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**DEMOCRACY/GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENTS:  
A REVIEW OF THEIR DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND  
THE UNDERLYING FRAMEWORK**

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## ACRONYMS

AID	Agency for International Development
AFR	Bureau for Africa, AID
CPSP	country program strategic plan
D/G	democracy/governance
HCN	host country national
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONI	Office of New Initiatives (AFR/ONI)
PD&S	program development and support
PO	project objective
REDSO	Regional Economic Development Support Office (REDSO/W[est], REDSO/E[ast])
SO	strategic objective
SOW	Scope of Work
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Executive Summary** ..... 1

**I. Overview** ..... 4

**II. Designing and Implementing D/G Assessments** ..... 9

**III. Efforts to Improve the Framework for D/G Assessments** ..... 26

**IV. Findings and General Recommendations** ..... 51

**Annex A: D/G Assessment Framework Group Members** ..... 55

**Bibliography** ..... 56

C

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document serves as a status report on the progress and results of five country-level democracy and governance (D/G) assessments, conducted during FY93-FY94 for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Missions in Africa. The report examines how these assessments benefited from systematic efforts by a working group of scholars, AID policy makers and D/G assessment team members to develop and improve the macro-political D/G assessment framework. Assessment framework improvements were planned to coincide with different phases of the D/G assessments in Mali, Ghana, Madagascar, Tanzania and Niger. The report also examines how the field testing and application of different concepts and approaches, and consultations with Missions and Host Country Nationals (HCNs), influenced development of the macro-political assessment framework.

It then describes how this iterative and collaborative process led to the design of a macro-political D/G assessment framework integrating elements of institutional analysis, State-Society and political economy approaches, as well as insights from AID staff, to achieve the principal objective of developing a "useable" policy tool to address AID's programmatic needs.

The report traces the process of design and implementation of the five D/G assessments, and details how the macro-political framework increasingly structured these inquiries. The framework operationalizes the multi-dimensional aspects of D/G. It offers a systematic set of categories for collecting D/G baseline and monitoring data, and can provide strategic guidance to AID in the on-going formulation of its D/G policy and programmatic strategies.

The report evaluates the extent to which the improved D/G assessment framework gives AID Missions and the Bureau for Africa a diagnostic and prescriptive tool to:

- evaluate progress towards and constraints to democratic consolidation; and,
- specify criteria for formulating strategies and programs to support D/G in Africa.

The current D/G assessment framework is structured around six "democratic disciplines." Each is an institutional mechanism that enhances citizens' power to hold officials accountable. The disciplines also serve as analytic criteria to collect data and structure the D/G assessment. Each is rapidly described below:

- *discipline of constitutionalism*: the idea that a constitution is a statement of fundamental law enforceable through the courts against officials as well as citizens, and not subject to change on the sole decision of officials.
- *discipline of the open public realm*: citizens are free to associate, publish, otherwise circulate information and openly critique government actions, as well as petition officials for help with their problems.

- *discipline of electoralism*: elections provide citizens the opportunity to hold officials periodically accountable for their actions in office, as do *referenda* and the *initiative*.
- *discipline of due deliberation*: elected representatives, once in office, are free to analyze policy questions as their best judgment dictates and to formulate legislative answers without undue pressure from the executive.
- *judicial discipline*: the concept that governments of laws are preferable to governments of men because the former tend to be more predictable and less capricious in the decisions they render.
- *discipline of governance at many levels*: the first five disciplines are applied at multiple levels within a political system.

These disciplines can be achieved through a wide variety of institutional arrangements, many of which may already be found in country. Foreign models may be useful in stimulating reflection, but they *must be adapted to local circumstances* if they are to successfully empower citizens and enhance their control over officials.

The report also highlights problems encountered in the process of developing the framework and applying it, and suggests specific remedies for these difficulties.

Among the most important findings and associated recommendations are the following:

**Finding**: three-to-four months' negotiation of terms of reference for an assessment was overly long and confusing for Mission personnel.

***Recommendations***: (a) prepare an AID/Washington (AID/W) approved memorandum clarifying the process and utility of D/G assessments and their strategic importance in formulating Mission D/G support plans; (b) draft a short manual for Missions concerning assessments that guides Mission personnel in thinking through D/G issues in their country context; and, (c) supply Missions contemplating D/G assessments with background materials, including earlier assessments.

**Finding**: the current, refined D/G assessment framework can be of great utility in structuring the methodology of future assessments.

***Recommendations***: (a) develop a manual describing all steps in the assessment process and use the six democratic disciplines to organize data collection and analysis; (b) prepare team members in a team-building session so that each understands the D/G macro-political framework, knows her/his roles in data collection and analysis, and understands the precise nature of the report required in light of eventual in-country political sensitivities.

**Finding:** structuring D/G assessments as two-phase activities allows team members more time to collect data (much of which is not readily available) and to analyze it carefully. Two-phase activities can also provide Mission staff with greater insight into possible strategies to support D/G consolidation, and help HCNs achieve a fuller understanding of core D/G concepts, i.e., the six democratic disciplines, by reference to *the specific country context*.

***Recommendation:*** because of its complexity, the D/G assessment process should be organized as a two-phase activity.

**Finding:** the democratic disciplines provide a useful tool to analyze formal institutions and rules, but confusion remains about how the disciplines structure an analysis, how formal institutional rules relate to rules-in-use, norms and beliefs, and implications for successfully consolidating democratic reforms.

***Recommendation:*** clarify these points in the manual mentioned above.

**Finding:** assessment users often do not understand the assumptions underlying the assessment framework and their implications for Mission strategies in the D/G sector.

***Recommendation:*** furnish users with recommendations of completed reports so they can grasp more fully the uses of the assessment and the sorts of recommendations a D/G assessment is likely to produce.

**Finding:** the process of developing the revised framework, involving creation of an initial model, field testing and critiques of both field results and the model itself, led to benefits which largely outweighed costs. AID now has available a useable tool for conducting D/G assessments.

***Recommendation:*** view the initial assessment as part of a long-term process designed to include periodic monitoring to measure progress towards the democratic disciplines. Provide technical assistance on an as-needed basis in support of the D/G consolidation process.

**Finding:** policy constraints, notably ambiguities in the roles of State and AID in the D/G sector, and potential conflicts between AID/W and Mission short-term objectives can impair the value of macro-political D/G assessments.

***Recommendation:*** AID/W should develop a strategy to address these constraints, with specific attention to resolving AID/State conflicts and providing policy guidance for Missions on the relevance of D/G assessments in developing sustainable strategies supporting consolidation of D/G regimes.

## **I. OVERVIEW**

### **A. Introduction**

The rapidly changing political environment in contemporary Africa creates a need for precise and detailed information about the complex array of factors related to democratic transitions and consolidation of democratic systems of governance. Without such information, AID Mission personnel are handicapped in their efforts to implement AID's commitment to democracy and improved governance as a fundamental policy goal. Mission staff are also likely to be less effective in encouraging D/G as a key strategy to improve performance, by promoting participatory decision-making and sustainability in the three other major sectors of Agency focus: economic development, environment and natural resources, and health and population (Atwood, 1993).

In addition, the Agency needs detailed and nuanced information that will enable it to make more informed and consistent choices in allocating resources among the set of countries that are potential candidates for assistance in support of D/G activities. This task is particularly delicate because AID wants to *reward progress* in consolidating systems of D/G, but at the same time, AID wants to avoid continuing to reward past achievements.

Given the complex and uncertain environment within which AID functions in Africa, AID staff need *not only accurate information* about D/G conditions in the countries where they work, *but an analytical framework* that provides a broad, macro-political overview of the political environment. This framework must be sensitive to the particular conditions in individual countries and capable of analyzing governance issues from multiple perspectives. A D/G assessment framework must at one level comprehend the overall political environment within a specific socio-cultural and economic context. At another level, it must facilitate analysis of information in a strategic manner that gives serious consideration to AID's comparative advantage and answers two key questions: How might AID develop a longer term strategy to support emerging democracies? How might AID best invest scarce resources and allocate personnel to effectively implement D/G activities?

Supporting consolidation of emergent democracies is a long term process. It requires strengthening the institutional and governance capacity of state, local and community governments and non-state institutions alike. This gradual, iterative process strongly suggests that AID should develop a similarly long term perspective in its efforts to support consolidation.

### **B. Agency Position on D/G Assessments**

The Agency is committed to D/G assessments and recognizes the need to improve the analytical framework for those activities, but has so far not adopted any particular framework or approach that could also provide an empirical basis for cross-national comparisons of D/G performance for D/G policy formulation.

Since 1991 numerous policy papers on USAID's D/G programs have stressed the need for and importance of D/G assessments. These reports have also acknowledged the need for a better analytical framework for D/G assessments. The Agency's 1991 *Democracy Initiatives Policy Paper* stated that "country level D/G assessments are a necessary tool for the Agency to ensure that D/G programs and projects are rooted in the specific needs and conditions of any given country and that strategies are more than punctual interventions in response to a particular event or crisis." The 1994 *Sustainable Development Strategy Policy Paper* pointed to the need for assessments in developing the Agency's approach to fully integrate D/G issues into all aspects of the Agency's sustainable development strategy. The most recent policy statement on D/G assessments is found in the Agency's June 1994 draft of *Democracy Implementation Guidelines*. This document emphasizes the importance of a country D/G assessment as a pre-condition which must be met if Missions are to develop effective, country-specific strategies to strengthen democratization activities that are sequentially based within a longer term strategy.

Although AID has conducted D/G assessments in many countries, as of yet no standard methodology or generally accepted checklist exists to guide the D/G assessment process. There is broad support within the Agency for improving the analytical framework for D/G assessments. However, less agreement has been achieved about what analytical assumptions are best suited to produce strategic planning documents. This may reflect the Agency's concern to avoid analytical approaches that imply normative assumptions about democratic development or that seek to impose western democratic institutions on non-western societies.

In searching for viable policy options to support democratic development as well as ways to strategically guide the D/G assessment process, the Agency has sponsored numerous conferences and seminars to elicit advice from Africans, political scientists, and Africanists. These have produced a variety of perspectives on the question.

AID's Bureau for Africa has engaged in a variety of activities to improve its policy and programming capability in the democracy areas, including conducting D/G assessments. In 1991, the Bureau for Africa, in particular, created a program development and support (PD&S) facility that provides the Bureau with technical capacity to conduct studies and develop programs and strategies to support D/G in Africa. Under this mechanism, Associates in Rural Development, Inc. (ARD)/Management Systems International, Inc. (MSI) are providing technical assistance to USAID through two complementary contracts. The core contract is for technical services to assist the Bureau for Africa in developing a D/G strategic framework and program. Under this contract, ARD/MSI provide a core team of advisors and support personnel who offer a range of services to AID/W as well as USAID Missions and governments in Africa. Under the requirements contract, ARD/MSI organize and closely supervise short-term D/G technical assistance to USAID Missions in Africa to help with democracy sector assessments and project designs.

### **C. D/G Assessments, A Useful Tool**

Country-level D/G assessments provide a useful tool for both Missions and AID/W. The assessments are designed to:

- provide Missions with a comprehensive perspective on the political environment within their countries with the aim of enabling them to formulate more effective D/G strategies and, on the basis of more detailed knowledge of the country situation, to identify and prioritize those activities that are likely to have the greatest impact in support of democratic transitions;
- create a basis for dialogue with HCNs and for joint agenda-setting by Mission personnel, HCNs and other donors to develop specific policy reforms;
- involve HCNs in all aspects of the assessment process to strengthen analytic and deliberative capacity concerning D/G within country;
- provide a common basis for donor coordination and consultation on D/G;
- generate a standard set of analytical categories, through which different countries' political conditions and performance in consolidating democratic practices can be comparably and more systematically assessed. This will permit creation of an empirical basis for comparison of country performances in making policy;
- identify a set of operational criteria to specify constraints and opportunities concerning advancement of democratic consolidation processes for each country;
- develop specific indicators and data points that will improve Agency capabilities in making allocative decisions; and,
- create a means for more strategic, longer-term planning and involvement in supporting D/G.

### **D. Critical Issues Concerning D/G Assessments**

Experience to date suggests that D/G assessments pose several significant problems for AID. As one would expect with an action agency, questions focus on three general areas: are these exercises worthwhile for AID and Missions? What do they contribute to the capacity of HCNs to promote the D/G agenda in their countries? Are D/G assessments feasible in terms of the manpower available? This section provides very brief, introductory comments on each of these issues.

## **1. *Utility of Assessments for Missions and AID***

Do the D/G assessments provide enough additional value for AID and Missions to justify their cost in human resources and money? Answers to this question should be based on empirical results. They will vary from AID-assisted country to country, as well as between Missions and AID/W. From the perspective of Missions, major concerns will be whether the assessments enable Mission personnel to understand better the D/G situation in the country, options for strengthening in-country interest in D/G, and the requirements for more effective and efficient programming in the D/G sector.

