Annotated Bibliography Series
Democracy and Governance - Volume I
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The Regional Partnership for Culture and Development (RPCD) is a program of USAID’s Office of Middle East Programs (OMEP). The goal of the RPCD is to gather and disseminate information to improve development efforts in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The Annotated Bibliography Series is a biannual publication that highlights the most recent publications and studies covering issues in the MENA region in three focus areas: natural resources management, youth development and engagement, and democracy and governance. It includes syntheses, brief evaluations of the work and context, and detailed information on the author, date, and source. We welcome your comments on this publication or suggestions for inclusion in future Annotated Bibliographies at rpcdinfo@fhi360.org.

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Table of Contents

Helpdesk Research Report: The Arab Spring and its Impact on Human Rights in the MENA Region ........................................ 3
Post-Qadhafi Libya: Interactive Dynamics and the Political Future ......................................................................................... 3
Syria’s Revolution - Society, Power, Ideology ......................................................................................................................... 4
Egypt in Transition .................................................................................................................................................................. 4
Assessing Democracy Assistance – Synthesis Report ........................................................................................................ 5
Tunisia’s Democratization: Is Europe rising to the occasion? ............................................................................................. 5
Failing Oversight: Iraq’s unchecked Government ................................................................................................................ 6
Iraq in Transition: Governance, Politics, Economics, and Petroleum .................................................................................. 6
Women and the Law in Iraq ..................................................................................................................................................... 7
Civil Society and Democratization in Jordan ....................................................................................................................... 7
Yemen: Developmental Dysfunction and Division in a Crisis State ....................................................................................... 8
Electricity Sector Reform in Lebanon: Political Consensus in Waiting .............................................................................. 8
The Role of Social Media in Arab Women’s Empowerment ............................................................................................. 9
Helpdesk Research Report: The Arab Spring and its Impact on Human Rights in the MENA Region

This recent report provides an overview of the human rights situation in a number of MENA countries, including an assessment of the impact of the Arab Spring, and the risks to any specific ethnic or religious risk groups. The report, written in response to a question from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), draws a number of overall conclusions based on the experiences in each country and identifies current trends in democratization and human rights across the region. Detailed country information is presented for Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Yemen, Algeria, Tunisia, Bahrain, Iran, Syria and Saudi Arabia.

The research presented in this report is drawn from news sources as well as international organizations and human rights groups. The Governance and Social Development Resource Center (GSDRC) provides knowledge services and research to the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and other development agencies.

http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/HDQ748.pdf

Post-Qadhafi Libya: Interactive Dynamics and the Political Future

This journal article seeks to examine the political forces and dynamics in Libya after the fall of Qadhafi. The first section assesses the general context of post-revolution Libya including the role of religion, tribalism and oil and is followed by an exploration of the current political arena. Major groups include Islamists, liberal/nationalist and leftist parties, influential tribes, civil society and the February 17th coalitions. The article argues that the country’s future will be shaped by the interaction among these groups and their relative influence and power. Finally, the author assesses the current transitional phase, including the role of the National Transitional Council, identifying key challenges facing Libya in its rocky path toward stability and democracy.

The article provides a useful delineation of the complex and delicate political situation in Libya and offers insightful analysis for audiences interested in understanding the dynamics shaping Libyan politics after Qadhafi. The research is based on literature as well as eye-witness accounts and interviews with representatives of political groups and influential individuals. The article is authored by Youssef Sawani, professor of political science at Libyan University in Tripoli, Libya and is published in the peer-reviewed journal Contemporary Arab Affairs.

Syria’s Revolution - Society, Power, Ideology

The latest edition of Perspectives provides multi-faceted analyses of Syrian society at a time of political change. It seeks to improve understanding of the diverse and complex factors shaping Syrian society, and includes essays on a wide range of topics of interest to democracy and governance practitioners. These examine the way the current political situation is affected by and differs from the revolution in Egypt, the historical antecedents of the current regime, the history of the Syrian constitution, the impact of the uprising on Christian inhabitants, and a review of the economic situation.

