Recognising and Implementing Housing Access for Low-income Inhabitants of Dire Dawa,” Mercy Corps initiated dialogue mechanisms for housing rights in 11 cities between low-income inhabitants and local government authorities at the *kebele* level. *Kebele* are the smallest unit of local government in Ethiopia, representing large neighborhoods, and the level largely responsible for registering land. Mercy Corps’ program is conducting annual trainings for *kebele* leaders on the national legal framework of rights to housing and mechanisms for slum improvement (photo below). The 100 participants include people from the Ministry of Urban Works and Development, Parliament’s relevant standing committees on City Cabinets, Land Administration, Urban Planning, Preparation and Inspection, Environmental Development and other offices, as well as 40 city and *kebele* officials.



Photo: Johanna Thoeresz/Mercy Corps. Ethiopia, 2009

### Colombia.

Facilitating greater inclusion of vulnerable populations in city government is the goal of the Resources for Equitable Development (REED) program, funded by Irish Aid. Mercy Corps first established a framework with the Mayor’s office of Barranquilla to better include marginalized groups such as women, minorities and persons with disabilities in municipal decision-making and planning processes, with a particular emphasis on sustainable resource management issues. The agreement paved the way for community-based reforestation activities coordinated jointly, with local CSOs and government officials, and supported by a €117,000 contribution from the *department* (district) government of Barranquilla. The *department* also provided funds for a communications center to facilitate regular community participation in local government affairs (photo below). The lessons learned from this program are contributing to the design of a comprehensive regional strategy focusing on community-based sustainable development and natural resource planning in Latin America.



Photo: Miguel Samper/Mercy Corps. Colombia, 2007

### 4.1.2. Local Decision-makers and Relationship Mapping

The types of local governing structures vary among countries and regions. Examples are mayors, village chiefs, town councils, councils of elders and county commissioners. In the examples above, these include the *kebele* (at the sub-city level) or *departments* (encompassing several villages and towns) which often have several functional service sectors including education, security, health or sanitation. How these various individual leaders and groups of leaders coordinate responsibilities can be complex and driven largely by the local context.

For example, in Afghanistan there are two different types of village level authorities which interact with each other and communities. The *shora* or traditional groups are made up of influential community elders and respected religious leaders, such as *sayeds* and *mollas*. In many cases, being part of the *shora* is a position passed down within families, from generation to generation. There are also elected councils called Community Development Committees which the Government of Afghanistan established to pursue political agendas. Such committees may include elders from the local *shora*. The interaction between elected committees and traditional *shoras* depends largely on how the elected councils are created. If there is consultation with elders to understand their interests, there is most often strong cooperation and support for the official committees, making it easier for government, NGOs and private sector to work together. As Dr. Sardar Mohammed of Mercy Corps' Afghanistan program says, "Most of the rural community members respect and follow their community elders and respect aged people more than anyone else." If an elected committee is established without advice from elders, "both institutions fight to keep their power. Any commitment that comes from the traditional *shora* is stronger than if it is coming from the elected one."

**Assessing Technical Skills for Service Delivery at the Local Level** – Whether working with a local police department, a district IDP returns office or any other local government entity, there are a number of ways to assess the capacity of government for effective and efficient service delivery. Many of the tools in [Chapter 5](#) are relevant for use with municipal, regional and national government entities.



**Tip:** Since many tools for assessing capacity of local government were adapted from tools for working with CSOs and local businesses, they can be used alongside these tools to compare findings and inform integrated programming.

#### 4.1.3. Power Dynamics in Local Governance

As the Afghanistan example demonstrates, working at the level of local government also includes understanding power relationships among stakeholders to determine decision-making processes, allocation of resources and connections with citizens. Often, citizens consider those in leadership positions as *elites*, along with other influential community members. It is important to be aware that key stakeholders may see governance programming as a challenge to established power structures due to the basic good governance principles of participation, accountability and inclusivity. Thus, programs with governance goals must define when it is useful to work only with elites as representatives of the larger community, when to involve ordinary citizens in decision-making or when to engage members of both groups.

#### Local government and traditional governance structures

In many areas where Mercy Corps works, communities interact with parallel structures for public decision-making: some are formal structures, like a municipal government that a national constitution recognizes; others are informal structures, like local councils that have a foundation in local customs but not constitutional law. Both formal and informal institutions can perform valuable public service delivery functions. Formal and informal institutions might also overlap – elected officials might work for the locality by day, but otherwise hold positions in traditional councils.

When considering how to effect change, a program team should assess what community structures pre-exist for service delivery and decision-making. At times, it may be difficult to observe informal structures. However, if program design does not account for the service delivery mechanisms that already exist, the program can both create tension and miss important opportunities. Collaboration between formal and informal institutions may hold the key to sustainable change. In fragile environments, informal service delivery mechanisms may also harbor innovations that can overcome the challenges of a particular context.

#### 4.1.4. Working with local government through Community Mobilization

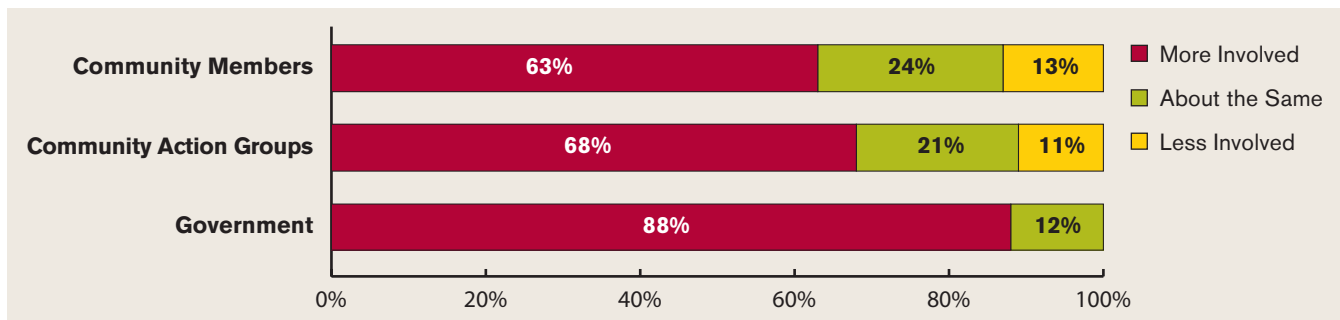
One of the main ways that Mercy Corps works with local government is through community mobilization approaches. Community mobilization involves electing Community Action Groups (CAGs) or supporting existing groups to have equitable representation – including members of local government – to lead communities through the process of prioritizing local programs, bringing local resources to bear, managing implementation and repositioning for subsequent rounds of programming. It is a "learning by doing" approach where Mercy Corps and our partners

eventually transitions to advisory role and communities take full ownership and leadership of their development. So why are members of government included on CAGs?

The mobilization methodology helps create communication channels between the government and their constituents and helps government understand the benefits of listening to community needs and priorities. Programs do this through modeling good governance behavior and skills, such as consensus-building, transparency, accountability and resource management. A critical factor in the success of mobilization programs is the sustained ability of citizens to interact with government and advocate for equitable allocation of public resources. Such relationships can also help open channels to the municipal and national policy levels. Involving government in mobilization efforts also communicates to communities, as well as government, that Mercy Corps is not seeking to replace the government’s responsibilities to provide effective services. Rather, government becomes an essential partner in development alongside civil society and the private sector.

**Figure 7. Reported Change in Government Involvement**

The graph below is from Mercy Corps’ *Sustainability Field Study*, which investigated the lasting impacts of programs in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. It found increased government involvement was confirmed by both CAG members and general community members, who also felt that local government was more involved in community actions following the Mercy Corps programs.<sup>11</sup>



Mercy Corps’ [Guide to Community Mobilization Programming](#) includes many tools that can also be used for good governance programming, including on:

- Participatory Research and Action.
- Project Prioritization.
- Village/Community Development Plans.
- Maintenance Committee Roles (for infrastructure projects).

**Local Collaboration in an Emergency: Haiti**

When a major earthquake hit southern Haiti in January 2010, 230,000 people were killed and over one million displaced. Many IDPs found their way to the city of Mirebalais where hundreds of informal camps sprung up in courtyards or restaurants with 20 to 30 people in each. During Mercy Corps’ initial assessment in the area, it was clear that the large emergency food and non-food item (e.g. plastic sheeting) needs for IDPs were not being addressed and that way people were so spread out in small camps presented a major logistical challenge. As a solution, Mercy Corps met with the mayor’s office, which agreed to manage an initial distribution of high energy biscuits to over 20,000 people from City Hall as trial for further distributions. Our team trained the mayor and his staff how to unload distribution trucks safely, how to ensure the safety of beneficiaries, how to advertise the distribution, account for and document it. A short time later, a small number of Mercy Corps staff were on hand to observe, advise and report on the distribution. The process went well and was recommended as a model for the distribution of relief supplies to communities across the Central Plateau and Aetibonite areas of Haiti. This met both the emergency needs and laid the foundation for collaboration with local communities and government in the long-term.

<sup>11</sup> Mercy Corps. *Sustainability Field Study: Understanding What Promotes Lasting Change at the Community Level*. December 2007. pg. 27 <https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/docs/SustainabilityFieldStudyFinal.pdf>.

## 4.2. Working with Municipal/Provincial-level Government

Government at the municipal – or provincial or state – level acts as an important bridge between local and national issues, as well as local and national government. Officials and institutions at this level have both “upward accountability” – to central-level counterparts – and “downward accountability” – to local government structures and citizens. Since many issues related to public service delivery cross municipal boundaries – management of water resources, grazing land, transportation routes, trade and others – municipalities also have a vital role in coordinating with each other. They are thus a good example of the need to work on both vertical and horizontal linkages, presented in [Chapter 1](#).

In most countries, members of government at this level include a combination of elected representatives/heads of departments and appointed/hired civil servants working for those representatives and departments. As part of decentralization (see box), municipal government often has many of the same departments as the central government, with the mandate to implement local initiatives that contribute toward national goals. For example, Serbia has both a national ministry in charge of economic development as well as a Municipal Office of Local Economic Development with functions such as:

- Direct support to the local business community.
- Business retention, expansion, and attraction.
- Incentives and finance.
- Workforce development.
- Design, partner for and implement local economic development projects.
- Advise the mayor and assembly (head of municipal administration).
- Maintain and improve relations with central institutions responsible for economic development.
- Maintain a database of economic development indicators and tracking progress.

### What is Decentralization?

Many countries in which Mercy Corps works are undergoing processes of “decentralization.” Sometimes used interchangeably with local or municipal governance, decentralization is actually a national process that affects the local and municipal levels by expecting them to provide services formerly provided by national entities. Decentralization is often a concept supported by donor governments to ensure that decision-making power in a country is not disproportionately held by a few, centrally located groups or individuals. For example, countries interested in joining the European Union – such as Mercy Corps countries Kosovo and the Republic of Georgia – are decentralizing authority for education, health and welfare to municipal and regional level departments.

In large countries, such as Indonesia, diverse geography makes decentralization a practical choice. And in places that have different traditional forms of governing, like Liberia and many other African countries, decentralization is a way to balance national laws and development with local practices that work for communities and represent their culture. The challenge of decentralization comes where municipal or local authorities do not receive appropriate guidance or funds for carrying out the duties allocated to them. Decentralization can also be a fragile process if authorities lack the capacity for local discretion about how they should use specific functions of government or funding in line with changing local circumstances. The most effective applications of decentralization are where local authorities balance local decision-making with accountability to both the national-level government and constituents in communities. Allocation of appropriate resources and follow through can be a major limitations for decentralization.



#### 4.2.1. Facilitating Participation at the Municipal Level

Authorities at the municipal and other sub-national levels of government can play a major role in promoting civic engagement. In the past several years, creative ways for citizens to participate in mechanisms of government have emerged. Participation requires government to recognize that regular and meaningful citizen contribution strengthens its capacity to fulfill its mandate. Mercy Corps and our partners often work to help governments realize the mutual benefits of citizen participation. For example, Mercy Corps has organized joint trainings for citizens and municipal governments so that they can collaboratively develop policy initiatives or create referenda (see [Chapter 2](#)). A few other methods that Mercy Corps has experience with are discussed in [Chapter 5](#).



Photo: Thatcher Cook/Mercy Corps. Niger, 2008

#### Strengthening Municipal Capacity for Infrastructure Development

Mercy Corps has significant experience implementing infrastructure development programs at the municipal level. An integrated approach, using community mobilization or other participation methods, involves helping communities articulate their priorities for infrastructure investments and municipal governments managing resources or working with INGOs as collaborators for allocating resources. A case example is the Municipal Infrastructure Support Initiative (MISI) in Kosovo (see [Section 7.5](#) for more information on MISI).

Notable findings from an evaluation of relationships between local communities and municipal-level local government<sup>12</sup> include:

- Communities involved with MISI reported more contacts and stronger relations with the municipality as a result of the program. Many members of community working groups said they would not have appealed as often to the municipality about subsequent service provision issues if not for the program.
- Municipal government authorities reported that they noticed the difference in MISI communities versus others, crediting them with “being more active in building relationships with local government, advocating for their needs and organizing themselves.”
- Tangible examples of municipal support contributed to a community’s sense of agency. Community groups described a specific fulfilled request, usually an infrastructure project, as evidence of their ability to influence the municipal government. Conversely, many of those most frustrated with their inability to influence the municipal government gave unmet infrastructure needs as evidence.
- Communities and municipalities were equally pleased with procedures introduced by MISI that emphasized transparency and participation throughout the entire process of infrastructure programs. Two municipalities complained about the amount of paperwork and procedures but, nonetheless, complimented the process as participatory and sustainable.

<sup>12</sup> <https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/ docs/MISI%20Evaluation%20Dec%202005.pdf>

In central<sup>13</sup> Sudan, the Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services (BRIDGE) program addresses the urgent need for service delivery and tangible peace dividends while also responding to the need to build the capacity and credibility of government structures. Given the decades-long conflict, neglected development of the region and political fragility, this is a vast undertaking. Through mentoring and training in planning, management, leadership, budgeting and conflict resolution, BRIDGE supports state line ministries and local government departments to implement the decentralization process under the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement.



Photo: Mercy Corps. Sudan, 2010.

In addition to training, Community Development Committees (CDCs) and government officials are gaining practical experience in planning, implementing and managing projects that deliver tangible improvements to communities through both quick impact projects and long-term development efforts. An example of a quick impact project was in Southern Kordofan State, where the Kumbar community was on the verge of a water crisis due to damaged boreholes, insufficient water points and seasonal drought. The South Kordofan Ministry of Water Affairs, local government units and CDCs partnered to repair five boreholes and were trained in maintenance of project-provided assets, strategic planning for longer-term development and management of water supply delivery systems.<sup>14</sup> Longer-term efforts included working with the Ministry of Education to train hundreds of teachers, as in the photo above. As BRIDGE Chief of Party, Provash Budden said, *“After 25 year of conflict, there is the need for peace and stability in Sudan. The BRIDGE program is a vehicle for bringing government and citizens together to jointly plan and manage public services that address the needs of communities in war-affected areas and to create the right relationships that can mitigate future conflict. There is a lot of work to be done, but the people of Sudan are dedicated to providing a better future for their children.”*

### 4.3. Working with National/Central-level Ministries and Offices

National governments play a critical role in establishing and maintaining the framework for effective provision of basic services. Well-run institutions at the central level can help societies transition out of poverty by meeting basic needs, sustain development gains and weather major social, economic or environmental shocks. They also promote state legitimacy and are more likely to manage tensions before conflict arises. How heads of state, ministries, parliaments, legislatures and other national structures manage themselves also sets the standard for all other levels of government, as well as the tone for how a country interacts internationally.

In many of the countries where Mercy Corps works, there are national plans for addressing the pressing needs of society, with unique differences for societies managing sustained transitions compared to those newly emerging from conflict. For example, in Liberia, the Poverty Reduction Strategy was established following the country's 14-year civil war and major political transitions. The strategy has four pillars: Consolidating Peace and Security; Revitalizing the Economy; Strengthening Governance and the Rule of Law; and Rehabilitating Infrastructure and Delivering Basic Services. Implementation requires capacity-building at all levels, establishing means to monitor and evaluate progress against development targets under each pillar, and managing risks and constraints such as financing, internal and external stability.

This is a tall order for any country, and requires leadership, coordination and collaboration among the many parts of national government. In rare contexts such as Kosovo, Mercy Corps has been instrumental in helping establish central level structures. However, more frequently, Mercy Corps works with national ministries to provide capacity-building and establish program partnerships.

<sup>13</sup> The Three Areas (Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile) and Upper Nile State.

<sup>14</sup> In Southern Kordofan State, BRIDGE is operated by Mercy Corps Scotland.

### 4.3.1. Working with Ministries

Partnering with national ministries, like any other public sector partnership, serves program goals and helps strengthen the capacity of ministries themselves. Mercy Corps and partners often build technical expertise of officials through workshops, provide training in management, leadership and mentoring skills, mentor, advise and encourage.

For example, the School Environment and Education for Somalia (SEEDS) program is working closely with the Transitional Government's Ministry of Education to see that local efforts to improve education are sustainable. In partnership with local organizations and local authorities, Mercy Corps is ensuring that 20,000 pupils have improved access to basic education through rehabilitation projects, and teachers and school committees at 250 schools have stronger skills for education and management. The Ministry of Education has collaboratively created monitoring tools for each school, and used program support to restructure the Ministry of Education in Puntland. Through workshops and on-the-job training, ministry officials are learning the benefits and modes of participatory planning, as well as communication skills for greater decision-making transparency. More information on this project is in [Section 7.6](#).

For ministries to continue being effective, they must scale up services by improving coverage or increasing the scope of services. Ministries can determine how and when to scale-up through organizing regular needs assessments and gathering demographic data, as well as defining national budget priorities. National and equitable public service delivery coverage faces several obstacles, including: a lack of skilled personnel, lack of long-term strategic planning and uncertainty about funds available year to year. Managing these challenges requires that ministers and their staff have the advocacy and negotiation skills to get priorities on the national agenda and in the national budget. Ministers also need capacity to build coalitions with other ministries or national structures, as well as civil society and private sector partners, in order to implement complex plans.

Mercy Corps' work in Nepal with disaster risk management is a case in point. The need to make disaster risk management systems more effective and widespread became evident after Mercy Corps helped implement early warning systems in one region of the country and establish links with district authorities responsible for local disaster management. Mercy Corps, with our NGO partner Practical Action and the National Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, sought support from the Home Affairs and Environment Ministries to draft a National Strategy for Early Warning of Natural Disasters for Nepal, which was approved in October 2009. The strategy focuses on the most frequent disasters in Nepal, including flooding and other water-related hazards, as well as accommodating early warning for other hazards like landslides, earthquakes and fires. Policy-formation was based on the experience of early warning systems in regions of the country and incorporated international best practices and protocols, such as the Hyogo Framework for Action, the international framework for disaster risk reduction (for more information, see [Section 8.7](#)).

National ministries play a major role in attempts to achieve national targets toward the MDGs), discussed in [Chapter 2](#). Research by the UN and others shows that working towards good governance creates cycles of empowerment that will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services and empower the poor to become agents of their own development. This often starts with ministries of education, health, economic development, social welfare and others.



Photo: Ulla Dons/Mercy Corps. Nepal, 2009

### 4.3.2. Public Sector Reform

The public sector is the largest spender and employer in virtually every developing country. This far-reaching scope of the public sector means that priorities can become imbalanced. Public sector reform, therefore, is the process of understanding what is working, what needs improvement and what is missing. Mercy Corps has primarily been involved with reforms designed to improve participation. However, these reforms do not automatically lead to improved access to services for poor people. There are often barriers that prevent people from using services, such as cultural traditions, poverty and physical distance from services. To ensure that services are accessible, authorities have to

specifically target groups that are often routinely excluded, such as rural communities or chronically poor people. Many "demand-led" approaches are emerging as successful mechanisms to tackle exclusion.

### Service Delivery and Reform are Gendered

Women and girls often experience specific barriers to accessing services and to participating in service provision design and management. Around the world, it is overwhelmingly women who access and use public services to meet household needs – disproportionately using community wells and public health services. Mercy Corps programs emphasize empowering those with most direct need for and use of services as agents of accountability. However, many measures of assessing needs for goods and services do not thoroughly take gender differences into account and statistics can hide the constraints women face when accessing services, limiting effectiveness. Reformers need to consider gendered use of services and power relations when designing service delivery reforms.

Public service reform has gone through three waves. The first wave began in the mid-1980s and focused largely on structural reforms in the context of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund's (IMF) "structural adjustment programs." The second wave took root in the mid-1990s and focused on capacity-building – for example, improving staff skills, management systems and work environments. The most recent wave has been dominant since 2000 and emphasizes the importance of improved service delivery. The reform of basic services is not purely a technical or financial exercise. The main barriers to reform are political and institutional, including weak state capacity, domination by elites, centralized systems and poor accountability mechanisms. Many different actors are involved in reform. Donors, civil servants, elites and citizens each play key roles in either driving or impeding progress.

**Policy Committees or Task Forces** – Task forces or specialized policy committees of public, private and civil society actors can help define specific public issues, draft responsive policy and plan approaches for uptake and implementation. The model of "workshopping" issues also demonstrates the power of and essential need for collaboration among the three sectors. Once society has identified issues, task forces or policy committees can help move beyond dialogue about defining issues, and rapidly progress to data-gathering, policy-drafting and advising relevant stakeholders about public outreach to gain broad support and advocacy with lawmakers or other final decision-makers.

The Mercy Corps Mongolia team applied the task force concept to realize national standards for accessible construction. Through programming with persons with disabilities (PWDs) in diverse provinces across Mongolia, Mercy Corps and our partners saw how insufficient access to basic infrastructure prevented PWDs from benefiting from basic public services such as education, health and social welfare, as well as limiting their ability to seek and find employment. As a first step, Mercy Corps established a diverse multi-agency task force of leading Mongolian organizations – both national and local disabled people's organizations – government, and private sector representatives. The group jointly delivered advocacy campaigns designed to improve the accessibility of public buildings and walkways for PWDs.



Photo: Dominic Graham/Mercy Corps. Mongolia, 2010

The task force then studied the legal environment and worked with engineers to design accessibility guidelines that were presented to the Mongolian government. In February 2010, the "National Standards for Accessible Construction and Walkways" became enforceable under Mongolian law (see photo). Although approval of the standards will alone not automatically result in greater access for PWDs, they do create the needed legal foundation and provide specific engineering regulations for all current and future buildings in the entire country. This policy victory has also motivated disabled people's organizations to strive for the full achievement of accessibility for PWDs in all aspects of life. Over 25 accessibility ramps at public buildings were built in the first months since passage of the standards, all at government and private sector expense. The task force remains active so that it can work with government partners to continue implementing the National Standards and plan future PWD services.

## Managing Corruption

Government corruption can happen on any level. Though Mercy Corps has not implemented specific anti-corruption programs, it is a reality in many countries where we work and must be faced. As crucial contextual analysis, Mercy Corps strives to understand how corruption affects service delivery and the possibility for good governance, such as the situation of water and agriculture in Pakistan. Pakistan produces rice, wheat, cotton and sugar as primary crops in their agricultural economy. Central government regulates imports, exports and irrigation water. Pakistan has enough water between the Indus, Jhelum and Kabul rivers, but corruption is a significant reason for the mismanagement of these resources. As a result, crop production and the overall economy suffer regular shocks. In a good rain year, Pakistan produces surplus wheat and sugar. But in the absence of a transparent export system, prices can drop so low that farmers can not recoup production costs. Food insecurity is a frequent result. On “World Water Day” 2010, one of the most circulated English newspapers in Pakistan quoted an Asian Bank study on the water crises: “[Pakistan] reached the withdrawal limits of its water resources...mainly because of increase in population, inefficient irrigation, corruption, mismanagement and unequal water rights...The experts termed collapse of the *warabandi* (a rotational system used for the equitable allocation of irrigation water) an illustration of bad governance...They warned that Pakistan will not be able to address its water crisis without a paradigm shift in water management.” Mercy Corps’ agricultural programs in Pakistan encounter this situation first-hand and target local leaders to mitigate these governance problems, with eventual hopes of affecting national reform.



**Tip:** Corruption not only prevents sustainable change – it also undermines the potential for Mercy Corps to form effective partnerships. A program team may find corruption prevalent among potential partners and levels of governance it hopes to work with. For recommendations and guidance about programming in these circumstances, see [Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Assistance](#).

### 4.3.3. Fragile States

An estimated 500 million people live in fragile or failing states.<sup>15</sup> These countries generally experience long-term, complex difficulties. Their populations require urgent action to address problems with public service delivery – action which must begin before conflict or fragility has passed. Governments in such countries have historically been bypassed, with NGOs and other non-state actors taking responsibility to deliver goods and services otherwise provided by a functioning government. This may be necessary in the short-term to address humanitarian needs but is not a solution. Service delivery can improve the legitimacy of weak governments and help to build capacity in fragile states. Many international donors are therefore supporting INGO efforts to work with states so they can maintain a genuine and visible role in service delivery, or restore it as soon as possible after conflict subsides and the initial effects of economic, social or political shocks have passed. By improving the capacity and legitimacy of national governments, good service delivery can also reduce tensions and grievances between conflicting groups over services.

Businesses in fragile states face much larger regulatory burdens than those in other developing countries. They face three times the administrative costs, nearly twice as many bureaucratic procedures and delays, and have fewer than half the protections of property rights compared to rich countries. Heavy regulation and weak property rights exclude the poor from doing business.

A hypothetical improvement to the top quartile of countries, measured in ease of doing business there, is associated with up to two percentage points more annual economic growth. However, some governments – even in formal democracies where most voters are poor – lack the capacity or incentives to promote economic growth and pro-poor policies. The problem goes deeper than weak technical capacity and lack of “political will.” Individuals matter, but so does the context within which they operate. History suggests that more effective and accountable government cannot be achieved just by creating new formal institutions. It is a more uncertain, incremental process which depends on each country’s historical circumstances, and involves fundamental changes in society, economic structures and political culture. It is thus closely connected with other sorts of economic and social progress.<sup>16</sup> For more information, see [Tool 6](#).

<sup>15</sup> Fund for Peace. *Failed State Index*. 2009. [www.fundforpeace.org](http://www.fundforpeace.org)

<sup>16</sup> World Bank. *Doing Business Report*. 2009. [www.doingbusiness.org](http://www.doingbusiness.org)

Indices provide valuable metrics about fragile states and can provide a snap-shot of a country or a trend at a specific point in time. Examples include international indices such as the [Failed States Index](#) or [Global Peace Index](#), as well as regional ones like the [Strengthening African Governance: Index of African Governance Results and Rankings](#). Each index uses different methods to assess various categories, but all give important information for governments to reflect on their own ability to meet essential political roles. Analyzed together, multiple indices often paint a more complete picture of a country or region and give clues to programming options.

## Adapting to a National Governance Shock: Kyrgyzstan

By Kevin Grubb, former Mercy Corps-Kyrgyzstan.

*In March of 2005, the so-called “Tulip Revolution” was the first such coup to hit Kyrgyzstan, five years prior to the events that led to a second presidential ouster in April 2010. With a new administration and political party in power, local government officials were replaced en masse both at the level of oblasts (provinces) and aiyl okmotus (village councils). In some cases, the president or other national-level officials nominated and installed their supporters into government positions; in other cases, the people elected new officials in elections held a few months after the coup. But in many cases, the general public rose up and physically removed sitting administrators, placing their own village or clan leaders in the rapidly vacated posts. While there was new hope that these officials would bring positive change to the outlying regions, neither the public nor the new government understood that, in the place of life-long bureaucrats sat ordinary people who were untrained and unskilled in governance and without the tools or resources to govern.*



Photo: Colin Spurway/Mercy Corps. Kyrgyzstan, 2007

*In the midst of this rapid transition, Mercy Corps' Collaborative Development Initiative (CDI), funded by USAID, identified an opportunity. Building upon the momentum of the Tulip Revolution, newly-installed governing officials understood they needed to rule effectively in order to maintain their posts. To sustain this new atmosphere of openness and change, Mercy Corps and CDI partner the Urban Institute implemented a series of good governance projects throughout southern Kyrgyzstan. These activities improved officials' abilities and resources to meet their constituents' needs. The program also slowed the flow of forced replacements of local leaders by a disgruntled public, still awaiting the socio-economic changes they had been promised during the revolution.*

*Working in 30 local self-government administrations, Mercy Corps provided training to 567 newly-elected officials in the Basics of Local Self-Government. Trainings tackled issues that included the legal aspects of establishing a functional local administration, and the rights and obligations of local deputies, administrative personnel and constituents. These trainings led to open budget hearings and funding decisions, formerly unseen in the Kyrgyz Republic, with hundreds of villagers in attendance. Legislative Resource Packets complemented the trainings. These packets were translated into Kyrgyz and other local languages, offering the first such native language resource to local leaders. The benefits of these projects were self-reinforcing, with officials gaining confidence in their abilities to govern as they gained more knowledge from Mercy Corps trainings, while the public's faith in these officials grew as a result of the improved capacity to govern.*

## Chapter 5. Tools for Good Governance Programming

Mercy Corps and our partners have developed a number of tools useful for good governance programming. Several will be unique to working on one part of the Good Governance Framework from [Chapter 1](#), though others can be applied in many ways depending on the context, program and need. [Chapter 6](#) offers further resources and guidance on the process of designing, monitoring, and evaluating governance efforts.