AID/W has a somewhat more complicated perspective. It incorporates the interest in more effective and efficient Agency action in target countries to strengthen D/G, but it includes a cross-national concern as well. This latter concern, alluded to above, comes down to the Agency needing to spend money - in an era of sharply shrinking resources - on the most promising countries undertaking transitions to democracy, or consolidating new systems of democratic governance.

## **2. *Extent to Which Assessments Assist HCNs to Understand D/G Options, Opportunities and Constraints***

The assessments can also serve the interest of HCNs who support D/G by providing them with a legible road map of the D/G situation in their countries and a sense of action options that they might not yet have considered, or that they have envisioned but are uncertain about in terms of their feasibility. By highlighting the relationships among institutions, and the impact of developments in one or the other of the *democratic disciplines* (see below) on prospects for positive changes or loss of momentum or backsliding in terms of consolidating a system of D/G, the assessments can unleash the creative potential of HCNs.

## **3. *Applicability of D/G Assessments in Terms of Availability of Trained Manpower and Cost***

A final point of concern is whether the human resources necessary to carry out the assessments is available in the quantities required to execute assessments that Missions or AID request.

## **E. *Context of Transitions to D/G in Five African Countries***

D/G assessments undertaken in five countries during 1993-94 are analyzed in this report. These countries, named in the order the assessments were conducted, are: Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, Madagascar and Niger. All have made some progress away from formerly authoritarian systems of government and towards more democratic ones. They are at different stages along their paths toward consolidated systems of democracy. In three of these countries - Mali,

Madagascar and Niger - the collapse of the autocratic regime was accompanied by varying degrees of violence. In Tanzania and Ghana, the transition has been more peaceful.

In addition to considerable variation in the political circumstances that initiated the transition in each country, each is evolving in a quite distinctive socio-economic and geographic context. Some are well endowed with renewable and non-renewable natural resources, access to ocean ports and fisheries, a generally hospitable climate, etc. Others face much harsher conditions with considerably less resources at their disposal. Forms of social organization varied before the colonial era and were variously affected by colonial and post-independence practices. Each country, in short, must be understood on its own terms.

#### **F. Contents of Report**

The report contains three chapters. The first one examines the process of designing and implementing the D/G assessments, the second the efforts to develop and refine the D/G assessment framework through an interactive process linking framework design workshops with field assessments. The final chapter summarizes findings and recommendations.

## **II. DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING D/G ASSESSMENTS**

### **A. Design of D/G Assessment Scopes of Work (SOW)**

#### **1. *Aspects of the Design Process***

##### *Criteria for Selection of Countries*

To be eligible for selection for a D/G assessment, a country must meet a single, relatively simple criteria. It must be *undergoing some phase of democratic transition or consolidation following constitutional reforms, elections, political liberalization, and increased freedom of expression and association in an opening public realm.*

##### *Role of AID/AFR/ONI/D/G in D/G Assessment Design*

The principal role of AFR/ONI/D/G was to guide the Missions through various stages of the assessment process, providing strategic direction as well as logistical support. ONI/D/G supplied Missions with broad guidelines on D/G assessments to ensure a comprehensive approach to analyzing key issues of D/G. The office assisted Missions in identifying appropriate expertise for each assessment. It also played a facilitative role in helping link Mission priorities to those set by the Bureau for Africa and the Agency, i.e., participation, integration with other sectoral activities, gender considerations, etc. ONI/D/G exercised intermittent oversight to ensure a degree of consistency in the assessment processes.

Direct supervision of all aspects of the D/G assessments by the Bureau for Africa's D/G Advisor ensured that AID could provide substantial support to country Missions and at the same time introduce and apply new analytical concepts being developed in the D/G framework workshops.

The *source of funding* for the assessments influenced the level of effort provided by AFR/ONI/D/G and the extent to which the assessments were able to apply and develop aspects of the macro-political framework. In countries receiving central funding for the assessments - Mali, Ghana and Tanzania - AFR/ONI/D/G was able to play a more active role in guiding the D/G assessment design and implementation than in countries where Mission funding supported the assessments - Madagascar and Niger. For example, in the former three countries, the contents of the D/G assessments were shaped somewhat more by AID interests in developing comparative, cross-national information than they were in the latter two countries. However, the D/G analytic framework was utilized in all five countries.

Close collaboration between the Missions and AFR/ONI/D/G sometimes helped to ensure that a first phase of the assessment focused on a comprehensive overview of formal and informal institutional arrangements, while recommendations for particular sectoral or specific project activities were prepared during a second phase.

## *Role of Missions in D/G Assessment Design*

The role played by Missions during the design and implementation of the assessments was primarily that of facilitating meetings with key HCNs and donors, and focussing the team assessment effort on relevant Mission needs and priorities, as articulated in the CPSP and in specific activities within the Mission program. In cases where Mission staff were more involved in the assessment, they supplied team members initially with substantial amounts of information about the country political context which was often quite helpful in launching the assessment (West, p. 4).

### **2. *Three Stages (Phases) of the Assessment Design Process***

#### *Stage I: Mission-AID/W*

The Bureau for Africa's D/G Advisor invested much time and effort in negotiating scopes of work with the Missions to ensure that D/G assessment designs incorporated a broad macro-political framework and were relevant to Mission programmatic needs and to country program strategies. This allowed adaptation of the assessment SOW to the country-specific context.

#### *Stage II*

The D/G Advisor headed up the recruitment of team members. Once teams were formed they participated in Washington in a first round of team-building before departing to conduct the assessment. A key element in these team-building exercises was familiarizing team members with the elements of the D/G analytic framework, particularly the six democratic disciplines and State-Society concepts.

#### *Stage III*

In general the final stage of the assessment design process began in-country with consultations with the AID Mission and members of the post Democracy Committee. Consultations with government officials and HCNs followed. Informed by these discussions and reflecting their content, a second team-building activity then occurred. Thereafter the team finalized the scope of work for the assessment and prepared a final work plan and definitive schedule.

### **3. *General Issues Regarding Design***

#### *Mission Priorities*

Missions sought primarily two results from the D/G assessments. They viewed them as a means to meet policy requirements established by AID and to improve project designs by creating either stand alone D/G projects or by integrating D/G elements into existing or new sectoral

projects. Missions were less committed to developing an analytic framework or a broad overview of the political environment in the host country.

### *Trade Offs*

The Mission and the D/G Advisor decided on the precise scope of the assessment within the inevitable time constraints. Of particular importance here was whether the role of the military in the country's political affairs would be examined, whether the assessment would address sub-national levels of government, and whether specific development sectors would be addressed as a means to illustrate D/G issues. Another critical question was the relative degree of emphasis to be placed on analyzing formal and non-formal institutions (NGOs, de facto community governments, etc.)

### *Interface Between D/G Analytic Framework and Assessments*

Another dimension of the D/G assessment design process involved applying and testing concepts developed during a series of workshops intended to improve the analytical framework of D/G assessments. In October 1993, prior to field missions for the D/G assessments in Mali and Ghana, ONI/D/G, with technical support from ARD/MSI, convened the first of these workshops. Its purpose was to develop an approach to assessments that would more systematically integrate aspects of several different theoretical approaches: institutional analysis and development, political economy and state-society analysis.

The two-day workshop identified a set of *democratic disciplines*, i.e., institutional arrangements through which citizens could hold officials accountable for their actions. These democratic disciplines (see below, p. 28) offered a broad macro-political framework by which D/G assessments in Mali and Ghana could be structured.

### *Time Frame for D/G Assessment Design*

On average the design of a D/G assessment requires four to five months from initiation of the request to initiation of the activity. In Ghana, Mali and Tanzania, Stages I and II of the design process, SOW negotiation and logistical arrangements took approximately four months. Stage III involved further consultations in-country with the Mission, the Embassy, USIA and other United States Government Agencies in-country and a final team-building exercise and development of the final work plan. The table below provides the dates Missions began the process of designing the D/G assessments and the start up dates of assessments in each country.

Table 1. Time Frame for D/G Assessment Design and Start Up Date

Country	Mission Request for D/G Assessment	Date Assessment Began
Mali	July 1993	November 1993
Ghana	July 1993	November 1993
Tanzania	August 1993	December 1993
Madagascar	September 1993	December 1993
Niger	April 1994	August 1994

#### 4. *Findings and Recommendations Regarding Design of D/G Assessments*

##### *Team Identification*

Getting the right skill mix of institutionalists, Civil Society analysts, socio-economists, country specialists, political scientists and legal experts is critical. The mix can only be judged - good, bad or mediocre - in light of the political environment in a specific country.

##### *Cutting Labor and Time Inputs in the Assessment Design Phase*

Resources and time invested in preparing the SOW and D/G assessment design should be reduced. This ought to be feasible given the experience accumulated to date. One approach would be to provide the Mission with a set of more specific guidelines and associated questions to consider in planning a D/G assessment. This should enable Mission personnel to play a more active role in both activities, thereby speeding up the process and reducing costs involved.

##### *Increase HCN Involvement in the Assessment Design Phase*

It would be appropriate, in most countries where D/G assessments are to be conducted, for the Mission to sponsor seminars or informal fora with HCNs and donors on the democratic reform agenda prior to D/G assessment design. This would have the effect of both creating a demand for the product of the design, and ensuring that the assessment addresses issues of concern to HCN and other donors. Both of these factors are likely to encourage wider distribution of the assessment and its ultimate use by more people, particularly in the host country. Government and Civil Society organizations have consistently indicated strong interest in having copies of the assessments.

## *Team Building*

Team building, as a two-phase exercise, ensures among other things that team members share a joint set of concepts - analytic tools - and a joint vision of issues the report is to address. As most team members bring their own training, experiences and development theories to their assessment tasks, it is crucial for all to learn a central core of concepts and to share them in conducting the assessment. This makes it possible for team members to support each other efficiently, e.g., by sharing information of value to those who did not participate in collecting it.

### **B. D/G Assessment Implementation: Aspects and Issues**

This section presents general and country specific aspects of processes involved in the implementation of the D/G assessments conducted in Mali, Ghana, Madagascar and Tanzania.

#### ***1. Analytical Criteria for Data Collection and Report Structure***

The analytic criteria around which data are collected and the assessment is organized are the *six democratic disciplines*, the concepts of *State*, *Civil Society*, *linkage institutions*, *rules* and *institutions*. Brief definitions of each of these concepts follow.

The democratic disciplines can be seen as institutional mechanisms or tools that, when they function properly, allow citizens to hold elected and appointed officials accountable for their conduct in office. The six disciplines are:

- ***constitutional discipline over the use of power:*** the idea that a constitution should be a statement of higher law, applicable against officials as well as citizens, enforceable through the courts and police, and not subject to change at the sole initiative of officials;
- ***discipline of an open public realm:*** freedom to circulate information openly via independent media as well as personal networks, to criticize the activities of elected and appointed officials, freedom to associate with others of one's choosing to pursue common goals, and freedom to petition political officials for redress of grievances;
- ***electoral discipline:*** elections allow citizens, as principles, to hold officials, as their agents, periodically accountable for their actions in office; the *initiative* and the *referendum* are two other institutional mechanisms which, if adopted, multiply citizen options for control;
- ***judicial discipline:*** officials as well as citizens can be compelled to comply with established rules in cases of dispute through an open and fair judicial process, i.e., a *rule of law*, rather than a rule of men;

- ***discipline of due deliberation:*** legislative representatives, once elected, enjoy sufficient autonomy from executive or bureaucratic control so that they can consider policy issues openly and exercise their own judgement in disposing of them; and,
- ***discipline of governance at multiple levels:*** the first five disciplines are applied at many levels within the political system, so that local and regional officials are subjected to the same kinds of (citizen) controls over their exercise of public power as are national officials.

These six democratic disciplines are described in greater detail below.

Definitions of several other concepts are also essential at this point. Definitions below indicate how the terms are used in this report:

- ***state:*** refers to the set of institutions, typically the national executive, legislature, judiciary, bureaucracy and the military that in principle make and enforce policy, provide public services, issue currency, resolve disputes, supply support services and manage the economy, and provide for the national defense; included in this definition of the State are those forms of regional and local government that are largely dominated and guided by national institutions;
- ***civil society:*** all social, religious and economic institutions between the family and the State, including NGOs but excluding the media, political parties and "neutral fora" (see *linkage institutions*); Civil Society includes as well autonomous and semi-autonomous regional, local and community governments, resource user groups, non-State service provision organizations and NGOs, whether formally recognized by the State or non-formal in character;
- ***linkage institutions:*** the term refers to three types of institutions, all of which function as feedback mechanisms informing officials of citizens' concerns. They are the free media, political parties and non-governmental fora:
  - the media include print and electronic versions;
  - political parties must have some autonomy from State institutions to be included here; and,
  - non-governmental fora within which competing and opposing interests can debate their differences, to be included must likewise enjoy autonomy from State control.