As stated in the preface, Syrian society and politics have not received sufficient attention from researchers in the social and political sciences, especially given the current tumultuous times and imminent regime change. This volume seeks to address this gap and provides a wealth of analysis that is topical and written from the perspectives of Syrians. The research is published by the Middle East office of Henirich Böll Stiftung, an international think tank based in Germany.

http://www.boell.org/downloads/03_Perspectives_ME_2012_Syria_s_Revolution.pdf

Egypt in Transition

This report documents changes in Egypt’s political dynamics one year after ousting former president Hosni Mubarak. It provides a brief overview of the transition currently taking place on the ground and its influence on the region and the future of US strategy. The report reviews critical issues, including the role of the military, the emergent parliamentary power of the Muslim Brotherhood, the importance of international lending in relation to economic conditions, and Egypt’s changing foreign policy, with a focus on Israel and the U.S. The report also details the Egyptian government’s actions in relation to international NGOs and the potential impact on the future of U.S. development funding to Egypt. Finally, the report presents a concise overview of foreign assistance to Egypt, both historically and during the period since the revolution.

The report is published by the Congressional Research Service (CRS), which responds to Congressional inquiries. Author Jeremy M. Sharp is a specialist in Middle Eastern affairs. The information and analysis is timely given the recent date of publication. Although written for the U.S. Congress, it is a valuable resource for a range of development professionals and policy makers.

Assessing Democracy Assistance – Synthesis Report

This synthesis report summarizes the findings of 14 country case studies commissioned to assess the perceptions of civil society stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of donors’ democracy assistance programs. The author asserts that it is important to understand perceptions in working with local stakeholders on democracy programming. To develop its case material, the research involved interviews with a wide range of democracy experts and policy-makers that participated in consultation meetings. The overall finding from the case study evidence is that democracy programs and funding by international donor governments only scratch the surface of authoritarian power structures. The report concludes by recommending further steps that can be taken towards improving donor approaches. For those interested in a more narrow country focus, there are detailed existing case studies of Yemen, Morocco and Egypt on the FRIDE site as a companion to this report.

FRIDE is a European think tank based in Madrid, which works in the area of democracy and human rights. FRIDE working papers are research efforts with the goal of encouraging debate on selected topics while presenting policy relevant conclusions. Given the recent political change in the MENA region, the synthesis report and case studies provide valuable information about how democracy efforts are perceived by local partners, and input on how these efforts may be improved.

http://www.fride.org/publication/777/how-to-revitalise-democracy-assistance-recipients%27views

Tunisia’s Democratization: Is Europe rising to the occasion?

This policy brief discusses reasons for Tunisian dissatisfaction with aspects of the relationship with Europe after the revolution. It highlights the Tunisians’ vision for improving relations with the European Union. The document describes the viewpoint of the local stakeholders with regard to changing the dynamics between the two parties, and reaching a compromise on the issues of illegal migration and inter-regional mobility.

The author of this document is Anna Khakee, an associate researcher at the Spanish think tank FRIDE. Khakee focuses on the aspirations of the Tunisians themselves, not how international players – mainly European – might want to see a post-revolution Tunisia develop. Although the report concludes with a pessimistic vision of a unified European policy toward Tunisia, it makes it clear to the reader that local stakeholders have a clear vision of how they want to shape the relationship with European countries.

http://www.fride.org/publication/921/tunisia’s-democratisation:-is-europe-rising-to-the-occasion
Failing Oversight: Iraq's unchecked Government

This report gives a recent historical examination of the increasing level of corruption in Iraq, its impact, and risk this increase represents to the legitimacy of the Iraqi government. Starting with an overview of the Maliki government's response to protests in February 2011, the report proceeds to examine the institutions tasked with tackling corruption, as well as the role of the judiciary and legislature. The report concludes that the oversight agencies remain weak, as do legislative and judicial institutions. Despite improvements in the security situation since 2008, the Iraqi state remains unable to control corruption and improve the delivery of government services, given the overall weakness of constituent parts of the oversight structure.

The report concludes with recommendations to the Iraqi government and the Council of Representatives to strengthen oversight and to control the levels of corruption that threaten state stability. The report was prepared by the International Crisis Group (ICG), an independent, non-profit organization committed to preventing and resolving deadly conflict.


Iraq in Transition: Governance, Politics, Economics, and Petroleum

This document provides a range of data on the government, economy and petroleum industry in Iraq, from 2002 to 2011. It also highlights the economic challenges to development and poverty reduction the country faces. Some examples of data provided include the levels of corruption in different regions, the sectarian territorial divisions inside Iraq, and employment figures. It concludes with a presentation of data related to oil export earnings, and figures on the location and amount of oil reserves.