 **Tip:** All tools in this chapter and more can be found at this link to the [Digital Library](#).

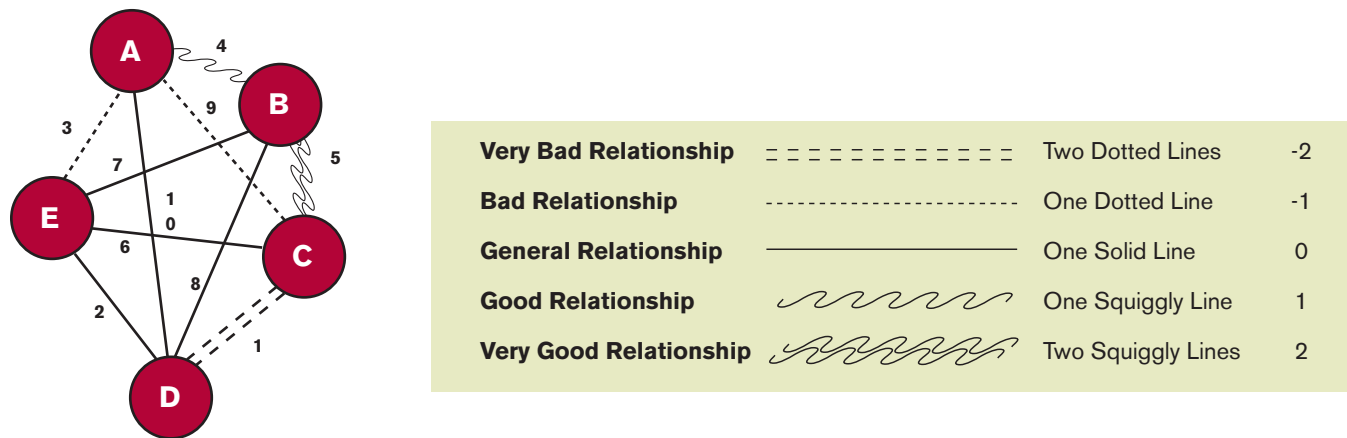
### 5.1. Planning and Design Tools

**Tool 1. Relationship Mapping** – Relationship mapping is a useful way to understand multiple levels and types of programming. This tool explores relationships among local decision-makers and other authorities. It can help program teams examine:

- a) Who are the main decision-makers in a context?
- b) Which groups outside the context have significant influence?
- c) What are the relative relationships among all groups?

Where program teams observe mapped relationships, they can identify targeted approaches for working with local governing bodies. Since relationship mapping is highly participatory, programs teams can also use it with communities. The Scored Relationship Mapping tool, developed by the Sri Lanka team and Mercy Corps-Conflict Management Group, adds another level by posing a series of quantitative and qualitative questions about each pair of actors on the map. These questions measure the quality of relationship – coming up with a number or “score” for each, per Figure 8 below. Through this method, teams can see how scores change over time. This can indicate whether programs are having the desired affect or causing more harm than good and need realigning.

*Figure 8. Scored Relationship Mapping*



**Tool 2. Assessing Community/Government Relations and Government Capacity for Community Mobilization** – Community mobilization includes working with local government groups to accomplish projects and strengthen local capacity for sustained project leadership. This set of tools developed by Mercy Corps-Afghanistan helps evaluate the community context and its potential impact on the government’s role in community mobilization, as well as the government’s capacity for engaging in community mobilization. Included: group interview questionnaires, an individual interview questionnaire, a community profile report template and sample workshop exercises.

**Tool 3. Capacity Indices** – Capacity indices highlight the strengths of local government offices or traditional governing groups and where they could benefit from capacity-building. Indices also offer effective monitoring tools.

The Local Government Capacity Index (LGCI) measures five types of capacities in local government:

- Financial Resource Management: accountability, operational planning and budgeting.
- Human Resources Management: personnel management, staff development and staff participation.
- Strategic Leadership/Management: strategic planning, sustainability and resource mobilization.
- Information Systems: monitoring and evaluation, reporting and organizational learning.
- External Relationships: public relations and constituent input (participation), representation to other levels of government.

The LGCI asks value-neutral (objective) questions that focus on accepted or standard organizational practices and systems, which, if in place, should set the local government office on a healthy, sustainable track.



**Tip:** The results of the first use of the LGCI tool can be considered as baseline data to inform government capacity-building in each of the five areas.

To improve understanding of capacity index dimensions and scores, many program teams hold feedback sessions in which they share information about results and methodology with local government groups. These sessions allow time for officials and local leaders to discuss with Mercy Corps and partners the skills they most want to develop to help meet long-term goals. As part of capacity-building plans, program teams should establish a regular schedule for repeating the capacity index scoring process. This helps track progress, and build officials' analytical and reflection capacities. Regular progress reports to communities can also contribute to community members' confidence in local governance.

**Tool 4. Municipal Capacity Questionnaire and Gap Analysis** – For programs depending on the capacity of municipal departments to carry out integrated functions – such as managing IDP returns processes, market development or land use planning – it is essential to know how municipal departments understand their individual and shared mandates. Detailed questionnaires can assess the capacity of offices to:

- Articulate their mandate;
- Implement services or provide goods that fulfill their mandate;
- Coordinate effectively within municipal government;
- Consult constituents or encourage more engaged participation in decision-making;
- Collaborate with civil society toward targets;
- Monitor their activities and impact; and
- Report to central authorities, donors and constituents.

Questionnaires can also help to understand barriers to municipal government effectiveness, or opportunities municipal offices see to expand their services in response to emerging needs.

Taken alone, this is valuable information for planning appropriate programming based on assessed capacity. If budgets and workplans allow, it is often helpful to get additional vantage points on municipal capacity. Carrying out questionnaires in communities or other constituent groups that the program ultimately aims to help should ask similar questions, soliciting perceptions of government capacity and effectiveness. This will provide the ability to compare perceptions – governments' perceptions of its service and constituents' perceptions of government – to see if they are aligned or if there are gaps. More often than not, gaps do exist. Analysis of the questionnaires can help focus capacity-building activities or present the opportunity for discussion among stakeholders about why gaps exist and how to address them. This tool is based on a process developed by Mercy Corps in Kosovo.

**Tool 5. Goods and Services Assessment** – There are a wide range of goods and services that local governments procure with the use of public funds: food for public schools, construction materials for public building repairs, stationery for civil servants, vocational training courses, street cleaning, garbage removal etc. In many countries, government institutions organize public procurement without informing civil society or local businesses. In addition, governments might select suppliers un-competitively and favor those, predominantly from the capital city.



Where this occurs, governments miss a valuable opportunity. Open and competitive procurement of public goods and services not only stimulates the growth of local businesses, but also increases efficiency and quality in government service delivery. Open procurement involves joint meetings with local civil society, government and business groups to gather information on specific needs and locally-available goods and services. These meetings also reveal information about available local capacity for providing the desired quality and quantities of services, and help establish standards and agreements.

The Mongolia team developed this approach and successfully tested it in three provinces. Mercy Corps works with local CSOs, government agencies and businesses to procure a government school tea break program. Mercy Corps employed a “tripartite partnership” approach, collaborating with local chapters of the Scouts Association and Women for Social Progress, local government departments such as Social Policy, the Education Board and the Professional Inspection and Standards Agency, and businesses interested in supplying their products for schools.

As Director of Civil Society Mandal Urtanasan commented, “CSOs mobilized the public and acted as a bridge between citizens and government agencies responsible for policies and funds. It was important to convince the government officials that competitive procurement has many benefits for the local economy, for building trust for the government institutions and for solving development issues in partnership with all the stakeholders. Once government officials were convinced, they needed capacity-building. Mercy Corps provided training on procurement law, best practices in competitive tendering and food safety issues for government, CSO and business partners. As a result, everyone won from the process. The businesses expanded their market and gained new customers. They also increased jobs and upgraded their technologies. The children started receiving more nutritious and better quality food. The CSOs improved their skills of promoting social accountability and citizens’ participation in governance issues. The government services became more transparent and responsive, helping to increase the public trust in governance. They also gained new skills on conducting procurement in a transparent way.”

**Tool 6. Governance and Economic Development Programming Guidance: Reform and Working with the Private Sector in Fragile States** – This set of tools discusses reform as a political process that incorporates relationships and shapes incentives that drive both business and government behavior, as well as advice for working with the private sector in failed or failing states. Both contain best practices and indicators useful for planning.



**Tip:** See [Section 6.1](#) for more detailed discussion of the process of designing and planning for governance programs and activities, including developing goals and indicators.

## 5.2. Implementation and Monitoring Tools

### Tool 7. Community Government Linkage Card

– A tool that can help collaboration between local government and groups in the community is the Community Government Linkage Card. The steps start with developing a Memorandum of Understanding<sup>17</sup> between the local government and community groups, outlining commitments to a project or collaboration. The groups then jointly hold a community meeting to present their agreement and take a baseline score of their ability to collaborate. A mid-way process review meeting with communities takes another score – a process repeated at the end of implementation to review how well the collaboration fulfilled commitments. The overall scores are tallied and recorded.



Photo: Mercy Corps. Sri Lanka, 2008

<sup>17</sup> See sample MOUs between Mercy Corps and various government groups on the Digital Library.

### Using Community Score Cards

- Unit – Community
- Meant for local level
- Emphasis on immediate feedback and accountability, less on actual data
- Implementation time short (3-6 weeks)
- Information collected through focus group discussions

**Tool 8. Community Score Cards** – Score Cards are qualitative tools used for local-level monitoring and performance evaluation of services and projects. Communities can also use the score cards to assess the performance of government administrative units. Where communities and program teams make scores public through local media, the score cards serve as an instrument to exact accountability and responsiveness from service providers. However, to make effective use of score cards, program teams must meet with participating local officials in order to invite immediate feedback.



**Tip:** In addition to these general tools, there are many sector-specific tools for assessing local government capacity for specialized service delivery. Further information in [Chapter 4](#).

**Tool 9. Local Government Focus Groups** – Focus groups solicit both qualitative and quantitative information about local government understanding of their mandate, resources and capacity. Government focus groups are similar to community focus groups. They can provide information similar to household surveys or other methods of collecting data on a local scale. Through comparative analysis, focus group data can show whether government and community have the same or significantly different perceptions (sometimes called a “gap analysis” – see [Tool 4](#)). A general outline for local government focus groups discussions covers:

- 1) Community issues and concerns;
- 2) Locally available resources to meet those issues and concerns;
- 3) Presence of cooperation and tension within and between communities;
- 4) Presence of cooperation and tension between communities and local government;
- 5) Presence/role of a specific group (e.g. youth, returning migrants, IDPs, etc.) relevant to the service being provided;
- 6) Current/past activities; and
- 7) Constraints of local government.

**Tool 10. Town Hall Meetings** – Town hall meetings are events open to the public at which people knowledgeable about specific policy or community issues present information and give average citizens the opportunity to ask questions and express their views. They encourage greater citizen participation in government decision-making and increased communication between officials and constituents.



**Tip:** While town hall meetings can work for any issue at any level, it is most effective in locations that represented a range of perspectives on an issue and when the meetings bring together presenters from government as well as civil society and/or the private sector.

In many countries, such as Niger, the vast majority of elected officials lack experience in lawmaking, representation, and oversight, and have little familiarity with the complexities of legal reform that affect people’s daily lives, such as food security. Town hall meetings give representatives and ministry departments the chance to engage with constituents and learn about issues such as land reform needs at the local level. Town hall meetings can also give rise to constructive feedback from citizens on government aspects to be improved such as the need for more staff in particular departments, more even implementation of laws, and the need for sufficient information for citizens to uphold their responsibilities. Town hall meetings provide the opportunity for all stakeholders in reform debates to meet and develop relationships that will help them ensure an inclusive and representative reform process.

Roundtable discussions among key stakeholders to plan actions on the specific issue discussed can be a good follow-up to more consultative town hall meetings.

In Niger, following training on collective responsibility for inclusive decentralization, municipal officials applied some of their new skills by conducting 30 information sessions and outreach activities to educate citizens about available judicial services. These included court appointed representation and the issuance of birth, death and marriage certificates.

**Tool 11. Participatory Budgeting** – Participatory budgeting is an innovative mechanism that promotes the joint-engagement of local government, private sector and civil society in the allocation of municipal resources. From an initial innovation in Brazil, participatory budgeting initiatives have been growing exponentially in many countries in Latin America, and more recently in Europe as well as Africa and Asia. It is increasingly recognized that participatory budgeting is not only an effective mechanism to prioritize community needs and improve targeting of public resources to the poor, but also an aid to decentralization and social accountability.

In some cases a municipality's total budget can be open to this participatory process, including salaries of elected officials and civil servants, maintenance, debts, and other resources coming from private-public partnerships and donors. Other municipalities may choose to report some of these budget areas and open others to participatory budgeting. A number of tools exist to guide specific resource allocation criteria, established to ensure equity in the budget allocation process. For example, general basic criteria include: 1) size of the population; 2) indicators to measure access to services and infrastructure; and 3) ranking of priorities defined by citizens.

Mercy Corps-Indonesia is using this method in urban governance programming based on requests from urban municipalities to assist them in introducing participatory budgeting in their regions. They are working towards building the capacity of local governments to prepare them for the establishment of participatory budgeting as a way of realizing good governance. The approach is based on UN-Habitat's [Participatory Budgeting Toolkit](#).

**Tool 12. Services and Resources Mapping** – Many countries also use mapping methods as criteria for understanding needs and allocating resources using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to graphically represent social, economic and quality of life indicators. This approach can be combined with other needs assessment processes or participatory budgeting. Such maps can be the basis for examining relationships between local government and constituents or between resources and their allocation. Participatory-GIS methods also foster accountability, transparency, legitimacy of government at the same time that they allow for greater participation, value of local knowledge and ownership of decision-making processes.

One of the major lessons learned from relief and recovery programming in Sri Lanka and Indonesia after the Asian Tsunami in 2005 was the value of GIS as a systematic component of the project planning process. Maps indicating household survival rates by location sped up coordination with the public sector at the local, municipal and national levels for urgent health care and housing support. These kinds of maps and data also helped with budget estimations and provided baselines to help monitor the success of implementation.

**Tool 13. Serving the Public, Serving the Nation: Short Course in Communication for Government Officials** – Developed by the Mercy Corps Mongolia team, this tool focuses on the specific communication issues and skills that government officials need related to relief and development programming. It includes an adaptable course outline and instruction notes for trainers.

**Tool 14. Citizen Report Cards** – Much the same idea as Community Score Cards discussed above, Citizen Report Cards are a simple way to provide public agencies with feedback from public service users. The tool helps groups collect data on user perceptions of the quality, adequacy and efficiency of public services. In this way it gives communities, CSOs, businesses and local governments information needed to engage providers to improve the delivery of public services. Citizen Report Cards measure themes such as: access, quality, reliability, problems encountered by users, responsiveness of providers, transparency of standards and norms in service provision and costs.

### Using Citizen Report Cards

- Unit - household/individual
- Meant for macro level
- Main output is data on demand for services and performance with actual scores
- Implementation time longer (3-6 months)
- Feedback later, through media Information collected through questionnaires

Teams using the Citizen Report Cards find they:

- Help local government facilitate open and proactive discussion of their performance.
- Give CSOs the data needed to play a watch-dog role to monitor public service delivery.
- Enable central level planning departments to budget appropriately and monitor implementation of service delivery at the local and municipal level.

**Tool 15. Public Opinion Research** – Many of the tools and methods already discussed in this chapter can be used to gather information about public opinions. Frequently, developing countries experience a lack of in-depth qualitative research of public opinion which subsequently disconnects policy decisions from constituent concerns. In most countries – or nearby within every region – there are professional research institutes, either independent companies or centers associated with universities, that conduct opinion research and train CSOs and government offices in charge of information. Mercy Corps regularly partners with such groups to create surveys for civic and political actors to better understand and value the viewpoint of citizens on public affairs and policy issues. Such research provides public opinion toward public health initiatives, agrarian reform measures or minority participation in elections.

**Tool 16. Citizen Assistance Centers** – In any existing local government office, a dedicated room or staffed desk can provide a place for citizens to get government documents such as building licenses, birth certificates or copies of policies. Staffing assistance centers by members of CSOs can help encourage community use in places where there is mixed trust in government, but putting centers in government offices helps to promote transparency and accountability. This too provides recommendations for exiting CACs.

**Tool 17. Making the Most of Media** – This checklist presents tips to make radio, TV, print and web-based media powerful tools for good governance and other types of programming.

**Tool 18. e-Democracy** – In places where the Internet is widely accessible, national ministries and other institutions of government are using on-line platforms to foster broader and more active citizen involvement in addressing public challenges. “E-democracy” is a relatively new concept that addresses a growing youth population in many countries as well as the need to reinvigorate interest in the democratic process among people who may feel alienated from distant and unaccountable lawmakers. Approaches include:

- Maintaining websites with policy updates and ways for anyone with Internet access to provide instant feedback.
- Email lists sent to subscribers, providing updates on ministry activities.
- Live chat spaces with officials, for interaction similar to call-in radio programming.



**Tip:** See [Section 3.4](#) for more information on using media and information and communication technologies for good governance, including how Mercy Corps is applying these tools.

**Tool 19. CLEAR Framework** – There are a number of factors affecting civic participation of a given community or within a certain population. Initiatives to increase citizen participation should be accompanied by operational research to see what works and what does not in a given context. By understanding specifically which factors are weak, programming can better target ways to increase public engagement.

## CLEAR Framework

Factor affecting participation	Impact/How it works	Programming Target
<b>Can do</b>	Individual resources that people have to mobilize and organize (speaking, writing, technical skills, as well as the confidence to use them) make a difference in their capacity to participate	Capacity-building: specific support measures or targeted development for general or focused civic participation
<b>Like to</b>	Committing to participation requires a sense of involvement with a community or group that is the focus of engagement (CSO, city council, etc.)	Strengthening sense of community, social capital and notions of citizenship
<b>Enabled to</b>	Civic infrastructure – organizations, networks and interface opportunities with government – makes a difference because it creates or blocks an opportunity structure for participation	Supporting civic infrastructure so there are groups and organizations around to channel and facilitate participation
<b>Asked to</b>	Mobilizing people into participation by asking their input can make a big difference	Targeted outreach: creating participation schemes that are diverse, engaging and reflective
<b>Responded to</b>	When asked, people say they will participate if they are listened to, not necessarily agreed with, but also able to see a response or action taken	Capacity-building: public communication mechanisms and public policy systems that show a capacity to respond and report on actions

**Tool 20. Advocacy Checklist** – This tool guides teams through a series of questions in order to plan whether integrating advocacy activities are appropriate and, if so, what information and considerations are needed. Questions include:

- What structures, policies, practices, values and attitudes run counter to the goals for this program?
- Which of these would be important to change for the program to be effective, scalable and sustainable?
- What change do we seek? And Who can/will give the change to us?
- What is our plan for action?
- How often will we review our progress and adjust our plans?

Mercy Corps’ Policy and Advocacy team recommends [A Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Policy Influence](#) from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), which includes lists to keep in mind based on different advocacy objectives.



**Tip:** See [Section 6.2](#) for more detailed discussion of how monitoring is used to guide implementation and keep feedback loops open for continuous learning and strong program impact.

## 5.3. Monitoring and Evaluation Tools

**Tool 21. Participatory Impact Assessment (PIA)** – PIA techniques include mapping, ranking, charting, proportional piling, observation and other methods where community participants lead in the analysis. Program teams may be familiar with PIA from other types of programs, but they are also useful for governance activities or programs. PIA helps teams analyze issues such as the relative benefits from or importance of different project options, ranking of needs or priorities, and analyzing before/after situations. PIA techniques can provide both robust quantitative data and rich qualitative data from the perspective of beneficiaries.



**Tip:** PIA is closely related to Participatory Rural/Rapid Appraisal (PRA) methods used in design, implementation and evaluation phases of programming. For more participatory tools such as Action Planning, see Mercy Corps’ [Guide to Community Mobilization Programming](#), an approach to strengthening community members and local government to lead development programming. More information on both PIA and the Most Significant Change tool below, see [DM&E Tip Sheet 14: Participatory M&E](#)

**Tool 22. Most Significant Change** – This method consists of collecting a series of personal stories from beneficiaries by asking open questions, like: “What is the most significant change that occurred in government-community relations as a result of this project?” Different stakeholder groups then analyze the collected stories in successive rounds to identify the most significant or meaningful examples of changes brought about during the program, and why these were deemed significant. These stories can also be grouped by theme to show the relative importance of various types of impacts in the eyes of beneficiaries.

Most of the tools and approaches mentioned in this chapter and in Chapter 6 can be used for monitoring and evaluation. Many general evaluation approaches can be used effectively as well. To find what might work for your team, see the [DM&E Guidebook Supplement](#), a field-friendly resource with tip sheets for specific evaluation methods.

## Chapter 6. Design, Monitoring & Evaluation and Resources

As discussed throughout this guide, Mercy Corps has a number of programs where good governance is a main goal and many more where it is an objective or theme of programs dealing with food security or climate change, youth or gender and other realms. Every program design should have a rigorous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) core that: 1) provides information to guide decision-making; 2) tracks progress towards targets; 3) measures results; and 4) facilitates learning. Governance programs offer a powerful opportunity for participatory methods of M&E, whereby citizens and public decision-makers themselves play a central role in monitoring activities, evaluating program results, and reflecting on lessons.

In addition to identifying signals of progress or uncovering potential threats to program goals, participatory M&E methods model and reinforce mutual accountability and transparency among communities, between CSOs and governments and between project partners and Mercy Corps. Participatory M&E methods help citizens and government officials collaborate in the spirit of ongoing learning and exchange. Through monitoring, evaluating and learning, public, private and civil society groups can also enrich their expertise in participatory decision-making and project planning. Thus, participatory M&E can serve as a means to achieve governance objectives as well as a mechanism to track and understand success.

### Challenges of Governance DM&E

Governance programs pose a unique monitoring challenge. At Mercy Corps, good governance encompasses the following elements, presented also in the framework in [Chapter 1](#).

Accountable Decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rule of Law</b></li> <li>• <b>Transparency</b></li> </ul>	Civic Participation and Voice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Equity and Inclusiveness</b></li> <li>• <b>Participation</b></li> </ul>	Public Service Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Efficiency</b></li> <li>• <b>Effectiveness</b></li> <li>• <b>Responsiveness</b></li> </ul>
---	---	--

These elements of good governance underpin *processes* of decision-making, which are not easy to observe directly. This difficulty has elicited three myths about monitoring governance programs:

Myth 1: Development practitioners cannot measure progress towards objectives of complex interventions that change processes and behavior.

Myth 2: Setting the bar of success for a process change is always arbitrary and selective.

Myth 3: Since governance programs operate at multiple levels of decision-making, monitoring is too complex and costly for development agencies to undertake.

The following section offers methods for developing robust measures that fracture these myths and facilitate smooth learning.

### Mission Metrics Theme #10: Accountable Governance

Mission Metrics is an agency initiative to help us understand how we are achieving our mission. Its stated goal is to more effectively serve our beneficiaries and better manage our performance by applying and acting on results from a set of measurement indicators that address mission-critical success factors. By defining key terms in the Mercy Corps mission statement (secure, productive and just), and developing a set of Mission Themes that further describe these key terms, this initiative has provided a theoretical framework for developing and strategically aligning our work. Good Governance figures prominently in this framework, particularly in those Themes reflective of developing a 'just' community (Themes 7-10). These themes reflect principles of Good Governance such as participation, peaceful change, and the interaction of civil society and private sector with government. The most direct link, however, is Theme #10, Accountable and capable governance at local, sub-regional, or national levels. When reporting on existing programs and designing new ones, it will be important to reflect on these themes and align program objectives and indicators with them (please see the Mission Metrics subspace on Clearspace <https://clearspace.mercycorps.org/community/cops/dme/macroiinfo>).

## 6.1. Design of Governance Programs and Activities

Governance programs can tackle a range of cross-cutting issues and operate at diverse levels of decision-making. This means that governance programs can follow a range of program cycles. Rather than present one model, the following section outlines some key principles for effective design.

**Governance and Change** – Citizens, government officials and Mercy Corps staff can track governance processes without exceptional cost or complexity. The key is for stakeholders to articulate the program strategy and the specific changes that they intend the program to affect. This should occur at the design and proposal development stage, where stakeholders can voice the program strategy and types of change, they have an instant frame to define objectives and indicators.



**Tip:** Proposal development is often a short and busy time. Further consultation and clarification absolutely has to happen during project start-up. This also give any new program team members, who were not a part of the proposal process, the chance to hear from stakeholders first-hand about ways to track governance processes.

**Theory of Change:** A set of beliefs about how change happens.

**Type of Change:** A category that reflects transformation.

As a pre-requisite to surfacing a theory of change, a program team must reveal the dynamics and drivers of governance processes through a thorough context analysis.

**Initial Visits and Rapid Assessments** – Getting to know target communities and partners begins before a team can define their governance theory of change and identify program participants. A context analysis should incorporate interviews and initial data gathering amongst the target populations at all potential levels of a future program. Crucially, a program development team should notify all relevant authorities and involve them in information gathering and selection of target areas, organizations, communities and governance structures. Regardless of the purpose and target of a particular governance program, Mercy Corps should coordinate with government agencies at the national, regional and district levels, as well as CSOs and others in civil society. With these steps, the rapid assessment process can ensure collaboration at later stages of a program.

Program teams should tailor a rapid assessment to capture the broad dynamics of public decision-making. Issues to look at:

- The demographics of specific communities across a target area.
- The variety and nature of public decision-making mechanisms in a target area, including identification of both traditional institutions that operate through customary law and formal state institutions, grounded in constitutional law.
- Which actors make key public decisions.
- The relationships between and among cross-cutting issues relevant to the scope of the program.
- Key governance gaps, needs and bottlenecks that programming might influence.

Information can be gathered through focus groups, surveying, key informant interviews or other participatory methods, such as by using DM&E-in-a-Box [Tip Sheet #4](#).

**Mapping Actors and Potential Relationships** – Rapid assessments help Mercy Corps understand all the stakeholders operating in the area where Mercy Corps will be working, including local CSOs, INGOs, government agencies and others. Be sensitive to and respectful of their work, seeking to build on efforts already made and filling a needed gap in the given context. Keep an open mind about potential partnerships that will further program objectives.

Taking the time to map relevant actors – graphically illustrating the groups, levels of decision makers and key decision-makers – can help reveal natural alliances and avoid obstacles at later stages. Begin building relationships by identifying shared goals and complementary resources. The relationship mapping tool discussed in [Chapter 5](#) is also helpful for program teams to tackle this stage of the context analysis.



### 6.1.1. Theory of Change and Hypothesis Analysis

**Step (1): Articulating the Theory of Change** – Following a thorough assessment of context, the program team should work with stakeholders to identify their central approach to the program. This strategy – or theory of change – will demonstrate 1) the program team's assumptions about how change might occur, and 2) why the program team believes a specific approach to be particularly relevant or important. The program team should convene meetings and focus groups with key stakeholders so that these actors can contribute to the process.



**Tip:** Consider using one of Mercy Corps' participatory M&E tools, such as Participatory Rural Appraisal. For more information on participatory M&E, please see [DM&E Tip Sheet #14: Participatory M&E](#).

As the program team and stakeholders identify a theory of change, they should:

- Define assumptions about how and why a specific strategy will effect change in the context.
- Rank theories of change to compare their feasibility and effectiveness.

There is no restriction to the types of strategies or theories that a program team and stakeholders might identify – but each brings a specific set of assumptions and advantages. Possible theories of change for governance programs include the list in Table 3.

