

UNDP Oslo Governance Centre

Democratic Governance Group
Bureau for Development Policy
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

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INTRODUCTION

The overall strategy of the OGC for 2004 was to work through UNDP country offices (COs) and BDP's Sub-regional Resource Facilities (SURFs) to support partner countries in implementing democratic reforms necessary to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. In 2004, the **policy development and knowledge synthesizing** work of the Oslo Governance Centre was conducted within the framework of three of the seven MYFF service lines of democratic governance, namely:

- Policy support for democratic governance (SL 2.1)
- Justice and human rights (SL 2.4)
- Access to information (SL 2.5)

Work carried out under these service lines was focused on four areas of activity:

1. Knowledge management and the development of knowledge products;
2. Policy advice and technical support to country offices;
3. Partnership development
4. Advocacy and outreach

Partnerships is also a crucial part of the OGC's strategy. During 2004 the OGC strengthened its partnerships and collaborative working relationships with a number of key institutions and organizations working within the Centre's specific focus area. The OGC has continued its partnership with the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) and maintained close relations with IDEA, the Club de Madrid, Transparency International, EUROSTAT, NUPI, FAFO, Norwegian Institute for Human Rights, the Danish centre for Human Rights, PANOS, UNESCO, Article 19, CIVICUS, the BBC World Service Trust, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), WIDER/UNU, UNV, the National Endowment for Democracy, SADC Parliamentary Forum, Centre on Housing and Evictions (COHRE), UN Mission on Indigenous People, International Development Law Organizations (IDLO) and UNCTAD. Experience sharing and dialogue with Comparative Research on Poverty (CROP), Bergen University, and the Norwegian Association for Development Studies on knowledge relevant to poverty reduction and human development also took place in 2004.

Partnerships with umbrella organizations such as the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and CODESRIA continue to serve as important entry points for developing the Centre's co-operation and knowledge sharing with southern based knowledge institutions in the area of democratic governance. The OGC has also been instrumental in the establishment of an Africa Governance Institute (AGI) participating in key consultations on the AGI's role.

Stronger links have also been developed with UNDP Country Offices. Missions to programme countries are key to develop these relations but also visits by UNDP Country Offices to the OGC have played an important role in the Centre's staying in tune with their needs and interests.

The remainder of this report provides a brief outline of the work achieved within each of the three service lines.

POLICY SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE (SL 2.1)

The Policy Support for Democratic Governance is the service line that captures important cross cutting and underpinning thematic areas of democratic governance. The OGC's priority areas of focus under this service line include the development of policy on democratic governance and conflict; policy advice and development on civil society and democratic governance; analysis and policy development in the area of democratic governance indicators for policy reform and the management of a fellowship programme. The annual Bergen Seminar Series is also a key focus area of work under this service line.

A draft Practice Note on **Conflict Prevention and Democratic Governance** was completed in December 2004 and builds on a mapping of UNDP's work and experience in this area that was completed earlier in 2004 as well as the Bergen Seminar of May 2004 which addressed this thematic area. The OGC and the Panama SURG for Latin America and the Caribbean held an experts workshop in Panama in December 2004 to define and outline and provide inputs to the assessment tool for the public security systems in Latin America. The workshop also explored approaches to address security system reform issues and to strengthen and consolidate UNDP Latin America and the Caribbean's network of high level security experts and the alliance with partners participating in the initiative. Participants at the workshop included governmental and non-governmental organizations, universities and research institutions from the region.

The **governance indicators project** moved substantially forward during 2004 following the publication of two key papers *Sources of Democratic Governance Indicators* and *Governance Indicators: A Users' Guide*. The Users' Guide provides direction on how to use and where to find sources of governance indicators and was compiled through a joint collaboration between the European Commission and the Oslo Governance Centre. Planning for an international technical workshop focused on the development of methodological framework and process for piloting was initiated. The Governance Indicators project proposes three pilot countries for 2005. A mission was undertaken to Mongolia, the first pilot country. The OGC's work in the area of conflict prevention included a mapping undertaken of UNDP experience with conflict preventing programming in governance projects and a first draft of a UNDP Practice Note on governance in post-conflict situations.