- **rule:** a rule is an authoritative statement about what individuals (citizens, group members, entrepreneurs, officials, etc.) *may*, *can*, *must* and *must not* do in a given set of circumstances.<sup>1</sup>
  - *may* defines the area of liberty, that is, what an individual is allowed to do; even though it may impose costs on others, s/he cannot be prevented from doing it, for instance when an entrepreneur decides to go into competition with an already established business;
  - *can* defines the area of right, i.e., where an individual can invoke the assistance of officials to compel others to comply with his commands to act, forebear after a certain point or avoid an action altogether, as when, in the last case, a property owner exercises his right to keep others off his land by posting "No Trespassing" signs; and,
  - *must* and *must not* define the area of duty, within which the individual's conduct is subject to enforceable control by others as, for instance, when a judge upholds a "no trespassing" injunction against an interloper, or compels an official to issue an authorization or provide information.
- **laws, bylaws and administrative regulations:** these are all *formal* rules. That is, they exist as authoritative statements, but whether or not they are applied or enforced in practice is an empirical question.
- **rules-in-use or working rules:** these rules, as both names imply, are actually applied and enforced. They create incentives for human behavior.
- **institution:** an institution is composed of a set of rules-in-use that structure the behavior of individuals in the institution. Organizations, such as police forces, NGOs or private firms, are institutions. So are land tenure systems and public service provision arrangements.

Assessment reports now follow the general form outlined below (see, e.g., Kante et al.; West, Charlick, et al.; West, Kraus, et al.; Charlick, Fox et al.):

- introduction and brief historical overview of governance in the target country from the pre-colonial era to the present;

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<sup>1</sup>John R. Commons, *Legal Foundations of Capitalism*; first published 1924: New York, Macmillan; Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968, pp. 65-100.

- analysis of the country's constitution and its governmental institutions, including devolved ones (regional, local and community governments), with a focus, in addition to descriptive aspects, on their weaknesses and strengths;
- a review of NGOs and an assessment of their potential and actual roles in governance given their capacities and disabilities;
- an assessment of the role of linkage institutions, their impact on governance, their efficacy as mechanisms to provide feedback to public officials and to compel the latter to pay attention to popular concerns;
- a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations; and,
- prioritized recommendations for missions in light of existing portfolios concerning the most promising options for D/G interventions, often presented as either stand-alone D/G activities or support for D/G through existing mission activities.

## **2. *Information Needs***

The implementation process varied considerably from country to country. Experience demonstrates, however, the importance of all team members having considerable familiarity with African conditions. Furthermore, it is essential that at least two members be country specialists with a capacity to link rapidly and with high credibility and trust into local networks and quickly elicit accurate data. Two givens make this imperative: lack of easily available, reliable data, and the restricted time frame for data collection. Even in a two-phase study, team members have no spare time. In a single phase study, any lost time can impair the quality of the assessment.

## **3. *Team Leadership and Team Cohesion and Collaboration***

The team leader must know the D/G assessment framework thoroughly in order to support team members, both expatriate and HCNs, who are less familiar with it. In addition, the team leader should ideally be familiar with the country, though not necessarily a country specialist.

The team should be weighted towards political scientists who offer expertise in the following areas:

- diagnosis of institutional problems and capacity to design solutions to those problems, primarily by modifying formal and non-formal rule structures;
- constitutional analysis and design, with strong capacity to analyze the allocation of authority under a given constitution, and to propose modifications calculated to ensure that the constitution will be both stable (not subject to rapid and capricious change) and applicable to officials as well as to citizens;

- organization of national-level institutions (legislature, judiciary, executive), with a capacity to identify weaknesses and propose rule-based solutions;
- sensitivity to issues of freedom of press, assembly, religion, and insight into ways to promote a strong *open public realm* within which such freedoms can be vigorously exercised without danger of State or other forms of opposition;
- knowledge of electoral processes and the impacts of various electoral rules and systems on the kind of representation that citizens are likely to experience;
- understanding of issues raised by decentralization (especially devolution of power and authority from national to regional, local and community governments), such as rule making, application and enforcement, financing mechanisms, and the all important question of acquiring and preserving autonomy from invasive control by overlapping governments;
- familiarity with the organization, strengths, weaknesses and problems of Civil Society organizations, and capacity to work with NGO personnel and to support efforts to strengthen NGOs as mechanisms to articulate citizen demands concerning various levels of government; and,
- understanding of *linkage organizations*, especially the press and political parties, that inform and articulate public opinion, and aggregate it into a political force that is meaningful in terms of popular participation in governance.

Given this set of topics, and the heavy emphasis in D/G assessments on institutional, State-Society and political economic analysis, the D/G assessment team will function most efficiently if all members have a clear notion of the analytic ideas and approaches underlying the D/G assessment framework. The two team-building exercises (in Washington and in country) provide opportunities to familiarize all team members with the approach, but the team leader and those members most familiar with D/G assessments must be alert to assist other team members when they encounter difficulties with the analysis.

A very useful exercise to ensure that all team members are working in a mutually supportive manner is organization of daily information exchange sessions. Team members can present both data and initial analyses and receive from their fellows corrections and advice when they encounter difficulties.

#### 4. *Participation by HCNs*

HCNs play a critical role in helping expatriate team members make contacts with appropriate informants, providing them with data not otherwise available, helping analyze issues and reviewing written materials to weed out egregious errors. HCNs can serve as the beginning

of a network to disseminate the D/G assessment approach, findings, conclusions and recommendations throughout the wider society, changing the way people think about political institutions, the fundamental issue of controlling the use of power, and their own futures.

The most useful HCNs recruited by D/G assessment teams have been local academics. The favored disciplines have been political science, law and sociology. Junior faculty members tend to have more time available than do senior personnel, and so are preferred as team members. HCNs attached to the Missions are less available. They usually do not work full-time for the team leader, but instead have to split their efforts between responsibilities defined by their Mission superiors and working with the team. The sole exception here is when Mission HCNs accompany team members on trips outside the capital city, at which point they become full-time team members (West: 1-2).

##### **5. *AID Mission Criteria Versus D/G Analytical Criteria for Deriving Recommendations and Identifying D/G Support Activity Priorities***

In most Missions where D/G assessments have been conducted tension has arisen between what Mission staff saw as desirable outcomes of an assessment for their country and what the D/G assessment teams regarded as appropriate results within AID's multi-country framework. Usually when D/G teams arrive in country Missions have strategies worked out and formulated in the country program strategic plan (CPSP). They also have a series of development activities underway. They may have a specific D/G activity already in mind. While Mission preoccupations need not lead staff to try to narrow the focus of the assessment, they may have that effect. This was certainly the case in Ghana. In other countries, the explicit prohibition on examining the role of the military in the political system, established either by the host country government or by the Mission, inadvertently weakened the D/G assessment.

The D/G assessment team, by contrast, is more committed to a comparative perspective on country evaluations. Team members expect to use the six democratic disciplines as well as State-Society and political economy concepts in analyzing the country's macro-political situation. They tend to take a relatively broad view of the kinds of data they need to collect and analyze in order to meet AID goals.

Pressures on the D/G assessment team to meet both AID and Mission criteria can be intense. The most effective strategy for the team to avoid unmanageable demands is to invite discussion of these issues as soon as possible after arrival in country. If Mission expectations diverge from AID/W's and the team's reading of the D/G SOW, it is still often possible to accommodate most interests if the conflicts can be addressed early on. On the other hand, Mission pressures on the team to make explicit D/G aspects inherent in sectoral activities planned or under implementation have turned out, at least in one assessment, to be very positive interventions from the perspective of team members (see Charlick in D/G Project, 1994d: 90).

## **6. *Time Frame: Two-Phase Approach Versus One-Phase Approach***

The Mali and Ghana assessments were undertaken as two-phase operations, as will be the Guinea assessment. Madagascar, Tanzania, Zambia and Niger were single phase missions. Each approach combines advantages and disadvantages. Two-phase activities allow for more information collection, a longer period of time to reflect on findings, and the option to gather any missing information during the second phase. Team members have more opportunity to work intensively with both Mission personnel and HCNs to explain to them the assessment framework and process, and the logic of follow-on activities.

The disadvantages of the two-phase approach are the difficulty of remobilizing the same team and, in the event of a new team being formed around an old nucleus, time lost in getting everyone to the same level of information. It is also possible that the analytical framework used during the first phase will be modified in practice during the second phase because new personnel stress other aspects. Costs, proportionate to time invested, are of course higher in the two-phase evaluations.

The single phase evaluation economizes on time and so holds down costs. But the risks of missing or misconstruing relevant information are higher. Because there is no margin for error or omission, the single-phase approach puts a very sharp premium on getting everything exactly right the first time. This includes team building and team organization during the conduct of the assessment. Team members must understand the D/G analytical framework, be committed to using it systematically, and be capable of functioning in a highly autonomous manner once in country. On balance, single-phase assessments are probably preferable (cf. West, who participated in four different assessment, two single phase and two-phase; West, 1994) if the point is simply to develop baseline D/G data. But if Missions are interested in supporting a D/G consolidation process, based on close collaboration among Mission personnel, HCNs and D/G team members the two-phase approach is superior.

## **7. *Final Report Preparation and Internal Review***

Preparation of the final report, in four of the five D/G assessments reviewed here, benefited from review and comments provided by the D/G analytic framework group (see Appendix A. for list of members). This group, composed of scholars and practitioners, met periodically from late 1993 through 1994 to review results of field work and propose modifications as necessary. The Mali, Ghana, Madagascar and Tanzania reports all received one or two reviews by group members. Overall quality of these products has improved, principally because analytic sections have been sharpened.

**8. *Case Examples of Country Specific Issues Regarding Implementation of D/G Assessments***

***Mali: Benefits and Considerations in Involving HCNs in All Aspects of D/G Assessment Process, Project Design and Development.***

The Mali two-phase assessment was organized from the outset as a participatory process. Several Malians joined the team and executed significant parts of the assessment design. These Malian members of the D/G assessment team continue to disseminate D/G assessment approaches and findings in Mali now that the evaluation has been completed. One, a newspaper publisher who also heads an NGO dedicated to improving the political process in the country, has published several parts of the report. This has increased demand among political elites, including the president's counsellors and political party leaders, for copies of the final document. NGO members are also transmitting many of the ideas in the assessment to members of the rural population through producers' associations. The document is seen in Mali as presenting a quite different perspective on D/G issues.

Despite the demand for the document, a change in Mission personnel led to an appreciable delay in releasing it, even though much of the contents was already known to many interested parties. The delay was caused by Mission concerns about language - perceived to be too harsh - concerning the government in some parts of the report. Other donors, who had specifically decided to forego their own D/G assessments on the understanding that they would have access to USAID's D/G assessment, and were counting on it as a basis for continued donor coordination, were understandably impatient with the delay.

The Malian experience reveals the perceived delicacy of the D/G assessments, and Mission concerns to avoid offending host country governments. Mali is not alone in its hesitancy to release assessments, and this is an issue of some consequence because it affects directly the potential value of the assessment in stimulating broad discussion in country about issues of D/G.

***Ghana: Greater Opportunity for the Mission to Consider Formulation of Recommendations and Priorities and Strengthen D/G Capabilities Within USAID/Ghana.***

The Mission had, for all practical purposes, decided before the team arrived that its D/G effort would focus on a voter registration campaign. The objective of the campaign was to identify all eligible voters, register them on an approved, official role, and furnish each voter resident in a major urban area with a picture identification card, while others would be given simpler forms of identification.

The purpose of this campaign was to lay the foundation for parliamentary and presidential elections in which all political parties would participate. Major opposition parties had boycotted the last round of elections on the grounds that the voter registry was manipulated by President Jerry Rawlings' appointees. Assessment team members got the clear impression that Mission

personnel as well as other donors, were very strongly committed to supporting the Rawlings' government on the grounds that it functioned as an effective economic development partner. The Mission wanted to minimize the risk of another election boycott to enhance the legitimacy of the Rawlings team, which it judged likely to be re-elected in a fair, open contest. But the Mission's desire to support the regime in power led it to gloss over other serious problems raised by governmental hostility to the media, universities, competing political parties, and any kind of criticism (Charlick, D/G Project, 1994b: 32-33, Paras. 2-7; Charlick, D/G Project, 1994a: 2, 20, Para. 17).

An important aspect of the Ghana two-phase assessment was the chance to discuss first-phase findings with the D/G analytic framework group. This provided mutually enriching feedback for both groups: the framework group got a sense of field realities, usefulness of various types of data points, etc., while field team members could pose problems and seek advice on possible solutions.

One of the drawbacks in trying to mobilize two-phase assessments is the frequent difficulty in reconstituting exactly the same teams. A change in one or two members may materially alter the thrust of the final report, as was the case in Ghana. The individual who joined the team for the second phase and wrote the final version of the assessment was strongly committed to a State-Society paradigm and had little sympathy for institutional analysis. Had the initial emphasis on institutional analysis been retained, the Ghana report might have placed somewhat more emphasis on strengthening certain state institutions, such as the parliament. Despite domination by a single party after opposition parties boycotted the election, the new MPs made very promising efforts to play an oversight role concerning government spending. With modest additional funding, this and other parliamentary roles could be easily supported. Yet the recommendations emphasized assistance to Civil Society organizations. In part this was justified by the electoral register campaign, which in effect was designed to support the Rawlings government. Nonetheless, recommendations might have been somewhat less single-minded.