*Table 3. Theories of Change for Governance Programming*

<b>Theory</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Mercy Corps Programming Example</b>
<b>Individual Change Theory</b>	Processes of public decision-making transform through the change in attitudes, behaviour and skills of a critical mass of individuals.	Investment in individual change through training, consciousness-raising workshops, dialogues and encounter groups.	Global Citizen Corps (GCC)
<b>Healthy Relationships and Connections Theory</b>	Processes of public decision-making become more participatory through breaking down divisions, prejudices and stereotypes between and among groups.	Inter-group dialogues, networking, relationship-building processes, joint efforts between government and CAGs.	Localizing Institutional Capacity in Sudan (networking), Iraq Community Action Program (joint development efforts between government and CAGs)
<b>Institutional Development Theory</b>	Facets of good governance achieved through establishing stable/ reliable public institutions that guarantee transparency, equitable participation and fair allocation of resources.	New constitutional structures, new ministries, development of rule of law, establishment of equitable economic structures/ a private sector, democratization.	Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services - Sudan (local government capacity-building), Municipality and Integration Support Initiative - Kosovo
<b>Political Elites Theory</b>	Facets of good governance achieved when political leaders take necessary steps, and it is in political leaders' interests, to increase transparency and participation.	Increase benefits/ incentives for political leaders to embrace participation and transparency, engage influential constituencies in favour of reform.	TIERRAS - Guatemala, Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services - Sudan
<b>Community Mobilization Theory</b>	If a program can mobilize communities and increase civic engagement, political leaders will pay attention and be more responsive.	Community mobilization programming (CAG formation), advocacy training for CAGs, use of media.	Community Mobilization Programs, Localizing Institutional Capacity in Sudan
<b>Economics Theory</b>	Economic incentives and improved livelihoods can induce reform in public decision-making processes.	Reward systems, livelihoods programming, public service delivery	Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services in Sudan, Municipality and Integration Support Initiative - Kosovo
<b>Public Attitudes Theory</b>	A change in public attitudes can promote more equitable participation and inclusion of vulnerable groups in public decision-making processes.	TV and radio programs that promote tolerance and dialogues among groups that otherwise cannot cooperate.	Towards an Inclusive and Collaborative Environment for People with Disabilities in Manicaland (TICEPWD) – Zimbabwe.

### **Logical Framework Step 1 of 5: The Goal (Impact)**

Surfacing a Theory of Change will have revealed the overall program goal, which will fill the first row of the logical framework.

### Step (2): Identifying the Types of Change

While theories of change relate to the overarching approach of a program, types of change show how a program targets specific populations, processes and problems. Through the lens of the theory of change, types of change reveal a program's objectives and associated indicators. Therefore, types of change form the backbone of both the program model and monitoring and evaluation plan.

Governance programs might affect the following types of change:

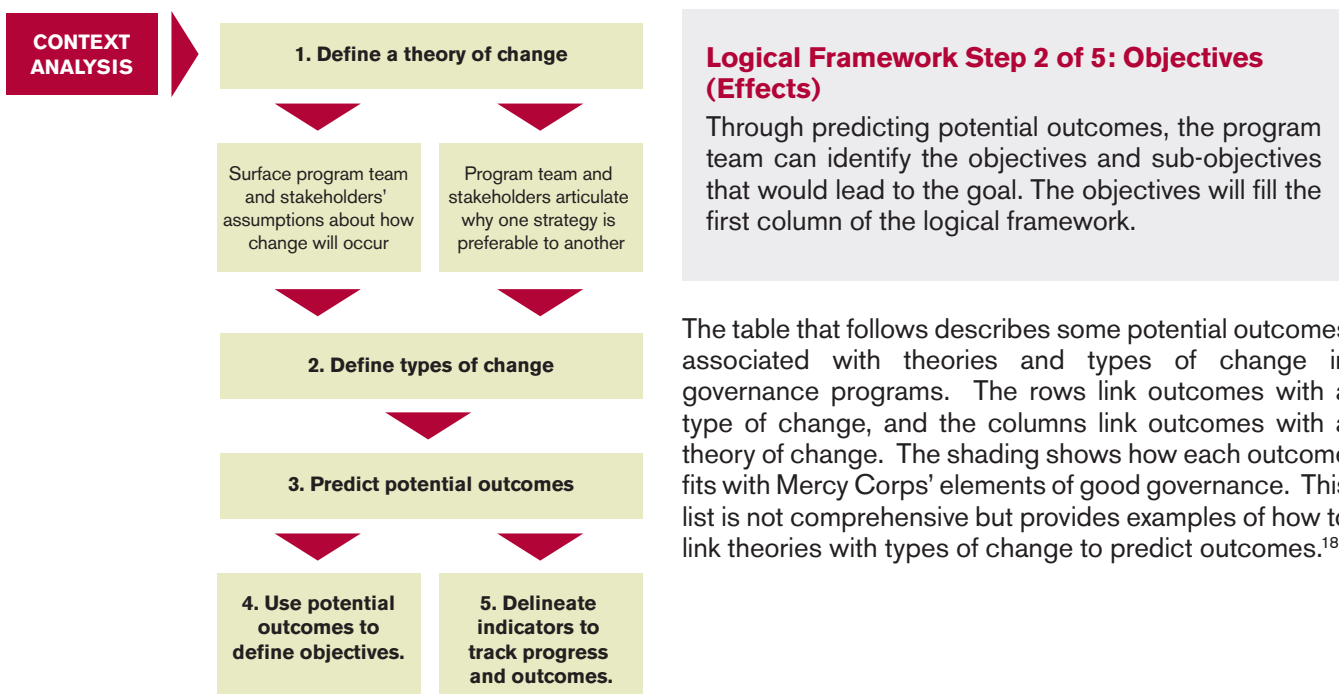
- *Change in functioning*: increasing transparency; from authoritarian to consultative policy-making; increasing cost efficiency.
- *Change in behavior*: from public officials disrespecting constituents to respecting constituents; from public decision-making bodies ignoring youth to considering their interests.
- *Change in circumstance*: from politically marginalized to able to vote or to voice interests to public officials.
- *Change in skills*: ability to introduce items onto the agenda in local governance.
- *Change in process*: from repressive authority over others to equitable engagement with others.
- *Change in structure*: creation of new government ministries; creation of new CSOs that can help deliver public services.
- *Change in relationship*: from adversaries to partners in public service delivery.

### Step (3): Predicting outcomes through theories and types of change

Once stakeholders have defined a theory of change and the types of change they seek to effect, they can forecast potential outcomes. These outcomes form two purposes:

- They help us articulate the objectives that frame the program's logic.
- They indicate what sorts of signals of change (indicators) stakeholders might track when monitoring program progress and measuring results.

Figure 9. Context Analysis



18 This list and section presents an approach to Theories of Change first developed by Cheyanne Church and Mark M. Rogers, *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs*, 2006.

Table 4. Types of Change and Potential Outcomes from each Theory of Change

Types of Change	KEY						
	Accountable decision-making	Civic participation and voice		Public service delivery			
	Individual Change Theory	Healthy Relationships and Connections Theory	Institutional Development Theory	Political Elites Theory	Community Mobilization Theory	Economics Theory	Public Attitudes Theory
<i>Change in Functioning</i>	Able to play an active role as a citizen	Government and citizens routinely exchange information	Political appointments no longer exclusive domain of executives	Increase in transparency	Agenda-setting open to all	Increase cost efficiency of local government	Citizen value participation in community decision-making processes
<i>Change in Behavior</i>	Will comply with laws and regulations	Increase in joint CSO-government activities	Promotions based on merit and publicly-known rules	Allow greater participation of citizens	Increase in public discussions of community needs	Community groups able to receive credit loans for development projects without default	Public officials listen and respond to citizen needs
<i>Change in Circumstance</i>	Able to vote in elections and referenda	Barriers preventing CSO interaction with government removed	Increased allocation of municipal budget to infrastructure development	Increase opportunity for popular participation in local governance	Marginalized groups able to voice interests in media	CSOs have access to credit to conduct community development projects	Citizens can publicly judge public officials' performance
<i>Change in Skills</i>	Increase depth of analysis of community development needs	Improve skills to facilitate dialogue meetings	Collaborative community planning at the municipal level	Improve communications with constituents	Improve citizen advocacy skills	Citizens can read and understand municipal budget	Citizens value and incentivize community volunteers to acquire public service delivery skills
<i>Change in Process</i>	From individual submission to elite decision-making to individual proaction in engagement with community decision-making.	From divisive decision-making that separates marginalized groups to decision-making that propagates compromise and cooperation	Routine response to citizen advocacy efforts	Public officials move from closed-door decision-making to garnering input from citizens and CSOs	CSOs help plan and implement development projects	Local government implements process to share budget with citizens	Popular opinion rejects practices that exclude marginalized groups from decision-making
<i>Change in Structure</i>	Understand structure of public decision-making	Equitable and affordable access to public services	Local government able to deliver public services	Opportunity for election to government posts no longer restricted to elites	Public services accessible to all	Local government co-funds development projects with community	Creation of an active public media
<i>Change in Relationship</i>	Individual interactions in community decision-making based on dignity and respect	Increase in trust	Introduction of citizen consultative processes in key ministries or county government departments	Public officials and other decision-makers more accessible to those they represent	Increased dialogue between marginalized groups	County government sub-contracts project implementation to CSOs/	Public recognition that all groups have a right to participation in public decision-making processes

### Logical Framework Step 3 and 4 of 5: Activities and Outputs

Once the program team has identified objectives and program logic, it can define the outputs and activities that would achieve those objectives. These will fill the second and the third columns of the logical framework. For more information about this process, and Mercy Corps Logical Frameworks, please see the *Design, Monitoring and Evaluation Guidebook*.

#### 6.1.2. Indicator Development

Once the program team has specific predicted objectives, it should follow some general principles to identify appropriate indicators or signals of change for these outcomes. These indicators are useful during both program design and monitoring and evaluation:

- *Design Stage*: Indicators help clarify program logic and confirm which types of change the program might stimulate.
- *Baseline*: The program team – and preferably the future evaluator – should collect data against each indicator as a starting-point.
- *Monitoring*: Indicators help to track progress towards success, and data should be collected throughout the life of the project to measure progress and flag potential problems.
- *Evaluation*: The program team (or evaluator) will collect the same data at the end of the project to compare to the baseline data set and ascertain what sorts of change have occurred, in addition to looking for unintended outcomes.



**Tip:** *Too many objective-level indicators can make programs spread too thin and will be hard to measure.*

Where relevant and appropriate to the context, a program team should consider ways for partners and beneficiaries to be involved both in defining what indicators are meaningful to them, and in tracking their progress. A team might adopt participatory methods that are more likely to foster self-reflection and ownership, and thus greater project impact and sustainability, rather than passive methods that are not immediately beneficial to the person giving the information.

A *quantitative* indicator is designed to collect numerical data which can be analyzed with statistical calculations such as averages, percentages, percent change, etc. This will generally be gathered through surveys, or close-ended interview questions. A *qualitative* indicator is designed to collect non-numerical data, especially in narrative or descriptive form. *Qualitative* data will be collected through open-ended interviews, focus groups, and other non-prescriptive methods. A combination of qualitative and quantitative indicators and data collection methods will provide a richer and more robust understanding of program results. Both are highly compatible with Mission Metrics Indicators.

The program team should aim to select a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures. For guidelines on what constitute high quality indicators, please refer to page 14 of Mercy Corps' [DM&E Guidebook](#).

#### All indicators should pass three tests:

*Feasible* – Indicators should be practical and cost effective.

*Reliable* – Indicators should yield consistent findings after repetition and regardless of the data-gatherer.

*Useful to decision-making* – The prime purpose of developing a performance monitoring plan is to generate valuable information that can drive critical decision-making and equip a program team to enhance program design. Therefore, indicators must yield the sort of information that can inform program choices.



**Tip:** *Think about the budgetary and time implications of tracking each indicator. Sometimes program teams commit to extensive evaluation activities without analyzing whether they have adequate funding and capacity to carry them out. If there are many objective-level indicators requiring surveys, and/or the program team envisions a fairly complex monitoring system, it's a good idea to invest in a full-time M&E position.*

A program team should aim to strike a balance between good-enough indicators that are currently measured by pre-existing programs and incorporation of new indicators found in sector best practices or academic literature. Too much emphasis on generally unfamiliar indicators that are ambitious or complicated can decrease buy-in and use among field teams. At the same time, however, it is invaluable to push beyond current boundaries and promote new indicators that are more in line with the results a program aspires to achieve and with sector or industry-wide best practices. Therefore, a mixture of previously used and “new” – but tested – indicators offers an effective mix.

### **Governance Sector Indicators**

The following section sets out some generalized indicators that can signal change across a range of governance themes and program strategies. These can serve as the starting point for a governance program’s Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) or Mercy Corps Indicator Plan. For further tips on design of a PMP or Indicator Plan, please refer to [DM&E-in-a-Box](#).

#### **a) Purpose of the Menu**

Individual municipalities and communities vary greatly. This means that universal indicators can miss important trends specific to a context, and reduce localized relevance and buy-in. Therefore, the purpose of this menu is to offer a platform from which program officers can contextualize pre-existing indicators and add new ones.

The menu complements the Good Governance Framework in [Chapter 1](#) by proposing a selection of “change signals” that apply to types of change within each of the three governance objectives: accountable decision-making; civic participation and voice; and public service delivery.

#### **b) Objective and Output Indicators**

The principal indicator menu displays objective-level indicators. These indicators represent different measures which can detect whether specific types of change have occurred. The purpose of these generalized indicators is to help a program team consider even more specifically what sorts of change they seek to affect and how to determine progress or success.

The menu does not offer a list of generalized output indicators. Outputs are often tangible deliverables or products that emerge from activities in the immediate term. This means that outputs are specific to types of activities – and not types of change or governance objectives. However, the menu offers some example output indicators in call-out menus linked to the objective indicators.

#### **c) How to Use the Menu**

Before referring to the menu, a program team should determine three elements related to an objective in question:

1. Where the objective fits in the context of Mercy Corps’ three governance objectives.
2. The overarching theory of change for the program.
3. The type of change linked to the objective.

The program team can then scan the first columns of the indicator menu to identify the relevant Good Governance Component. Within each Component, the menu yields example indicators for suggested types of change. The program team can try to identify an indicator specific to the type of change in question.

Once the program team identifies a generalized indicator, it should contextualize the indicator according to:

- The governance level in question.
- The relevant population, group or institution.
- The appropriate level for the target.
- The appropriate time frame.

The contextualization stage also presents a moment to meet with stakeholders and explore what success looks like to them. The program team can then match these observations with the types of change and adjust or add new indicators.

For guidance on how to facilitate locally-developed indicators, please see DM&E [Tip Sheet #14](#): Participatory M&E and the Participatory Impact Assessment guide.

For example, suppose that a program team is locating an indicator for an objective that relates to accountable decision-making, fits within the Healthy Relationships and Connections theory of change and signifies a change in functioning. The program team considers the generalized indicator: “% of community members who can identify how they can access information about their municipal/ county/ locality action plans.”

Suppose the program in question operates in southern Sudan, and aims to help public officials from the Abyei Area Administration exchange information about road building with members of local CSOs in the county. The team decides that within a 12 month period, reasonable success would equate to 30% of CSO members having access to information about the administration’s plans. Therefore, the team could arrive at a context specific objective as follows: “Within 12 months, 30% of CSO members across Abyei can identify how they can access information about the Abyei administration’s road-building plans.” This would translate into the indicator: % of CSO members across Abyei who can identify how they can access information about the Abyei administration’s road-building plans.

The indicators in the menu originate from pre-existing Mercy Corps programs and from the USAID Handbook for Democracy and Governance Program Indicators. Several of these indicators have been adjusted and generalized in line with field team member feedback.

### Measuring Mercy Corps’ Mission Indicators

One of the keys to applying Mission Metrics to programming as we know it is recognizing that most Mission Indicators are not measured directly, but serve as ‘categories’ of likely indicators that programs might use. The two Mission Indicators identified for Theme #10, *Accountable and capable governance at local, sub-regional, or national levels*, are:

Indicator 10.1 Number and percentage of communities with increased capacity to engage with government; and

Indicator 10.2 Government responsiveness and accountability improved at local, sub-regional, and national levels.

The Indicator Guidelines in Annex D provide a description of these two primary approaches to capturing program results, as well as examples of each type (mainly drawn from the Governance Indicator Menu in this chapter). The primary distinction is whether the program targets communities and individuals with respect to their engagement with government, or targets government itself – offices, policies, performance, laws, staff, etc.

There are two other Mission Metrics themes relevant to some governance programming. The first is Theme #8, *Government, civil society, informed citizens, and private sectors successfully interact together*. This theme has only one, very open-ended, Mission Indicator 8.1 – *Linkages between private sector, government, and civil society are forged and/or improved*. Another relevant theme is #7, *Effective participation of marginalized groups in public life*, with two Mission Indicators:

Indicator 7.1 Increased knowledge and skills among marginalized populations

Indicator 7.2 Marginalized populations play a role in community decision-making

*Table 5. Governance Indicator Menu*

<b>Good Governance Component</b>	<b>Theory Of Change</b>	<b>Type Of Change</b>	<b>Potential Outcome</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Accountable Decision-Making	Community Mobilization Theory	Change in Skills	Citizens can read and/or understand their municipal/ county/ locality action plans	# or % of community members who can describe the core content of their municipal/ county/locality action plans. *
Accountable Decision-Making	Healthy Relationships and Connections Theory	Change in Functioning	Government and citizens routinely exchange information	# or % of community members who can identify how they can access information about their municipal/ county/ locality action plans.
Accountable Decision-Making	Political Elites Theory	Change in Functioning	Increased transparency	# or % of local councils/ other public body that make budgets/financial reports available to citizens “in good time” during the planning stage of a municipal/ county/ locality project. †
Equitable Civic Participation and Voice	Individual Change Theory	Change in knowledge	People understand how they can play active roles as citizens	# or % of citizens who can describe at least three methods for contacting local government.*
Equitable Civic Participation and Voice	Healthy Relationships and Connections Theory	Change in relationship	Interactions between public officials and citizens based on mutual dignity and respect	# or % of citizens that feel that they could have a “positive” discussion with a public official. *
Equitable Civic Participation and Voice	Community Mobilization Theory	Change in behaviour	Increase in public discussions of community needs	# or % of citizens that attend community association [or local government-organized] activities in X period.*
Equitable Civic Participation and Voice	Community Mobilization Theory	Change in circumstance	All groups able to participate actively in community discussions	# or % of citizens in attendance that report they have access to comprehensible information throughout the activity.
Equitable Civic Participation and Voice	Political Elites Theory	Change in process	Public officials move from closed-door decision-making to garnering input from citizens and CSOs	# or % of civil society groups that has X communications with local government in a given time frame.*
Equitable Civic Participation and Voice				CSO/other perception/ opinion of willingness of public institutions to engage in dialogue. †
Equitable Civic Participation and Voice	Community Mobilization Theory	Change in functioning	Cluster committees able to meet on a regular basis	# or % of cluster committees meeting at least three times a year.*
Equitable Civic Participation and Voice	Community Mobilization Theory	Change in relationship	Increased collaboration between communities	# or % of joint activities implemented by cluster committees.*



*Table 5. Governance Indicator Menu (continued)*

<b>Good Governance Component</b>	<b>Theory Of Change</b>	<b>Type Of Change</b>	<b>Potential Outcome</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Effective and Efficient Service Delivery	Economics Theory of Change	Change in structure	Local government co-funds development projects with community	Value and % of cost share from community for community project implementation.*
Effective and Efficient Service Delivery	Economics Theory of Change	Change in structure	Local government co-funds development projects with community	Value and % of cost share from local government for community project implementation.*
Effective and Efficient Service Delivery	Community Mobilization Theory	Change in structure	Public services accessible to all	# or % of community members that use public infrastructure.*
Effective and Efficient Service Delivery	Institutional Development Theory	Change in process	Local government routinely responds to community needs throughout implementation process.	# or % of community members that express satisfaction about the infrastructure implementation process.*
Effective and Efficient Service Delivery	Institutional Development Theory	Change in structure	Local government able to maintain public services	# or % of community members that believe that the municipal government has maintained public infrastructure at a consistent quality since initial implementation at X date.*
Effective and Efficient Service Delivery	Institutional Development Theory	Change in structure	Local government able to maintain public services	# or % of communities/ local governments that initiate development projects without Mercy Corps resources or oversight.*
Effective and Efficient Service Delivery	Community Mobilization Theory	Change in circumstance	Communities able to meet own development needs	# or % change in the degree to which community members feel their communities are more capable of meeting their own development needs.*
Effective and Efficient Service Delivery	Political Elites Theory	Change in process	Local government gives citizens avenue to give input to investment or development plans	# or % of target local government units implementing investment or development plans with citizen input. †

†Adapted from USAID Handbook for Democracy and Governance Program Indicators.

\* Derived from former Mercy Corps programs.

### **Logical Framework Step 5 of 5: Activities and Indicators**

The indicators that the program team defines will fill the fourth column of the logical framework.

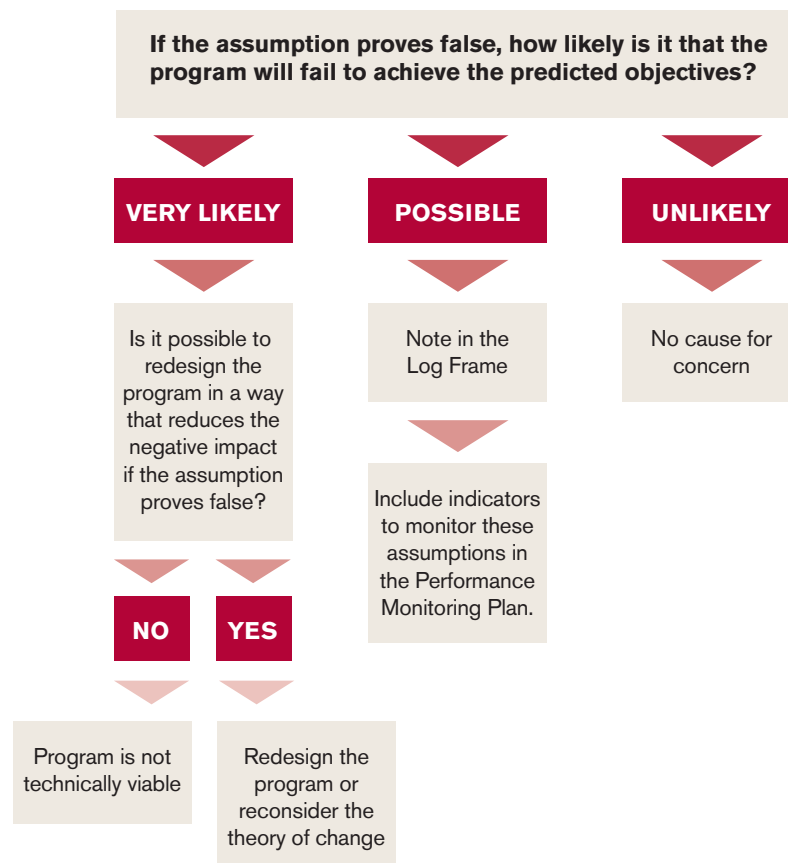
### 6.1.3. Defining and Testing Assumptions

After the program team has defined a theory of change, types of change, potential objectives, a logical framework and indicators, it should be able to describe two sets of key assumptions:

1. Assumptions about how change will occur, implicit in the theory of change.
2. Assumptions about why chosen outputs lead to specific objectives, as indicated by the logical framework.

Before finalize the logical framework, the program team should test these assumptions using the following framework in Figure 10.<sup>19</sup>

*Figure 10. Process for Testing Assumptions*



If an assumption is possible and included in the log frame, the program team should develop indicators for the assumption. Alongside standard objective monitoring, the program team should monitor “possible but not likely” assumptions throughout implementation. This gives a program team the opportunity to adjust program design if the context changes unexpectedly and an assumption threatens to inhibit success.

<sup>19</sup> Diagram adapted from: Search for Common Ground. *Designing for Results*. 2006.

## 6.2 Monitoring and Evaluating Governance Programs and Activities

Once the indicator plan and logical framework are complete, the program team should undertake a baseline study. The base line study is a moment to collect data as a bench mark at “time zero” against which the program team can compare future indicator measurements. The baseline is crucial because, without this primary data, the program team cannot measure progress in later monitoring stages and evaluations.

### 6.2.1. The Baseline

The baseline should not be confused with the original assessment. Unlike a needs or context assessment, the baseline is a moment to gather information for the defined indicators as applied to the target population. The baseline is also a chance to perform final tests on the selected indicators.

#### When should a baseline occur?

Program teams can undertake baselines before a program starts or before the start of major new activities. Baselines also do not have to be one large event. Sometimes it is more effective to conduct a rolling or phased baseline, a series of smaller baseline data collection activities, timed to match the sequencing of specific project activities.

#### Who should perform the baseline?

Ideally whoever will perform the program evaluation should also conduct the baseline. If Mercy Corps has planned an internal evaluation, then the relevant teams should be involved. Otherwise, the relevant external consultant should be involved. This will improve the quality and ease of future evaluations, since the evaluator will have had a chance to assess the appropriateness of indicators before the program starts and understand the context at “time zero”. Even when an external consultant is leading a baseline (or evaluation), the involvement of the program team is critical. It is an opportunity for them to share their knowledge, to “own” the data, and to learn about their beneficiaries.

#### How should the program team use baseline data?

Following the baseline, the program team should do two things:

1. Where relevant, make necessary adjustments to both indicators and data collection tools.
2. Review from the base line and participatory assessment activities what reasonable success looks like, and insert reasonable targets into the indicators. For example, if the indicator is, “# or % of community members that use public infrastructure”, the baseline for a target population of 1000 might show that a reasonable target in three years would be: “500 or 50% of community members use public infrastructure.”

For further guidance on conducting a baseline study, please see DM&E [Tip Sheet #5: Baselines](#). The baseline is also another moment where the program team should consider using participatory data collection tools. For guidance, please see DM&E [Tip Sheet #14: Participatory M&E](#).

### 6.2.2. Ongoing Monitoring

Monitoring goes hand-in-hand with implementation in order to not be overly time-consuming – data collection, analysis and reflection are all part of implementation and are important regular processes for governance programs and activities as political and other influencing factors can change rapidly. As each program activity occurs, the program team should collect information about key outputs and arrange moments to jointly analyze progress with stakeholders, including relevant government partners.

For more information about incorporating monitoring activities into a workplan, please see DM&E [Tip Sheet #7: DM&E at Project Kick-off](#). For more information on operationalizing a monitoring system, please see DM&E [Tip Sheet #12: Developing a Monitoring System](#).

Program teams can choose monitoring methods that involve the participation and build the oversight capacity of key stakeholders. Participatory monitoring of this sort can help achieve governance objectives in addition to generating information to improve strategic decision-making. Outcome Mapping offers one monitoring method that performs these functions, stimulating discussion and reflection at key intervals. For more information on Outcome Mapping, please see page 12 of see DM&E [Tip Sheet #14: Participatory M&E](#).

### Outcome Mapping

Outcome mapping is a highly participatory method that focuses on behavior change among local actors, including various government actors. It usually begins with a participatory workshop, where the team expresses the long-term, downstream impacts that it is working towards. These desired impacts will provide reference points to guide strategy-formulation and action plans in which individuals, CSOs, government groups and others outline responsibilities. The team then develops progress markers used to track performance for each “boundary partner”, or stakeholder, to identify changes the program hopes to influence. This process can benefit from some of the tools referenced in [Chapter 5](#).

#### 6.2.3. Evaluation

An evaluation constitutes an in-depth, retrospective analysis of an aspect (or aspects) of a project that occurs at a single point in time. An evaluation often measures effects and impact, and examines how Mercy Corps achieved them. This process also captures experiences so that future projects can learn from them. It aims to capture intended as well as unintended or emergent outcomes and contribute lessons learned to inform Mercy Corps and our partners.

Evaluations can occur at different moments and have different purposes, dependent on program needs. Mercy Corps might conduct an internal evaluation or recruit an external consultant for the job. For more information on Mercy Corps' evaluation methods, please see page 29 of the Design, Monitoring and Evaluation Guidebook.

Given the diverse shapes that an evaluation can take, there are no one-size-fits-all guidelines for governance programs. However, a program team should strongly consider participatory methods. As with monitoring, evaluation offers an opportunity both to perform an M&E function and to enhance the capacity of stakeholders.

In particular, a program team might consider Participatory Impact Assessment and Most Significant Change analysis. For more information about this methods, please see DM&E Tip Sheet #14: Participatory M&E.

