

UNDP project on Pro-Poor and Gender Sensitive Governance Indicators for Policy Reform

Framework for Piloting

July 2005

Framework for Piloting Pro-poor and Gender Sensitive Governance Indicators for Policy Reform¹

Introduction

The UNDP project 'Pro-Poor and Gender Sensitive Democratic Governance Indicators for Policy Reform' supports the carrying out of a pilot programme for the development of democratic governance indicators (DGI). UNDP country offices are invited to participate in the programme in countries in which there is a clear, specific and time-bound commitment to undertaking democratic governance reforms.

The objective of the pilot programme is to support nationally led processes for democratic governance reform through multi-stakeholder dialogue mechanisms. The democratic governance indicators should be specifically tailored to the requirements of national policymakers and should be designed to be responsive to priorities for reforms on the policy agenda, from the point of view of people, especially the poor and other disadvantaged groups.

The pilot process has two main aims:

1. To identify a set of 'core indicators' and 'satellite indicators' across UNDP's seven democratic governance service lines². (It may be that the country selects several but not all of the UNDP democratic governance service line areas for inclusion in the piloting process).
2. To build national capacities especially in the area of data collection (with a focus on national and sub national agencies) and evidence based policy making (with a focus on national and local level policy makers)

Underlying the piloting process are three key principles: a focus on the participation of all stakeholders; a focus on capacity development; and a focus on national ownership.

The pilot programme is managed by the Bureau for Development Policy's Democratic Governance Group (DGG) through the Oslo Governance Centre (OGC). A key responsibility of the OGC in relation to BDP includes establishing a governance indicators taskforce compris-

ing selected DGG policy advisors and policy advisers from the Poverty Group as well as a BDP gender specialist. This taskforce will meet at regular intervals to discuss strategic issues related to the project and provide expert counsel on request to UNDP Country Offices participating in the pilot programme. The taskforce will also assist in identifying possible sources of funding (both UNDP sources and external sources of funding) for participating Country Offices.

The pilot programme involves two main phases comprising a number of different elements:

1. The pre-planning and preparation phase

- OGC mission to pilot country to undertake consultations with key stakeholders
- Desk-study democracy assessment using available governance data
- Establishment of a Steering Committee comprised of key stakeholders
- Identification of a national institution for hosting indicator initiative

2. Multi-stakeholder dialogues around the identification of priority governance issues and indicators related to them

- Identification of the important democracy and democratic governance issues
- Dialogue between data collectors and data users
- Timeframe for collection, generation and dissemination of indicators
- Action plan and recommendations from Steering Committee on indicator usage and capacity development needs

(3)

¹ This is a *Fact Sheet* that provides information on the UNDP project 'Gender Sensitive and Pro-Poor Democratic Governance Indicators for Policy Reform' (the Governance Indicators project). The Fact Sheet should be read along side the Governance Indicators – FAQ, the Governance Indicators Concept Note and the project document for the Governance Indicators project (<http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/cross.htm>).

² The piloting programme has a dual approach entailing the development of two sets of indicators, core and satellite. The latter set of indicators is meant to reflect the specific concerns and features of democratic governance in particular countries, over and above the core features of democratic governance identified.

The Pre-planning and Preparation Phase

Mission to pilot country to undertake consultations with key stakeholders

The Oslo Governance Centre would be prepared to field a mission to countries interested in “piloting” this project. The purpose of the mission would be to explain to key stakeholders the distinctive features of this project. The mission would focus on how this project could be helpful to national and sub-national policy makers through a process of generating data and indicators that can point to governance areas that are in need of reforms, particularly from the perspective of poverty reduction and gender equality. The mission would also explicate the “value added” of this project with reference to data and indicators on governance that already exist, such as the aggregated governance data sets developed by the World Bank, among others.

Another objective of the mission would be catalyse a participatory process for the purpose of systematic data collection, develop indicators with reference to key areas of governance, identify issues and problems that are unique to a specific country and its context, and identify mechanisms through which policy makers can make decisions based on empirical data and informed by appropriate indicators.

(4)

The mission would normally require at least one week, and the cooperation of the UNDP Country Office to facilitate discussions with relevant stakeholders interested in governance reforms, and having the responsibility to ensure that the implementation of reform policies is on track and that these can achieve their desired objectives.

NB: The CO should assign a focal person (e.g. programme officer) for the indicators project, who will liaise with national stakeholders and the OGC for backstopping.