#### *Tanzania: Coherence and Continuity in Team Effort*

The Tanzania team conducted the assessment in a single phase. This forced team members to complete all the work - data collection, analysis and preparation of the draft report - in one continuous effort.

The Tanzania experience illustrates a disadvantage of single-phase evaluations. Team members tend to be very pressed for time, particularly in countries where little published data is available, where Mission personnel interpret the SOW differently than do team members, or where Mission personnel want to add tasks to the SOW. Under last minute pressure, one person ends up preparing the recommendations without joint discussion (West). This may introduce an inadvertent bias in the assessment because those aspects the report drafter is less familiar with may be under-represented in recommendations. This is a time management problem. A solution

may be found in extending the team's stay in country for several days to a week, but this requires contract flexibility.

Furthermore, in Tanzania, as in Mali and Ghana, the Mission was very concerned about antagonizing the Government (Charlick, 1994b: 33, Para. 8). For example, the Government had appointed the Nyalali Commission to review laws with an eye to their constitutionality. In its 1991 report the commission stated among other things that at least 40 laws on the books were unconstitutional and should be modified or revoked (West et al., 25-26). The Government has made no move to do so. At the time of the evaluation, neither the Mission nor the other donors active in Tanzania had pressured them to move on this front. The team concluded that progress towards consolidation of D/G was stalled (Charlick, D/G Project, 1994c: 28). When team members presented their draft report in a debriefing for the Mission, staff reacted strongly to any mention of the Government's lack of progress in consolidating D/G. Mission personnel were adamant that the report should not be transmitted to the Tanzanian government without revisions to tone down the criticism (Charlick, Democracy/Governance Project, 1994b: 33, Para. 8).

*Madagascar: An Emphasis on Political Mapping Rather Than Broad Macro-political Assessment.*

When the first draft of the D/G assessment was submitted, the Mission indicated to the team that the theoretical section on the D/G framework should be removed. The director was not interested in comparative material. The team nonetheless collected data and structured the report in terms of the D/G framework. The Mission was specifically interested in an overview of the Malagasy political situation or a political mapping of the country, i.e., what the political parties were, who the important actors were in the parties, something about the underlying nature and origins of the parties in terms of ideology and personalism, ethnicity, clan base, etc. The team's findings were viewed as politically non-sensitive and were subsequently released.

**9. *Recommendations on D/G Assessment Implementation***

*The Need for Greater Acceptance/Tolerance/Understanding by Mission of Macro-Political Approach*

AID has committed the Agency to support of the goal of D/G. The assessments are conducted with the explicit purpose of furthering this goal. Friction frequently arises however between AID/W's publicly articulated policy favoring D/G, and Mission (and often ambassadorial) commitment to political stability. Mission leadership and staff face personal incentives that differ sharply from those AID/W personnel and D/G assessment team members confront. These differences often lead to friction among Mission, team and AID/W about data, conclusions and recommendations. Insofar as Mission personnel see the assessment as the beginning - the base line - of an intermittent, long-term effort at monitoring D/G in the country they can facilitate the exercise and carry it on. Where commitment is less firm, conflicts can arise among competing ideas about goals of the assessments.

*The Need for Short-Cuts for Assessment Teams to Get at "The Working Rules," Values and Norms*

One of the major difficulties in conducting a D/G assessment is the need, always advocated by institutional and State-Society analysts, to go beyond the formal rules (the constitution, implementing legislation, administrative regulations, etc.) to the *rules-in-use*, also known as *the working rules*.<sup>2</sup> A major assumption of institutional analysis is that **rules matter**, but only insofar as they create incentives for behavior. *Only those rules actually applied and enforced* create such incentives. A formal rule *may* be a working rule, but that is an empirical question. As the Tanzania assessment notes, some 40 laws have been stigmatized by the Nyali Presidential Commission as unconstitutional, including a rule on preventive detention (West et al., p. 9). Nonetheless, these are the current rules-in-use because the Tanzanian government refuses to abrogate them. Team members need to be able to determine which formal rules are applied in practice and how, and which are not observed. Both create incentives that affect individuals' and groups' choices of strategies as they seek to achieve their preferences and goals.

In addition, it is important for team members to have a good sense of what *nonformal* rules exist and of those, which are in fact working rules and which are merely holdovers or value preferences without being enforced. Nonformal rules may or may not be written. Yet they are likely to occur and affect behavior in many different areas. These include the organization of rural and urban production systems; governance and management of renewable natural resources; and, the provision of public services.

It is also critical for team members to understand that rules rarely influence behavior unilaterally. Typically, a rule interacts with other rules, and its impact is affected by other rules in the set. For example, in trying to assess the impact of formal decentralization rules within the environmental sector, it is important to know (a) what kinds of fiscal, labor and material resources local communities can mobilize, from what sources and on what terms, and (b) what impact those rules have on the capacity of communities to enforce regulations governing, e.g., use of village forests. A related set of rules are those involving the judicial system(s) that might take jurisdiction and decide disputes arising from community efforts to control access to local renewable resources. If transactions costs of getting access to credible dispute resolution services are prohibitive, the other substantive rules concerning resources governance may have little impact on human behavior because they simply cannot be enforced.

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<sup>2</sup>For example, a Constitution may guarantee all citizens access to primary education or other social services, but the government has insufficient funds to provide these services to all school-age children. Thus the rule-in-use concerning access to education may well be access based on ability to pay rather than the "universal access" stipulated by the formal rule. Similarly, the national court system may guarantee minimal cost access to all citizens involved in disputes, but judges may demand bribes to hear a case. The working rule then becomes "court costs plus the going bribe rate." Whether or not this (illegal) increase in the transactions costs of official dispute resolution services prevents some of getting their day in court, the working rule - as opposed to the formal rule - will almost certainly discourage some citizens from using the courts.

### *The Need for Sampling Techniques by Assessment Teams*

D/G assessment teams must gather data from a range of informants including, obviously, national government officials and employees, but also politicians, representatives of interest groups, the private sector, voluntary associations, community governments, whether formal or nonformal, NGOs, producers, etc. The magnitude of this data gathering task poses a time constraint for team members. They must achieve a reasonable compromise between thoroughness and representivity, on the one hand, and the need to analyze data collected and arrive at recommendations, on the other.

### *The Desirability of a Two-Phase Approach to D/G Assessments*

Given AID's publicly announced commitment to supporting D/G in countries it assists, the Agency should encourage a two-phase approach to D/G assessments. A two-phase approach allows team members to correct errors and collect missing information during the second phase. This gives greater assurance that the assessment data, conclusions and recommendations, upon which Mission strategy in the D/G sector should be based, will be solidly grounded. A two-phase also provides more opportunity for Mission personnel to discuss D/G findings and recommendations, and to inform themselves more fully about the team's reasoning in arriving at those recommendations.

Finally, the two-phase assessment is recommended as part of a long term strategy to promote greater dialogue and discourse among HCNs on key issues of D/G. Most assessment team members, as well as members of the group that developed the analytical framework, believe that a major goal of any D/G assessment should be to unleash a process of reflection among citizens, particularly civic actors, about D/G issues facing the country. This means introducing new concepts, including D/G concepts such as transparency and official accountability, the democratic disciplines by which accountability is enforced in a democratic regime, etc.

This is necessary because in many countries, the majority of active adults as well as most children have far more experience with authoritarian than with democratic regimes. In fact, people need a clear sense of a *democratic alternatives* to authoritarian modes of governance, and some sense of how to create and maintain these. This clearly includes voting, but it covers a series of other activities as well, e.g., pressuring government officials to establish and respect a rule of law system, seeking judicial recourse against officials as well as citizens perceived to have abused their rights, encouraging due deliberation by elected representatives of issues of public concern, lobbying for recognition of citizens' rights to have governments at several levels available to them to address public problems, etc. They need, in short, access to a paradigm and the practices of D/G.

Civic education programs designed to explain to people the mechanics and importance of voting are part of this process, but not the major part. Of at least equal importance is assisting citizens to understand how institutions of D/G should function, and how they, as citizens, can play

a role in making sure institutions do function in accord with democratic principles. Periodically updating D/G assessments, and disseminating that information widely in-country, will provide media with material to transmit, and politicians, officials and citizens with ideas to debate. Only when people see the relevance of concepts of D/G in their own lives will they have a practical incentive to struggle to consolidate and maintain D/G political regimes.

In order to give this process of HCN reflection a fair start, an assessment in two stages is a practical necessity. Without the encouragement that comes from working on D/G questions several times, few HCNs will have the skills or resolution to push the analysis and spell out its implications for citizens, politicians and government leaders. Ideally, the Mission should commit itself to using the D/G assessment as a form of baseline data and should underwrite periodic reassessments to enable it to measure progress towards consolidation. If HCNs are involved repeatedly in these exercises, they are more likely to incorporate D/G concepts progressively into their own thinking and action.

### *The Need to Create Guidelines for D/G Assessments*

AID should develop set of guidelines for D/G assessment teams to facilitate the implementation of field studies. These guidelines might be presented in a manual that would address the following issues:

- purposes, audiences and applications of D/G assessments;
- analytical framework for the assessments based on the six democratic disciplines;
- theoretical approaches - institutional, political economic and State-Society paradigms - to conducting such an analysis;
- type of information required to conduct the assessment;
- overview of the stages of the assessment, from team recruiting to report finalization; and,
- strategies for overcoming problems frequently encountered during assessment.

In addition, the manual might describe data sources and collection techniques that have proven useful in rapidly gathering information relevant to a D/G assessment. Examples of sources might include existing formal rules (legislation, administrative regulations and court decisions) and rules-in-use in defining the de facto enabling (or disabling) environment. Techniques would include using focus groups to identify key problems and issues of interest to the population generally or to specific groups; reviewing formal rules and interviewing representatives of various key groups, such as politicians, judges, local government officials, national government employees, community government leaders, private sector operators, etc., to get at informal rules, norms and values, etc.

### III. EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE FRAMEWORK FOR D/G ASSESSMENTS

This chapter presents a summary of the results of efforts to improve the D/G assessment framework. The summary will draw on proceedings of five workshops, which from October 1993 to October 1994 developed and applied a macro-political analytical framework in each of the five D/G assessments.

Simultaneously with implementation of the D/G assessments, AFR/ONI pursued development of an analytic framework which would orient and guide teams conducting the assessments. This section details development of the D/G analytic framework and the interaction that occurred between field assessments and framework development. Materials upon which this section is based include notes from the meetings conducted by the D/G analytic framework team and reports produced by assessment teams.

The main issues, resolved and unresolved, that grew out of the discussions and field experimentation with the evolving macro-political framework involved:

- formulation of the "democratic disciplines;"
- operationalization and field testing of a multi-tiered analysis of constitutional levels;
- analytical structure for assessing the self-governance capacity and functions of Civil Society vis-à-vis the state and linkage institutions; and,
- application of the democratic disciplines to assess the outcomes to date of D/G reforms (examining compatibilities and incompatibilities between *formal democratic rules or reforms* and *working rules* (norms, values, etc.), analyzing the resulting incentive structures for their impact on behavior, etc.

#### A. The Process

The five workshops were convened in Washington, D.C. Participants developed and refined a macro-political analytic framework for D/G assessments, with the goal of achieving a common tool that could be used in all D/G assessments. If the framework were used as planned, results of the different assessments would be roughly comparable.

The core group of participants in these workshops included a majority of policy makers and practitioners drawn from the disciplines of political science, public administration, political sociology, public finance and economics (see Annex A for a list of group members and their backgrounds). All had experience with democratization, governance, decentralization and related issues. Several other core group members were academics or had academic backgrounds; of these, all had consulted extensively for AID. Several members of the core group participated in

the assessments in Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, Madagascar and Niger. From time to time, other practitioners and academics also joined in the discussions.

The conveners of these workshops assumed that the participating policy makers, academics and practitioners would bring diverse experiences and viewpoints to bear on the task of developing a workable field instrument for the conduct of D/G assessments. They also assumed that an analytic framework which resulted from a process of intellectual reflection and repeated field testing would be both a useful field tool and a rigorous instrument for conducting assessments in a comparative manner.

The next two sections outline the process by which the D/G analytic framework was created.

### *1. Workshops to Define a Consistent D/G Assessment Framework*

Workshop participants had to grapple with two related problems. The first involved developing an analytic framework for D/G assessments. The second concerned an effort to combine three different theoretical approaches into a single, common theoretical approach toward conducting assessments. The first problem was progressively resolved by Professor Ron Oakerson (Oakerson, 1995) and other participants over the course of the year. Oakerson created a framework based on six *democratic disciplines*. This framework is summarized below. The second problem, developing a common theoretical approach, proved more intractable, although considerable progress was made towards resolving it. The difficulties encountered, and the partial solutions developed, are also described below.