Five UNDP democratic governance practitioners participated in the OGC's **fellowship programme**. The fellowship programme provides UNDP staff with an opportunity for reflection, codification and discussion on specific governance issues. The aim of the fellowship programme is to strengthen UNDP's programmes and advocacy by enhancing the organization's capacity to research new areas and learn from its vast field experiences. The research focus areas for 2004 under the fellowship programme included:

1. Civil Society and Right to Information: A Perspective on India's Experience
2. Towards Democratic Governance: Emergence of the Concept of Governance in the Kingdom of Bhutan
3. The Impact of Corruption on the Human Rights Based Approach to Development
4. Addressing Human Insecurity in the Solomon Islands: RAMSI, the UN system, and New Approaches to Intervention
5. Reflections on the State Institution-Building Support in Timor-Leste: Capacity development, integrating mission, and financial challenges

Four of the five papers were approved for publication on the OGC website.

The **Bergen Seminar Series 2004** 'Strengthening Democratic Governance in Post-Conflict Situations'. The UNDP/ Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) Seminar on 'Strengthening Democratic Governance in Post-Conflict Situations' was held in May 2004 in Bergen, Norway. Over 50 participants including development practitioners, experts from northern and southern institutions and representatives from civil society and aid agencies participated in the seminar which explored challenges and issues to be addressed in programming democratic governance initiatives in post-conflict situations. Within a conceptual framework that considered issues related to reconciliation, building trust and programme delivery, this event examined the implications of the early post-conflict setting on democratic governance programming. The seminar had a special focus on justice, security and human rights; access to information and democratic dialogue; parliamentary development and elections and public administration and local governance.

In addition to the major achievements described above with respect to policy support for democratic governance, the following activities were undertaken:

Knowledge Management and Development of Knowledge Products

- Support to BCPR on conflict prevention and peace building, and collaboration with them on developing a UNDP policy on justice and security sector reform (JSSR).
- E-discussion on UNDP's engagement with political parties initiated and completed. The e-discussion was the most lively and active e-discussion to date on the DGPNet with 79 contributions from 45 countries covering all five of UNDP's regions.
- Democratic Governance module for VDA developed and forwarded to the Learning Resources Centre
- Preliminary design of the structure and work plan for a UNDP annual report on governance completed.
- Participation in BDP and BCPR knowledge and practice events.
- Governance Institutions Directory project initiated. Typologies developed in accordance with corporate parameters. Around 200 institutions captured and systematized accordingly.
- Participated in the gender analysis work of the DGG and assisted the gender team in developing a gender analysis matrix.
- Initiated a review of the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) with draft title "*Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) 1994-2005: statistical overview and success stories*" with the BDP gender team and HDRO, in partnership with the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities.
- Draft DG Practice Guide submitted for consideration to DGG team leader.
- Research conducted and initial draft developed of a guide to civil society organizations working with democratic governance.
- Participation by an OGC policy adviser in the HDR 2004 Readers' Group.
- Development viewpoints on pro-poor media, right to information, conflict prevention, security sector democratic oversight, and religion.

Policy Advice

- Technical assistance provided to the Commission of the African Union on drafting binding documents on elections, governance and democracy, 15-17 May 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