## Chapter 7. Impact Examples

### 7.1. Colombia and Guatemala: A South-South Model in Latin America Tackles Land and Governance

By Matthew Alexander, Coordinator, and the Latin America South-South Team

Challenges to good governance in Latin America are historically linked to inequitable land distribution, cumbersome land tenure processes and conflicting land-use priorities. The inability of governments to resolve land conflicts and engage the wide range of actors has led to systematic forced displacement, distorted land prices and armed conflict in both Colombia and Guatemala. Violence often prevails over dialogue and good governance as the main land dispute mechanism.

**Key governance themes:** accountable decision-making, rule of law, government responsiveness, decentralization

Recognizing the potential for a mutual exchange of best practices and lessons learned in land conflict resolution between Colombia and Guatemala, Mercy Corps launched the Latin America South-South Initiative in 2009. The South-South model for cooperation is an exchange of peer expertise between CSOs, governments and individuals from developing countries. The Initiative leverages pragmatic, contextually relevant knowledge based on local capacities and experience.



*“By strengthening government’s capacity to peacefully resolve land conflict and manage natural resources, the South-South Initiative will contribute to successful post-conflict transitions in Colombia and Guatemala.”*

– Miguel Balán, Mercy Corps Guatemala

#### Land Conflict Mediation in Guatemala

In 1996, the Guatemalan Peace Accords put an end to 36 years of armed conflict and outlined the good governance components for a successful post-conflict transition. Specifically, the Agreement on Socioeconomic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation (AASSA) provided a framework for participatory, decentralized rural development. However, a coffee market crash in 2000 and unfulfilled peace agreement commitments heightened land tenure tensions and overwhelmed local governments. In response, Mercy Corps set out in 2003 to confront agrarian problems with an innovative land conflict resolution program named *Tierras* (Land). Guided by the good governance principals enshrined in the Peace Accords, *Tierras* has achieved unprecedented results in resolving land conflict and contributing to more equitable rural development.

A municipal government official from Guatemala shares his experience in land conflict resolution with a Colombian community leader during Mercy Corps’ Fourth South-South Cross-Visit. Photo: Sarah Malachowsky/Mercy Corps. Colombia, 2010

According to Article 27 of the AASSA, “the transformation of the structure of land tenure and land use should have the objective of incorporating the rural population into economic, social and political development, given that the land constitutes a socioeconomic stability base and is fundamental to the progressive social well-being and guarantee of freedom and dignity for those who work on it.” *Tierras* leverages the knowledge of local mediators and technical specialists to resolve

land conflict and streamline land titling in an otherwise overburdened bureaucratic process. Once a conflict over land is resolved, new land-holders and local government have a greater incentive to invest in the productive capacity and sustainability of the land. Working with its local partners, JADE and ADIM, Mercy Corps has resolved 249 land conflicts in Guatemala, benefiting 12,553 marginalized indigenous families with 47,143 hectares of arable land.

Convinced by the results of *Tierras*, numerous local authorities in Guatemala have adopted key elements of the program. For example, the national government’s Secretary of Agrarian Affairs provided over US\$70,000 to finance field studies and the acquisition of land for a *Tierras* agreement that benefited an indigenous community in the Tukurú municipality. Many of the municipal governments have also provided resources to support the mediation centers, such as personnel.

### **Agrarian Policy Advocacy Helps Pass Agrarian Reform Laws**

Despite the initial success of *Tierras*, Mercy Corps-Guatemala recognized that its achievements could be undermined without deeper structural changes in agrarian policy. With the goal of making governance more participatory, Mercy Corps developed an advocacy component for *Tierras* in which diverse stakeholders work alongside government representatives to develop more equitable and coherent agrarian policies. Locally, the main vehicle for advocacy has been the municipal land commissions, which include the participation of government, civil society, indigenous farmers' associations, academia, ecclesiastical organizations, NGOs, land owners and the private sector. The land commissions give a diverse range of stakeholders a venue for sharing their concerns and aspirations with local government officials. The land commissions have proved vital in establishing local governance priorities and galvanizing greater participation in political processes.

At the departmental (provincial/state) level, the *Tierras* program developed a Multi-Sector Coordinating Body for Land Issues called *CMTierras*, which was designed to engage civil society, municipal and government representatives to analyze the historical, political and economic causes and effects of land conflict. Together the municipal land commissions and *CMTierras* serve as platforms for lobbying national congress and department officials to reform agrarian codes, cultivate alliances and bring visibility to land tenure insecurity for marginalized indigenous communities. The *Tierras* program has served as a critical instrument in the design and/or passage of numerous pieces of legislation, the most notable being the Law on the Registry of Cadastral Information and the Comprehensive Rural Development Law.

### **Similar Land Dilemmas in Colombia**

Struggling to overcome a more than 45 year-old internal armed conflict, Colombia faces similar challenges of land conflict and governance. Building on the success of *Tierras*, Mercy Corps will use the South-South approach to transfer land conflict resolution methods from Guatemala to the Darién region of Colombia. The Darién region has recently experienced a delicate post-conflict calm, but latent land conflicts threaten to throw communities back into conflict.

The South-South participants are engaged in an invigorating dialogue on best practices and lessons learned. As a result the first two land conflict mediation centers in Colombia were launched in April 2010. The centers aim to resolve over 100 land conflicts within their first two years of operation, and engage the participation of local and regional governments in developing lasting solutions. The South-South exchange also includes technical training for Guatemalan participants on Colombia's official land-use planning processes, which serve as important governance tools for ensuring long-term peace and development after land tenure has been secured.

Mercy Corps Colombia anticipates that the Initiative will influence public policies and enhance good governance. For example, agreements between disputing parties will entail the participation of the Colombian Institute for Rural Development (INCODER), the government agency responsible for land reform and rural development. As a result, INCODER will assume more responsibility in preventing land disputes and adopt best practices for demarcation and land titling. Furthermore, land dispute resolution will enhance land tax collection, which is the main source of revenue for local government. While land use planning is mandatory, local government capacity for adopting and utilizing the latest technologies is limited. The South-South Initiative will provide local officials with training and tools in satellite imagery and other practices that support sustainable development and natural resource conservation.

### **Future Goals; Sustainable Natural Resource Management and the Regional Network**

Protecting and managing natural resources is another important governance issue in Latin America. In November of 2009, Mercy Corps added natural resource management to the South-South Initiative. By exchanging lessons learned and best practices, each country is developing comprehensive programs in sustainable resource management for local governments. The Initiative is also building a regional network that examines current land and natural resource policies and proposes more equitable and sustainable solutions. This multi-sectoral network will include government officials from various levels and agencies, as well as leaders from indigenous, Afro-descendent and other marginalized groups.

## 7.2. India: Good Practices in Public-Private Partnerships

By Dr. Sanjay Gurung, Executive Director Mercy Corps-India

In the Darjeeling hills, tea is the primary cash crop with 10 million kilograms of world-famous tea grown each year. Recent efforts by Mercy Corps and our partners in India have helped show government regulators the benefits of making space for small holder farmers.

**Key governance themes:** civic participation and voice, equity, inclusiveness

There are 87 certified trademark Darjeeling Tea Estates, registered with the Tea Board of India (TBI). Production is dominated by five large tea companies with often exploitative management practices,<sup>12</sup> which sets up perpetual conflict and many fields being abandoned or closed. Even though small tea growers have emerged, they cannot challenge the power of the established tea industry. At the behest of these groups and the TBI, along with various other government bodies, the trademark is used to restrict legal sale of tea grown outside the registered Darjeeling estates. This was a misinterpretation of the law and resulted in small holder farmers not being able to sell their tea legally.

In the late 1990s in Darjeeling's foothills, small holder farmers, seeking profits, started giving up traditional farming practices, growing rice and other food crops and replacing them with tea due to encouragement by corporations and middlemen. Unregulated cultivation led to over production. Many of these farmers had no buyers for their tea, the market was saturated and led to a tea crisis. Many farmers went hungry and the government to this day is providing bailout packages. As a result, the government passed an interim order banning the planting of new tea bushes after 2001. Though the problem was restricted to the foothills, the government order affected a larger area. For seven years this law forbade any small farmer from Darjeeling who could not prove that they had planted their tea before 2001, to produce and sell their tea.

### Organic Ekta

The CHAI project, a Starbucks/Tazo Tea-funded partnership with Mercy Corps, facilitated small farmers to organize themselves into the Darjeeling Organic Ekta Society, a registered farmers' organization that promotes the rights of small farmers in the Darjeeling area.

Organic Ekta lobbied the government and presented the on-the-ground options to clarify the difference between their small farmers and the large Darjeeling estates. This resulted in a visit by the Tea Board Chairman in early 2008 to Darjeeling. After seeing the situation firsthand, the Chairman issued a clarification stating that the blanket law would not cover Darjeeling. As a control mechanism, to prevent a similar situation from developing in the foothills, the government required all small farmers to become members of a small farmers association recognized by the Tea Board of India. *"It is for the first time that a Tea Board Chairman has visited small farmers in the Darjeeling hills. This definitely shows a change of the government's attitude towards the small farmers; it's been a long time waiting."*  
– Prashant Giri, Project Officer for Organic Ekta

A total of 410 farmers had joined the Organic Ekta Society as of April 2010. Darjeeling Organic Ekta Society's role has been to collect green leaf (unprocessed tea), negotiate prices with a processing factory, provide transportation of tea, quality control, facilitate farmers' registration with the Tea Board of India and organic certification. Working with the Department of Land reforms, along with the District Administration, Organic Ekta has helped farmers get their land classification. Without this, farmers could not harvest tea (as tea is a taxable commodity). Registration in the TBI's small farmers' scheme gives the farmers an opportunity to avail government subsidies for promoting their plantation. Small farmers can now sell their tea as Darjeeling as long as it is processed in a trademark registered tea garden factories.

<sup>12</sup> The Plantation Labor Act, first passed in 1951, was intended to protect the rights of permanent laborers by requiring tea companies to provide basic health, education and social standards. For the past 20 years, tea companies have made concerted efforts to not hire permanent laborers; on average, only nearly 70% of the workforce is casual or seasonal laborers. Since the Act only addresses permanent laborers, most workers go without legally mandated benefits.



Sushila Chhettri is plucking tea leaves from a field she has worked for 25 years. Today she is part of Ekta, a Nepali word for "unity", a group of indigenous growers registered with the government and channeling profits back to the community.  
Photo: Thatcher Cook/Mercy Corps. India, 2008

Organic Ekta has developed into a well run organization. Members have been trained to be trainers, thus institutionalizing the agricultural extension program. To provide services to the farmers Organic Ekta receives three Indian Rupees (US\$ 0.06) for every kilogram of tea sold by farmers to the processing factory. They have negotiated a doubling of the price that member farmers receive for green leaf, developed strong administrative procedures, created linkages with government agencies, held regular monthly meetings and purchased a new truck for green leaf transportation. They have procedures in place to register new farmers with the TBI.

Organic Ekta also facilitated soil testing for 104 Mirik Small Tea Growers farmers for TBI registration. Mineral Springs, a collective of individual farmers growing on an abandoned tea plantation has registered as a society; building off the organizational structure of Organic Ekta. These three groups, Organic Ekta, Mineral Springs, and Mirik Small Tea Growers, have held a series of meetings to establish a Federation that can advocate on behalf of small tea farmers to the government and tea industry.

### Economic Impact

- The quality of green leaf has improved with the price per kilogram increasing from 17 INR (US\$ 0.35) to 40 INR (US\$ 0.73).
- Between 2006 and 2008 individual farmers increased their production per hectare by 24%. Overall Organic Ekta increased green leaf production from 8,000 kilograms (2006) to 42,000 (2010), and the estimate for 2011 production is 55,000.

With these successes, Organic Ekta has forced the establishment to sit up and take the small farmers movement seriously. Many government regulatory bodies including TBI and Land Reforms Department, have made policy level changes to accommodate the needs of small farmers. This project has successfully established a society of small farmers in an industry dominated by large companies. The large companies lobbied against the small farmers to the Tea Board of India, but through persistence of the registration of individual farmers and the establishment of Organic Ekta there is now a new player in the tea industry. From being total outcast of the tea industry, the Organic Ekta small farmers have come a long way!

### Process Reflections

The success of the program has been the implementing team's ability to engage the public and the private sector jointly where the out put of the project has incentivized their participation as well as created synergies between them. The advocacy process has taken into consideration needs of the government, the private sector and the beneficiaries and finding the common points where they meet. Mercy Corps' role has been that of a proactive facilitator, inviting each of the three actors to the relationship triangle and helping them work together to achieve more than they could do independently.

Some key points that made this program a success:

- Incentivizing active participation of public and private sector groups.
- Building a receptive environment for advocacy and engagement.
- Institutional strengthening of organizations formed through an informal, organic process.
- Mercy Corps acting as an honest broker for/amongst all stake holders.



### 7.3. Southern Sudan: Rights and Responsibilities for Good Governance

By Michael Gorjin, LINCS Deputy Program Manager, with Sophia Dawkins of Tufts University

Over the past 30 years, civil war and major social upheaval have shattered and distorted many of southern Sudan's governance structures. With the peace agreement of 2005, CSOs in southern Sudan are now doing their part to get involved and encourage civic engagement at the community level as a basic element of good governance, the foundation for a just and lasting peace. In the run-up to the creation of a new country in southern Sudan, this engagement is more important now than ever before. Yet, for civic engagement to affect change, local government must show receptiveness and give communities a real voice in development, Mercy Corps has developed an integrated approach for programming in southern Sudan.

**Key governance themes:** civic participation and voice, public service delivery, participation, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, inclusion, access to information

#### “Mercy Corps is building links and bridges”

Since 2005, the Localizing Institutional Capacity in Sudan (LINCS) program has supported CSOs through technical assistance, networking dialogues, access to information and civic education. Spanning seven regions and 28 counties across southern Sudan and the transitional areas – contentious areas in Sudan's ongoing north-south tensions – LINCS is currently the largest initiative in Sudan dedicated to building the capacity of civil society to help construct robust governance structures from the bottom up.

Building on LINCS' foundations, Mercy Corps is now also enhancing the capacity and credibility of nascent government institutions through the Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services (BRIDGE) program. With support from BRIDGE, which began in 2009, public officials are developing avenues to engage with communities. They are also acquiring the skills to strengthen local government mechanisms for delivering concrete improvements in livelihoods, education, health, and water and sanitation.



Community leaders trained by the LINCS program dialogue with officials from the Government of South Sudan about education issues during the conference “Strengthening Women's Participation and Leadership in southern Sudan and the Three Areas.”

Photo: R. Ordonez/Mercy Corps. Sudan, 2007

This dual approach reinforces practical linkages across multiple levels of government, between government and civil society and among the myriad stakeholders within communities. Together, LINCS and BRIDGE unite community voices with government initiative to deliver tangible services.

#### “This information does not belong to us only, but to our country”

Mercy Corps supports 114 CSOs engaged in a variety of sectors. At the heart of this process, is the creation of fora for CSO members to share knowledge, engage in community dialogues, and support the meaningful participation and leadership of women and marginalized groups in public discourse.

“There are too few role models for women who think about participating in community action to follow, but once they realize their actions can have effects, they gain confidence and continue to achieve. I didn't want to be paid; I just wanted to make a change in my community.” – Sarah Nyanath Elijah, Program Director, Gender Empowerment for Sudan Organization

Protracted civil war and inequalities in traditional power structures mean southern Sudanese women face some of the poorest quality of life indicators in the world. Over 60% of households in southern Sudan now have a female head, meaning that women's families and communities are also affected by their precarious position. Women's involvement in CSOs has helped to challenge traditional roles. With its support to CSOs through the LINCS program - nearly 50% of which are led by women - Mercy Corps is helping to encourage this trend by building women's skills and their confidence to participate fully in their communities.

For example, Mercy Corps has partnered with the National Democratic Institute to educate Sudanese citizens about important political events in Sudan, including the national elections in April 2010 and the January 2011 southern Sudan referendum through coalitions that work closely with local authorities, such as chiefs, elders, and county officials. In many areas of southern Sudan, it is taboo for women to stand up in front of men and address them. However, these coalitions have found creative and culturally acceptable ways – such as peer-to-peer outreach – for women to participate in civic engagement, helping to elevate the status of women in the community and more effectively reach women with voter education messages.

Through dialogues – a key component of the LINCS program – Mercy Corps is also building CSO networks and strengthening relationships between civil society and local officials. . Dialogue meetings impart skills to participants in a variety of areas and provide important opportunities for the exchange of ideas and information. Skills and knowledge gained is in turn shared with communities. As one civil society leader and event participant from Northern Bahr-el-Ghazal asserted, “If we don’t pass this information along, it will present a great challenge to us and to our community; this information does not belong to us only, but to our country”.

Recognizing that information-sharing is essential for civic participation and the promotion of accountability and good governance, Mercy Corps is working with its partner Internews to establish community radio stations throughout southern Sudan and the transition areas. Internews trains reporters and volunteers, who in turn help CSOs spread their messages to communities. The reporters develop programs in response to community demands. Community radio stations are also becoming one of the most important ways for government officials to give updates and address topics of national concern to local communities, and to learn about community priorities.

### **Teresa Deng: Building Civil Society for Good Governance**

Teresa Deng is among the many women now leading CSOs across southern Sudan. Her organization, Dot Baai, is supported by LINCS – initially through trainings, then through grants that she successfully applied for. Dot Baai is committed to helping the most vulnerable women living in Juol Jok, a village in the middle of the Abyei area – one of the most politically sensitive in Sudan. Carving out a role for women in this fragile environment is Teresa’s challenge. Dot Baai provides a means for upward economic mobility and a political voice for local women, many of whom are war widows. “Civil society organizations are important,” Teresa says, “because they are the eyes of the community” and a link between citizens and their government. “Women have power when they speak as one group.”

Teresa’s office *tukul*, a round mud hut with conical straw roof that is common in this part of Sudan, is next to the school supply warehouse that represents the origins of Dot Baai. “One day,” Teresa recalls, “I saw children sent out of school because their mothers couldn’t pay the fee.” After discussions with teachers and destitute mothers, Teresa spearheaded a community volunteer team that donates material and labor to build the warehouse in exchange for the school fees owed by 16 children. The project galvanized Teresa to start Dot Baai.

To attend Mercy Corps networking conference, Teresa has flown to places in Sudan she had never before visited, and met organizational leaders doing similar work in other regions, as well as government officials, whose cooperation is critical to her success. Due to her respected role in the area, Teresa is now among the civil society leaders collaborating with local government through the BRIDGE program. As one official from the newly formed Abyei Area Administration said during a September 2009 workshop at which he and Teresa were joined by 20 other leaders to advise the BRIDGE program, “We need to hear from the people, but that is hard if people do not understand government. Civil society can help. She [Teresa] is strong and can tell us.”

## 7.4. Global Citizen Corps: Youth Civic Participation for a Better World

By Sarah Warren, Director of Global Citizen Corps and Gulf Partnerships, with Sa'ad Salih Khudair, Program Coordinator for Iraq's Community Action Program, and Steve Haley, Lebanon Country Director

Civic participation, civic education and youth leadership development are at the heart of Mercy Corps' Global Citizen Corps (GCC) program. GCC inspires and supports an international movement of young people, helping them build the knowledge and skills they need

**Key governance themes:** civic participation and voice, inclusiveness, advocacy, leadership

to turn their passion into meaningful action on critical local and global issues. If the world is to successfully tackle immense challenges, such as lifting the "bottom billion" out of poverty or reversing climate change, we must harness the energy and creativity of youth. And we must support young people in developing the capability and opportunities that will enable them to be responsible citizens working effectively with communities and governments to bring change. GCC is doing exactly that.

Since its inception in 2007, GCC has grown to involve more than 13,000 youth in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Indonesia, Pakistan, and the West Bank/Gaza, connecting with one another and peers in the US and UK. In 2010 youth leaders engaged 71,142 people in their projects and campaigns, reaching over one million people. The GCC program is shaped by Mercy Corps' international expertise and networks, matched with our on-the-ground presence in countries in transition. GCC engages youth through a three-tiered process of training, action-taking, and dialogue. In-person and online trainings help youth build critical life skills and leadership capabilities, while also providing them with the multi-media, communications, advocacy and organizing skills necessary to successfully educate and mobilize their peers and communities. Participants also learn about critical global challenges and explore how those issues relate to problems in their own countries.



Photo: Mercy Corps. Iraq, 2010.

After assessing and prioritizing needs in their communities, young people design and manage action projects that directly address local concerns. Projects typically focus on awareness-raising, advocacy, or community service. At the same time, young people from around the world connect with each other through the GCC website ([www.globalcitizencorps.org](http://www.globalcitizencorps.org)), social networking sites, video-conferences, and in-person gatherings to share their experiences and action plans. This youth-to-youth dialogue is structured to increase empathy and understanding among youth in different countries, bridging physical and cultural divides, while also creating the sense that they are all part of a larger global movement of youth.

As GCC participants develop a greater sense of awareness of the important issues that confront their communities as well as the broader international community, they often find that the best way to effect change is to lobby or work in partnership with local and national governments to reform policies, institute new laws, ensure that existing laws are enforced, or carry out joint initiatives that directly address community concerns. The examples below illustrate how GCC leaders in Iraq, the US and Lebanon are taking action in the areas of the environment, health and education and ensuring their voices for change are heard by national and local governments.

### Iraq – Advocating for Health through GCC

GCC has been particularly popular in Iraq, where young people have suffered from repression and isolation and where they continue to have limited opportunities for self-expression or activism, whether through volunteerism, recreational activities or political participation. Mercy Corps has found that providing training in leadership skills and multi-media literacy, while at the same time fostering meaningful interactions with the rest of the world, can transform feelings of victimization and desperation into a powerful desire to make a difference.

More than 500 young Iraqis in five governorates across Iraq gather weekly in youth centers, computer labs and classrooms to learn about local and international issues. Online dialogue and video-conferences allow the youth to exchange ideas and information with their peers in other countries. Like GCC leaders elsewhere, these Iraqi youth are continuously transferring their global learning into local action.

In Khanaqeen governorate, GCC youth learned there were over 90 patients with severe blood disease staying at a hospital without sufficient equipment and capacity to care for them properly. The young leaders decided that action must be taken to improve the conditions of these patients. They travelled several hours to Erbil to advocate on behalf of the patients at the Ministry of Health and UN. Their efforts resulted in a pledge from the Ministry of Health to address the needs of the hospital. The Ministry eventually dedicated a section of the hospital to accommodate these patients and is currently providing them with discounted or free medication. This is one of many examples of how GCC youth are not only serving their neighbors directly but are also succeeding in influencing government policies to bring about more significant, longer-term impact on their communities.

### **GCC in the US – Global Campaign for Education**

“We are all here, united, to urge congressmen and women to fulfill this promise and pass the Education For All Act,” declared Fay Chan, a GCC Leader, who held the floor at the Global Campaign for Education Press Conference. Camera flashes illuminated the room as she spoke to a packed house, her fellow GCC Leaders behind her.

It was April 2008; GCC Leaders were in Washington, D.C. Their mission: to lobby Congress to sign the Education For All Act, a bill ensuring all children receive a basic education. Cameras rolled as Chan and others advocated on behalf of the millions of children who lack access to education.

Before trekking to Capitol Hill, Mercy Corps equipped GCC Leaders with the tools they needed to get their message across. At a role-playing exercise, Chan practiced her persuasive skills on a fellow GCC Leader acting as a congressman. “We’re gaining an in-depth understanding of education and public policy and how to really make things happen,” said Kathy Zhang, another GCC Leader.

A day before GCC Leaders tested their advocacy skills, Mercy Corps President Nancy Lindborg fired them up. “Don’t underestimate the power of your voices on the Hill tomorrow,” said Lindborg. Fay Chan was ready. “I’ve got this confidence, that, yeah, I can change the world,” Chan smiled, nodding her head confidently.

The big day arrived. Cameras also captured Tanya Padilla of Texas speaking passionately to Congressman Henry Cuellar’s staff, “We feel that it’s a human right for everybody in the world to experience at least a primary education.” Padilla and other GCC members flooded over 70 congressional offices with their message. “I feel extremely accomplished, like I did something,” said Padilla. And they did do something – as a result of their efforts, two additional members of Congress signed on to the bill.

### **Lebanon – GCC and Youth Municipalities**

Traditional power structures based on client-patron relationships have alienated many Lebanese youth and undermined their faith in their ability to change society. Mercy Corps has a history of helping youth in Lebanon participate in the local decisions that affect their lives. In the ongoing *Local Governance through Youth Municipalities* project, Mercy Corps is setting an example of transparent and accountable local governance. The initiative seeks to inspire the next generation of leaders to create political systems of vision free from social, economic and political corruption and favoritism. The project cultivates youth leadership and a sense of identity by engaging 150 young people in five areas of Lebanon to undergo an election process to create and manage five Youth Municipalities. The Municipalities function as “shadow” city councils and develop comprehensive agendas for youth in their communities.

Youth campaigning to be elected by their peers are taking advantage of the GCC network to develop campaign platforms and outreach programs. They seek to demonstrate their ability to find local solutions to global issues. For example, Youth Municipality candidates developed their knowledge of global climate change through the GCC website, exchanged views through the site’s discussion board and drew tips from the “Take Action” section to design community projects. These projects mobilized the participation of broad groups of young people who selected the best projects.

Youth in Lebanon, Iraq, the US, and UK participated in an eight-week dialogue to discuss local elections in each country and mechanisms to promote transparency and accountability. The student leaders debated different definitions and forms of governance - another way GCC encourages youth to act locally while thinking and talking globally.

## 7.5. Kosovo: Strengthening Capacity at the Municipal Level

By Iveta Ouvry, Country Director Mercy Corps-Kosovo

Equitable and inclusive participation in public-decision making can help communities safeguard peace in fragile, post-conflict environments. However, plural participation poses a complex feat where polarization along ethnic lines has fractured horizontal relationships within a society and vertical linkages between citizens and government. These communities face yet graver obstacles to participatory governance where they confront the social and material challenges of reintegrating returnees.

**Key governance themes:** accountable decision-making, accountability, participation, inclusiveness, responsiveness

Mercy Corps' experience in Kosovo illustrates how communities can achieve participatory governance amidst a dynamic returns process and social linkages among ethnic groups torn apart by conflict. During the events of 1999, Kosovo experienced a NATO bombing campaign, the displacement of over 800,000 Kosovans, the subsequent displacement of Serb, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) populations and the looting and burning of property. In the years immediately following, Mercy Corps has helped build trust between municipalities and communities so that together they can improve conditions for and inclusion of returnees.

Kosovans at the community-level have identified municipalities as the most effective access point for stimulating progress towards stability and recovery. Mercy Corps has thus targeted community-municipal relations as a powerful avenue to revive horizontal linkages amongst communities alongside vertical linkages between citizen and municipality.

### An Incentive-Based Approach

Mercy Corps-Kosovo's Municipal Integration and Support Initiative (MISI) deployed an incentive-based scheme to encourage municipal authorities to take a lead in the return and reintegration of minority citizens, whilst stimulating cooperation within communities. Capable municipal authorities also received funding for infrastructure projects that they could implement jointly with communities. As community members have asserted, the MISI approach provided an "opportunity to improve interethnic relations and reintegrate Kosovo Serbs [and other minorities] into municipal structures" while "trust-building between the municipal authorities and citizens."

Hallmarks of the MISI approach include:

1. Establishment of Municipal Steering Groups as contact points with the community.
2. Creation of Community Working Groups (CWGs), which draw together citizens from majority and minority groups.
3. Joint development between the steering groups and CWGs of Action Plans, which identify obstacles to return and reintegration, and methods for how to overcome them.
4. Monitoring of Action Plan implementation.
5. Funding rewards for municipalities that progress in Action Plan implementation.
6. Facilitation of transparent and participatory processes for infrastructure project selection and implementation.

### From Trust to Participation

Mercy Corps-Kosovo has recognized that propagating trust sustains equitable and inclusive participation. Trust binds citizens to their communal duties and municipalities to their civic responsibilities. MISI sought to create this bind at all levels of implementation. For example, as MISI entered its second phase, it established a municipality mentoring program. Authorities with MISI experience conducted exchange visits and gave support to municipalities that had newly committed to the program. In addition, MISI helped municipalities build trust and credibility amongst communities through public media. Officials learned how to employ a range of media to disseminate messages of support for minority returns while reassuring communities.

Mercy Corps Kosovo also recognized that MISI could strengthen trust between municipalities and youth so

communities could sustain participatory governance processes. As one school teacher and CWG member asserted, “The most important thing is to create basic conditions for youth. We want to attract young people to stay.” MISI reached over 3,400 youth across Kosovo through multi-ethnic camps, sporting activities and trainings. A multi-ethnic camp coordinator recalls that “At the beginning of the camp, the children kept themselves within their ethnic group – language being the main barrier. As time went on, they became more and more open and became good friends. At the end, they cried because they had to part.”