Desk study democracy assessment using available governance data

A desk study should be commissioned to be undertaken by an organization(s) with expertise in doing democracy assessments. The desk study should use a well established methodology for undertaking the assessment, and be combined with extant quantitative democratic governance indicators to provide as robust a picture as possible on the state of democracy in the pilot country. The results should be organized across the main pillars of democratic governance, possibly drawing on the way UNDP organizes its democratic governance work into seven service lines. The study should draw together what is known and publicly available concerning these main pillars, identify areas in need of further research, and make concluding observations and recommendations for the pilot study. The desk study thus serves as a diagnostic tool for identifying those aspects of the country’s democratic governance that need to be researched further, with special emphasis on the poverty and gender information gaps as well as statistical capacity development needs. The OGC has developed relationships with several organizations that do such desk studies e.g. International IDEA and Essex University.

Establishment of a Steering Committee comprised of key stakeholders

A Steering Committee should be established that comprises representatives from national and local governments, parliament and local assemblies, civil society and academia. As policy makers are the 'end users' of governance indicators, their inputs and collaboration are vital for the success of the proposed process. It would therefore be important to include in the Steering Committee a representative group of such policy makers drawn from national and local levels of the administration. If requested by the government, UNDP staff could be assigned to the Steering Committee to play a facilitating role.

The Steering Committee should be located in an appropriate national institution. In many cases the Parliament (Secretariat of the Parliament) will be the most appropriate institution (see below). The participation of the National Statistics Office is key in this process.

The Steering Committee must be the main driver behind the democratic governance indicator process. Since democratic governance covers a vast spectrum, and the potential number of indicators relevant to different aspects of governance is very large, it is recommended that an exercise to identify priorities should be undertaken, under the guidance of the Steering Committee after it has been constituted.

UNDP can assist the Steering Committee (if asked for assistance) by facilitating the process and providing advice as required. In particular, UNDP can provide advice to the Steering Committee (via the Country Office) on how to develop the governance indicators in terms of identifying methodological issues and providing indicator examples, especially with respect to the development of 'core indicators'. UNDP can also provide advice on possible methods for developing 'satellite' indicators.

Identification of a national institution for hosting the governance indicator initiative

The most appropriate location for housing the governance indicators initiative is the Secretariat of the Parliament or National Assembly. This is because in most cases, the Parliament has a number of critically important governance institutions reporting directly to it, including for example, the Constitutional Court, Elections Commission/Committee, the National Statistical Office or equivalent agency, the Central Bank, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Human Rights Commission, and the Civil Service Council or equivalent institution etc.



Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Processes

The development, adoption and use of governance indicators must be the result of participatory and transparent dialogues that result in a consensus. Multi-stakeholder dialogue processes are therefore at the foundation of the pilot programme. UNDP has a key role to play in this phase of the pilot programme by bringing together the various stakeholders around the table and facilitating focused discussions while taking care to not to usurp the role of the Steering Committee.

(6) **Identification of the important democracy and democratic governance issues**

It is recommended that a broad-based group comprising representatives from the Parliament/National Assembly, the executive, the judiciary, central and local government authorities, civil society organizations, and academia, should undertake a participative dialogue in order to reach an agreement on which issues are important, which of them are characteristic of the essential features of democracy, and which of them reflect special concerns of the country. The 'desk study democracy assessment' outlined previously would be a key discussion document in this process. Following this exercise in identifying priority concerns in democratic governance, a smaller group, comprising experts in indicators and statistics, should be asked to propose to the larger group the set of indicators that are feasible to develop in the context of the country concerned, having regard to the conditions under which data will have to be collected.

Dialogue between data collectors and data users

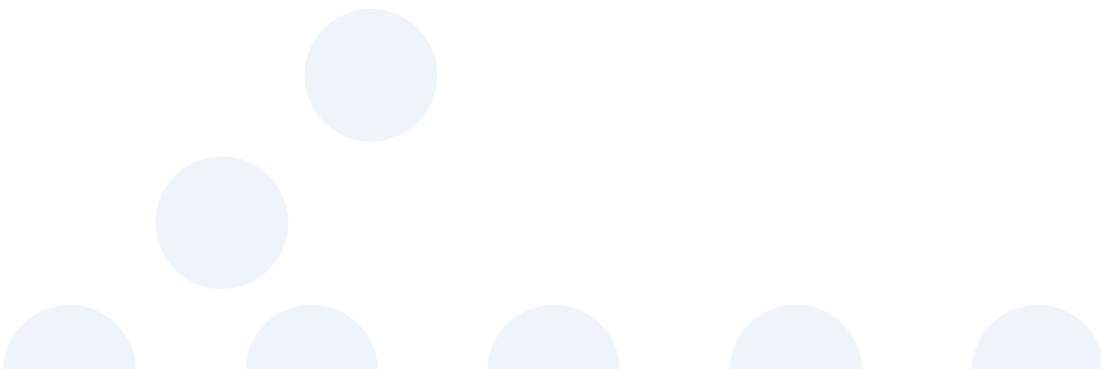
The producers of the data and indicators such as the National Statistical Office (or equivalent agency), research and academic institutions and civil society organizations need to be brought into dialogue with the users of the indicators, i.e. policymakers, and establish together milestones for the development and use of democratic governance indicators.