- Technical support to the Mongolia CO on the development of appropriate governance indicators and on the ICNRD Follow-up Project, August 2004.
- Technical support to RBA on the establishment of an Africa Governance Institute (AGI), including participation in the Second AGI Consultation in Addis Ababa, 13-14 September 2004.
- Support to RBA in building a strong partnership with the African Union (AU) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), including participation in the AU's African Intellectuals Forum in Dakar, 6-9 October 2004, and the ECA's 2004 African Development Forum (ADF-IV), in which the OGC Director chaired the plenary session on the African Governance Report and the African Women's Report, Addis Ababa, 11-15 October 2004.
- Support to RBAP regional governance programme formulation, May 2004.
- Responses provided to policy advice queries, including recommendations on sectoral experts, on conflict and peace building, civil society, and political parties from country offices, regional centres and the electronic networks.
- Contributed to discussions and policy development of UNDP's civil society advisory group including on UNDP's revised Information Disclosure Policy (IDP), input into the SG's report on the work of the organisation in the area of partnerships with civil society and the private sector and UNDP's partnership with Civicus.
- Led a mission to conduct a comprehensive review of civil society in Uzbekistan and developed an outline strategy for the country offices to foster the sector's engagement with national development processes.
- Contribution to DGG review of BCPR policy paper on mainstreaming mine action.
- Input into the preparations for and UNDP's contribution to a joint senior level forum with the World Bank, the OPECD and the EC on fragile states that took place in January 2005.

Partnerships

- Close involvement of the senior management of the UNDP/ Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) at every stage of the planning and implementation of the 2004 Bergen seminar has contributed to greater mutual organisational understanding, a more equal partnership and a more useful and interesting event for participants.
- Growing partnership with the Club de Madrid, including participation in the Barcelona Forum dialogue organized by the Club on democracy and poverty, 22 September 2004 in Barcelona, Spain.
- Deepening partnerships also with Civicus and with International IDEA, to which we offered support for their proposed yearbook on democracy and continued collaboration on political parties, constitution-making in crisis and post-conflict countries, conflict prevention and other areas.
- Maintaining partnership with OECD/DAC and other partners for coordinating work on conflict prevention and peace building.
- Partnerships are being established with EUROSTAT, with which we have published a user's guide on governance indicators; and with the Indian Council for Science Research (ICSSR) with which we have co-organized an international technical workshop on governance indicators in early 2005.

Advocacy and Outreach

- Presentations made on various aspects of democratic governance to international conferences, including Civicus's biannual meeting in Botswana (March), the Africa

Institute of South Africa conference on 10 years of freedom in Pretoria (March), the annual international conference on Africa by the University of Edinburgh (May), and to several NGOs in Oslo.

- Keynote address on democracy and human rights in the international framework to the joint monthly meeting of the Finnish Development Policy Committee and the Finnish Advisory Board on Human Rights in Helsinki (June).
- Launch of HDR 2004 in Dublin, Ireland, July 2004.
- Joint OGC-Nordic Office HDR 2004 Post-Launch Seminar on "Cultural Diversity – A Cause of Conflict or the Key to Peace and Development?" with the Prime Ministers of Belgium and Norway and the Lutheran Bishop of Palestine, in Oslo, 20 October 2004.
- Participation in various workshops organized by partners such as OECD/DAC Govnet, the Organization of Francophone States, UNRISD, International IDEA and other organizations, such as the LSE's Centre for the Study of Global Governance.
- Publication of *Update*, the OGC Newsletter, and regular posting of major events and documents on the OGC website.

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS (SL 2.4)

The OGC focused its work in 2004 around HURITALK, an international seminar in Seoul and support to HURIST.

HURITALK which is moderated by the Oslo Governance Centre is a human-rights policy network that addresses UN system-wide efforts in applying a rights-based approach to development. During 2004, HURITALK was made a UN-wide network on human rights policy under the framework of the UN Secretary-General's programme "Action 2". By the end of 2004, HURITALK had 490 members. The network received 25 queries during 2004 as well as a number of queries that were addressed off the network. The OGC moderated a very successful e-discussion during 2004 on integrating human rights with decentralization. HURITALK is also increasingly being used as a space for making important information more easily available in the field such as by disseminating the speeches and statements at the UN launch of 'Action 2' and in circulating UN Human Rights day messages. Information has been shared from countries as diverse as Turkmenistan, Bangladesh and Libya on ongoing human rights initiatives. Sharing information on regional lessons learned has been initiated, an initiative that will be pursued in 2005. Nine issues of the HURITALK resource update were produced and shared with network members. The update contains recent news on the work of the UN treaty and convention –based bodies, professional development opportunities, upcoming conferences and courses, fellowships and calls for papers as well as resources in the forms of manuals, databases and reports etc.