#### *D/G Framework*

The D/G framework comprises six different criteria. Each can be thought of as a standard to be used in assessing a country's position with reference to D/G. They are used to evaluate a country's progress from an authoritarian form of governance to one more democratic in character. This framework must be applicable both during *transition*, the first phase of change in governance forms, and during the later stages - globally, *consolidation* - of the process. Consolidation typically lasts for at least several decades if all goes well. Consolidation will go through several stages. During this time democratic forms of governance and democratic practices become progressively so firmly anchored in the polity that they come finally to be viewed as "the only game in town."

During the evolution of a regime towards (or away from) a system of D/G, it is important for citizens, government officials and donors to use a common system of measurement to evaluate changes. The D/G framework offers this potential.

## *Democratic Disciplines*

The six democratic disciplines are *techniques* available in democratic polities to both citizens and officials *to control the use of power*. Each discipline constitutes a specific type of limitation on the capacity of officials to exercise power in an unfettered manner. All, in one way or another, make officials to some degree dependent on citizens. They create incentives for officials to see themselves as accountable to citizens for their policies and actions. They tend to increase the transparency of government business. Obviously their impact varies with how firmly they are established. A marginally free press, for instance, may not contribute to informing public discussion as much as a fully autonomous and free media.

The six disciplines may be briefly summarized as follows:

- *constitutionalism*: a constitution is considered to be a fundamental law, enforceable in the courts against officials just as much as against citizens, and not modifiable by officials at their sole initiative. In other words, citizens must concur with constitutional changes. Their agreement must be expressed through some mechanism of collective choice different from those used in making or modifying legislative rules, before proposed constitutional changes achieve the character of fundamental law.
- *open public realm*: citizens are free to form associations, to discuss political issues and petition for redress of grievances, advocate adoption of new laws, etc.; and the media are free to publish, and to debate and criticize ideas, policies and official actions. Vigorous public debate tends to expose official wrong-doing and draws attention to abuses of power.
- *electoralism*: officials hold office, upon winning contested and competitive elections, only for a limited mandate, at the end of which time they must again win an electoral contest in order to reoccupy the post.
- *due deliberation*: elected officials, particularly in legislatures, are free to gather information from the public and from executive agencies. They can debate issues arising from this information, draw conclusions in light of their findings, and produce legislation to modify policies and frameworks for public and private activity.
- *rule of law*: judges enjoy autonomy from control by either the executive or the legislature, and they are under an obligation to apply laws impartially in all cases. Government officials are bound by the enforceable constitution, the rules for collective decision-making, and operational rules determining who *can*, *must*, and *may* act in a given situation.

- *governance at multiple levels:* the sixth democratic discipline provides that the preceding five are to be applied at several levels of governance (community, local, supra-local, regional, national) within a single polity.

The democratic disciplines complement each other and enhance the capacity of citizens to regulate how officials use power and to limit abuses. None however is by itself sufficient to achieve these ends. Elections provide for the periodic renewal of political elites. The rule of law, sometimes in conjunction with constitutionalism, can enable citizens to challenge officials' decisions between (or even during) elections. The open public realm and due deliberation mutually reinforce each other, providing for a free flow of ideas, empowering citizens to associate to act on their ideas, and enabling elected legislators to initiate reforms. Governance at multiple levels, finally, extends these concepts and practices throughout the polity.

Typically, the open public realm is the first discipline to be operationalized during the transition. This is usually followed by a period of scrutiny of the existing constitution, and then a shift to a new constitution incorporating a new social compact, which forms the basis for future political interactions. Elections tend to occur soon after a new constitution has been approved. Realization of the other disciplines follows in rather uncertain order. However, of the six disciplines, constitutionalism is the most fundamental. Without effective guarantees provided by enforceable constitutional law, neither the allocation of authority nor the various other disciplines are likely to be stable. Instability, in turn, encourages rapid changes, or strong, often illegal counter-measures to prevent them.

Even when all disciplines function well, D/G remains a fragile phenomenon. When the operation of any single discipline is impaired, D/G is threatened. The six disciplines are not meant to incarnate an ideal system, an impossible standard. It is clear that very few, *if any*, polities fully meet all of these criteria. Nonetheless, it is important to have high standards as insurance against too easily according any system the rating of democratic, only to watch the capacity of citizens to control officials, and vice versa, come unraveled.

It is critical to note that, *while these six disciplines will be found to a significant degree in any democratic regime, the specific institutional arrangements that give rise to them in one country will vary from those found in others. In other words, the disciplines in no way represent a prescription to countries about how they must organize their institutions to achieve democracy* (Oakerson in D/G Project, 1994c: 37). They only establish criteria by which institutions may be systematically judged. Several examples will illustrate this important point.

The enabling framework for an open public realm can take various forms. The degrees of freedom to investigate official, public business accorded to media organizations in OECD countries, vary significantly. British media, for instance, are constrained by the Official Secrets Act. American media benefit from the Freedom of Information Act. These produce different outcomes in terms of the degree to which media organizations probe for abuses of power in the two countries.

Similarly, the allocation of authority among decision makers and citizens that any constitution establishes varies markedly from country to country. Different constitutional arrangements can yield controls on the use of power that, while different in terms of their underlying institutional arrangements, are of roughly similar efficacy.

Likewise, elections vary in terms of the rules by which candidates are slated (party must nominate, self nomination, fellow citizens nominate, etc.) and elected (single member district, first past the post; proportional representation; etc.). Gerontocratic systems, which seem highly undemocratic, may in fact incorporate strong elements of D/G because of the certainty of death. The younger men who actually govern the community under the authority of the oldest man know that their "mandate" in office, though indeterminate, is not likely to be long. If they abuse their powers while their senior relative holds the chieftaincy, they risk reprisals when the old man dies and they are replaced. This prospect tends to discipline effectively their use of power.

The forms of D/G at multiple levels run from unitary governments with semi-autonomous local governments to federalist and confederal systems. The rule of law may be applied by judges elected or appointed, in a formal national system. But it may also be applied by an age grade of elders in a community. The latter system may be subject, within the community, to greater transparency and accountability than State-organized judicial systems.

To summarize, the democratic disciplines in no way prescribe a specific set of institutions, whose existence or adoption in a country indicate/guarantee that the polity is "democratically" governed. Just as autocratic regimes can be arrived at by a variety of institutional mechanisms, so can democratic ones. Institutional analysts explicitly recognize that there is no institutional blueprint for democracy. They try to be sensitive to the impacts on human behavior and governance patterns of diverse forms and combinations of rules, including very importantly the non-formal rules that lawyers and legislators often treat as irrelevant or non-existent.

### *Combining Theoretical Approaches*

The six democratic disciplines find their theoretical grounding in institutional analysis. The D/G assessment teams were asked to carry out institutional assessments and to supplement them with the insights of political economy and State-Society analysis. In order to clarify some of the differences and complementarities among these three theoretical approaches, it will be useful, first to summarize each, and then to describe how they interact with each other.

The general distinctions among the three paradigms might be characterized as follows: institutional analysis is most concerned about the impacts of configurations of rules on human behavior; political economy is most concerned about configurations of interests, and State-Society analysis focuses on configurations of groups as they counterbalance State action.<sup>3</sup> This formulation expresses in rather succinct fashion the complementarities among the three. Viewed

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<sup>3</sup>Ron Oakerson, personal communication, 21 April 1995.

from the perspective of institutional analysis, it is important to understand the configuration of rules and the incentives they create in order to be able to grasp clearly, both how the interests, on which political economy analysts focus, will be worked out in a specific case, and how the organized groups of Civil Society can help discipline the use of official power, the topic of interest to State-Society analysts.

### *Institutional Analysis*

Institutional analysis begins with the proposition of methodological individualism. It assumes that individuals make decisions, and that a series of decisions by individuals underlie group decisions. Institutional analysis makes other assumptions, the most important of which are that individuals have (differing) preferences and that they can prioritize rationally among their preferences. Individuals usually make decisions under conditions of uncertain information and so may make mistakes, but can learn from their mistakes. Individuals are assumed to be *satisficers* rather than maximizers; in other words, given uncertain knowledge they adopt strategies that will allow them to satisfy a given preference, rather than seeking to get as much as they can of what they prefer (Ostrom, V.: 50-52).

Institutionalists pay particular attention to *rules as a source of incentives*. However, they are very conscious that both culture and the character of the physical world, as modified by technologies that humans apply to it, are also powerful sources of incentives for human behavior. Institutionalists tend to focus on rules because they are often the easiest to modify of the three major sources of incentives for human behavior. Even though it may be difficult to change rules, it is often less difficult than changing cultural values, or the character of the physical world.

Institutionalists see in rules a major source of incentives for human actors. Individual actors interested in pursuing their interests are viewed as having a strong incentive to explore rules and the institutions they create to see what advantages they might provide in controlling the behavior of others (rights and duties) or freeing them from controls to pursue strategies as they wish (liberties). Individuals may try to constitute groups to pursue their preferences in common. But whether as individuals or as groups, they seek to use rules to achieve their ends.

When institutionalists conduct a macro-political assessment of a polity, they adopt essentially the same analytic approach as they do when examining renewable resource governance problems, or issues of public service provision. Only the scale and the scope of the investigation differ. When conducting an institutional assessment of, say, provision of primary education services in a country, the analyst is concerned about any rules-in-use deriving from national legislation, administrative regulations or community-level working rules that affect how primary education services are provided. The investigation will focus on the details of people's behavior within the primary education sector. The relevant scale may well be local rather than national. A macro-political analysis, on the other hand, will draw on available information about specific sectors, but it is concerned with behavior in all sectors as it relates to issues of D/G. Furthermore,

the scale is likely to be national rather than local, although it may draw on local case or sector studies.

Institutional analysts begin with a specific *problem*. They analyze the problem in the following steps:

- diagnosis:
  - What is problematic about the target situation, i.e., what is the problem, precisely, and what behavior gives rise to it?
  - What motivates the actors whose behavior gives rise to the problem? What preferences are they trying to satisfy?
  - What strategies do these actors adopt who are conducting themselves in ways that cause the problem?
  - What are the incentives that lead those actors to adopt their current strategies and behave as they do? Are those incentives culturally-based, rule-based, or do they result from some phenomenon in the physical world?

Once the incentives that underlie the inappropriate behavior have been identified, the analyst can go on to the last major task:

- prescription:
  - Of the incentives promoting "problematic" behavior, which might be modified?
  - If inappropriate rules (as opposed to culture or the physical world) underlie the problematic behavior, can those rules be changed, and can they be replaced with other rules that will change incentives for actors and lead to better outcomes?

This kind of diagnosis and prescription, in the context of a D/G assessment, will likely lead to identification of specific institutional problems. These problems are often caused in part by inappropriate institutional arrangements. Of these institutional arrangements, some will be susceptible to change. Others will not be easy to modify, either because it is politically unrealistic, or because necessary modifications would conflict with cultural values, or some feature(s) of the physical world makes it difficult to do so.

Institutional analysts look for weaknesses in institutions which, as noted above, are all constituted by rules-in-use. Most such weaknesses flow from what specialists refer to as *incentive incompatibility*. This concept means roughly the following. A person who occupies a particular office or post in an institution is responsible for carrying out certain actions. But the

incentives that the individual in the post faces, as an individual, do not encourage him or her to exercise the powers of the office, and to defend its prerogatives against those who would encroach upon them. When the occupants of offices decide not to exercise the powers of the office, it is not surprising that institutions do not function as designed.

In examining institutional weaknesses, it makes no difference, in theoretical terms, whether the rules-in-use that make up the institution are based on formal rules or non-formal rules. In practical terms, however, it is likely to be more difficult and time-consuming to identify non-formal rules-in-use. The degree of difficulty will depend in part on the kind of research that has been done to date in the country, and its availability.

Oakerson notes that typically, a D/G assessment based on the six democratic disciplines will identify a series of problems that are linked to inappropriate institutional arrangements. Examples of such institutional arrangements might be:

- a judicial system that does not free judges to exercise impartial judgements in deciding cases, but makes them effectively subject to manipulation by executive officers;
- rules that, by the terms of the country's constitution are unconstitutional, yet are regularly applied by members of the executive, e.g., preventive detention, or prior censorship of the press; and,
- in a state whose constitution provides for a strong degree of decentralization, a division of power between central and local authorities which severely impedes the capacity of local authorities to address local problems, e.g., by restricting their capacity to mobilize resources and leaving them dependent on the national regime for the bulk of their revenues.