The propagation of trust reinforced municipal procedures conducive to integration and supported transparent collaboration between communities and municipalities for infrastructure development. In addition, 85% of municipal authorities asserted that MISI enhanced community processes and participation, in addition to tangible infrastructure development. Community members also evidenced this change, with 96% claiming that their communities felt ownership of infrastructure projects.

By using infrastructure as the entry point for reestablishing linkages among groups, community-driven approaches like MISI provide a low-risk way for people to identify common interests that can help bridge otherwise divisive issues between communities. The linkages that programs like MISI build provide communities with the preconditions to pursue more ambitious initiatives in the pursuit of a secure, productive and just society.

### **Municipal-Community Collaboration for Reintegration**

Fehmi Sadiku serves as School Director of the only primary school in Balaj/Baljaj village, Ferizaj/ Uroševac Municipality. Balaj/Baljaj is home to 1,840 residents and has faced tides of returnees. Before MISI, Sadiku struggled to provide the village’s 250 primary school pupils with the education they deserved. Sadiku had to run two shifts of the school each day and did not have the facilities for a science department. The school had no absorptive capacity for returning children.

Through MISI, the community of Balaj/Baljaj had the opportunity to present a school expansion project to municipal authorities for consideration. Following election of a Community Working Group, Sadiku and his fellow committee members worked closely with municipal officials and received trainings in project planning, implementation and monitoring. Sadiku recalls how trainings brought CWG members into contact with municipal officials: “They informed us about the structure and function of local government. We were actively involved in daily monitoring... before this program, cooperation with the municipality was weak. But since we have started working with the municipality this relationship has improved and we hope that this cooperation will continue in future.”



Mercy Corps Kosovo, MISI Program road asphalting project in the village of Gracë/Grace, Vushtri/Vucitrn.

Photo: Hetem Geci/Mercy Corps. Kosovo, 2007

Now, Sadiku has fulfilled his hope of building a school annex. Through joint efforts between community and municipality, Balaj/Baljaj primary school can welcome returnees into a culture of collaboration.

## 7.6. Somalia: Engaging Grassroots Traditional Governance Initiatives

By Abdullahi Gabho, Program Manager Southern Somalia

Somalia has not had a strong central government since the collapse of the military regime in 1991. This has led to two decades of lawlessness, destruction and displacement causing the decay of all public institutions, continued violence, failed peace talks, “warlordism”, chronic famine and food insecurity, and, in the recent past, piracy and religious extremism. Many internationally supported strategies have attempted to support a stronger central government and rebuild trust, law and order. These efforts have included 15 separate negotiation processes. However, they have not succeeded in establishing a viable, legitimate government.

**Key governance themes:** public service delivery, accountable decision-making, transparency, responsiveness

In several parts of the country such as Somaliland and Puntland, however, new entities of governance have emerged which enjoy legitimacy from the citizenry. They have largely moved beyond the widespread violence and chronic instability that have plagued the southern parts of Somalia. In these relatively stable and autonomous areas, a wide range of indigenous institutions such as council of elders (*Gurti*), peace seekers (*Nabad doon*), women associations and other local CSOs have replaced the formal administrative structures. They play a variety of roles in defining community priorities, maintaining peace and making resource allocation decisions. They largely use a traditional Somalia system of governance which consists of sets of contractual agreements (*xeer*) and customary laws, that define the rights and the responsibilities of the individual within the family, clan and among neighbors. Currently, nearly all tensions are resolved through *Nabad doons* and through councils of clan elders (*shirar odiyaal*).

Mercy Corps does not run stand-alone governance programs in Somalia but since 2005, when we first set foot in Somalia, the organization has mainstreamed governance into development programs to revitalize grass roots home-grown institutions and find solutions that work specifically in Somaliland, Puntland and other regions. Mercy Corps has focused on enhancing the capacities of these indigenous structures and initiatives to contribute to peacebuilding, emergency response and provision of basic services like education and water to rural and urban poor communities. Work with indigenous structures in Somalia has also created employment opportunities for youth. Mercy Corps embraces the principles of “Do No Harm” in all its programming in Somalia by building the capacities to disengage; and uses grassroots, “bottom-up” approaches to build capacities of local communities to engage in dialogue with each other and officials.

Mercy Corps, through the USAID-funded Promoting Peace and Reconciliation Program in Puntland and Somaliland, has worked with local communities and traditional structures of governance to reduce violent conflict and ease social tensions. By using available indigenous alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, Mercy Corps has helped avert conflict and built trust among warring communities. The program has supported dialogue forums, advocacy messages, and community projects that addressed the causes of violence. For instance over 35 local community projects were implemented to address one of the root causes of conflict – equitable use of natural resources. The projects included the planting of tree nurseries, income-generating activities, vocational training, and solid waste management projects in Somaliland and Puntland.

In Somaliland and Puntland, Mercy Corps has revitalized traditional systems of decision-making based on councils of clan elders to strengthen traditional governance structures and national government actors and promote accountable governance and engaged citizens.

Some of the outstanding achievements of such grassroots governance processes so far include clan elders in Sanaag and Karkaar developing customary policies (agreed to by Puntland authorities) to manage competition over water resources. In Warsengeli, clan elders negotiated an agreement with the government of Puntland to provide security following clan conflicts in Bossaso town. In all program communities, Mercy Corps advocates for the inclusion of women and youth in the traditional set of governance structures it helps build.

Through the USAID-funded School Environment and Education Development for Somalia (SEEDS) program, Mercy Corps is supporting inclusive and accountable decision-making for effective public service delivery and government responsibility. This includes for educational institutions through capacity building, such as managerial, financial and technical topics. Community Education Committees are also trained on school management, including developing, implementing, and monitoring School Improvement Plans. Ministry of Education officials are trained on

national, regional and international education trends, conflict management, roles and responsibilities of participants, management of student and teacher affairs, and educational monitoring and evaluation, including supervision and inspections. In addition to improving access, these activities strengthen governance as school communities are more capable of interacting with their government, and government officials are more prepared to respond.

Other good governance strategies used by Mercy Corps in Somalia include demonstrative approaches where communities and government officials are invited to Mercy Corps tendering and bidding processes to model and



foster grassroots democracy, accountability, and provides practical first-hand experience in planning and managing projects that address community needs. Already government officials and local NGOs are taking increased responsibility for projects and services that deliver tangible improvements to communities in livelihoods, education and water and sanitation. Mercy Corps continuously engages local government officials and ministry officials in Puntland and Somaliland to foster responsiveness and participation.

Somali elder during a meeting of traditional leaders in Somaliland.  
Photo: Jeremy Barnicle/Mercy Corps. Somalia, 2007



## Chapter 8. Sector Integration

For Mercy Corps, governance is not a stand-alone sector itself, but rather a cross-cutting approach of integrated programming. This chapter provides overviews of how governance intersects seven areas of programming: food security, climate change and natural resource management, youth, gender, economic development, health, peacebuilding and disaster risk reduction. Resources and contact information for sector teams are provided at the end of each section.

### 8.1. Where Governance Intersects Food Security

Food security, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) definition, exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Governance plays a key role as it is only through working to support local structures that many food security initiatives and policies can be effectively adopted, implemented and sustained. While programs focused on food security are simply aimed at making sure households do not live in hunger or in fear of starvation, it is in fact a complicated issue comprising a breadth of sectors, such as humanitarian response, poverty reduction, agriculture, health, nutrition and governance. The challenges to achieving food security are varied according to the particular circumstances of each population, but the importance of good governance as a foundation of sustained food security is evident when one considers that the world's farmers currently produce enough food to feed the entire population. That nearly a billion people are currently living in food insecurity is a result of inequitable access to food, a problem that requires effective governance to improve food production, health services and food-related policies, such as those that regulate economics, agriculture, research and technology.

To contribute to food security for their populations, governments must provide an enabling environment to strengthen the four components of food security: availability of food, access to food, utilization of food and vulnerability to hazards.

- To address availability, Mercy Corps partners with governments to increase the amount of quality food that exists at both national and community levels through activities that increase agricultural production or reduce barriers to local markets.
- Addressing access focuses on activities that increase a population's ability to obtain food through purchase or other means of transfer and exchange. In these cases, Mercy Corps works with local governments to improve livelihoods, such as through extension services, and enabling economic development especially among youth and women.
- Utilization refers to the human body's ability to make proper use of the macro and micro nutrients that food provides. By keeping the population healthy, such as through effective health services or safe water provision, local governments contribute substantially to food security; Mercy Corps can provide support to this process, building capacity of health service providers or assisting their reach into remote, underserved communities.
- Social safety nets are one way that governments can help protect their citizens from food insecurity as a result of hazards. Mercy Corps can facilitate the implementation of safety net activities, such as cash-for-work or food price subsidies following a shock, such as an earthquake or financial collapse.

Mercy Corps' food security programs often incorporate objectives focusing on improving interaction between communities and their governments.

**Accountable Decision-Making:** In Mongolia, the Rural Agribusiness Support Program is working to improve livelihood and income-earning opportunities for rural and urban economically marginalized populations. Strong livelihoods are important to establishing food security because they enable people to purchase the food they need. The program focuses on establishing new businesses, expanding and diversifying existing businesses and creating stronger market chains. For these enterprises to be successful, however, a supporting environment must exist. Therefore, Mercy Corps has facilitated the creation of long-term economic development plans for 15 districts. This process was led by local government officers and representatives from local communities, who ensured transparency by holding public discussions of their work to allow other population members to understand the thinking behind proposed plans and to enable their feedback at each step of the process.

**Equitable Civic Participation and Voice:** Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) Food Security in Goma Program is focusing on the provision of potable water to the population of Goma. Reliable clean water contributes to food security by eliminating a major vector for pathogens such as cholera and dysentery that, when they infect the human body, prevent the absorption of food's nutrients. The program provides the means for the public water utility, Regideso, to rehabilitate or install more than 30 kilometers of water pipes and water points for 220,000 people. Equally importantly, Mercy Corps promotes the population's engagement with Regideso, contributing to the identification of prioritized projects and to increase the public's awareness of critical water health issues through community-led water committees. These committees further contribute to the sustainability of program results by taking the lead for collection of fees for water use, using proceeds to maintain and repair the system locally.

**Effective Service Delivery:** Ethiopia's Revitalizing Agricultural/Pastoral Incomes and New Markets program is working to address the key underlying causes of increased food prices in chronically food insecure districts and increase local resilience to food security shocks. Livelihoods in the targeted areas of Ethiopia are reliant on livestock herds, but a combination of inconsistent rain that reduces pasture viability and increased conflict that interrupts normal trading and migration patterns has depleted herds. Existing animal health services that might have strengthened animal resistance to these challenges were insufficient or non-existent. To address the population's critical need for improved animal health services, Mercy Corps programming facilitated the government animal health services – suffering from shortages of drugs, equipment and general operating funds – to provide vaccination and/or treatment of nearly 150,000 head of livestock critical to the livelihoods and food security for 3,174 vulnerable households before the end of the first year of implementation. By improving livelihoods and income, the program establishes long-term reliable access to food, a fundamental component of food security.

### Policy Advocacy: Roadmap to End World Hunger

Beyond country-specific programming, Mercy Corps has also been active in advocacy in food security as a global issue. Recognizing that interest is keen on reducing global hunger yet political follow-through rare, Mercy Corps, as part of a coalition of international NGOs, advocacy groups and religious organizations, helped develop a Roadmap to End World Hunger. This Roadmap consists of a comprehensive steps for the US government to take to make positive strides toward meeting the MDG of cutting global hunger in half by 2015. The Roadmap recommended increased coordination of US government efforts to address food insecurity, increasing the profile of hunger as a legislative issue in Congress, balanced programming approach that includes both necessary humanitarian food assistance as well as development-focused activities to address the root causes of food insecurity, and sufficient funding necessary to implement this balanced approach. The Roadmap directly informed the Global Food Security Act, introduced in Congress in 2009 and still in discussion in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, which would provide funding for Roadmap implementation for five years. <http://actioncenter.org/roadmap>

Momentum in prioritization of food security in foreign aid policy increased under President Obama's administration. In 2009 at the G-8 Summit, Obama pledged \$3.5 billion for food security development over three years, a pledge that helped leverage a further \$18.5 billion from other donors. This pledge became the basis for the US Government's Feed the Future Initiative, which will align US international development resources with country-developed plans for reducing food insecurity. By engaging government in Mercy Corps' food security programming and advocacy efforts, the agency is contributing to the overall momentum building globally around this issue. [www.feedthefuture.gov](http://www.feedthefuture.gov)

### Recommended Resources

- Mercy Corps Food Security and Policy Assessment Tools Resource Base <http://assess.mercycorps.org/jiveassess/kbcategory.jspa?categoryID=105>
- Eldis Resource Guide, Food Security [www.eldis.org](http://www.eldis.org)
- IFPRI also does some specific research on the two subjects together. <http://www.ifpri.org/book-41/ourwork/program/governance-and-policy-processes>
- The Food Security Portal tracks the latest developments in food security issues around the world, as well as makes available helpful policy analysis tools. <http://www.foodsecurityportal.org/>

**For more information, contact:** Penny Anderson, Director of Food Security [panderson@dc.mercycorps.org](mailto:panderson@dc.mercycorps.org)

## 8.2. Climate Change and Governance: Dual “Force-multipliers”

Climate change is a force multiplier of environmental and natural resource degradation, including natural disasters. It will exacerbate environmental challenges threatening sustainable development legacies and bring new ones to the fore, especially changing weather patterns and rising sea levels. Predicted impacts include climate-induced scarcities of food and water and migration from coasts or land no longer suitable for agriculture. At risk communities will become more vulnerable with predictions of around 250 million people forced to migrate from increasingly marginal land, 50% falls in agricultural yield in sub-Saharan Africa, fish stocks migrating to cooler waters, and increased weather-related disaster.

The UN General Assembly has acknowledged that climate change will exacerbate current or lead to new conflicts in the years ahead. Post-conflict and under-developed countries are expected to be the most vulnerable to climate change, given their heavy reliance on natural resources, compounded by poor resource management. The most acute impacts are expected to be felt among the 100 countries suffering conflict and most vulnerable to climate change, a catchment of over a billion people.

Climate change will test governance unlike any other global challenge in global history. Its impacts will be immense, yet its onset will be creeping, and its causes largely invisible. Even in countries with sound governance, the scale and cost of response falls well outside election cycles, and gaining support from electorates to engage in necessary change will be difficult in the face of responding to short-term emergencies like wars or rapid onset disasters. For fragile states, where climate impacts are likely to be the most severe because of a lack of good governance and community resilience to current hazards, the capacity and resources to respond may be lacking altogether.

Two complementary sets of actions need to be taken. One is to *mitigate* the engine driving climate change – the emissions of greenhouse gasses, especially carbon dioxide – from the industries and other activities that drive economies across the world. *Mitigation* is primarily the responsibility of the developed economies, and the emergent industrial powers including China and India where greenhouse gas emissions largely originate. Shifts to green energy can be capitalized upon by national governments to create new jobs and revenue streams. Communities can benefit from energy poverty work taking advantage of improved, affordable energy products that reduce household expenditure on energy, provide health and other benefits. A further opportunity is arising from reducing deforestation, which contributes around a fifth of greenhouse gas emissions. Nascent policies surround a process called REDD – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation – which are being designed to compensate forest-rich countries like Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Indonesia for keeping forest cover intact.

The other is to put in place *adaptation* measures to cope with current impacts of climate change, and for the stronger impacts yet to come. *Adaptation* is a subset of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) focusing on large, slow onset climate hazards (see also [Section 8.7](#) on DRR and governance). These are numerous including sea level rise, increased storm frequency and intensity and changing rainfall patterns. Their impacts will compound current threats to broad swathes of humanity; unsustainable agricultural practices in marginal areas, water shortage in both rural and urban areas, rainfall patterns altering irrigation and growing seasons... the list goes on.

Governance actions to address mitigation and adaptation have not been focused and until recently were rarely prioritized to any meaningful level. They have largely ignored the vulnerable communities served by development agencies such as Mercy Corps and its peers, missing opportunity to reduce energy poverty through the application of market forces and to put in place adaptation measures. Global agreement on both adaptation and mitigation floundered during the 2009 Copenhagen Climate meeting. It continues to do so with little clear direction in sight.

Mitigation incentives fail to sufficiently channel resources to those who most need it with the majority of carbon credits schemes still pursuing the cheapest, industrial, options. Global governance mechanisms need help to expand this mechanism to ensure that developing countries can harness the power of the carbon market to solve energy poverty for the poor as well as develop greener, and cleaner, power generation that stimulates national economies. At the community level, governance incentives are needed to help communities switch to cleaner and lower-energy use platforms, particularly those used for cooking and lighting that save money, reduce health risks and are more sustainable. REDD has also lacked a community focus; as incentives are currently being captured by forest owners, both government and private. Forward thinking donors, NGOs and other partners, however, are seeking governance mechanisms to ensure that REDD funds reach the communities in and around forests who, ultimately, are those who are best placed to safeguard forest cover, and whose lives must change to do so.

Governance surrounding adaption is lacking at multiple levels and needs urgent action. The neglect may be largely due to the investment expense needed to implement measures that work at scale, without an obvious or immediate return on investment. The hurricane Katrina disaster in the US, to which Mercy Corps responded, serves as an illustration: where capital was not invested in to adequate flood defenses and; money was saved, yet the storm took more than 1,800 lives and inflicted a cost over US\$90 billion. The worst affected included the poorest, many of whom have permanently relocated.

The lack of governance capacity to consider and plan for climate adaptation, and allocate resources is common across the world at all levels of government. Notable exceptions include some developed governments including the Netherlands and the UK. The private sector, particularly the insurance business is highlighting the need for action but understandably focused on the wealthy, industrial markets they service. Among those serving vulnerable communities including agencies like Mercy Corps, programming footprints are minute compared to the scale of need. Among those serving vulnerable communities, including agencies like Mercy Corps, programming footprints are minute compared to the scale of need, and positive but small-scale benefits may be wiped out by one large storm, for example. A truly effective response will require NGOs to join forces with governments and the private sector in order to scale up successes, and invest in the large infrastructure defenses communities need to survive. This is reflected in other climate challenges to agriculture, food security and water shortage in countries from Sudan to Nepal.

Governance, in almost all countries and at all levels, needs urgent prompting to engage in long-term, often costly, climate adaptation and mitigation measures. Development agency projects can help point the way but mobilization of communities, particularly at the scale of electorates, will be needed to drive the process.

### **Mitigation Through Energy Poverty Programming**

In Myanmar, the *Civil Society and Market Networks for Pro-Poor Sustainable Environmental Development in the Ayeyarwady Delta* project supports civil society networks to lead recovery and sustainable environmental development practices to reduce poverty and deforestation in resource-poor cyclone-affected communities in Laputta Township. This is done through promoting widespread use of fuel-efficient stoves and social reforestation strategies to achieve sustainable reductions in household poverty and reversals in deforestation through a market-led approach. A sister program in Timor, *Energy for All*, alleviates energy poverty in rural and peri-urban areas by facilitating access to alternative sources of energy and renewable sources of fuel through sustainable market-driven approaches.

### **Adaptation Through Collaboration**

The Mercy Corps' Indonesia program works in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation-supported ACCCRN, the Asian City Climate Change Resilience Network – initiative. Mercy Corps is the Indonesia ACCCRN country coordinator, conducting extensive networking and collaboration with the national government and funding agencies in Indonesia. Two cities are implementing pilot projects and in-depth studies on sectors vulnerable to climate change impacts. Each city team has defined concepts proposals contributing to City Resilience Strategies. With government engaged, effective action at appropriate scales is anticipated.

### **Resources**

Mercy Corps climate-related programming includes examples of mitigation and adaptation programming. These and other tools are available via searching for [Climate Pack](#) on the Digital Library.

**For more information, contact:** Jim Jarvie, Director of Climate Change [jjarvie@hq.mercycorps.org](mailto:jjarvie@hq.mercycorps.org)

### 8.3. Youth: Fostering Civic Participation for Today and the Future

A core goal, wherever Mercy Corps works, is to help young people become citizens responsible for and capable of building secure, productive and just communities at home and around the world. Though youth constitute the majority in many transitional and fragile states, young people rarely have constructive avenues to voice opinions or opportunities to influence their governments. As a result, governments do not view or respond to young people as powerful members of communities. Furthermore, service delivery is often poor and unmonitored.

Additionally, in many places around the world, young people see their governments as corrupt, beset by nepotism and unaccountable to the people they serve. Sometimes, young people become disillusioned and disengaged from political/community decision-making life, or they learn to address these concerns through protests. Unfortunately, such protests are often met with a military or security response, creating conditions for violent conflict and deepening the rift between governments and the young people they are supposed to represent. This cycle has been seen in many places around the world and is well-documented and researched – the core finding is: youth who do not feel represented by or support any political party were two to three times more likely to join violent movements, voluntarily or involuntarily.<sup>21</sup>

Mercy Corps' Support for Kosovo's Young Leaders (SKYL) program mid-term evaluation survey in 2010 found a 63% increase in trust in local government among youth from diverse communities. This positive change shows that efforts undertaken by municipal authorities to hire SKYL youth as interns to work collaboratively on community projects had a strong impact in Kosovo.

#### Mercy Corps' Youth Transformation Framework

Mercy Corps' youth programming almost always takes direct aim at this vicious cycle, striving to build voice, participation, skills of engagement and a sense of possibilities for youth. We seek to empower young people by building their capabilities and linking them to opportunities for engagement of many kinds: to income generation and employment, to schooling, to psychosocial support and others. We not only provide education and training relevant to supporting young people to become more civically engaged, but also help governments create spaces where young people can evolve and contribute.

To facilitate better engagement with governments, Mercy Corps provides civic education to help young people understand their rights and responsibilities as members of society, how decisions are made, and ways they can enter the process. Participation – linking in common purposes with others, being well informed about community needs and goals – can take a variety of forms, as local traditions around participation, and also governments, vary greatly from nation to nation. And while our programs frequently work directly with young people, we also often work with governments – at local and municipal levels and sometimes with national ministries responsible for youth issues – to improve their own responsiveness to citizens working to improve their communities. We have great examples of this two-pronged approach – direct training of youth in participatory skills, coupled with programs which improve governments' skills at enlisting community engagement in Sudan, Kosovo, Tajikistan, Timor Leste, Lebanon and Iraq.

**Timor Leste:** Through the Engage program and Youth for All program, Mercy Corps and our local partner, Timor Aid, reduced youth participation in violence by involving over 5,000 youth representatives in building ties to community members and local council members. Mercy Corps enhanced the abilities of youth to make their voices heard and influence decision-making processes at the local, regional and national levels through joint workshops in civic education between young leaders and government officials, which helped create strong relationships after years of isolation. Youth also received mentoring and small grants that helped them apply their newly developed skills in implementing community development activities with the support of the local councils. UN Development Programme and the Timorese government hired youth participants to provide voter education training before the 2007 election and a number of young people ran in the 2009 local council elections. At the end of the program, youth reported more frequent meetings with local officials and vocalized increased confidence in working with government officials, sharing that the government was more apt to listen to youth concerns.

21 Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War*, American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 52, No. 2, April 2008, p.447. [http://www.stanford.edu/~jweinst/files/AJPS\\_2008.pdf](http://www.stanford.edu/~jweinst/files/AJPS_2008.pdf)

The **Tajikistan** Conflict Prevention Program (TCPP) reduced vulnerability and hopelessness among disenfranchised youth in the Tavildara region of Tajikistan by involving them directly with government leaders as advisors. TCPP supported 218 young people with opportunities to interact, learn skills and engage in healthy and positive activities through 20 mixed-gender youth committees. The results of young people's interactions with local government were dramatic and impactful; youth helped provide water to nearly 4,000 individuals and electricity to 1,900 individuals who had formerly been without these services. Additionally, police officials from the Tavildara region reported a 70% decrease in crime during TCPP, with fewer reports of youth involved in tensions.

In **Lebanon**, youth have limited opportunities to engage with local officials to articulate and address their needs. As in many societies, young people tend to be dismissed by elders who may not view their concerns as primary or practical, or may not view youth as powerful constituents. A lack of interaction, and the alienation which results, is reflected in high drop-out rates, high levels of unemployment, and lack of recreational or positive social engagement. Given the fragile political and economic state of the country, engaging youth in positive social outlets is central to converting youth frustration away from violence and social unrest toward positive participation. Again, participation is the antidote to alienation. Through the Supporting Youth Advocacy Program, Mercy Corps expanded access to, and improved quality of, public spaces for youth engagement and recreation by promoting productive local collaboration between young people and municipalities on development projects. Additionally, youth successfully advocated for change through youth-produced media, including a newsletter targeted at local officials and a documentary. By the end of the program, young people were more able to express their needs, views and opinions to decision makers, dialogue and collaborate with municipal leaders, and participate in community decision-making.

Check out [Section 7.4](#), Global Citizen Corps: Youth Civic Participation for a Better World, for more information on a multi-country initiative providing youth with leadership and civic engagement training, real-life experiences in community service, advocacy and/or governance, all supported by online virtual youth-to-youth exchange.

### Tools and Resources

- Mercy Corps' Youth Curriculum, which includes lessons related to civic education and advocacy (See Conflict Management, Global Citizenship and Life Skills): <https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/cgi-bin/library?e=d-000-00---0progdev--00-0-0--0prompt-10---4-----0-1-1-en-9999---20-mchome---00031-011-0-0utfZz-8-00&a=d&gc=2&cl=CL1.30.6.3#CL1.30.6.3>
- Mercy Corps Localizing Institutional Capacity in Sudan (LINCS) Youth Curriculum: [mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/cgi-bin/library?a=q&r=1&hs=1&t=0&c=progdev&h=dt&q=youth+governance](https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/cgi-bin/library?a=q&r=1&hs=1&t=0&c=progdev&h=dt&q=youth+governance)
- Mercy Corps' Youth and Conflict toolkit: <https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/docs/MCYouthandConflictToolkit.pdf>
- Innovations in Civic Participation (2010.) Youth Civic Engagement as a Strategy for US Foreign Aid and Policy. <http://www.icicp.org/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/10752>
- Population Council's Girl-Centered Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen and Expand Adolescent Girl Programs: [http://www.popcouncil.org/publications/books/2010\\_AdolGirlsToolkit.asp](http://www.popcouncil.org/publications/books/2010_AdolGirlsToolkit.asp)

**For more information, visit:** <http://www.mercycorps.org/sectors/youth>

## 8.4. Women, Gender and Good Governance

Participatory and accountable governance systems require that all citizens both have opportunities to engage meaningfully in decision-making processes and equally benefit from policies, laws and decisions that result. In societies around the world, social, political, legal and cultural norms limit the ability of women and other marginalized groups to participate in decision-making processes – not only at national and regional levels, but starting from decision-making at the household and community levels. Across the globe, women are less likely than men to participate in political life, contribute to public dialogue and decision-making or to serve as elected officials or local representatives. Marginalized from their rights to participate in decision-making and political processes, women are unable to advocate for resource allocations to address their needs.

Mercy Corps works in transitional and conflict environments, which offer unique opportunities for increased involvement of marginalized groups in governance processes. Gender inclusivity is essential to Mercy Corps' good governance programming and to building secure, productive and just communities. Four key thematic areas where Mercy Corps programs can help to encourage balanced participation in governance programs worldwide are education, participation, empowerment and advocacy.

### Basic and Civic Education with a Gender Focus

Education is a resource that women in developing and post-conflict environments frequently have difficulty accessing. According to a recent UNESCO survey, women are 64% of the 774 million illiterate adults in the world.<sup>22</sup> Basic education provides citizens with the tools needed to gain information about their social and political environments. Civic education provides the foundation necessary to participate effectively and proactively in the governance process. Basic and civic education are two components of a democratic governance system that must be present to allow citizens to defend their rights and participate meaningfully in decision-making in their communities.

**Women's Literacy in Iraq** has plummeted, with nearly 30 percent of women failing to receive formal education. As a result, Iraqi women often struggle to engage meaningfully with their communities, to advocate for their and their family's needs, to obtain employment or to access public services. Mercy Corps' women's literacy programming in Iraq began in 2005 through the USAID funded Community Action Program as a means to increase women's literacy, decision-making skills and leadership abilities by facilitating free and open access to information.

The literacy programming quickly expanded beyond basic literacy and numeracy to include lectures addressing democracy, elections and rights. Illiterate women in Iraq have had little opportunity to learn about the freedoms, rights and duties that accompany democracy. Program participants report higher levels of self-confidence, independence and greater involvement in their communities and the governance process. However, this programming approach has significant impacts well beyond the individual level. In order for democracy to be fully participatory, women – who represent more than half of Iraq's population – must be an integral part of the process in meaningful and sustained ways.