At the request of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UNDP jointly organized a **human rights seminar in Seoul** in September 2004 to discuss effective examples of governance practices that have had an impact on the promotion of human rights and to draw lessons from them. The Oslo Governance Centre was UNDP's focal point for the seminar. The seminar focused on essential elements of good governance as identified in Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/70 on *the role of good governance in the promotion of human rights*, including the promotion of the rule of law, strengthening services delivery for human rights, strengthening democratic institutions and participation, combating corruption in the public

and private sectors and international cooperation in support of national good governance practices.

The OGC has provided support and backstopping to the HURIST programme and participated in two HURIST missions in 2004: Cape Verde and Rwanda. HURIST is a joint programme of UNDP and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) which aims to identify best practices in promotion and protection of human rights at the country level.

In addition to the achievements described above, the following activities were undertaken under Justice and Human Rights:

Knowledge Management and Development of Knowledge Products

- Access to justice and human rights policy advisers met at the OGC from 4 to 7 March to finalize work on the Access to Justice and Human Rights Practice Notes.
- Terms of reference for individual contributors to the proposed UNDP publication on "Accelerating Access to Justice" have been elaborated.
- CD-ROM containing examples of good governance practice in the promotion of human rights based on the OHCHR/UNDP Seminar in Korea (September 2004) prepared.

Policy Advice and Country Office Backstopping

- Policy advice to the UN Commission on Human Rights in preparation of the 2004 OHCHR/UNDP Seminar on Good Governance and Human Rights, held in Korea.
- Policy advice on access to justice programme strategy and formulation to Indonesia and Sri Lanka country offices as well as to the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Asia Pacific Access to Justice Network.
- Participation in the workshop *Human Rights-based Approaches to Development in the Arab States*, organized by the Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) and BDP/HURIST to co-facilitate and deliver a learning session on knowledge tools, networks and UNDP regional experiences on developing Communities of Practices within the human rights area, Damascus, Syria, 11-14 December 2004.
- Knowledge sharing with the Botswana Country Office on socio-economic barriers to access to justice for presentation to the SADC Chief Justices Conference in July 2004.
- Support to the Bosnia CO on developing a think tank network to promote rights based economic policies within the PRSP/MDG process and on continuing funding for the RMAP project.
- Work with the Bratislava Regional Centre on guidelines for Ombudsmen in Europe and the CIS countries.
- Review of the draft programme for capacity development of the Human Rights Commission in Ethiopia.

Partnerships

- Collaboration with our strategic partner, CMI, in preparations for the December 2004 conference in Buenos Aires on the role of the judiciary in the protection and promotion of the human rights of the poor and other disadvantaged groups.

- Emerging partnership with Comparative Research on Poverty (CROP), Bergen University, and the Norwegian Association for Development Studies for work on knowledge relevant to poverty reduction and human development.
- Collaboration with International IDEA on research on constitution-making in transitional countries.
- Discussions held in April on possible areas of cooperation with the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) during the visit to OGC by IDLO Deputy Director Gilles Bianchi and the Senior Adviser for Governance and Development, Ewa Westman.
- Ongoing meetings and visits during the year with representatives of Norwegian entities, UN agencies, and other visitors.