Each of these problems must be ranked in terms of (a) its potential as a threat to the consolidation of democracy in the country, and (b) its capacity, if remedied, to enable citizens and officials to deal with other problems that obstruct progress towards democratic consolidation. From those rankings flow a *reform agenda* for the USAID Mission in the country in question. That reform agenda should then become the basis for Mission programming in both the D/G area, and in sectors where AID activities can produce positive effects in helping to consolidate democracy. In this sense, recommendations for Mission activities formulated after D/G assessments should always be justified by institutional analysis (Oakerson in D/G Project, 1994c: 33-34, 41, 51).

### *State-Society Analysis*

Institutional analysis is not an analysis of groups per se. It does not focus on their internal organization, their action capabilities, their external relationships, their autonomy vis-à-vis State

agencies, or the density of such organizations that exist in a given society. These are important elements that State-Society analysis adds to the institutionalist perspective.

State-Society analysts are not methodological individualists. They begin from an assumption that Civil Society groups can and must play a critical role in controlling the use of State power. State-Society analysis assumes that if Civil Society groups (all institutions between the family and the State, except the media, political parties and neutral fora) are successful, they contribute to the consolidation of democracy in a polity.

As noted earlier, units that connect Civil Society groups to the State are linkage organizations such as the media and political parties. Media organizations disseminate information to groups about what is happening within government and contribute to the formation of public opinion, as well as to inform State officials about what people are doing.

Political parties play a key role in aggregating interests of the various Civil Society groups. They weigh different interests and their demands, explore implications of those demands, and try to craft policy solutions that accommodate as much as possible the interests of their supporters. Through electoral and law-making processes, parties translate group interests into State policies.

In the view of one State-Society theorist, linkage institutions are critically important when Civil Society groups grow strong because they can balance demands of different groups against each other and so moderate them. This buffers the State against groups' demands for immediate and full satisfaction of their claims. These claims, if not moderated by linkage organizations, can overwhelm the State and reduce its capacity to govern, as has been the case recently in Mali (Charlick in D/G Project, 1994c: 10-11).

Two variants of State-Society theory can be distinguished. Both reason in terms of groups and the State, rather than focusing on individuals seeking their preferences in light of constraints and opportunities created by institutional arrangements, culture and the physical world. The first, or *national* variant emphasizes the important role of Civil Society groups at the *national level* in holding State officials accountable for their actions. In the national variant, Civil Society groups serve primarily to pressure the State into dealing with popular concerns, addressing group interests and meeting the needs of the population. This variant tends to see the world in two counter-balancing camps, the State on the one hand and Civil Society groups on the other. Civil Society groups include social and religious groups, NGOs and economic interest associations. How other local-level institutions such as community de facto or nonformal governments<sup>4</sup> and associations that manage resources and provide public services are categorized - as State or Civil Society units - is not clearly addressed.

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<sup>4</sup> A de facto or nonformal community government is not officially recognized by the State, but makes, applies and enforces rules, mobilizes resources and provides services, e.g., maintaining order, providing education, etc.

A second, or *local* variant of State-Society theory combines strong interest in the role of Civil Society groups in compelling accountability from State agents, with emphasis on the role of Civil Society groups in self-governance. This local variant tends to a somewhat wider definition of the term "civil society groups." In addition to national NGOs and economic interest groups, the term covers local producer groups, user associations, community de facto governance units, and local governments that have their own resources and enjoy some clear degree of autonomy from State oversight. All of these additional institutions are seen, accurately, as playing significant roles in dealing with problems that their members confront daily. Examples would include associations of parents of primary school children, water users associations, other resource management groups, etc.

Both variants of State-Society theory see Civil Society groups as providing the impetus for reforms in the political system and the consolidation of democracy. They compel State officials, including elected politicians, to service their demands rather than exploit State power for self-aggrandizement.

### *Political Economy Theory*

Neither institutional analysis, which typically commences with a problem, nor State-Society analysis, which focuses on groups and their activities in relation to the State, focuses initially on the array of interests that might be involved in a given problem, in the way that political economy stake-holder analysis often does. Political economy theory adopts a set of assumptions somewhat similar to those of institutional analysis. Individuals (and groups) are seen to be motivated by relatively narrow economic interests. Interest groups seek government assistance in order to protect their economic gains, or achieve new ones. This provides a theory of political change, driven by the interests of various Civil Society groups to have their concerns taken into account. While such changes may assist in the consolidation of democracy, nothing guarantees that they will. If certain groups outstrip others in their capacity to seek and even manipulate State assistance, they may come to exercise power sufficient to allow them to dominate their rivals. This problem parallels the one raised by State-Society theorists when linkage organizations are not sufficiently strong to moderate groups' demands on the State.

Political economy theory does not however focus much attention on rules. Rules, particularly formal rules, tend to be viewed as rather irrelevant. Groups' interests will override rules and change the allocation of public resources if groups are powerful enough and sufficiently committed to the changes they propose.

Political economy theory and, to a lesser extent, State-Society theory, adopt a perspective on political analysis that highlights current interactions. The interesting question, for these analysts, are "Who wins this round of play?"

By contrast, institutional analysts tend to take a more "constitutional" perspective on political systems. The questions of interest are the long-term evolution and stability of a political

system, and the equity and efficiency of the system over the long haul. Equity and efficiency criteria focus attention on the effects of the rules in the system in impeding or increasing people's capacity to solve their problems. From this institutional perspective, political events are analyzed to assess their implications for the long-term functioning of the target system. The complementarity of institutional analysis with the D/G analytic framework flows from the joint interest in:

- rules and their impacts on human behavior at the constitutional, collective choice (legislative) and operational levels;
- capacity built into the system to discipline the use of power;
- equity and efficiency resulting from the system's functioning; and,
- problem solving capacity.

State-Society and political economy theories complement institutional analysis by further emphasizing the factors for dynamic change within a system. Civil Society groups may demand accountability from State officials. Economic interest groups as well as others may lobby State representatives for redress of grievances or assistance in dominating a market or productive sector. This introduces a more explicit dynamic into D/G assessments. It supplements the somewhat more diffuse dynamics already present in institutional analysis theory, in the sense that individuals and groups are assumed to be creating and implementing strategies they think will enable them to pursue their preferences more effectively.

## ***2. Interactions Between Theoretical Framework and Empirical Applications in Five Countries***

This section reviews the findings of the D/G assessments in Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, Madagascar and Niger. Each of these assessments benefited from interaction with the D/G assessment framework group. As the findings below indicate, the D/G assessments arrived at distinct conclusions and recommendations in each country. In the cases of Ghana and Madagascar, results reflect Mission predispositions. In Mali, Tanzania and Niger, they represent something closer to a joint D/G assessment team - D/G assessment framework group product.

None is totally "pure" in the sense that it reflects only the field team's sense of what they found and what should be done to further consolidation of D/G in the country. On the one hand, this is as it should be. As Mission teams have to implement recommendations, it is important that the assessments reflect their perspectives, provided they have a sound basis.

Recommendations in all the assessments thus take into account a number of pragmatic considerations: the Mission's existing portfolio; the political sensitivity of specific activities; manageable interests of the Mission; USAID's comparative advantage in a sector or activity and

the presence and interest of other donors in the same areas; costs of interventions; and, ability to maintain flexibility in a rapidly changing political context (Fox et al., 1994: 70).

The assessments must be used with care because they are to some extent political documents that represent the outcome of three theoretical frameworks team members utilized, the sometimes competing interests of diverse audiences (Mission staff, AFR/ONI, Africa Bureau Senior D/G Advisor, D/G assessment team members, D/G assessment framework group and, in some cases, HCNs involved in collecting and analyzing data that eventually appeared in the reports).

### *Mali D/G Assessment*

The assessment addressed three major themes: (1) extent to which State institutions and officials are subject to control through the six democratic disciplines; (2) character, autonomy and capacity of Civil Society organizations, particularly their ability to play a civic role in holding State officials accountable and in demanding transparency in government business; and, (3) the capacity of linkage institutions to play their roles. Concerning the last, there are two issues. First, can the media gather, analyze and disseminate information necessary for citizens and citizens' groups to play their roles in the process of D/G? Second, can political parties aggregate parochial demands and negotiate reform demands that the State can in practice meet (Kante et al., 123)?

The Mali assessment highlighted, in its findings, several critical gaps in institutional arrangements. The first concerned the judicial system. Although it is a key institution in creating a system of D/G based on the rule of law, the Malian judiciary is not currently capable of playing that role. Observations indicated, most importantly, that judges do not enjoy autonomy from executive control. Moreover, the system is underfunded and understaffed, with a huge backlog of cases and misallocation of personnel.

The legislature is also weak and, under current rules, leaders of the National Assembly appear to have at best weak incentives to control the executive. Furthermore, electoral rules stipulate a multiple member plurality jurisdiction for national elections and proportional representation at the local level. This representation process encourages weak opposition parties. Finally the process of devolving power from the center to local and community-level governments, is not far advanced, and risks being aborted into a form of strong deconcentration, rather than real devolution.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>*Deconcentration* involves the transfer of executive authority within an administration agency from higher to lower levels. *Devolution* occurs when power and authority are definitively transferred from higher to lower levels within a political system. *Delegation* denotes a transfer of power and authority which can be reclaimed by the transferring agency. All are often considered to be forms of *decentralization*.

*Five Recommendations Concerning Reinforcement of the Democratic Disciplines Were Produced by the Team (Kante et al.: 126-38):*

1. The Mission should strengthen the judiciary through donor support for both reform of constitutional rules concerning the position of the judiciary and additional resources to operate the system.
2. The Mission should join other donors in targeting effective decentralization as the best way to oppose incipient recentralization. Public funds and powers should be transferred initially to communities, and thereafter, to overlapping local governments in the form of communes comprising roughly twenty villages.
3. The Mission should support devolution of authority over education. This would modify the current highly centralized system to one where communes (or even communities) could make key decisions about the governance of the system. This would both enhance chances of more Malians getting an adequate education and improve their understanding of the role and techniques of community self governance as applied to activities formerly under control of the central State (many Malian communities already have quite sophisticated systems of self-governance for grass-roots-level activities, which the colonial and independence regimes never centralized).
4. The Mission should support the legislature by providing training and material to enable legislators to play their role more fully in the rule-making process and to exercise more control over executive branch decisions.
5. The Mission should assist political parties in their efforts to organize a reconsideration of current electoral rules and advocacy of electoral system reforms. Mission support could take the form of organizing fora on this issue, and supplying support for voter registration, etc.

*Two Recommendations Were Formulated for Civil Society and Media Organizations:*

1. The Mission and other donors should continue to support Civil Society organizations, in particular by assisting the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ESCC). The Council is a form of upper house of the legislature, with constitutional authority to comment on legislation under consideration in the Assembly. It needs start-up assistance to play its role in advising the Government and the Assembly on Civil Society organizations' views on pending legislation.
2. The Mission should provide support for autonomous (non-governmental) media organizations in the form of an independent national press center that would offer journalists training in their craft, perhaps access to wire services and access to donor financing for material support for independent newspaper and radio stations.

Subsequent discussion within the D/G assessment framework group emphasized two points: (1) the necessity of rendering judges constitutionally more independent of the other two branches before investing in support and technical improvements for the judiciary; and, (2) the potential role of the ESCC in keeping open the constitutional dialogue and possibilities for appropriate reform of rules, and in developing a position of moral legitimacy as an institutional representative of Civil Society organizations.

The Mali D/G assessment strongly emphasized the importance of strengthening the democratic disciplines in the country. The team's recommendations for a strategy to enhance Civil Society and media contributions to the consolidation of D/G in Mali focused first on reforming the constitutional framework for action, and then on improvements in information dissemination and exchanges among Civil Society organizations.

### *Ghana D/G Assessment*

The Ghana assessment notes several important background factors. First, Ghanaians have a long political experience, dating from the Ashanti Kingdom, as well as substantial human resources capable of dealing with the intricacies of rule systems. They understand concepts such as *constitution* and *rule of law*. Second, after independence in 1957 political contestation was carried on without violence (though arbitrary arrest was common, torture and political murders did not occur) until Rawlings first coup in 1979, when he had three former rulers executed. After his second coup in 1981, human rights abuses multiplied. This poisoned the political atmosphere and created an environment of deep political mistrust (West, Kraus et al.: 1-2). It also led opposition parties to boycott the parliamentary elections in 1992 (West, Kraus et al.: 88). Two further factors are the cultural preference for hierarchical forms, and the difficulty those in the official hierarchy have in accepting criticism as legitimate rather than an unwarranted attack on the current government (West, Kraus et al.: 10-12). This makes it difficult, in the view of the assessment's authors, for Civil Society organizations to engage either in self governance or to check abuses of State power (West, Kraus et al.: 19). Finally, Ghanaians seem to have concluded from their years of experience with governments after independence that consolidating democracy will be no easy matter. They view the process with healthy skepticism. These factors form the backdrop to the recommendations of the Ghana assessment.

### *Support for Voter Registry Program*

The team concurred, somewhat reluctantly, with the Mission's already fixed commitment to create a framework for credible parliamentary elections in 1996. The justification for this activity lies in the opposition parties' boycott of the 1992 elections. Leaders of those parties refused to accept election results on the grounds that the electoral commission manipulated the voting process (West, Kraus et al.: 29-30).