### Participation in Local and National Governance Processes

Participation is an integral part of Mercy Corps' Vision for Change and [Good Governance Framework in Chapter 1](#). Peaceful, sustainable change is only possible when all stakeholders have equal opportunity to engage in governance processes at local and national levels. Across the world, women and minority voices are not equitably represented in elected positions and formal (and frequently informal) governance processes and government structures. Decreased access to information and resources, social stigma and discrimination all contribute to a lack of participation by marginalized groups.

<sup>22</sup> UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=6401\\_201&ID2=DO\\_TOPIC](http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=6401_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC)

**A Mercy Corps/ Irish Aid initiative in Colombia** aims to integrate displaced persons into their receptor communities on the Atlantic Coast cities while empowering them to become productive citizens in their new homes and enabling them to access their rights. This project focuses on facilitating the most marginalized groups' participation in planning processes. A specific gender component of the project promotes the empowerment of women around issues such as gender-based violence (GBV) – acknowledging that such violence is not only a violation of basic human rights but is an impediment to community development.

Women and men are trained to take community-level action to prevent violence and to provide support to victims, and they are also assisted in deliberative democracy-based community development planning sessions, underscoring the link between women's empowerment and community development. Local plans for development, with a focus on women's participation, are then implemented. Meaningful participation resulting in positive social change must be led by local communities and supported by local government.

### Advocating for Rights and Needs in Governance

Advocacy is critical to promoting solutions to gender-inclusive governance. Advocacy activities may center on influencing law or policy to ensure that both men and women enjoy equal protection under the law and are able to access their rights, or to overturn laws or policies which discriminate against women or reinforce gender imbalances. Advocacy is equally important in promoting policies to ensure that services are accessible and meet the needs of the population, particularly of vulnerable or marginalized groups. Advocacy activities may also be directed toward decision-makers or opinion leaders in order to change predominating beliefs, behaviors or cultural norms, such as norms which accept violence against women or perpetuate gender disparities.

**The UKAid-funded project in Honduras, DEBORAH** (Development, Rights and Economical Freedom to Victims and Survivors of Domestic Violence), focuses on women's participation in local development. The advocacy component of this program builds as the capacity of women's groups and women's networks to advocate for services that address needs as identified by women. Municipal-level women's networks, which include a range of women from different ethnic, economic, and social backgrounds, organize regular women-specific audiences with municipal leaders, advocating for the allocation of funds to needs identified by women. For example in Siguatepeque, the women's network successfully negotiated with the mayor's office for a piece of land and financial support to start up their own office and build a refugee house for abused women and their children. The networks have also been trained in social auditing to monitor social service providers and companies to ensure they adequately respond to women's needs. The project both empowers women to take an active role in governance, and ensures equity and inclusiveness in service provision and budgeting by the state.

### Mercy Corps Tools

- The BRIDGE and Gender Mainstreaming: A Guide for Program Staff was created by Mercy Corps' Sudan team implementing the Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services program: <https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/cgi-bin/library?a=q&r=1&hs=1&t=0&c=all&h=dt&q=BRIDGE+gender+mainstreaming>
- The Democracy, Governance and Elections Trainings conducted as part of the Governance Promotion through Conflict Management in Iraq program: <https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/cgi-bin/library?a=q&r=1&hs=1&t=0&c=all&h=dt&q=democracy%2C+governance+and+elections+training+for+WAI>

### External Tools

- UNIFEM – Democratic Governance Section: [http://www.unifem.org/materials/other\\_publications.php?WebSectionID=1](http://www.unifem.org/materials/other_publications.php?WebSectionID=1)
- UNDP – Quick Entry Points to Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Democratic Governance Clusters: <http://www.iknowpolitics.org/node/9898>

**For more information** or to get involved, email the Gender Working Group [gender@mercy Corps.org](mailto:gender@mercy Corps.org)



## 8.5. Good Governance and Economic Development: the *Public and Private Sectors*

### A. Good Governance and Government: The Business Enabling Environment

The public sector's role, in relation to the private sector within a "pro-poor" growth framework, is to develop the architecture that permits space and opportunity for the private sector to operate: building essential capacity, delivering key public services, promoting standards and competition, and ensuring regulation that provides access and benefit to all segments of the population. This interface between the public and private sectors is reflected in Mercy Corps' Vision for Change. A key lesson of the 1990s was to "get the politics behind the economics right." Effective states and better governance are important to economic growth. Countries which are more politically stable are more likely to encourage domestic investment, entrepreneurial activity, foreign investment, and long-term growth, plus reduce poverty and sustain growth. No picture of private sector development is complete without the role of government. However, a generally disappointing track record of public economic interventions has led to greater awareness about the limitations of government capacity to manage the macro-economy and public finances – and more focus on government's performance in relation to its core functions, notably market-friendly policy making and regulation.

#### Private Sector and Government Trends in Growing Economies<sup>23</sup>

- The private sector as the engine of growth in the economy – widely recognized as a crucial source of innovation, efficiency and growth, the private sector is also the largest employer in many countries.
- Considerable privatization and de-regulation of most sectors – idespread market liberalization and privatization of government-owned industries has created space for the private sector.
- A continuing and significant role for government – there are a variety of functions that only government can play.
- A different role for government – governments in growing economies are characterized by less direct intervention in markets and are more limited in its scope, focusing on:
  - 1) *Key public functions* such as health, education, and macroeconomic management and
  - 2) *Functions and institutions that support markets and market development.*

#### Public and Private Sector Interface – Vision for Change

The role of the government in relation to the private sector within a pro-poor growth framework is to develop the architecture that permits space and opportunity for the private sector to operate: building essential capacity, delivery of key public services, promoting standards and competition and ensuring regulation that provides access and benefit to all segments of the population.

#### Key Principles Guiding Government's Role in Private Sector Development

- Focus on core competence; areas which only government can deliver.
- Be appropriate for capacity; prioritize according to resources and hierarchy of importance.
- Improve equity and access; address market failures that limit access of the disadvantaged.
- Do not crowd out markets; seek to develop rather than supplant private sector activity.
- Influence values and culture; policies, education and other signals to encourage enterprise, competition and access.

#### Specific Government Roles in Pro-poor Private Sector Development

Government can act as a service provider or a facilitator. Best practice shows that for systemic change benefitting the poor, the role of facilitation is more effective – a temporary intervention which uses public funds to address a specific market failure. A facilitator tries to develop a market to encourage entry and competition, with a view to making the market work more effectively in terms of prices, product diversity or standards and making markets work for the poor. Any government is faced with a prioritization of functions based on available resources; for all

<sup>23</sup> Rob Hitchins, The Springfield Centre. *The Role of Government in BDS market Development: Preliminary Review for ILO.* 2002.

governments this will vary. A distinction needs to be made between functions that are funded and undertaken by government, those functions that government funds but others deliver, and in some cases functions that government undertakes and others pay for directly.

### Governance Reform and Considerations for Fragile States

Establishing the rule of law, tackling corruption, reforming public services, and getting democracy and markets to work in poor countries is a long-term, complex process. Post-conflict and fragile state economies need a better understanding of economic policies and sequencing of reform as a foundation of recovery and eventually growth. Businesses in poor countries face much larger regulatory burdens than those in rich countries. Analyzing business enabling environments in specific countries where Mercy Corps works requires careful attention when designing and establishing programs.

## B. Good Governance and the *Private Sector*: Governance and Market Systems

Governance is a feature of market systems that characterizes the relationships and/or linkages among market actors. Since these relationships change according to internal and external factors, governance is a dynamic feature of market system analysis, particularly in countries in transition. Sometimes also referred to as “political economy” – market system governance is about power and who has more or less of it and why.

The relationships between actors can be observed through the structure of the market system: how buyers and sellers are integrated with each other and the key supporting functions. These structures are influenced by a range of factors: history, institutions, geographic, social, and cultural context. The complexity of the key product also plays a role: more complex products involving components that may have patents manufactured to exact specifications call for more captive relationships. Thus the complexity of the information required in a transaction, the ease by which it can be codified and communicated, and the capabilities of suppliers and potential suppliers to deliver, all influence the governance of the market system.

Analyzing and mainstreaming governance as part of a market assessment and interventions can influence how an economic development program seeks to empower the poor through improving their position or relative power in the market system. Facilitation with lead firms, government, trade bodies or service providers should improve access and terms of access for the poor following good governance principles.

### Key Principles Guiding Good Governance in Market Systems

- **Transparency:** Improve access to information, removing asymmetries. Improving information about the specifications required of a producer. Incorporation of measures which remove corrupt practices.
- **Accountability:** Improve relationships and build trust through access to legal services, contracts, arbitration.
- **Access to technology**
- **Non-Discrimination and greater Participation:** assist formal and informal (functional) groups to function more efficiently to allow poorer members to benefit from improved economy of scale. Ensure market actors monitor and report upon who they transact with (gender and ethnic disaggregation of data).
- **Efficiency of transactions:** incorporation of good management practices.

### Mercy Corps Tools

- Governance and Economic Development Programming Guidance: Reform <https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/docs/GovernanceEDProgramGdReform.doc>
- Governance and Economic Development Programming Guidance: Private Sector in Fragile States: Doing Business <https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/docs/GovernanceEDProgramGdPvtSectorFragileStates.doc>

**For more information, contact:** Diane Johnson, Global Economic Coordinator [djohnson@field.mercycorps.org](mailto:djohnson@field.mercycorps.org)

## 8.6. Healthy Societies Depend on Good Governance

Over the last 60 years, health has been and remains a primary focus of humanitarian and development aid. Although commitment and funding are important, the difference in terms of outcomes often depends on participation and governance. In countries where there are good indicators, where decision-makers are well connected to and supportive of their communities, where there is appropriate technical experience to set priorities and where there is strong committed leadership and management, health improves.

Despite commitment, funding and improvements in technology, huge disparities continue to exist in morbidity and mortality rates between parts of the developing and the developed world (for example, in 2009 if born in Somalia you have a one-in-five chance of dying before the age of five, if born in Sweden this is one-in-300). More surprising, there is considerable disparity between countries with a similar level of development and average per capita income. For example, Somalia and Ethiopia have average per capita incomes of less than US\$300. However, Somalia ranks fourth lowest (200 per 1000) in the world for its infant mortality rate, whereas Ethiopia ranks 27<sup>th</sup> (109 per 1000) in infant mortality. Somalia has almost twice the infant mortality rate as Ethiopia. This disparity, and lack of progress despite considerable international aid and investment, is attributed to governance. Mercy Corps' focus on governance is consistent with the leading global health initiatives.

The Obama Global Health Initiative (GHI) and UN's World Health Organization (WHO) identify the issue of good governance as a central pillar to effectively, equitably and sustainably ensure a minimal level of access and health security for all. Five of the seven core principles of the GHI relate to good governance, addressing how we work at the donor, ministry and community level. These five include:

- 1) Strategic coordination and integration;
- 2) Strengthen and leverage key multilaterals and other partners;
- 3) Country-ownership;
- 4) Sustainability through health systems strengthening; and
- 5) Improve metrics, monitoring and evaluation.

Three of five of the WHO's Global Health Agenda items also relate to good governance, including:

- 1) Strengthening of health systems with a focus on staffing, financing, vital statistics, and access to appropriate technology and essential medications.
- 2) Harnessing research, information and evidence which provides the foundation for setting priorities, defining strategies, and measuring results.
- 3) Working to enhance partnerships using collaboration and the strategic power of evidence to encourage partners to align activities with best practices and country priorities.

Working at the intersection between community, civil society and the private sector, Mercy Corps has long realized good governance is essential to community-level change. Communities must be informed, priorities established, decisions made and implemented. Accountability is essential for those in the positions to make decisions and spend resources. The process benefits from being transparent, just, responsive and participatory. This way of working makes Mercy Corps an especially effective partner in the implementation of sustainable health programming. Below are two examples of projects illustrating the integration of governance in Mercy Corps health programs – at the national and community levels.

### **National Level: Breast Milk Substitute (BMS) Marketing in Indonesia**

In Indonesia, Mercy Corps works with local NGOs and community leaders to generate an effective coalition focused on advocacy around support of a woman's right to breast feed. In addition to pushing for legislation and regulation around the marketing of BMS products, the coalition has taken on the role to document and address corporate violations of the International BMS code of marketing. It is believed corporate marketing has been a primary influence in changing cultural norms away from the breast and to the bottle. In Indonesia alone, UNICEF estimates 24,000 lives would be saved each year if all women that could, breastfed their infants. By working closely with these organizations, community leaders and other coalition members, Mercy Corps is an effective partner in providing the

necessary tools to bring together interested parties and assist them to develop their voice and an advocacy strategy focusing on improved government regulation and corporate behavior. Their public face has resulted in greater community awareness of the life-saving benefits of breast feeding.

In Pakistan, Mercy Corps and the national Ministry of Health are jointly managing a multi-million dollar TB Control Program as Principal Recipients (PR). The program is being funded by the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. Mercy Corps is the PR for advocacy, communication and social mobilization, and private-sector involvement, while MOH is responsible for improving the quality of TB-care services and treatment of multi-drug resistance. Mercy Corps plans, implements and monitors TB control jointly with MOH at National, Provincial and District level.

Mercy Corps is also responsible program activities being implemented through ten sub-recipients in 88 of 134 districts in the country. The program involves a wide range of stakeholders including TB patients and their families, local elected representatives, public and private healthcare providers, religious leaders, journalists, teachers and school children. The program performance is actively monitored by an oversight committee called the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM). The CCM has representation from national and international partners such as MOH, donors, UN agencies, academic institutions, NGOs, and people living with diseases. Working closely with the MoH and this wide range of partners ensures ownership and accountability at all levels to maximize the impact of program.

### **Community Level: Getting the Right People Talking**

Institutions and providers responsible for society's health and well-being intersect at the community level. Here we find public health authorities, government supported clinical services, community representation (majors or councils) as well as private providers, doctors and midwives. The health of a community depends on how well these groups work together to identify, prioritize and act on patient and community needs. As each of these groups have different mandates, funding and reporting lines, it is not uncommon to find coordination lacking. This is understandable in that active governance requires prioritization and decision-making, which in turn will leave some with unmet expectations.

To address this, the first step in the process is making sure there is dialogue, that it is equitable and that it addresses the greatest needs of the community (even if the discussion is inconvenient). At times a society is so traumatized there is no dialogue. In other situations this happens through a regular, formal process – quarterly meetings, agendas, minutes, and action items. In a well functioning community, key members communicate frequently and informally, and constantly rework their activities. If things are not working well, there is retrenchment, isolated action taken and poor communication. One could then ask: What is the role of an INGO like Mercy Corps? And how do we get invited to the table to get the dialogue going?

An invitation to participate in public health dialogue comes when an organization can bring something significant to the table – new programs, funding for staff, equipment/technology or a new way of looking at available data. In many situations, Mercy Corps has added value as an impartial presence. A good program and an impartial presence will make a difference in the short-term. A longer-term difference is made if a community can build on a new sense of trust and accomplishment. A sustainable change can happen if a more effective structure or way of doing things that matches the culture is implemented or adopted. Such efforts serve to support a healthy community-level dialogue and leave a management tool for authorities to get a sense of the quantity and quality of the dialogue and action (governance) at the local level.

### **Health Resources for Good Governance Programming**

- The WHO Agenda – <http://www.who.int/about/agenda/en/index.html>
- Press Statement White House Global Health Initiative – [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Statement-by-the-President-on-Global-Health-Initiative](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Statement-by-the-President-on-Global-Health-Initiative)
- UNICEF tool to combat maternal mortality in India – grass roots approach [http://www.unicef.org/health/india\\_33208.html](http://www.unicef.org/health/india_33208.html)

**For more information, contact:** Dr. Aris Noor, Public Health Director [anoor@mercy Corps.org](mailto:anoor@mercy Corps.org)

## 8.7. Disaster Risk Reduction: The Central Role of Good Governance

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is the systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices designed to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society. DRR mitigates risks and prepares communities for adverse impacts from hazards within a broader context of sustainable development. Mercy Corps believes that DRR is an essential part of our mission to help people build secure, productive and just communities. We therefore incorporate DRR strategies in our assistance work.

A key element of successful DRR is the government responsibility to provide effective public service delivery, including the protection of citizens. With the increase in natural hazards over the last decade, this protection is crucial, especially in high-risk countries. However, many governments, particularly at the local level, do not have the resources they need to prepare and mitigate against hazards – both those already present and others like climate change – that threaten all citizens. Mercy Corps programs attempt to support the government in this process by engaging in DRR activities that involve and build capacity of local government. Many current activities include adaptation, which is anticipating and modifying behaviour in advance of an acute or cumulative disaster. Adaptation is a form of DRR.

Disasters threaten long term development and weaken possibilities of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Without mitigation strategies in place, disasters generally produce severe damage to housing, infrastructure, productive assets, health systems and water sanitation facilities. They produce loss of human life and an increase in orphaned or homeless children. Negative impacts of this sort make it increasingly difficult to eradicate extreme poverty (MDG 1), to reduce child mortality (MDG 4), or to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (MDG 6). It is critical that local governments first understand the importance of DRR. The government - at all levels - must first understand the risk involved with potential hazards in their country, region or community. They must then explore the capacity and vulnerabilities to handle the risk. With this knowledge, they are already better able to take action and mitigate against the risk and incorporate activities into their development plans. DRR activities can be effective to protect development investments, prepare for climate change, empower communities and save lives.

The Hyogo Framework for Action, an international framework for DRR to which 168 countries have agreed, highlights the importance of good governance in its first Priority for Action. It asks member nations to “ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.”

In order to do ensure DRR is a priority for governments, we need to involve them in DRR activities and support them when possible. We may do things such as assist to develop a functional multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral institutional capacity for DRR through capacity-building of government employees and institutions such as schools. We may help to integrate DRR into public and private sector policies and planning and operational activities or we can ensure community participation in DRR initiatives within local and national governments. DRR activities can be integrated into many development and humanitarian programs.

We also need to engage in advocacy to increase DRR interventions. In reality, substantially increased investments for DRR have to compete with a variety of other national priorities and demands on already scarce resources. Significant changes in government policies and investment priorities are likely to happen only if governments perceive a “public demand” to do so; thus genuine and lasting change can only come about from determined and vocal citizens. Mercy Corps’ work in countries in transition puts us in a good position to support citizens and local governments to demand preparedness and mitigation activities in the face of increasing hazards.

**Community-Government Collaboration on DRR:** Mercy Corps-Nepal, in cooperation with the Nepal Red Cross Society–Kailali District Chapter are implementing the second phase of the Kailali Disaster Risk Reduction Initiatives (KDRRI II) funded by the European Commission. The project aims at building safer communities by applying DRR measures in collaboration with communities, local government and other key stakeholders. Capacity is being built through a dynamic process involving the identification of needs, priorities, strengths, weaknesses and coping strategies by the people concerned. Thus, Mercy Corps-Nepal seeks to strengthen local actors and institutions in the flood prone areas of Kailali district to achieve more sustainable and risk reduction practices and to integrate those fully into their development processes.

The project has facilitated the establishment of 16 socially inclusive community Disaster Preparedness Committees (DPCs) and nine Village Development Committee Disaster Management Committees (Village Development Committee is the lowest administrative government level in Nepal). These institutions function to network, coordinate and develop rapport with community, Village Development Committee and district level stakeholders. The project supported each committee to prepare disaster preparedness plans incorporating evacuation plans, rescue and relief initiatives, mitigation measures, allocation of roles and responsibilities for early warning, evacuation and management and maintenance of interventions. Capacity has been enhanced through various trainings such as disaster risk management, search and rescue, first aid, nursery management and financial management. The project further helped the communities lobby for development of Village Development Committees' plans and for government support of their own and neighboring communities. Disaster preparedness is now an integrated part of Village Development Committee plans.

For a list of potential DRR activities, please go to Mercy Corps Disaster Risk Reduction Site on Clearspace <https://clearspace.mercycorps.org/community/cops/drr>. There you will find DRR ideas by sector, by hazard, and in support of the Hyogo Framework for Action, including Priority 1 on Governance, <https://clearspace.mercycorps.org/docs/DOC-4834>. You can also see how Mercy Corps programs like the Kailali Risk Reduction Program in Nepal have contributed to Priority 1 on Governance by reading through the Case Study developed <https://clearspace.mercycorps.org/docs/DOC-6666>. For more information on the Hyogo Framework for Action, please see <http://www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/hfa.htm>.

**For more information, contact:** Randy Martin, Director of Global Emergency Operations  
[rmartin@dc.mercycorps.org](mailto:rmartin@dc.mercycorps.org)

## 8.8. Conflict Management/Peacebuilding: Good Governance in High Risk Environments

Of the 40 countries in which Mercy Corps works, the vast majority (73%) fall into the category of fragile or critically weak states. In many of these fragile states, governments are either unable or unwilling to provide basic services or security to significant portions of their population. In this context, deeply impoverished and insecure communities can be susceptible to the appeals of powerful non-state actors – clans, religious groups, militias – who promise to provide basic services and security. In many parts of the world, the clash between formal government structures and these informal governance systems is at the heart of widespread violence. In other places, governments simply lack the capacity to engage citizens and address the tensions and grievances that can flare up into violence. Many of Mercy Corps' conflict management programs are intended to help address these issues by: 1) building cooperation and understanding between government authorities and non-state actors; and 2) encouraging partnerships between citizens and local government to identify and address issues that are leading to violence.

In Somalia, Mercy Corps has implemented a program that provides joint conflict management training to clan elders, religious leaders, private sector actors, and local government authorities. These leaders then use their skills to address issues that are leading to violence. For example, Mercy Corps sponsored a forum to mediate a dispute over grazing land between the Ali Saleban and Ali Jibraahil sub-clans. Clan elders, religious clerics, and Puntland government authorities ultimately reached an agreement that involved the redistribution of land and a cash contribution from government authorities to repair damaged property. It also incorporated elements of *sharia* law. The agreement has been widely accepted as a fair, legitimate solution that encouraged cooperation between three respected authority structures and drew on the strength of each.

After decades of authoritarian and violent rule in Iraq, the skills of consensus-building and compromise that are vital to democratic governance were unfamiliar to many leaders. Over the past several years, Mercy Corps has implemented a project that brings Iraqi leaders together to: 1) learn the negotiation and consensus-building tools necessary to more effectively manage competing constituent interests; 2) help these leaders apply their new skills through concrete projects that mitigate conflict at the local-level; and 3) create a national network of Iraqi conflict management and negotiation practitioners. To date, participants in the program have used the skills to resolve over 80 disputes. Many of these have been disputes between local citizens and government, including long standing land and commercial disputes. The network is one of the few projects that brings together tribal leaders, religious clerics, civil society representatives and local/provincial government officials from all major regions, ethnicities (Arab and Kurd) and religions (Sunni and Shiite).

In December 2007, Kenya descended into political violence following disputed presidential elections between incumbent President Mwai Kibaki's Party of National Unity (PNU) and Raila Odinga's opposition Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). The political clash was reinforced by ethnic tensions between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin tribes, with the PNU drawing its base of support largely from the Kikuyu and the ODM from the Kalenjin. The epicenter of violence was in the Rift Valley and local political figures on both sides were deeply implicated in using youth militias to organize widespread ethnic killings, looting, and destruction of property. In response, Mercy Corps is working with community leaders, youth, the private sector and local government officials to identify and address the issues that led to violence. We are working to strengthen government structures that respond to core citizen grievances, such as ethnic tensions over land and access to economic opportunity. We are also providing employment opportunities and civic education/leadership training to young people, so that they are more able to resist political manipulation in future elections.

In Ethiopia, Mercy Corps implements a peacebuilding program in the volatile Somali, Oromiya, and South Nations and Nationalities Peoples Regions of Ethiopia. The Strengthening Institutions for Peace and Development (SIPED) program is designed to help local communities better understand and address the issues that lead to conflict. These include inter-ethnic clashes over land and water, livestock raiding, disputes over political boundaries, livelihood insecurity and the erosion of traditional systems for conflict and resource management. To date, the program has trained 254 people in conflict resolution and prevention strategies, organized public outreach campaigns reaching an estimated 60,600 community members, and provided small grants to community-based peace-building projects. The program also helps build ties between communities and local government officials by helping officials develop the tools and skills they need to identify and address tensions before they turn violent. The program is helping state governments in the region build a comprehensive conflict early warning system and is also helping them reduce violence through the accelerated delivery of social and economic development.

### **Governance/Conflict Tools:**

The Mercy Corps-Conflict Management Group team has developed a number of tools that help field offices better understand and measure issues related to the intersection of conflict and governance. These include:

**Scored Relationship Mapping:** This tool helps communities understand how influential actors are connected in the community and how those actors affect community tensions. The tool was developed in Sri Lanka and is now also being used in Tajikistan, Ethiopia and Uganda. In Sri Lanka, we found that the tool helped us see how relationships between the government and the community changed over the course of the program.

<https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsdll/cgi-bin/library?a=q&r=1&hs=1&t=0&c=all&h=dt&q=scored+relationship+mapping>

**Disputes & Dispute Resolution Scoring:** This tool helps communities to identify the actors involved in local dispute resolution and to analyze how effective these actors are in resolving local disputes. We have found that government bodies or representatives are frequently among the actors listed in this exercise.

<https://clearspace.mercycorps.org/docs/DOC-9424>

<https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsdll/cgi-bin/library?a=q&r=1&hs=1&t=0&c=all&h=dt&q=disputes+and+dispute+resolution>

**Dispute Resolution/Negotiation Process Form:** A core feature of good governance is the ability of leaders to balance competing constituent interests in a fair, unbiased, and transparent manner. Many of Mercy Corps' conflict management training programs provide leaders with the tools and skills they need to strengthen their ability to manage contentious issues and resolve disputes in a way that addresses the interests of multiple parties. The Dispute Resolution/Negotiation Process form is designed to capture important information about agreement that program participants reach and whether they are using new consensus-based conflict management tools and techniques that have been delivered through training programs. It allows Mercy Corps to track how many disputes participants resolve over the life of the grant. It also documents key aspects of each agreement, such as they types of disputes resolved (e.g. political, economic, natural resource), the number of people who benefit from the agreement, how long agreements last and the negotiation process and/or tools that participants use to reach an agreement.

<https://clearspace.mercycorps.org/docs/DOC-9712>

<https://clearspace.mercycorps.org/docs/DOC-9713>

**For more information, contact:** Sharon Morris, Director, Conflict Management Group  
[smorris@dc.mercycorps.org](mailto:smorris@dc.mercycorps.org)



## 8.9. Learning for Effective Aid Practice and Policy: Researching What Makes a Difference in Conflict-Affected Contexts

Mercy Corps developed the Learning for Effective Aid Policy and Practice (LEAPP) research because:

- Through decades of experience working in insecure environments, our teams have observed that community-led development – involving local people in selecting, planning and implementing development programs – yields the greatest benefits.
- Unfortunately US foreign assistance is taking the opposite approach. The US government increasingly supports quick-impact programs implemented by the US military or joint civilian-military teams that do not include significant community involvement. This trend is particularly prevalent in insecure environments such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mercy Corps worked with independent research firms in Iraq and Afghanistan to interview a total of 1,032 community leaders and members in August and September of 2009. Twenty-one focus groups were also conducted. Data was analyzed by Globescan Incorporated, an international research consultancy group with over two decades of experience in conducting multi-country public and stakeholder opinion surveys.

This study confirmed that Afghans and Iraqis view community-led development implemented by INGOs as the most effective way to advance stability and development.

### What data supports the finding that community-led development is more effective?

- In both Iraq and Afghanistan, INGOs that use community-led methods are the most highly rated development actors. In Iraq, they are followed closely by government organizations, with local NGOs in third place, followed by military-civilian hybrids called provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs). In Afghanistan, INGOs are followed by local Afghan NGOs, then national and district governments and finally the PRTs.
- In Iraq, the actors perceived as most capable, effective, and trustworthy in terms of community development are INGOs, followed by the national government. In Afghanistan, The most effective and trusted actors, in the minds of community leaders and members, are the local shura, followed by INGOs, and then religious leaders.
- In Iraq, the community-preferred actor for development projects is a tie between INGOs and national government (28-29%), followed by district/sub-district government (19%), with PRTs and local NGOs chosen by only a small minority of community members (5-6%). In Afghanistan, INGOS are preferred for the implementation of development projects by a wide margin: 41percent prefer INGOs compared with 20 percent shura, and seven percent or less for each of the other actors evaluated.