Advocacy and Outreach

- Presentation on human rights and democracy at the OSCE workshop on the subject in Warsaw, Poland (May).
- Presentations on human development and multiculturalism at the Goethe Institute Conference on "Does Culture Matter?" held in Kolkata, India (April) and the Centre for Development Studies at the University of Bergen (March).
- Presentation to the Oslo University Asia Summer Institute on the implications of the general elections of 2004 in India (June).
- Presentations on various aspects of human rights, including the HRBA and the African Charter to various Norwegian NGOs.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION (SL 2.5)

The OGC's work under the Access to Information Service Line has focused on the development of a range of diagnostic and thematic practice materials (a knowledge 'toolkit') that use the Access to Information Practice Note (2003) as an anchor. Materials developed in 2004 included practical guidance notes based on priority thematic areas intended to assist democratic governance programme officers in Access to Information programme design and implementation. A database and directory of UNDP assistance to Access to Information were also completed as part of the knowledge toolkit.

The following activities have been undertaken in the area of Access to Information:

Development of Knowledge products

- Practical Guidance Notes on Civic Education and the Right to Information completed, translated into Arabic and Russian and posted on UNDP's website and intranet.
- Paper on *Supporting Public Service Broadcasting – Learning from Bosnia and Herzegovina's experience* completed.
- Two Human Development Viewpoints: *Official Information and the Public Domain* and *Media and the Poor* drafted.
- The Guide to UNDP supported Access to Information projects and a directory of other organizations developed was updated as a searchable database.
- A chapter on Access to Information in post-conflict situations developed as a component of a UNDP's background paper on *Governance in post-conflict situations*.
- Access to Information component of Governance chapter for VDA completed

- Supervision of Fellowship paper on *Right to Information in India: the role of Civil Society*
- Contributed to the revision of UNDP's Information Disclosure Policy

Support to Country Offices

- Member of mission to UNDP Syria - first step in development of a project proposal on media development. Drafted project proposal in collaboration with UNDP Syria colleagues detailing a strategy for a comprehensive strengthening of the media sector in Syria. Project approved by Government of Syria in December 2004.
- Provided a range of policy advice and support in response to specific country office requests, e.g. Benin on support to the Beninese press; Argentina on potential resource people for the implementation of the presidential decree on Access to Information; Cote d'Ivoire on the development of a government communications strategy; and Ukraine on general Access to Information resources.
- Provided advice on the network in response to Access to Information related network queries including queries from UNDP Ukraine on media development and HIV/AIDS and UNDP Mozambique on potential consultants for UNDP Access to Information project evaluation.

Enhancement of Access to Information Community of Practice

- Participation in meetings including joint World Bank/Sida organised seminar (Stockholm) on '*Strategic communication for poverty reduction*' and Danish Institute of Human Rights (Copenhagen) on *The Role of Access to Information in the creation of democratic societies and the protection of human rights in the CIS countries*.
- Presentation/discussion of a range of Access to Information issues at Oslo University
- Circulation of UNDP 's Access to Information documents to key external players
- Developed the web-pages for Access to Information related information and resources for both external and UNDP users on the UNDP Oslo Governance website which will be mirrored on the UNDP intranet

CONCLUSION

As this record of achievements indicates, the Oslo Governance Centre completed its third year of existence in 2004 by continuing to establish itself as a credible resource centre for UNDP in the thematic area of democratic governance. The positive record described above in the various areas of the Centre's mandate was achieved in spite of some unfavourable circumstances. These included a long delay in the budget approval process, which prevented a comprehensive implementation of a carefully planned annual work plan; and a fire at the OGC building at Inkognitogate in July, which disrupted the work of the Centre. NORAD, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, was kind enough to offer temporary premises to the OGC, which is currently awaiting completion of new premises at the FAFO Building in Oslo.

By the end of 2004, it became clear that the Centre's full potential would be better realized by ending its duplication of the work being done at Headquarters and in the Regional Service Centres within the different service lines of democratic governance. Discussions began in November for a reformulation of the focus of the work of the OGC as a global thematic facility designed as part of UNDP's commitment in building governance capacity to

achieve the MDGs. With a new concept paper approved in 2005, the OGC will pass from its formative phase to a new phase of maturity with emphasis on governance and poverty eradication, governance and conflict, civil society empowerment and learning and capacity development.

Annex 1: UNDP Oslo Governance Centre Staff, December 2004

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