This is the second in a series of three summary briefings on Iraq, which examine recent trends in Iraq's politics and security. As a rich and detailed source of data, it represents a comprehensive overview for those interested in Iraq's government, economy and oil reserves. In addition, the information is presented in graphs and tables that allow the reader to quickly grasp the facts at hand. Anthony H. Cordesman holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

Women and the Law in Iraq

This paper presents an analysis of Iraqi laws relating to women, in order to provide information that can assist in reform. It provides an in depth examination of Iraqi women’s current legal situation, and highlights possible improvements that could enhance the protection of women's rights in Iraqi society. These recommendations contrast Iraq with comparable countries and note similarities and differences. While this report details some of the best practices in Iraqi law in terms of gender equity, it also highlights major discriminatory provisions and gaps as well.

This publication is authored by Jennifer MacLeod, who was a Senior Fellow at the Institute for International Law and Human Rights during Summer and Autumn 2010. Analysis and recommendations presented in the document are of interest to specialists of both human rights law and women’s rights.

http://iihr.org/documents/womenandlawiniraqEN.pdf

Civil Society and Democratization in Jordan

This working paper analyses the state of civil society and the democratization process in Jordan. It examines the characteristics of the regime and the governing system, its well-entrenched institutions, and the role of its ruling elite. It also details the influence of ethnic rivalries in political life, and describes the role played by religion in shaping the Jordanian political spectrum. When addressing the economic sector, the author raises the question of how the de-liberalization of the Jordanian economy has unfolded, and discusses the role played by the political opposition.

This paper provides an examination of democratization in Jordan within the perspective of the country’s historical progression. It provides essential contextual information for those working on the country in the area of democracy and governance. It is produced with the support of the Knowledge Program on Civil Society in West Asia, a joint initiative by Hivos and the University of Amsterdam.

Yemen: Developmental Dysfunction and Division in a Crisis State

This qualitative study aims to explain why the Yemeni regime and its political elite have been unable to respond to a growing threat to their power, through an analysis of the Yemeni regime’s internal politics. It provides a careful examination of the Yemeni structural and political contexts in order to define the role played by key national and international actors in shaping the Yemeni political scene, including such actors as the "Joint Meeting Parties", the General People’s Congress, and outside actors such as Saudi Arabia. The paper also provides recommendations and suggestions for western policymakers to consider when addressing Yemen's ability to overcome the economic and political development challenges it faces.

The paper combines data from previous field research, interviews with Yemeni political actors and experts, media reports, and data gathered international donors and organizations. It was commissioned by the Developmental Leadership Program, which focuses on the role of leaders, elites and coalitions in international development to address critical gaps around thinking and policy. Information and analysis in this document are helpful for those working in Yemen as well as for those who seek a better understanding of the complexities of Yemeni democracy and governance issues.


Electricity Sector Reform in Lebanon: Political Consensus in Waiting

This paper presents an analysis of the factors that have slowed the pace of electricity sector reform in Lebanon. In addition to giving a detailed review of the electricity sector, the paper explains the complex political factors that impact and slow the reform process. The author notes that while electricity development is critical for economic growth in Lebanon, better electricity provision would also strengthen the legitimacy of the, as well as put the country on a more sustainable environmental path by reducing oil dependence.

This paper is helpful for those working in the electricity sector as well as the area of public management and governance. By focusing on the political context the paper provides insight into the multi-faceted nature of reform efforts. The paper was developed under the auspices of the Safadi-Stanford Initiative for Policy Innovation, as part of the Arab Program on Reform and Democracy at the Center for Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law (CDDRL) at Stanford University. It was disseminated at the December 2012 conference “In the Middle of the Storm: Development and Governance in the Arab World.”

http://iis-db.stanford.edu/pubs/23465/No._124_Electricity_Sector_Reform.pdf
The Role of Social Media in Arab Women’s Empowerment

This report is part of a continuing series that seeks to better understand the role that social media plays in societal transformations in the Arab region. This edition focuses on the patterns of women’s use of social media. Using survey and user data, the research addresses three questions: why women tend to be less frequent users of social media (the virtual gender gap); whether women perceive social media as meeting their needs; and whether women’s use of social media is leading to increased civic participation and higher degrees of civic empowerment for them. In addition, the report also presents data on trends in Facebook and Twitter use in the region. For example, the research found that Facebook users in the region increased by 67% between January and November 2011.

The Dubai School of Government’s Governance and Innovation Program produces the Arab Social Media Reports. With a focus on the use of ICT for government policy development and innovation in the region, the Program engages in both research and programmatic activities.

http://www.dsg.fohmics.net/Portals/Pdfs/report.pdf