### Why is community-led development perceived as more effective?

LEAPP research found three main reasons for the positive perceptions of community-led development:

**1. Community-led development allows people to participate in and feel ownership for their own development.** Iraqis and Afghans perceive development projects as most successful when they include communities, build consensus, and galvanize a strong sense of ownership. Building ownership takes time but enables durable, sustainable impact. The chart below illustrates how the ratings of INGOs on seven different aspects of promoting participation compare to the ratings given to other actors evaluated by respondents. INGOs are perceived as the most participatory of all actors, with respondents in both Iraq and Afghanistan rating them 27% higher than other actors.

<b>INGO percentage gain over other actors on promoting participation*</b>		
<b>Method</b>	<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>Iraq</b>
Promotes participation of community members	+27 %	+27 %
Encourages people to work together to improve their community	+18 %	+22 %
Gets community leaders to contribute to costs	+19 %	+15 %
Gets community members to contribute labor time	+27 %	+14 %
Actively involves people in the community in project management and supervision	+19 %	+33 %
Teaches people in the community new skills	+20 %	+26 %
Gets community to continue project after the organization leaves the community	+25 %	+28 %

\* Mean scores for INGOs on each characteristic expressed as a percentage gain over the average scores of government, local NGOs, and PRTs (other actor average score = 100)

**2. Community-led development meets urgent, specific needs.** Different communities have very different needs. Because community-led methods involve people in identifying priorities, they were perceived as more effective at resolving urgent problems. While all communities surveyed felt a strong need for a wide variety of development programs, the demand for specific services varies considerably. In order for development interventions to be perceived positively by the population, local needs must be taken into account. The survey shows very low levels of satisfaction in both locations for most services, as highlighted in the summary chart below.

<b>Percent of interviewees satisfied with the quality of services in their communities</b>		
	<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>Iraq</b>
Sample size (n)	512	520
Roads and transportation	38 %	17 %
Electricity supply	14 %	1 %
Education	43 %	24 %
Health care	7 %	16 %
Number of jobs increased in last year <sup>1</sup>	26 %	30 %
Overall economic situation <sup>2</sup>	11 %	12 %
Overall quality of life in community <sup>2</sup>	14 %	11 %
Likelihood that quality of life will improve	21 %	16 %

1 "Significantly" or "Somewhat"

2 "Good" or "Very Good"

Because community-led methods involve local leaders and community members in a process to identify and prioritize their most pressing needs, these methods were perceived by those surveyed in both countries as more effective at identifying and addressing their main problems. In Afghanistan, INGOs were ranked 18% higher than other actors on their ability to consult with people in the community to determine needs; in Iraq, INGOs led by 12%.

**3. Community-led development builds trusting relationships and positive perceptions.** The programs perceived as most effective create linkages between people, with INGOs catalyzing stronger local institutions and promoting inclusion of all groups, especially the most marginalized. When asked to compare different actors in terms of their ability to build trust with community leaders, respondents in Afghanistan ranked INGOs 23% higher than other actors. In Iraq, INGOs were rated 29% higher on trust building. In terms of how well they do at increasing communication between community leaders and local government officials, INGOs were rated 12% higher than other actors in Iraq and 19% higher in Afghanistan.

## Conclusions

This study suggests that if US assistance more strongly supported community-led development efforts, it would be a more effective use of taxpayer dollars. This is especially true in insecure areas. Based on research findings, Mercy Corps has been implementing a concerted outreach effort to policy-makers in the US and in Europe.

**For more information, contact:** Heather Hanson, Director of Public Affairs [hhanson@dc.mercycorps.org](mailto:hhanson@dc.mercycorps.org)

## Annex A. Mercy Corps Capacity Statement Good Governance Programming

Mercy Corps supports people living in some of the world's toughest places to turn crises of natural disaster, economic collapse, and conflict into opportunities for progress. Driven by local needs and market conditions, our programs provide communities with the tools and support they need to transform their own lives. Our worldwide team of 3,700 professionals is improving the lives of 14.5 million people in nearly 40 countries. Promoting good governance and working in partnership with local governments are central to Mercy Corps' approach because they build local ownership and sustainability for long-term development goals. **Many of our largest programs in the world have good governance goals and objectives, including over \$150 million in programming in six countries. An additional 300 programs across 30 countries reflect the deep integration of governance as a central approach for all types of relief and development efforts.**

Good governance emphasizes the partnership between citizens and government for the common good, specifically addressing how mechanisms, processes and institutions facilitate citizens and groups to articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their responsibilities, and mediate their differences. For Mercy Corps, **good governance is both a programming goal and condition for all other development initiatives to be sustainable.** In countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, Colombia and Guatemala, Sudan and the Central Africa Republic, Mercy Corps is helping strengthen the capacity of citizens and their representatives so that political, social, and economic priorities are based on broad consensus and decisions are implemented in accountable and transparent ways. A central tenet of this approach is ensuring the voices of the poorest and the most marginalized are heard in decision-making. In the sectors of economic development, infrastructure, and training inputs for public institutions such as schools, Mercy Corps applies good governance programming **to improve accountability in decision-making, equitable civic participation and voice, and effective local government service delivery.**

### Improving Public Service Delivery and Accountability for Development

A cornerstone of Mercy Corps' governance work is supporting communities and civil society organizations (CSOs) to hold government accountable for demand-driven planning and improved service delivery. In some of the most challenging political environments, Mercy Corps works in deep partnership with local officials to address community needs. Our experience shows that local governments, particularly in moments of significant transition, often require support for delivering services more effectively and efficiently and developing capacity to use the principles of good governance.

Mercy Corps is currently leading a consortium of six groups—both NGOs and technical service providers—in southern Sudan and the transition areas between north and south to address gaps in local government service delivery while building the capacity and credibility of nascent government institutions. This USAID-funded \$30 million program, **Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services** (BRIDGE), works directly with local government in four states. Conflict prevention and successful improvement of peoples' welfare in southern Sudan rests on responsive and accountable local governance, particularly following the January 2011 referendum on the future of the region. Mercy Corps and partners engage local government officials in mentoring and training in strategic planning, team management/leadership, budgeting, financial management, and conflict resolution. The BRIDGE program is also strengthening officials' understanding of constituent relations and institutionalizing forums for participatory planning and improved community-government interaction. In these forums, communities and government officials are gaining practical experience in planning, implementing, and managing projects that address community needs. Since its inception the BRIDGE program has trained more than 1,600 government officials on planning and budgeting, anti-corruption, Sudanese laws, computer applications, project management, monitoring and evaluation. Through these trainings and infrastructure and supply projects the BRIDGE program has helped 100 sub-national government entities improve their performance and facilitated 16 consensus building processes between government and their constituents. **Already government officials are taking increasing responsibility for projects and services that deliver tangible improvements to communities in livelihoods, education, health, water, and sanitation.** Additionally, Mercy Corps and partners are developing and reinforcing practical linkages across all levels of government, between government and civil society, and among the diverse stakeholders within the community – including existing international actors. Collaboration with Mercy Corps' six-year *Localizing Institutional Capacity for Sudan* (LINCS) program has significantly aided these efforts.

In Iraq, the large-scale, multi-year ***Iraq Community Action Program (CAP)*** fosters grassroots democracy and better local governance by giving Iraqi community groups first-hand experience designing and participating in democratic processes. Mercy Corps' CAP program has been operational since 2003 and represents an investment of over \$125 million from USAID. Through the program, Mercy Corps is helping over 550 communities form Community Action Groups (CAGs) to identify their own development priorities, including possible causes of conflict, and design and implement solutions in an inclusive, participatory manner. To date CAGs have implemented over 1,500 community development projects and supported women's groups in literacy programs, promoted equal representation in local and regional government, and aided disability-rights campaigns. **CAP has directly served almost three million people in Iraq and is helping Iraqis take advantage of the recent stability gains in their country. Mercy Corps is ensuring sustainability by gradually shifting the focus of project management from CAGs to sub-national government counterparts, building their capacity to secure national and provincial-level budgetary support for community-identified development priorities.**



Photo: Cassandra Nelson/Mercy Corps. Iraq, 2003.

In Mongolia, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)–***Market Opportunities for Rural Entrepreneurs (MORE) program*** demonstrates the crucial role of government in creating the enabling environment for economic development. The program's goal is increasing the income of herders in 15 of Mongolia's 21 aimags (provinces) and creating new market opportunities to help diversify and expand rural businesses. A main objective focuses on **expanding public-private partnerships to increase demand for local goods and services**. This is being achieved through: a) collaboration with government on improvement of procurement legislation and local capacity-building, and b) use of a transparency and competition index for public procurement. **Tripartite Partnership Councils – with civil society, local government and private sector representation – have already been established in 11 aimags and CSOs trained in monitoring are providing the oversight for business delivery a range of services with funding from the Mongolian Government.** An example of the result is improvements in food quality at 45 schools across eight aimags. Study tours for members of the Tripartite Partnership Councils support the generation of creative approaches government can take to encourage the participation of the civil society and private sector in public procurement and how partnership can be strengthened.

A recent ex-post evaluation by Mercy Corps in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan showed empowered communities and sustained good governance in areas that had graduated from the ***Community Action Investment Program (CAIP)*** and the ***Peaceful Communities Initiative (PCI)***. Funded by USAID, CAIP and PCI were pioneering cross-border programs in conflict-charged areas of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. CAIP was a three-year \$11.8 million program which ended in 2005, and PCI was a five-year \$6.7 million initiative that ended in 2007. PCI and CAIP formed Community Action Groups (CAGs) which implemented community development projects in partnership with local government officials as the vehicle for peace-building, improving interethnic and community-to-government relations, and economic development. According to the evaluation, **73% of members of the CAGs felt it was still easier to approach local government at least one year after the programs ended and 68% witnessed local government becoming more involved in community activities after the end of the programs as compared with before the programs.** The sustainability of the mobilization process used in the programs can also be seen by the fact that at the time of the final report, PCI CAGs, including government partners, had implemented almost 100 infrastructure projects by themselves and independent of donor funds. For more information, see the *Sustainability Field Study: Understanding What Promotes Lasting Change at the Community Level*. <http://www.mercycorps.org/publications/11935>

## Strengthening Equitable and Inclusive Public Participation and Representation

To Mercy Corps, strengthening a community's voice means tailoring specific approaches to ensure the meaningful participation of marginalized groups such as women, youth, ethnic minorities, and the disabled into all programs. **In the Central Africa Republic (CAR), five programs<sup>24</sup> address different barriers to women's political participation and, as a result of being designed as a comprehensive portfolio mind, are having significant impact.** Activities include working with municipal governments to establish access to justice centers for women to safely bring cases of rights violations and provide civic education through women's organizations. Additionally, the **Realizing Empowerment, Advocacy and Communications for Human Rights (REACH)** program trained over 4,000 women on democracy and good governance, human rights, civic education, and responsible participation ahead of CAR's most recent elections.

The **Access to Justice in Guatemala** project was part of Mercy Corps Guatemala's program on land conflict mediation in the northwestern highlands of Guatemala, specifically in the departments of Alta Verapaz, el Quiché, Baja Verapaz and Izabal. In 2005 the Law of Registration of Catastral Information (RIC) was signed into effect, and implementation of the law in the Verapaces began in 2008. The project facilitated the peaceful and transparent implementation of RIC in Alta Verapaz and Izabal, and **ensured indigenous communities were able to exercise, participate and protect their rights to land tenancy and registration in agreement with the 1996 Peace Accords.** The program **reached approximately 276,046 indigenous people and involved multiple sectors,** including civil society, local leadership and the municipal government, and rural indigenous communities.

A critical program in **Sri Lanka**, the USAID supported **Enhanced Capacity for Relationship Building among Indigenous Actors (ECRB)** program, strengthened multi-ethnic associations to act as a force for peace and reconciliation in eastern Sri Lanka. The program centered on strengthening the capacity of religious and community leaders to resolve conflict and build bridges among religious groups. The program also supported civic associations to promote joint interests in peaceful ways. Over 3,000 participants took part in dialogue and activities focused on building ties across communities and addressing conflict drivers.

And in Iraq the **Supporting Effective Advocacy for Marginalized Populations (SEAM)** program began in 2009 to **strengthen the capacity of Iraqi women and youth through civil society groups in disputed areas to work cooperatively with elected officials to reduce violence and build a sustainable, accountable and responsible system of governance.** Funded by the US State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL), one of the main objectives of this \$4.7 million program has supported linkages between CSOs and elected government officials, increasing citizen-government interaction at the provincial and national levels, and provided CSOs and government with basic negotiation and diversity training.

## Building a Critical Mass for Good Governance Across Generations

Mercy Corps recognizes the importance of people of all ages having the skills and capacity to understand processes of public decision-making, as well as to advocate for and make use of participatory governance processes. **The Global Citizen Corps (GCC) program directly addresses challenges pertinent to the half of the world's population being under 25 years of age, the largest proportion of young people ever recorded.** Globally, 80% of youth live in developing countries where economic, civic and social opportunities are insufficient to address the diverse needs of the transition to adulthood. And the Middle East, where GCC was launched, represents the youngest population in the world with 65% of citizens under age 30.<sup>25</sup> Since its inception in 2007, GCC has grown to involve more than 13,000 youth in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Indonesia, Pakistan and West Bank/Gaza, connecting with one another and peers in the US and UK. In 2010 youth leaders **engaged 71,142 people** in their projects and campaigns which subsequently reached over one million people. The GCC website, [www.globalcitizen corps.org](http://www.globalcitizen corps.org) aggregates web, mobile, and other digital media into a single, youth-friendly platform. The program inspires and equips an expanding network of young leaders to take informed actions that build secure, productive and just communities around the world. Every year, **4,200 Global Citizens Corps Leaders (GCCL) are recruited in six countries and trained to engage 420,000 peers through their actions. They learn about global issues such as climate change and food security, research how these affect communities and what governments can do about the problems, and produce and distribute digital content to build awareness reaching 12 million others worldwide.**

24 1) *Realizing Empowerment, Advocacy and Communications for Human Rights (REACH)*; 2) *Strengthening the Role of Women in Participative Local Governance and Poverty Reduction*; 3) *Responsabiliser les Femmes pour un Développement Durable/ Empowering Women for Sustainable Development*; 4) *Standing Up for Women's Rights*; and 5) *Women's Rights in Central African Republic (MPower)*.

25 According to the UN's Arab Human Development Report (2009), there are 100 million Arab youth between the ages of 15 and 29.

In one of the GCC countries, Lebanon, Mercy Corps' also implements the **Local Governance through Youth Municipalities** program funded by USAID. The program is a partnership with the Lebanese Transparency Association and was operated in 2009-10, cultivating youth leadership in order to build stronger understanding of good governance at the community level and a sense of identity among participants. Over 150 youth participated in elections to create five "Youth Municipalities" and were trained in elections monitoring procedures. Mercy Corps' program team developed a user-friendly toolkit following the elections and representation process, informed by lessons learned. **Using the toolkit, other NGOs (both local and international), youth groups, and even Municipalities are now able to create similar Youth Municipalities in different areas that are capable of engaging nationally, setting an example for accepted standards of transparency and accountability in governance.** In total, there were 67,900 indirect beneficiaries, eight community projects implemented, 2,869 voters, four youth municipalities formed, and 80 youth candidates for elections.

### **Supporting Responsible Citizenship for Global Good Governance**

For Mercy Corps, partnership is a cornerstone of successful and sustainable programming so partners play a major role our governance work. For example, the **World Citizens Project** was built on an innovative partnership between Mercy Corps, Scotdec, a teacher support agency with over 20 years of experience in development education, and Timor Aid, an experienced Timorese NGO. **Five schools in Dili, East Timor and six schools in Edinburgh and the Lothians participated in the project with 21 teachers forming part of the steering groups in their respective countries.** An ICT facility was set up in East Timor and students communicated through an interactive website, [www.Think.com](http://www.Think.com). The students in Scotland and East Timor produced videos for each other introducing their lives and communities. Teachers from East Timor travelled to Scotland for a Study Visit, met with Scottish teachers and students involved in the World Citizens Project, observed classes and produced resources needed to plug a gap in their own knowledge as teachers approaching global citizenship. **Over two thousand copies of the teachers' resource publication have been printed and disseminated** among the International Development Education Association for Scotland (IDEAS) network.

## Annex B. Relevant Resources by Mercy Corps and Others

### Mercy Corps Resources

#### **Mercy Corps. BRIDGE & Gender Mainstreaming: A Guide for Program Staff.**

Though this handbook was developed for the BRIDGE (Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services), it is useful for any team interested achieving gender sensitive programming. Section I introduces key concepts and a framework for gender and governance. Section II provides checklists for five sectors: education, livelihoods, WASH, health, and trainings and governance.

<https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/ docs/BRIDGEGenderMainstreaming.pdf>

#### **Mercy Corps. Community of Practice: Community Mobilization, Governance and Partnerships.**

Connect with colleagues across Mercy Corps to get advice, share ideas, collaborate, find consultants, and post resources.

<https://clearspace.mercycorps.org/community/cops/cmgp>

#### **Mercy Corps. DM&E-in-a-Box.**

DM&E-in-a-Box is a comprehensive set of tools to assist DM&E, from assessment/design, to conducting a baseline or evaluation, to setting-up a country-level M&E system. DM&E-in-a-Box was developed by and for practitioners as a proven, fundamental resource for planning and carrying out DM&E activities in the field.

<https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/cgi-bin/library?a=p&p=dme>

#### **Mercy Corps. Guide to Community Mobilization Programming.**

This resource provides a framework for community mobilization – the process of building community capacity to identify their own priorities, resources needs and solutions – and compiles tools created and lessons learned from Mercy Corps' experience over the past 10+ years, working and in all corners of the world.

<https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/docs/CoMobProgrammingGd.pdf>

#### **Mercy Corps. Sub-grant Management Manual.**

Sample policies, procedures and forms for working with sub-grantees, including government actors or community groups that include government representatives.

<https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/docs/Subgrant%20Management%20ManualStandard.pdf>

#### **Mercy Corps. Sustainability Field Study: Understanding What Promotes Lasting Change at the Community Level.**

This study is a product of Mercy Corps' own field research on two USAID-funded community recovery programs in Central Asia. The study results demonstrate that communities perceive themselves more capable to independently implement solutions and are empowered to reach out to local actors for partnership, including local and sub-national government actors.

<https://mcdl.mercycorps.org/gsd/docs/SustainabilityFieldStudyFinal.pdf>

### External Resources

#### **Andrea Cavelli and John Gaventa: “Bridging the gap: citizenship, participation and accountability.”**

This commentary provides an overview on how accountability and citizen participation mechanisms are being utilized globally.

Andrea Cavelli and John Gaventa. “Bridging the gap: citizenship, participation and accountability.” In *PLA Notes* 40. February 2001.

#### **A. Sengupta: “Realizing the right to development.”**

This article reviews the nature and contents of the Right to Development by virtue of which every individual is entitled to a process of economic, social, cultural and political development in which all human and fundamental freedoms can be realized. It spells out a program for implementation of the Right, step by step, through national efforts supported by international co-operation.

Sengupta A. ‘Realizing the right to development.’ *Development and Change* 31 (3): 553-578. June 2000.

#### **B.C. Smith: Good Governance and Development.**

This book assesses the ‘good governance’ agenda and examines the view of the international development agencies and considers the contribution political science can make to an understanding of each dimension of governance.

B.C. Smith (Ed.). *Good governance and development*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2007.

**Brian Walmpert: *A Guide to Participatory Budgeting.***

Participatory budgeting programs act as “citizenship schools” to empower citizens to better understand their rights and duties. To promote these “citizenship schools,” this paper provides insight on conditions necessary for participatory budgeting.

Brian Walmpert. *A Guide to Participatory Budgeting.* International Budget Project. 2000.

**Carmen Malena: *Political Won't to Political Will – Building Support for Participatory Governance.***

This book addresses the particular challenge of encouraging government officials to involve citizens in the political process, with contributions by participants from CIVICUS’ 2008 conference on building political will for participatory governance.

Carmen Malena. *Political Won't to Political Will – Building support for participatory governance.* CIVICUS. Kumarian Press, 2009.

**C. Church and M. Rogers: *Designing for Results.***

Designing for Results addresses the challenges of measuring effectiveness of programs that affect qualitative change, including governance. The manual offers clear guidance for locating theories of change and defining types of change. Through written from a peacebuilding perspective, Design for Results provides tools equally pertinent to the governance context.

[http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/ilr/ilt\\_manualpage.html](http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/ilr/ilt_manualpage.html)

**Center for Democracy and Governance: *The Role of the Media in Democracy – A Strategic Approach.***

Part of a technical publication series commissioned by USAID.

Center for Democracy and Governance. *The Role of the Media in Democracy – A strategic approach.* 1999.

**Center for Democracy and Governance: *Approaches to Civic Education – Lessons Learned.***

Part of a technical publication series commissioned by USAID.

Center for Democracy and Governance. *Approaches to Civic Education – Lessons Learned.* 2002.

**Charles T. Call with Vanessa Wyeth (Eds.): *Building States to Build Peace.***

This book explores the challenges involved in institutionalizing post-conflict states. The combination of thematic chapters and in-depth case studies covers the full range of diverse problems confronting domestic and international actors seeking to build states while building peace.

Charles T. Call with Vanessa Wyeth (Eds.). Lynne Renner. *Building States to Build Peace.* 2008.

**Dani Rodrik, A. Subramanian, and F. Trebbi: “Institutions rule: The primacy of institutions over geography and integration in economic development.”**

This quantitative analysis argues that the quality of institutions ‘trumps’ everything else – namely, geography and trade.

Rodrik, Dani, A. Subramanian, F. Trebbi. ‘Institutions rule: The primacy of institutions over geography and integration in economic development.’ *Journal of Economic Growth* 9 (2): 131 165. 2004.

**Department for International Development (DFID): “Governance, Development, and Democratic Politics–Dfid’s Work in Building More Effective States.”**

This policy paper explains the focus of DFID’s governance programming and highlights how DFID works with a broad range of partners.

DFID. *Governance, Development, and Democratic Politics–DFID’s Work in Building More Effective States.* London. 2007.

Also see: DFID *Eliminating World Poverty–Making Governance Work for the Poor.* 2006.

**Francis Deng: *Identity, Diversity, and Constitutionalism in Africa.***

This book outlines the relationship between governments and societies – a relationship informed by Western concepts, but based on traditional African values such as respect for human dignity, equality, and self-rule.

Francis Deng. *Identity, Diversity, and Constitutionalism in Africa.* USIP Press: Washington DC. 2008.

**H. White: *Evaluating Governance through Theories of Change.***

This resource demonstrates how theory of change analysis can drive program design and increase the effectiveness of interventions.

<http://www.3ieimpact.org/userfiles/file/H%20White%20-Evaluating%20governance%20through%20theories%20of%20change%20-%202009.pdf>



**Internews: *Investigative Reporting—A Handbook for Cambodian Journalists.***

This handbook provides useful tools for investigative reporting, education on terminology and processes, and tips for advocacy campaigns on right to information and media laws.

Internews. *Investigative Reporting: A Handbook for Cambodian Journalists.* 2006.

**John Gastil and Peter Levine: *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook—Strategies for Effective Civic Engagement in the 21st Century.***

This accessible book explores the process of deliberation and how its use can increase citizen involvement in governance and government.

John Gastil and Peter Levine (Eds). *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook: Strategies for Effective Civic Engagement in the 21st Century.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

**Martha Nussbaum, Amrita Basu, Yasmin Tambiah, and Niraja Gopal Jayal: “Essays on Gender and Governance.”**

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the gender equality and good governance and the challenges on promoting gender perspectives.

Martha Nussbaum, Amrita Basu, Yasmin Tambiah, and Niraja Gopal Jayal. *Essays on Gender and Governance.* Human Development Resource Centre. UNDP, 2003.

**Mary Anderson: *Do No Harm.***

See [Chapter 2](#) of this guide for a discussion of the Do No Harm methodology introduced by this landmark book.

Mary Anderson. *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – or War.* Lynne Rienner Publishers: 1999.

**Monika Jaeckel: *Advancing Governance through Peer Learning and Networking—Lessons Learned from Grassroots Women.***

This book offers insights into locally driven governance initiatives based on networking and knowledge sharing.

Monika Jaeckel. *Advancing Governance through Peer Learning and Networking—Lessons Learned from Grassroots Women.* HUIAROU Commission. 2002.

**N. Devas N and S. Delay: “Local democracy and the challenges of decentralizing the state: An international perspective.”**

This paper reviews a number of issues concerned with decentralization, drawing comparisons between the experience in Central and Eastern Europe with that in a range of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The analysis focuses in six key areas: the size of local government units and the need for an intermediate tier; structures for local democratic control; citizen participation and engagement of civil society; assignment of financial resources; central – local relations; and the impact of decentralization on service delivery, poverty reduction and corruption.

Devas N and S. Delay. “*Local democracy and the challenges of decentralising the state: An international perspective*” *Local Government Studies* 32 (5): 677-695. 2006.

**National Democratic Institute (NDI): *Increasing Citizen Participation through Advocacy Efforts—A Guidebook for Program Development***

This guidebook provides practical lessons for assessing civil society, managing partnerships, ensuring the inclusion of typically marginalized groups, and developing project tools.

National Democratic Institution for International Affairs. *Increasing Citizen Participation through Advocacy Efforts: A Guidebook for Program Development.* NDI: Washington, DC. 2000.

**Overseas Development Institute (ODI): “Voice for Accountability.”**

This briefing paper looks how diverse agencies have designed and assessed the effectiveness of programs that target citizen-state relations. The paper describes key caveats of and lessons from “voice and accountability” programming.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/401.pdf>

**Oxfam GB: “Speaking Out, Programme Insights.”**

These papers analyze how the right to be heard can strengthen the participation of people in poverty in formulating public policy, and enable them to hold decision-makers accountable. This paper also provides a useful framework for understanding active citizenship and power.

Oxfam GB: *Speaking Out, Programme Insights,* Oxfam GB. November 2008.

**P. Alson: “Ships passing in the night: The current state of the human rights and development debate seen through the lens of the Millennium Development Goals.”**

This article explores the reasons why the two agendas of human rights and development resemble ships passing in the night, even though they are both headed for very similar destinations. The author calls upon the human rights community to engage more effectively with the development agenda, to prioritize its concerns rather than assuming that every issue needs to be tackled simultaneously, and to avoid being overly prescriptive.

Alson, P. “*Ships passing in the night: The current state of the human rights and development debate seen through the lens of the Millennium Development Goals.*” *Human Rights Quarterly* 27 (3): 755-829. 2005.

**Peter Uvin: *Human Rights and Development.***

By advocating a rights-based approach to development, the author shows how practitioners can surmount the tough ethical and human rights obstacles encountered in their endeavors.

Uvin, P. *Human Rights and Development.* Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, 2004.

**SIDA: “Participation in Democratic Governance”**

This paper presents an overview of methods for strengthening the institutional and cultural relationship between the state and society through the promotion of participation. The paper studies the following: (1) the importance of participation for democratic governance; (2) challenges in participation; (3) different channels for participation; and (4) lessons learned from the field.

Swedish International Development Agency. “*Participation in Democratic Governance.*” *SIDA: Division for Democratic Governance.* July 2002.

**Stephen Golub: “Beyond Rule of Law Orthodoxy: The Legal Empowerment Alternative.”**

This article approaches rule of law programming from the community perspective and questions traditional rule of law interventions and provides alternatives to state-centered approaches. Legal empowerment implies empowering communities through legal awareness and support; treating beneficiaries as partners; building the capacity of communities to advocate for their rights; and providing access to justice services.

Stephen Golub. “*Beyond Rule of Law Orthodoxy: The Legal Empowerment Alternative.*” *Rule of Law Series.* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Democracy and Rule of Law Project. Number 41, October 2003. pp. 3-42.

**Susan Rose-Ackerman: *Corruption and Government—Causes, Consequences and Reform.***

This book suggests how high levels of corruption limit investment and growth and lead to ineffective government. The book concludes that reform may require changes in both constitutional structures and the underlying relationship of the market and the state, and requires the commitment of both the international community and national actors.

Rose-Ackerman, Susan. *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences and Reform.* Cambridge University Press. 1999.

**Thomas Carothers (Ed): *Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad—In Search of Knowledge.***

This book reviews current interventions in rule of law promotion and questions mainstream approaches to legal development, from a practitioner’s perspective.

Thomas Carothers (Ed). *Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad—In Search of Knowledge.* Carnegie Endowment for Peace: Washington, DC. 2006.

**Transparency International: *Global Corruption Barometer 2009.***

The annual Barometer presents the main findings of a public opinion survey that explores the general public’s views of corruption, as well as experiences of bribery around the world.

Transparency International. *Global Corruption Barometer 2009.*

**Transparency International: *The Anti-Corruption Plain Language Guide.***

This guide offers a set of standardized, easy-to-understand definitions, providing readers with concrete examples in practice of how TI approaches these issues.