1. The recommendation supports the Mission's position that USAID/Ghana finance a voter registry program before the 1996 elections. This amounts to an expensive operation to

provide voters in selected urban centers photo i.d.s, and remaining voters less costly forms of identification. Support will be channeled through the National Electoral Commission, a government agency (West, Kraus et al.: 128-29).

This first recommendation supports investing the bulk of Mission D/G funds to strengthen the democratic discipline of electoralism, or popular limits, on the use of power. If the expected outcomes are achieved, this activity will go a long way toward restoring legitimacy to the idea of elections as a way to select leadership. This recommendation supports, in effect, linking Civil Society organizations - political parties - and a State agency responsible for conducting elections.

The remaining recommendations, noted below, focus mainly on support for Civil Society organizations and for other linkage institutions, specifically, non-State media organizations (Kraus et al.: 129-33).

### *Recommendations Concerning Democratic Disciplines*

2. Constitutional limits and the rule of law are established by the 1992 Constitution. Enabling legislation is continuously under revision. Rules of standing are very lenient, so anyone can bring a constitutional case. Little financial support is needed for this specific activity; but, as many Ghanaians propose, the Mission and other donors could support these activities as legitimate under the system, in order to solidify the practice.
3. The Ghanaian court system requires substantial material and financial support. This should be devoted to updating legal texts available to judges, *but only when the legal community agree on the form of court system and the Attorney-General's Office agree to support measures to update texts and bring them into conformity with the new Constitution.*
4. Parliament should be supported with financing and training to improve its legislative oversight capacity, especially since the effectively single party body chosen in 1992 (because opposition parties boycotted the electoral process), has demonstrated considerable appetite for controlling the Executive's budget and holding Executive officials accountable. However, assistance should largely be conditioned on the establishment of independent budgets for Parliament and national commissions that the Executive cannot manipulate.

### *Recommendations to Support Civil Society and Media Organizations*

5. Civil Society groups might be supported in several ways. If the Mission does establish a D/G project, the first priority would be to set up a fund that could make small grants to a wide variety of Civil Society organizations, e.g., churches and mosque groups, women's groups, the bar association, trade unions, schools and student groups, environmental associations, local development associations, etc. Two other important activities would be

training and support for journalists with independent newspapers, and re-establishing the formerly strong relationship between the Ghanaian Trade Union Council and the African-American Labor Center.

6. Civil Society groups with a civic agenda, e.g., legal aid organizations, should be financed with small amounts.

### *Tanzania D/G Assessment*

The assessment team concluded that Tanzania was stalled at the early transition stage. Early transition towards a regime of D/G is characterized by some significant liberalization of the open public realm, but quite weak democratic disciplines in other areas. Yet, after the first moves to liberalize the political and economic systems in Tanzania in 1982, fully a decade passed before the media were allowed a degree of autonomy. In 1984, a bill of rights was added to the 1977 constitution. In 1992, the government-appointed Nyalali Commission, established to make recommendations about measures to strengthen democracy and begin its consolidation, recommended authorizing a multi-party system; elections in 1995 are to be competitive (West, Charlick et al.: 32).

The Commission also proposed that the Government revoke 40 laws judged unconstitutional. The ruling party has made no effort to do so. Civil Society groups report general discouragement with the Government's failure to move ahead with the reform agenda (West, Charlick et al.: 71-93). Many Civil Society organizations have:

...learned that they can expect little good and much that is harmful from their central government. In this context they see little possibility or even reason to attempt to influence national policy. The reality appears to be that the government is often unresponsive to the demands of even the best organized associations. This is a pattern that will not change rapidly. (West, Charlick et al.: 111)

The team concluded that completion of the democratic transition, much less consolidation of democratic processes in Tanzania, was endangered (West, Charlick et al.: 110).

The overall strategy proposed by the team consists of two elements, linked by a common theme of increasing communication and organizational capacity within Tanzanian Civil Society. Degraded physical infrastructure systems - highways and telecommunications - impede efforts by media to gather and disseminate news, by business people to revive the economy, and by Civil Society groups to recruit members, rebuild networks crushed by the one-party State, and eventually serve as a counterweight to State power.

The general recommendations are (1) to support rehabilitation of physical infrastructure, and (2) to support Civil Society groups and linkage institutions, such as the media and political parties, that seek to play civic roles in a situation of potential liberalization. The strategy is to

support these organizations as they become "**demanders of better governance, and as actors capable of more effectively providing self-governance services.**" (West, Charlick et al.: 113).

The team explicitly recognizes the importance of supporting changes in the underlying institutional arrangements so that the democratic disciplines can function effectively. But, in the current stage of early transition, stronger Civil Society and linkage organizations are held to be the key to obtaining a more effective enabling environment.

Specific suggestions include:

- improving the enabling environment for D/G, which serves simultaneously to foster economic enterprises and rights of voluntary association.
- supporting Civil Society organizations and encouraging them to address civic issues.
- reinforcing institutional arrangements that connect citizens to the public policy process (West, Charlick et al.: 115).

### *Recommended Activities*

The team recommended that the Mission pursue these objectives through three different activities.

1. Develop a small D/G project with five components:
  - create an NGO resource center to which Civil Society groups could go for assistance with proposal preparation, logistics for seminars, education campaigns, communications with outside groups, etc.;
  - support for better reporting, including courses for journalists, prizes, etc.;
  - encourage networking among in-country NGOs interested in women's rights, environment, education, etc., and likely to press for a better enabling framework;
  - establish a trust fund controlled by Tanzanians and perhaps representatives of some American NGOs active in country, to provide financing for small scale activities; and,
  - support development of operational skills among political parties through non-partisan workshops on intra-party organization, campaign techniques, issue formulation, etc.
2. Focus policy dialogue on important D/G issues, e.g., the constitutional process, human rights and encouraging government agencies to release more information to the public, as well as pushing for economic liberalization.

3. Encourage maximum Civil Society participation in all appropriate portfolio activities. This includes involving Civil Society groups in planning activities and keeping those groups involved during implementation and maintenance.

In Tanzania, perhaps more than in other countries covered in this report, it will be important for the Mission and the Embassy to maintain pressure on the government to complete the transition stage and move into consolidation.

### *Madagascar D/G Assessment*

The political transition that took place in Madagascar in 1991 from a Soviet-influenced dictatorship to a regime with a strong commitment to D/G was the work, in large part, of a church-led coalition of Civil Society groups. Since that change, the Third Republic has been established, and transition is completed. At present the country is solidly embarked on the arduous task of consolidating a system of D/G (Fox et al., 1994: 68).

Three conditions favor further progress:

- the new constitution is accepted as a valid social compact, and has great legitimacy because of broad agreement on its contents;
- the army has withdrawn from the political scene, apolitical officers with a commitment to separation of military and State have moved up in the ranks and now control the army; and,
- Malagasy churches have moved to the sidelines but monitor the situation and seem prepared to re-enter politics if they judge it necessary to sustain the new democratic regime (Fox et al., 1994: 67).

The biggest threat to the success of the Third Republic at the moment is the economic crisis, which continues to plague the country. Unemployment in urban areas is very high and the physical infrastructure necessary for the revival of economic activity in rural areas is severely degraded. Donor programs to address these issues, including several financed by AID, have been launched. However, the new regime is still at odds with the World Bank about key elements in its economic program.

Another problematic aspect of the current political situation is the relationship between the president on the one hand, and the prime minister and parliament on the other. Despite clear reorientation in the constitutional framework from the institutional arrangements of the so-called Second Republic, which concentrated power in the executive, the president of the Third Republic and his staff of executive managers are trying to reassert their primacy within the system. The prime minister is extremely weak, as only two members of his party were elected as deputies. The coalition that supports him is not unified, but is held together by the presence of an opposition

coalition, equivalent in size. If the current prime minister falls, and the legislature cannot select a replacement who commands a majority, then the president is constitutionally authorized to name a new prime minister. These considerations weaken the oversight power that the legislature is capable at present of exercising vis-à-vis the executive.

The assessment team concluded that, under the circumstances, the most appropriate strategy for the Mission was to support Civil Society groups, encouraging them both in their efforts at self-governance and in making demands on the State for better governance; and in supporting linkage institutions that can articulate demands of Civil Society organizations for reform of State institutions and policies (Fox et al., 1994: 68). Selected State agencies, particularly those that play linkage roles, might also be supported. However the disproportionate resources already controlled by State agencies and the continuing relative weakness of Civil Society and civic organizations argue against providing much support to the State at this stage.

Additional pragmatic criteria that should govern the nature of USAID-provided support would include its non-partisan nature, and that recipients participate in the process of developing activities so that they reflect Malagasy realities rather than American models. Limited Mission staff time and funding suggest that D/G activities not include large scale capacity building operations.

### *Objectives and Recommended Interventions*

Strategic criteria highlight the three broad objectives of recommended interventions:

- strengthening Civil Society organizations, particularly those with a civic agenda, so that they may demand better governance from the State and themselves engage in, or encourage, more self-governance;
- strengthening linkage institutions to promote more dialogue between State agencies and Civil Society organizations, fostering networks and fora to increase circulation of information, and to mediate among interest groups; and,
- defining and limiting State power, principally through policy dialogue until and unless funds become available to undertake a more ambitious program (Fox et al., p. 74).

Under the heading of strengthening Civil Society organizations, three activities are proposed:

- engaging the State in dialogue about reforms tending to reinforce guarantees for an open public realm;
- monitoring State performance; and,

- promoting civic education and engaging in capacity building with grassroots organizations.

The focus on support for linkage institutions includes assisting media organizations to improve journalism skills (investigative reporting, etc.) and business management. Political parties, which are still quite weak, should be offered non-partisan workshops on issues in organizational development and campaign skills. Finally, Commissions of the National Assembly might well merit some small degree of support if they become an interface between citizens, Civil Society organizations, and law makers (Fox et al., 1994: 73).

If the Mission provides support to State agencies, it should focus on educating civil servants about the governance rules that ought to guide their relationships with organizations in the public realm, and helping selected government agencies improve their policy analysis and reform skills. Some of this can be undertaken in the course of normal policy dialogue. Beyond that, support should be targeted to those State agencies responsible for monitoring the mobilization and allocation of State resources, to heighten transparency. Decentralization is another promising area, but the team considered it too early to recommend any firm commitment in this area, other than encouraging the Government to pursue its decentralization program.

Two action options are suggested, the first being a small-scale increase in support for on-going D/G Civil Society activities while the second would involve creation of a modest stand-alone D/G project and a new autonomous organization to guide civic action ("the Forum"). Support should be focused on grass roots civic organizations in the capital, on professional and business groups in the provinces, especially in the two to which AID is providing substantial support, and on multipurpose NGOs interested among other things in policy advocacy, civic education and capacity building. Priority activities, focusing on capacity-building, include:

- civic education and primary group capacity building;
- advocacy of political, legal and economic reforms;
- mediation and conflict resolution; and,
- following and evaluating government activities.

In all cases, the focus should be on capacity building among targeted organizations.

### *Niger D/G Assessment*

The D/G assessment undertaken in Niger was the last in the series reviewed here. Building on what had been learned through the earlier assessments, the team analyzed the Nigerien political situation in quite rigorous fashion, using the democratic disciplines, institutional

analysis, State-Society analysis and the concepts of linkage organizations to structure the assessment (Charlick et al., 1994: 2-7).

The overall finding concerning D/G in Niger is that transition to a much more democratic regime has been completed. The open public realm is now a reality in terms of increased information flows. The press, though recently subjected to some legal limitations, has been aggressive in disseminating information and playing a watch dog role concerning State activities. Competitive elections and a peaceful change in government are precedent setting events in recent Nigerien history.

Despite these achievements, the current constitution provides little recourse for minorities, little standing for citizens to challenge abuses of power, and retains institutional arrangements that privilege executive branch power over that of either the legislature or the judiciary. It does not provide adequately for governance at sub-national levels.

The legislature is weakened by a multi-party system encouraging a myriad of small parties, from which a majority coalition must be formed in the assembly to create a government. Ministerial and other high government posts are the rewards that hold the coalition together. The two coalitions in power to date have tended to be fragile. Nonetheless, deputies have begun to play a watchdog role in controlling executive branch actions.

The judiciary is institutionally buffered against politicization, a major accomplishment. Against this must be weighed another set of rule-based incentives which make it difficult for judges to intervene: their role is the passive one of deciding cases brought by complainants. The complainant class is by law limited to those who have suffered direct injury. In consequence, citizens are excluded from bringing suit as interested, but not directly affected, parties.