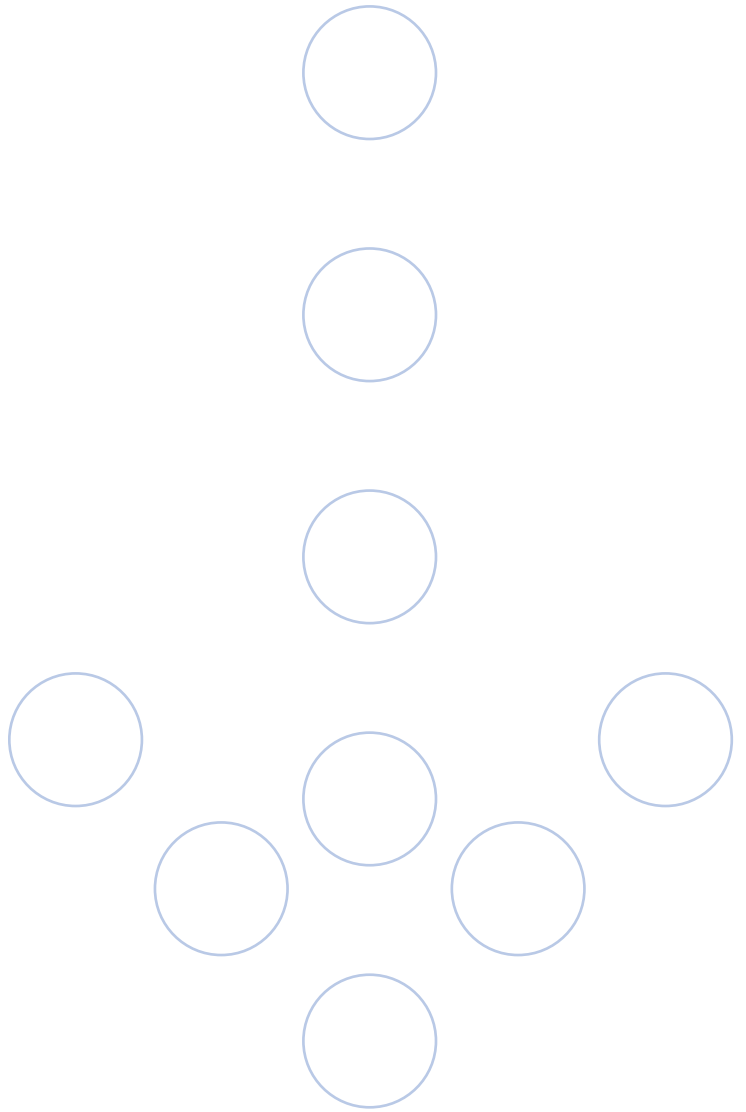
Timeframe for collection, generation and dissemination of indicators

Following agreement on the desirable data sets and indicators, the task of obtaining the data and developing the indicators should be entrusted to a specialist/technical group, preferably convened by the National Statistical Office (or equivalent agency). The outcome of this expert group exercise should be presented to the larger consultative group established for the project for review and discussions.

Action plan and recommendations from Steering Committee on indicator usage and capacity development needs

In addition to generating agreement amongst the stakeholders, especially policy makers, as to how the emerging governance indicator sets should be taken forward, the Steering Committee has an important task to fulfil in identifying capacity development needs. In many cases, there will be a need for an institutionalized system for collecting data and producing indicators that could help policy makers not only to identify problems, but also to monitor the effectiveness of actions taken to respond to those problems. It may also be recommended that capacity development be focused on strengthening the capabilities of policy makers to develop public policies based on the rigorous and systematic use of data. Where capacity development issues present themselves, recommendations should be given as to how these gaps can be reduced.





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