Transparency International. *The Anti-Corruption Plain Language Guide.* July 2009.

**UNDP: *A Guide to Civil Society Organizations Working on Democratic Governance.***

The Guide offers a snapshot of more than 300 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working on democratic governance at the global and regional levels.

UNDP. *A Guide to Civil Society Organizations Working on Democratic Governance.* UNDP. 2005.

**UNDP: Governance Indicators—A Users’ Guide.**

This guide provides guidance on indicators with examples from the governance arena and offers a *source guide*, with information on currently available data sources and methodology.

UNDP. *Governance Indicators: A Users’ Guide*. Oslo. 2007.

**UNDP: Programming Justice—Access for All, A Practitioner’s Guide to a Human Rights-Based Approach to Access to Justice.**

This guide highlights practical linkages between the different components of the justice sector and the normative framework of human rights. This Practitioner’s Guide discusses a wide range of obstacles and capacity development strategies to enhance access to justice.

UNDP. *Programming Justice—Access for All, A Practitioner’s Guide to a Human Rights-Based Approach to Access to Justice*. UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok: Bangkok. 2005.

**UNDP: User’s Guide to Measuring Local Governance.**

This guide addresses the specific challenges inherent in measuring governance interventions at the level of local governance institutions.

<http://gaportal.org/sites/default/files/LG%20Guide.pdf>

**United Nations: Governance for the Millennium Development Goals—Core Issues and Good Practices.**

See [Chapter 2](#) of this guide for a discussion of the MDGs and national policy.

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan025110.pdf>

**United Nations Human Settlements Programme/HUIROU Commission: Local to Local Dialogue: A Grassroots Women’s Perspective on Good Governance.**

This book presents case studies, through the Local-to-Local Dialogues, on women-driven decision-making processes.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme/HUIROU Commission. *Local-to-Local Dialogue: A Grassroots Women’s Perspective on Good Governance*. 2004.

**USAID: Decentralization and Democratic Local Governance Programming Handbook.**

This handbook serves as a practical guide to USAID officers who are faced with the task of developing program activities in the areas of decentralization and democratic local governance.

USAID. *Decentralization and Democratic Local Governance Programming Handbook*. USAID Center for Democracy and Governance. 2000. (Doc #PN-ACH-300).

**USAID: Democracy and Governance—A Conceptual Framework.**

This publication describes the USAID Democracy and Governance Office’s approach to democracy and governance assistance programs by presenting the strategic thinking underlying involvement in the areas of rule of law, elections and political processes, civil society, and governance.

USAID. *Office of Democracy and Governance. Democracy and Governance—A Conceptual Framework*. 1998.

**USAID: Handbook of Democracy and Governance Program Indicators.**

This handbook was developed to enhance the ability of strategic objective teams—those USAID officers and their partners responsible for program management—to monitor progress in achieving planned results and use performance information to guide program implementation.

USAID. *Handbook of Democracy and Governance Program Indicators*. Center for Democracy and Governance, Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support, and Research, USAID, Washington DC. 1998.

**USAID: “The Enabling Environment for Free and Independent Media—Contribution to Transparent and Accountable Governance.”**

This document identifies the main components of the legal environment that enable media to advance democratic goals. A basic understanding of the most pertinent laws, enforcement and judicial practices, administrative processes, ownership structures, and other aspects of the enabling environment can help in the design of more effective strategies for developing free media. This, in turn, reinforces more broadly the effectiveness of democratic institutions.

USAID. *The Enabling Environment for Free and Independent Media—Contribution to Transparent and Accountable Governance*. 2002. (PN-ACM-006)

**Winne Gobyn: “Governance in Post-Conflict Settings.”**

This paper explores the major streams of thought on governance and the way this concept has been implemented in state collapse and post-conflict reconstruction settings.

Winne Gobyn. *Governance in Post-Conflict Settings*. Conflict Research Group. Working Paper N° 2, January 2006.

**Yll Bajraktari and Emily Hsu: “Developing Media in Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations.”**

This USIP Special Report seeks to fill the strategic gap in media development and post-conflict peacebuilding and statebuilding operations.

Yll Bajraktari and Emily Hsu. *Developing Media in Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*. USIP Filling the Gap Program. October 2007.

**Yvette Geyer: *Integrated Development Planning: Handbook Series for Community-Based Organizations*.**

This series give an overview of the various processes to put integrated development planning in place at the local level.

Yvette Geyer. *Integrated Development Planning: Handbook Series for Community-Based Organizations*. IDASA. 2006.

**Zoe Scott: “Decentralisation, Local Development and Social Cohesion: An Analytical Review.”**

This analytical review discusses the nature, extent and impact of decentralization in developing countries.

Z. Scott. “*Decentralisation, Local Development and Social Cohesion: An Analytical Review*”, GSDRC Research Paper, Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, University of Birmingham, UK. 2009.

**Useful Links**

**Amnesty International:** AI conducts research and generates action to prevent and end grave abuses of human rights and to demand justice for those whose rights have been violated. <http://www.amnesty.org/>

**Berkman Center for Internet & Democracy at Harvard:** The Berkman Center explores and understand cyberspace; to study its development, dynamics, norms, and standards; and to assess the need or lack thereof for laws and sanctions. <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/about>

**Civicus:** World Alliance for Citizen Participation is an international alliance of members and partners that constitute an influential network of organizations at the local, national, regional and international levels, and span the spectrum of civil society. The website provides information on the following programs: Civil Society index, which measures civil society development; Civil Society Watch program, to ensure space for civil society action; Participatory Governance program; and the Legitimacy, Transparency, and Accountability initiative. The e-Civicus newsletter provides regular updates on activities by Civicus and global partners. <http://www.civicus.org/civicus-home>

**e-newsletters:** <http://www.civicus.org/newsletters>

**DFID:**

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Global-Issues/How-we-fight-Poverty/Government/Good-Governance/>

**European Commission:** [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/governance-democracy/governance/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/governance-democracy/governance/index_en.htm)

See Also: European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/eidhr/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/eidhr/index_en.htm)

See Also: Non state actors and local authorities – At the grassroots: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/civil-society/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/civil-society/index_en.htm)

**Freedom House:** An independent watchdog organization that supports the expansion of freedom around the world, Freedom House supports democratic change, monitors freedom, and advocates for democracy and human rights. [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org)

**Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC):** The GSDRC aims to help reduce poverty by informing policymaking and enhancing professional knowledge in relation to governance, conflict and social development. <http://www.gsdrc.org>

**Human Rights Watch (HRW):** HRW is an independent organizations dedicated to defending and protecting human rights. HRW’s investigations and strategic, targeted advocacy build pressure for action and raise the cost of human rights abuse. <http://www.hrw.org/en/home>

**HuriTALK:** The UN Human Rights Policy Network (HuriTALK) is a virtual network which facilitates dialogue among UN practitioners on how to best integrate human rights in their work. The website provides a plethora of tools, publications, and discussions on the application of human rights principles in all sectors of programming.

<http://www.undg.org/?P=487>

**IDASA–Community and Citizen Partnership Programme:** IDASA conducts research on democratic development throughout Africa. The Community and Citizen Partnership Programme, in particular, provides useful publications and tools for community organizing. [http://www.idasa.org.za/index.asp?page=Programme\\_details.asp%3FRID%3D22](http://www.idasa.org.za/index.asp?page=Programme_details.asp%3FRID%3D22)

**iKnow Politics:** The International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics) is an online workspace designed to serve the needs of elected officials, candidates, political party leaders and members, researchers, students and other practitioners interested in advancing women in politics. The forum offers access to resources, including the online library and the information and expertise of other users, experts and practitioners; mediated discussion forums, information exchange and consolidated expert responses to member queries; and tools specifically designed to facilitate the exchange of lessons learned and best practices. <http://www.iknowpolitics.org/>

**Institute for Inclusive Security:** The Institute supports leaders of social movements across the world, advocating for the full inclusion of all stakeholders in peace and security processes, and inspiring women to political leadership.

<http://www.huntalternatives.org/>

**International Association for Public Participation:** The Association manages the Participation Resource Centre, a collection of documents about participatory approaches to development. <http://www.iap2.org/index.cfm>

**Participation Resource Center:** <http://www.pnet.ids.ac.uk/prc/index.htm>

**International Crisis Group (ICG):** The International Crisis Group is an independent, non-partisan, source of analysis and advice to governments, and intergovernmental bodies in the prevention and resolution of deadly conflict.

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home>

**International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA):** International IDEA is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. In the field of elections, constitution building, political parties, women's political empowerment, and democracy self-assessments, IDEA undertake work through: proving comparative knowledge derived from practical experience on democracy building processes; assisting political actors in reforming democratic institutions and processes; and influencing democracy building policies through the provision of comparative knowledge resources and assistance to political actors. <http://www.idea.int/>

**International Republican Institute (IRI):** IRI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed to advancing freedom and democracy worldwide by developing political parties, civic institutions, open elections, good governance and the rule of law. <http://www.iri.org/index.asp>

**Internews:** Internews is an international media development organization whose mission is to empower local media worldwide to give people the news and information they need, the ability to connect, and the means to make their voices heard. Activities include: training, production, media infrastructure, law and policy, and global programs on investigative journalism. <http://www.internews.org/>

**National Democratic Institute (NDI):** NDI and its local partners work to promote openness and accountability in government by building political and civic organizations, safeguarding elections, and promoting citizen participation.

<http://www.ndi.org/>

**OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network on Governance:** DAC's Network on Governance is an international forum that brings together practitioners of development co-operation agencies and experts from partner countries. Work covered includes: government assessments; the fight against corruption; taxation and accountability; human rights and development; capacity development; and transparency in support of these elements of democratic governance. [http://www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en\\_2649\\_34565\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en_2649_34565_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)

**Open Society Institute (OSI):** OSI works to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. OSI seeks to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, OSI implements a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health, and independent media. <http://www.soros.org/initiatives>

**The Communication Initiative Network:** The Communication Initiative (The CI) network is an online space for sharing the experiences of, and building bridges between, the people and organizations engaged in or supporting communication as a fundamental strategy for economic and social development and change. The website provides summarized information and several electronic publications, as well as online research, review, and discussion platforms providing insight into communication for development experiences. <http://www.comminet.com/>

**Transparency International (TI):** TI is a non-partisan global network, including more than 90 locally established national chapters and chapters-in-information that seeks to fight corruption. The website provides information and tools on anti-corruption measures using interactive media and research. <http://www.transparency.org>

**UNDP Governance Assessment Portal**

The UNDP GAP offers access to diverse M&E materials, including data-gathering instruments and survey tools from key actors in the governance field. <http://www.gaportal.org>

**UNDP Oslo Governance Centre:** The overarching purpose of the work of the OGC is to position UNDP as a champion of democratic governance, both as an end in itself, and as a means to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. This is done through knowledge networking and multi-disciplinary teamwork, to provide policy guidance and technical support to the more than 130 UNDP Country Offices around the world. <http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/>

**USAID Democracy and Governance:** [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/democracy\\_and\\_governance/](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/)

**USIP:** The US Institute of Peace provides analysis, training and tools that help to prevent, manage and end violent international conflicts, promote stability and professionalize the field of peacebuilding. <http://usip.org/about-us>

**World Bank Institute (WBI), Governance & Anti-Corruption:** Combining participatory action-oriented learning, capacity-building tools, and the power of data, WBI, in collaboration with other units in the World Bank, supports countries in improving governance and controlling corruption. WBI's website provides literature, data, and tools on various sectors of governance programming and research.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/WBI/EXTWBIGOVANTCOR/0,,menuPK:1740542~pagePK:64168427~piPK:64168435~theSitePK:1740530,00.html>

**World Bank, Social Accountability – Tools and Methods:** This website is useful for developing participatory programming on social accountability as well as other areas of development. Tools include: participatory monitoring and evaluation, participatory budgeting, and civic engagement.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTPCENG/0,,contentMDK:20509421~menuPK:1278132~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:410306,00.html>

## Annex C. Glossary of Terms

**Accountability** – the responsibility and capacity to explain and report on actions and decisions to people affected by those actions or decisions. Accountability is a principle of good governance.

**Advocacy** – the process influencing groups, structures, policies, actions, values and attitudes to achieve a change.

**Coalition** – temporary alliances or group partnerships that pursue a common purpose or engage in joint activities. Coalition-building is the process by which parties (individuals, organizations or nations) come together to collaborate.

**Civil society** – the totality of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that form the basis of a functioning society as opposed to the structures of a state (public sector) or commercial institutions of the market (private sector).

**Citizen** – a native or naturalized member of a state or other political community, with rights and responsibilities according to legal frameworks of the country. In every country there are also people living in communities that are not citizens according to national constitutions or other frameworks – such as refugees, asylum-seekers, migrant workers and some ethnic populations – and their rights and responsibilities varies from country to country.

**Community mobilization** – the process of engaging communities to identify community priorities, resources, needs and solutions in such a way as to promote representative participation, good governance, accountability, and peaceful change.

**Consensus orientation** – the process of establishing mutual understanding among diverse stakeholders about what is in the best interest of the whole community or society and the general direction for achieving that vision. Consensus orientation is a principle of good governance.

**Constituent** – a citizen or non-citizen who is represented in a government by officials for whom he or she votes or is otherwise governed by.

**Corruption** – destroying someone's (or some group's) honesty or loyalty or undermining moral integrity. Political corruption is the use of powers by government officials for illegitimate private gain.

**Decentralization** – a national or sub-national process that affects the local and municipal levels by expecting them to provide services formerly provided by national/central-level entities.

**Democracy** – a system of government that emphasizes equality of all citizens before the law and freedom, which is secured by rights and liberties protected by a constitution. Democracy assumes different forms and shades, including: representative democracy, direct democracy and deliberative or participatory democracy.

**Do no harm** – one of the principles of medical ethics, reminding health care providers that they must consider the possible harm that any intervention might do. Adapted for the development field, the concept and methodology of “do no harm” seeks to identify the ways in which assistance given in conflict and other complex settings may be provided so that, rather than exacerbating and worsening the context, it helps local people develop systems for mitigating negative dividers in society and building on positive connections.

**Effectiveness and efficiency** – processes of governance and institutions of government produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at the society's disposal, including both monetary resources (such as those generated through taxes) and the natural resources of a country. Effectiveness and efficiency are principles of good governance.

**Electorate** – the collective people of a country, state, or electoral district who are entitled to vote. The electorate does not generally include the entire population; many countries prohibit anyone judged mentally incompetent from voting and all countries require a minimum age for voting.

**Equity and inclusiveness** – principles that allow and encourage all groups to participate in the social, economic and political life of a society. Equity differs from equality in that treating everyone ‘the same’ may in fact impose barriers, so equity initiatives and approaches examine policy, procedures and practices to find or create mechanisms and norms for fairness and broad ownership. Equity and inclusiveness are principles of good governance.

**Fragile state** – a low income country characterized by weak state capacity and/or weak state legitimacy. The term failed state describes a dysfunctional state which also has multiple competing political factions in conflict within its borders or has no functioning governance above the local level.

**Government** – the structures and systems established for service delivery and ensuring security, voice and protection of all people in a country's borders that fall under authority of the state.

**Governance** – the process of decision-making and how those decisions are implemented. Governance is good when the systems and processes are accountable, transparent, just, responsive and participatory.

**Horizontal linkages** – the connections among groups of citizens working together across divides or finding common ground for action among diverse interests (see vertical linkages).

**Law** – a legal document or the collection of rules imposed by a state or other authority governing a particular kind of activity.

**Network** – loosely-organized group of organizations or associations that share values and ideologies, and function primarily on the basis of information exchange.

**Participation** – the goal of every member of a group or society having the opportunity to engage in – directly or through representation - and have influence over decisions that affect their lives. Participation is a principle of good governance.

**Participatory governance** – a social contract between citizens and leaders, involving ample opportunities for civic engagement and mutual accountability.

**Policy** – a line of argument rationalizing the course of action of a government or set of principles intended to govern decision-making.

**Political will** – the demonstrated credible intent of political actors, involving the commitment of leaders to take action and allocate the resources necessary to achieve goals.

**Public sector reform** – the process of understanding what is working, what needs improvement and what is missing.

**Referenda** – a direct vote in which an entire electorate is asked to either accept or reject a particular proposal, which may be added to an election ballot or held separately and yield either binding or consultative outcomes. Many democracies and some other forms of government allow citizens to petition for referenda or “citizen initiatives” directly.

**Responsiveness** – when institutions and processes seek to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe and have mechanisms for soliciting ideas and giving updates to constituents. Responsiveness is a principle of good governance.

**Rule of Law** – fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially, requiring full protection of citizens and in many countries non-citizens; impartial enforcement of laws requires an independent judiciary and responsible police force. The Rule of Law is a principle of good governance.

**Theory of change** – the hypothesis and resulting strategy of a program seeking a particular goal, which includes the program team's assumptions about how change might occur and why the program team believes a specific approach to be particularly relevant or important.

**Transparency** – the act of sharing information openly; a characteristic of accountability. Transparency is a principle of good governance.

**Vertical linkages** – the connections between levels of government and citizens (see horizontal linkages).

**Watchdog** – term referring to the role of private sector and civil society groups that observe government decision-making in order to promote accountability, transparency and the other principles of good governance.



## Annex D. Mission Metrics Indicator Guidelines for Theme #10, Accountable Governance

### THEME 10 (Accountable Governance): ACCOUNTABLE AND CAPABLE GOVERNANCE AT LOCAL, REGIONAL OR NATIONAL LEVELS

As one of the three actors in the Vision for Change, government (the public sector) can often play a key role in program effectiveness, regardless of the sector. Mercy Corps seeks to promote more accountable and capable governance in a wide variety of ways. This theme is meant to capture some of the ways in which we promote the basic tenets of good governance discussed in this guide:

- Civic participation and voice
- Public service delivery
- Accountable decision-making

Two Mission Indicators have been designed to help guide and align program-level measurement with this theme. Please note that in most cases, you will not be measuring these Mission Indicators directly, but aligning your Program Indicators to fit under one (or more) of the Mission Indicators included in this theme. (More information on measurement and Program Indicators is provided in the Program Measurement Guidance section.)

**Mission Indicator 10.1**     **Number and percentage of communities with increased capacity to engage with government**

**Mission Indicator 10.2**     **Government responsiveness and accountability improved at local, sub-regional and national levels**

The following sections provide 1) Definitions key to understanding this theme and its indicators; 2) General Guidelines that help explain the theme further (often positioning it within the broader Mercy Corps programming context); and 3) a Program Measurement Guidance table providing key information on what and how to measure for Mission Indicators, what to report within the Mission Metrics data system, and examples of related data.

Keep in mind that the Mission Indicator is generally not what is measured – field-defined Program Indicators are aligned with specific Mission Indicators, measured independently, and reported in the Mission Metrics data system, underneath each relevant Mission Indicator (MI).

### 1) DEFINITIONS

Certain terms and phrases require clarification specific to their use in this theme and its related indicators. The definitions provided below come from Mercy Corps' "Guide to Good Governance Programming: A resource for planning, implementation and learning." [draft June 2010]":

**Accountability** is the responsibility and capacity to explain and report on actions and decisions to people affected by those actions or decisions.

**Community** is defined as *an interacting population in a common, geographically-bound location*. These locations will be further defined by the specific programs; examples include villages, sub-villages, neighborhoods, wards, districts, or perhaps administrative divisions in IDP camps, etc.<sup>26</sup>

**Good Governance** is accountable, participatory, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in consensus-oriented decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.

**Governance** is the process of decision-making and how those decisions are implemented.

<sup>26</sup> Note that there may be other 'communities' defined by teams in their programs, such as People With Disabilities, or rural farmers, or some other targeted group. This distinction will be addressed in other ways, through other themes and indicators. Here we are interested in the geographic communities where work is taking place.)

**Government** is made up of the structures and systems established for service delivery and ensuring security, voice, and protection of all people in a country's borders who fall under authority of the state.

**Responsiveness** occurs when institutions and processes seek to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe and have mechanisms for soliciting ideas and giving updates to constituents.

## 2) GENERAL GUIDELINES

"Governance is...a powerful component of integrated programming for Mercy Corps and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Since, at its core, governance is about decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented, its influence cross-cuts all sectors and locations of relief and development programming...Good governance brings the informed will of the people into governments' decision-making. In this way, good governance is not an end in itself, but rather a means to building and sustaining secure, productive and just communities."<sup>27</sup>

The indicators for this theme work from two perspectives. **First is the work we do with individuals and communities** to promote their understanding and pursuance of good governance. The second reflects **the work we do to influence governance** - to improve the understanding and capability of government and government officials to govern accountably and effectively.

## 3) PROGRAM MEASUREMENT GUIDANCE

MI 10.1 Number and percentage of communities with increased capacity to engage with government	MI 10.2 Government responsiveness and accountability improved at local, regional and national levels
<p>This Mission Indicator is meant to capture results of work we do with individuals, groups and communities to promote better governance through engagement. This includes community groups as well as formal civil society organizations that have increased their level of awareness, knowledge and/or capacity regarding civic participation, rights, and advocacy for participatory and accountable governance processes.</p> <p>This indicator relates to the 'Civic Participation and Voice' and 'Accountable Decision-making' objectives of Mercy Corps' Good Governance framework. It shares characteristics with two other Mission Indicators, Indicator 5.1 <i>Number and percentage of communities engaged in collective community action</i>, and Indicator 8.1 <i>Linkages between private sector, government, and civil society are forged and/or improved</i>. Where it is unique is in its emphasis on governance specifically, and engaging members of civil society in various and deliberate interactions with government.</p>	<p>This Mission Indicator reflects the work we do to improve decisions and the process by which decisions are implemented by government staff or governing bodies. The intent is to show <b>improved governance-related structures, skills, policies, practices and relationships</b>. These improvements can be reflected either in terms of more accountable and capable governance and government service delivery, or in terms of community/civil society perception of governance. We may be working directly with government or governance structures, or working with CBOs or CSOs on improving outcomes at government level.</p> <p>This Mission Indicator relates to the Accountable Decision-making and Public Service Delivery objectives of Mercy Corps' Good Governance framework.</p>

<sup>27</sup> "Guide to Good Governance Programming, A resource for planning, implementation and learning." Internal draft for comment and reflection. June 2010. Mercy Corps.

<b>MI 10.1 Number and percentage of communities with increased capacity to engage with government</b>	<b>MI 10.2 Government responsiveness and accountability improved at local, regional and national levels</b>
<b>WHAT TO MEASURE</b>	
<p>Improvements in community-level engagement with government can be measured in different ways, and at different levels. At a minimum, we want to <b>capture changes in capacity</b> – knowledge, skills, or levels of understanding around an individual, group, or community and its relationship with government. Next we hope to increase actual <b>engagement with government</b> or government officials – this means actual interactions between community members and the government. At its highest level, we hope to show the <b>sustainability</b> of increased engagement, or examples of how the relationship and interactions are perhaps institutionalized or somehow ensured, regardless of Mercy Corps’ intervention.</p> <p>This is a flexible Mission Indicator. The related Program Indicators can seek to measure change or improvement in established mechanisms through tools and surveys measuring baseline (pre-test) and endline (post-test). They can also capture anecdotal reporting of a significant change or discrete result (see Examples of Relevant Data below). Either type of measurement requires evidence of the result.</p> <p>Results or findings from external evaluations can also support claims of an improvement in capacity among individuals and/or communities to engage with government.</p> <p><b>Program Indicators</b></p> <p>Programs may opt to use this Mission Indicator language as one of the indicators in their design logframe or they may decide to use more specific indicator language to reflect the programming context. Below are some possible Program Indicators relating to capacity and engagement. Indicators relating to sustainability will be more context-specific.</p> <p><b>Increased Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of participants successfully completing governance-related training/workshop</li> <li>• % increase on pre-post test scores</li> <li>• % of community members who can describe the core content of their government action plans</li> <li>• % of community members who can identify how they can access information about their government action plans</li> <li>• % of citizens who can describe at least three methods for contacting local government</li> <li>• % of citizens that feel that they could have a “positive” discussion with a public official</li> </ul> <p><b>Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of citizens attending government fora, meetings, or planning sessions</li> <li>• % of citizens that attend community association [or local government organized activities] in __ period</li> <li>• % of citizens in attendance that report they have access to comprehensible information throughout activities</li> <li>• % of citizens that feel they have participated in some phase of governance</li> <li>• Value and % cost share from community for community project implementation</li> </ul>	<p>This is a flexible Mission Indicator. The related Program Indicators can seek to measure change or improvement through tools and surveys measuring baseline and end-of-project status. Anecdotal reporting of a significant change or discrete result may also be used (see Examples of Relevant Data). All results reported to Mission Metrics require supporting evidence.</p> <p>Results or findings from external evaluations can also support claims of improved governmental responsiveness and/or accountability.</p> <p><b>Program Indicators</b></p> <p>Programs likely will not use this specific Mission Indicator language as one of the indicators in their design logframe. Rather, they will use more specific indicator language for their measurement design. Some Program Indicators identified in the Good Governance Guidebook and relevant to Mission Indicator 10.2 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of local councils/other public bodies that make budgets/financial reports available to citizens “in good time” during the planning stage of municipal project</li> <li>• # or % of target local government units implementing investment or development plans with citizen input</li> <li>• # or % of community members that believe municipal government has maintained public infrastructure at a consistent quality since initial implementation</li> <li>• % of government staff that have improved their job-related performance</li> <li>• % increase in extension-workers responding to community members</li> <li>• % increase in levels of community satisfaction or cooperation with/perceptions government services</li> </ul>

MI 10.1 Number and percentage of communities with increased capacity to engage with government	MI 10.2 Government responsiveness and accountability improved at local, regional and national levels
<b>WHAT TO REPORT</b>	
<p>This section describes the information required for reporting Program Indicator results in the Mission Metrics data system.</p> <p>The Mission Metrics data system has a set of generic data entry fields for reporting that can be applicable to a large number of indicator types. In some cases, where commonly used Program Indicators are known, these data entry fields have been customized to better guide data entry. In these cases, when a Program Indicator is selected from a drop-down list in the data system, a specific set of data entry fields and field labels will appear.</p> <p>For this Mission Indicator, however, no customization is provided and the generic fields will be used. These fields include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>source report</b></li> <li>• <b>source report date</b></li> <li>• data collection <b>methodology type</b></li> <li>• <b>other data collection details</b>, including respondent selection process and the name of the data entry person</li> <li>• <b>total number communities targeted</b> (note that 'population type' is pre-selected for this Mission Indicator)</li> <li>• <b>number communities with the result</b></li> <li>• <b>description of the result</b></li> <li>• average <b>baseline</b> and <b>endline results</b> (if applicable)</li> <li>• <b>notes</b> field for any comments/explanations</li> </ul>	<p>This section describes the information required for reporting Program Indicator results in the Mission Metrics data system.</p> <p>The Mission Metrics data system has a set of generic data entry fields for reporting that can be applicable to a large number of indicator types. In some cases, where commonly used Program Indicators are known, these data entry fields have been customized to better guide data entry. In these cases, when a Program Indicator is selected from a drop-down list in the data system, a specific set of data entry fields and field labels will appear.</p> <p>For this Mission Indicator, however, no customization is provided and the generic fields will be used. These fields include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>source report</b></li> <li>• <b>source report date</b></li> <li>• data collection <b>methodology type</b></li> <li>• <b>other data collection details</b>, including respondent selection process and the name of the data entry person</li> <li>• <b>type of population</b>, selected from a dropdown menu (individuals, households, groups/partner organizations, or communities)</li> <li>• <b>total number population targeted</b> (<i>per the type of population previously selected</i>);</li> <li>• <b>number population with the result</b></li> <li>• <b>description of the result</b></li> <li>• average <b>baseline</b> and <b>endline results</b> (if applicable)</li> <li>• <b>notes</b> field for any comments/explanations</li> </ul>
<b>EXAMPLES OF RELEVANT DATA</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Workshops with local government and communities involving over 2,000 participants increased levels of trust and collaboration (<i>note: result still requires the number of communities represented, and the % increase</i>)</li> <li>☑ Overall village capacity increased by 30 percentage points from baseline to endline, including very significant increases in community-government relations (<i>note: result still needs number of communities and specific increase for community/government relations</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Guatemala's Secretary of Agrarian Affairs provided over US\$70,000 for field studies and land acquisition to benefit indigenous communities.</li> <li>☑ Ministry of Transportation contributed up to 20% of some project budgets, facilitated land agreements, collaborated on design and expressed interest in replicating similar projects elsewhere.</li> <li>☑ Community satisfaction with government services increased by 18%</li> </ul>