The executive branch in the Nigerien semi-presidential regime remains committed to salvaging as much centralized control as possible under the new constitution. Members of the executive, and State administrators, have incentives incompatible with strong norms of accountability and seek to control as many resources as possible to permit attractive rewards for members of the winning coalition (president, prime minister, and members of the majority coalition) (Charlick et al., 1994: 42-46). This discourages both effective control over the bureaucracy and effective decentralization (Charlick et al., 1994: 43-49, 54-65). In addition, the State has shown little interest in decentralization as devolution, preferring to focus on deconcentration. Communities below the *arrondissement* level are not likely to be accorded official recognition as semi-autonomous jurisdictions.

Civil Society has changed quite radically over the past several years. Previously, local groups faced severe barriers to organization, if not outright suppression. International NGOs found both their access to the country and their activities severely limited by the government. In response, State leaders constructed corporatist institutions designed to limit popular participation by coopting leaders into patron-client structures (Charlick et al., 1994: 80-81). These institutional

arrangements place critical limitations on the capacity of Civil Society and civic organizations even to form, much less to participate in controlling the use of State power. Clients who criticize their patrons are likely to lose their status as clients. Since patrons are linked to other patrons as clients in an interlocking web of relationships, few clients are willing to challenge the actions of the powerful.

Only in urban areas have alternative forms of organization arisen, notably among students and workers, and possibly among some religious groups as well. Thus for most Nigeriens, the idea of exercising democratic disciplines through Civil Society associations is behavior that will have to be relearned. To date, that process has only begun (Charlick et al., 1994: 101).

In addition, the rules of proportional representation at the national level create strong incentives within the new multi-party system for party organizations to exercise tight discipline over their deputies. Due deliberation is undercut. The tenuousness of winning coalitions in the legislature leads deputies to respect party discipline in hopes of benefiting from the spoils of victory, rather than voicing independent opinions about the country's undoubtedly serious problems. Those who toe the line can expect to direct rewards to their followers because the President is allowed to appoint people on the basis of party loyalty. All this impairs the healthy functioning, not only of the party system and the legislature, but of the bureaucracy as well (Charlick et al., 1994: 117).

### *Recommended Strategies and Project Objectives*

The team's proposed strategic objective for D/G in Niger is:

**To expand empowered participation on the part of all Nigeriens, particularly with regard to their capacity and opportunity to undertake self-governance, and to participate in the political process beyond the local level (Charlick et al., 1994: 125).**

While this objective does not address support for State institutions - the legislature and the judiciary - those possibilities remain open.

From this strategic objective follow seven project objectives:

1. *Increase the density of voluntary local associations*, particularly at the local level, in all sectors where the Mission currently has portfolio activity (health and population, environment and natural resources management, credit and credit management, and disaster mitigation);
2. *Increase the capacity of voluntary local associations to manage their affairs so as to broaden participation and increase accountability of leadership and members*, with a strong focus on capacity building for these new local associations in four areas:

- administration;
  - financial management and accountability;
  - access to requisite skills in technical areas; and,
  - strategic planning.
3. *Promote networking to facilitate horizontal information sharing among local associations and secondary-level associations.* This project objective implies AID will devote resources to encourage networking and training when horizontal groups become large enough to feel the need for umbrella organizations;
  4. *Encourage greater participation in D/G processes at the local and higher levels by targeting civic education to inform members and leaders of their rights and obligations;*
  5. *Improve the legal basis for voluntary associations* to create stronger incentives for members to join; this support should be focused on State agencies responsible for rules that constitute the enabling environment for Civil Society and civic organizations, e.g., resource codes through the rural code, credit unions and cooperatives, etc.; and disseminate information about these rules to judges at all levels in the system;
  6. *Support capacity of civic organizations to lobby State institutions* to create and improve the laws that improve the overall climate for voluntary associations and democratic participation; and,
  7. *Promote women's interests through local associations, e.g., health and family planning groups, cooperatives, etc.,* to ensure that women have autonomy to form and control their own associations.

In addition, at the Mission's request the D/G team provided extensive advice on integrating D/G goals and activities into the Mission's on-going portfolio.

Table 2., below, summarizes information concerning recommendations by country, and by recipient (State, Civil Society and linking organizations) and by category of activity by recipient.

TABLE 2. Comparison of Recommendations across Five Countries

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES	COUNTRIES				
	MALI	GHANA	TANZ.	MAD.	NIG.
STATE EXECUTIVE					
LEGISLATURE <i>Civil Society support</i>				✓	✓
<i>Other</i>	✓	[✓]			
JUDICIARY <i>Publishing laws and cases</i>		[✓]			
<i>Other</i>	✓				
VOTER REGISTRATION		✓			
DECENTRALIZATION	✓✓			[✓]	
POLICY DIALOGUE: DEMOCRATIC DISCIPLINES			✓	✓	
CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY BUILDING				✓	✓
NETWORKING			✓		✓
INVOLVEMENT IN AID PROJECTS			✓		✓
MONITORING STATE ACTIONS				✓	
CIVIC EDUCATION				✓	✓
RESOURCE CENTER/GRANT FUND		✓	✓	✓✓	
WOMEN'S INTERESTS		✓			✓
OTHER	✓	✓			

<b>LINKAGE ORGANIZATIONS</b>					
<b>PRESS</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<i>Training for journalists</i>					
<i>Press center</i>	✓				
<i>Other</i>	✓				
<b>POLITICAL PARTIES</b>					
<i>Organizational skills</i>	✓		✓	✓	
<i>Campaigning skills</i>			✓	✓	
<i>Other</i>		✓			
<b>FORA FOR EXCHANGE OF VIEWS</b>			✓		

NB: each check (✓) represents a separate recommendation. A few recommendations concern more than one cell. A check in square brackets ([✓]) indicates team suggests preconditions before acting on recommendation.

As Table 2. clearly demonstrates, the recommendations produced by the D/G assessment teams varied markedly from one country to the other. Some of this variation arises from differences in team composition. Most of it however reflects:

- the characteristics and needs of the country at a particular point in the processes of transition or consolidation of D/G;
- Mission programming and constraints (funding, staff availability); and,
- other donors' D/G activities and plans.

## **IV. Findings and General Recommendations**

### **A. D/G Assessment Design**

**Finding:** Three to four months' negotiation of terms of reference for an assessment was too long. Delays derived in part from confusion among Mission personnel over the different objectives of D/G assessments (doing exactly what Mission wanted versus using the centrally funded assessments to test conceptual approaches proposed by the D/G framework assessment group).

#### *Recommendation*

Prepare a brief memorandum, endorsed by the AID/W and the regional Bureaus, that clarifies both the broad and the specific aspects of D/G assessments, as well as the utility and importance of a macro-political overview in formulating a strategic plan for USAID D/G support.

#### *Recommendation*

Prepare a small manual for Missions considering D/G assessments that formulates specific questions about a target country's democratic reform agenda. This manual would assist Missions in thinking through the various dimensions of D/G and would provide a context within which specific D/G issues might be analyzed.

#### *Recommendation*

For future D/G assessments, share with target Missions the previously completed assessments and summary reports on the improved analytical framework for D/G assessments.

### **B. D/G Assessment Implementation**

**Finding:** Given the currently more refined status of the D/G framework, many issues raised by assessment team members regarding the implementation of assessments could be resolved by applying more systematically the methodological structure developed during the five workshops.

#### *Recommendation*

Prepare a manual for conducting assessments that indicates the sequential steps in the assessment process. Use the six democratic disciplines to identify key data points and structure the analysis.

### *Recommendation*

Provide time and resources for a D/G Assessment team briefing in Washington to:

- review the D/G analytic framework and the types of information needed for analysis;
- explain how individual tasks and reports fit into the overall report; and,
- establish clearly the type of report desired (a candid analysis, a sanitized, uncritical assessment, or a rationalization for predetermined D/G activities), in order to avoid the dilemma of being unable to release an assessment judged politically "too sensitive."

**Finding:** Advantages of the two-phase approach to assessments outweigh the additional monetary costs and difficulty of maintaining a single team. Greater thoroughness and reliability of data and conclusions are major benefits, as are more time to discuss the assessment framework, nature of the D/G consolidation process, and logic of recommendations with Mission personnel and HCNs.

### *Recommendation*

Conduct two-phase assessments whenever possible, with the dual objectives of establishing D/G baseline data and thereafter supporting consolidation of D/G as a long term process through periodic use of the six democratic disciplines to monitor progress.

## **C. Effectiveness of D/G Assessment Framework**

**Finding:** The Democratic Disciplines provide a useful tool to analyze formal institutions and rules, but confusion remains about how the disciplines structure an analysis, how formal institutional rules relate to rules-in-use, norms and beliefs, and implications for successfully consolidating democratic reforms.

### *Recommendation*

Guidance on this point should be included in the manual or set of guidelines mentioned above. Specific methodological short-cuts in identifying "working rules" should be included in the manual.

**Finding:** Too many people are unclear about the assumptions that inform the analytical framework or the extent to which normative values regarding democratic practices are applied via the D/G framework. Institutional analysis, political economy and State-Society approaches organize an inquiry that adopts a broad macro-political perspective in analyzing democratic performance via an assessment of specific rules and institutional arrangements.

## *Recommendation*

Use a brief summary report on the specific findings of the D/G assessments in Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, etc., to demonstrate in concrete terms the usefulness of the proposed framework. Cite specific examples and provide a glossary of key terms.

- Finding:** The costs and benefits of the experiment to coordinate development of an improved analytical framework with field testing during D/G assessments.
- cost: time and money were initially underestimated;
  - benefit: development of a specific, field-tested approach that will reduce costs of future assessments;
  - cost: the iterative process created confusion for Missions, teams, HCNs and other donors;
  - benefit: interface with Missions and HCNs ensured that the framework was progressively tailored to address AID and African needs;
  - benefit: field testing provided a solid rationale for assessments in servicing the Mission's programmatic needs, and the iterative process informed selected Mission personnel and HCNs about the D/G assessment framework, stages in consolidation and the logic of recommendations;
  - benefit: the assessment process (design, implementation, recommendations) provides ways for AID to *foster dialogue* among HCNs on D/G reforms;
  - benefit: in drawing on local expertise to analyze D/G issues, the assessment process *builds local capacity for independent research*;
  - benefit: involving HCNs in review of D/G assessment findings and recommendations *encourages participation in AID's decision making process*;
  - benefit: conducting the assessment *provides a basis for a non-partisan exchange* of diverse political opinions;
  - benefit: *HCN review of assessment findings creates occasions* for peaceful resolution of conflicts based on democratic rules; and,
  - benefit: *assessments* establish a basis for donor coordination.

*Recommendation*

View the short term D/G assessments as the initial stage of a longer term effort to foster discourse on democratic reforms. Within AID, create a mechanism to maintain the momentum developed by doing an assessment. Provide technical assistance to conduct seminars and workshops for HCNs in urban, regional and rural areas on governance issues, democratic reforms, etc., that demonstrate the benefits of playing by democratic rules.

**D. Programmatic Constraints**

Finding: Bureaucratic incentives to design stand alone D/G projects may bias Mission strategies.

Finding: Divergent views exist between State and AID about D/G support.

Finding: Foreign policy may be based not on facts, but on the perceived interests of powerful decision makers.

Finding: Incompatibilities exist between Mission objectives and Agency or Bureau for Africa priorities.

*Recommendation*

AID/W should develop a strategy to address these constraints. Particular attention should be directed to clarifying State and AID roles, and providing policy guidance for Missions on the relevance of D/G assessments in developing sustainable strategies supporting consolidation of D/G regimes.

## **ANNEX A: D/G ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK GROUP MEMBERS**

<b>CHARLICK, Robert</b>	<b>Former Senior Governance Advisor, Bureau for Africa D/G project; Professor of Political Science, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH</b>
<b>FOX, Leslie</b>	<b>Consultant specializing in Civil Society issues with extensive experience in francophone African countries</b>
<b>HOBGOOD, Harlan H.</b>	<b>Former AID Mission Director with formal training in public administration, currently consultant to ARD working principally in Africa</b>
<b>KANTE, Mamadou</b>	<b>Political scientist specializing in financial management issues with ten years' residence in West African francophone countries</b>
<b>MOZAFFAR, Shaheen</b>	<b>Political scientist with extensive field research experience in Nigeria, Ghana and other African countries; Professor of Political Science at Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, MA</b>
<b>OAKERSON, Ronald J.</b>	<b>Political scientist specializing in institutional analysis and design, former consultant to USAID/Cameroon on institutional reforms; Professor of Government, Houghton College, Houghton, NY</b>
<b>SHOEMAKER, Robert</b>	<b>Formerly Africa D/G Project Manager under AID/AFR/ONI; economist by training, currently posted to AFR/Sustainable Development Office</b>
<b>THOMSON, Jamie</b>	<b>Consultant with formal training in institutional analysis and design, specializing in issues of governance, management of renewable natural resources and provision of public services, principally in francophone African countries</b>
<b>WALKER, Tjip</b>	<b>Former PSC, USAID/Cameroon; Ph.D. candidate in Political Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN</b>
<b>WEST, Tina</b>	<b>Consultant with formal training in political science and business, working principally in the anglophone countries of Africa</b>

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