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United Nations Development Programme



SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN A CHANGING REGION ACTORS AND MECHANISMS

DELIBERATIONS OF ARAB GOVERNANCE WEEK, NOVEMBER 26-29, 2012, CAIRO, EGYPT



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Social Accountability in a Changing Region-Actors and Mechanisms

Based on deliberations of ARAB GOVERNANCE WEEK
November 26-29, 2012, Cairo, Egypt



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Foreword by the Manager of the UNDP Regional Centre for the Arab States

The Arab region is witnessing a tremendous momentum of transformation and potential for change. What started as a youth-led movement in Tunisia has had crucial consequences for the entire region, and continues to generate hopes and expectations, albeit increasingly mixed with caution and concerns about what the future may bring. People of the region have denounced corruption and demanded democratic governance, human rights, social justice, integrity, equity and economic inclusion. This highlights the importance of strengthening new relations between States and citizens, and also across society, based on a common vision of democracy, justice, and rights.

In June 2011, in response to these events, UNDP organized the international forum Pathways to Democratic Transitions which opened the discussion on some of the key governance challenges expected in times of transition. These included ensuring the integrity of electoral processes, addressing the needs for transitional justice, and supporting constitutional dialogue, all steps to uphold the key principles of social justice and equity. As a follow up to the international forum, the Regional Centre in Cairo (RCC) supported and continues to support many specific events and activities to assist country offices and national partners to address those important governance needs. A year and a half later, the Arab Governance Week (November 26-29, 2012) presented an opportunity to assess and support the move towards social accountability. Organized in close collaboration with OHCHR, UNWOMEN, IDEA and ANSA AW, it brought together 240 participants from 17 Arab countries, with delegates representing governments (including 8 sitting Ministers), civil society, sitting judges, academics and the media, as well as UNDP country offices from the region. By convening such a diverse group to discuss the practice of accountability in the Arab Region and the role of various actors in furthering accountability relations in these turbulent times, UNDP has played a strategic role in brokering knowledge and facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue about the future of governance in the region.

The role of governance data and human rights monitoring through the Universal Period Review (UPR) process, as mechanisms for enhancing accountability relations, was explored in great depth and recommendations for action by various actors were developed. Governance assessments can play an important role in the introduction of democratic values and principles at various levels of society during the transformation process towards democratic societies. Perceptions about UPR should also be adjusted to recognize it as a process of accountability to the people, which opens the door for effective collaboration between the state and civil society.

Many events also shook the Arab region after the Governance Week. Although this report strictly reflects on the context and discussions from November 2012, the events that took place in the second half of 2013 in several Arab States showed that post-revolutionary arrangements were unable to address people's aspirations for inclusive democratic representation. This, in fact, reinforces the argument made during the Governance Week that democracy is more than elections, and emphasizes the role that mechanisms of social accountability can play in deepening and solidifying democratic processes.



The Governance Week also reflected UNDP's commitment to South-South cooperation by sharing the knowledge and experiences from Arab countries, and from Kenya, Malaysia, Armenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Ukraine, fostering strategic partnerships for future joint activities. The Governance Week also included a specific focus on knowledge exchange, outreach and communication. Governance-related knowledge products, printed materials, videos, publications, and poster exhibition, were showcased at the Knowledge Exhibition.

In closing, I would like to thank our partners for their support in making this event a success. I would also like to thank the different leaders and stakeholders from the Arab countries who came to share their rich experience and their perspectives on the current transition. I would also like to extend gratitude to the participants from other regions who accepted to share the successes and challenges they faced in their respective countries.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alia', is enclosed within a blue oval. The signature is positioned above a horizontal blue line.

Alia Al Dall
Manager
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Executive Summary

Most governments in the Arab region have recently experienced, either directly or indirectly, the vigor of ordinary citizens holding their governments accountable. Partly because there was a lack of formal institutions regulating and facilitating proper legal, political and social accountability, citizens used the only power they had, showing their resentment of the former regimes by protesting in huge numbers. This realization that a ruler can ultimately be held accountable by citizens created a temporary impetus for reinforcing the mechanisms and institutions that are essential for democratic governance.

Institutionalized mechanisms of communication between the state and its citizens are crucial for re-negotiating the social contract between the citizens and State in the Arab Region, and social accountability practices provide a range of relevant tools and approaches that can contribute to establishing a minimal level of trust and legitimacy. Social accountability is a form of accountability that emerges through actions of people, civic movements and civil society organizations aimed at holding the state to account, as well as efforts by government and other actors (media, private sector, donors) to support and respond to these actions. It can provide an extra set of checks and balances on the states in the public interest, exposing instances of corruption, negligence and oversight. Social accountability mechanisms have the potential to channel current, and sometimes volatile, levels of “social energy” in a constructive and productive manner. In contrast to some forms of advocacy and social activism that adopt confrontational approaches and aggravate citizen-state relations, social accountability approaches often result in strengthened citizen-state relations, while fighting corruption and achieving institutional/behavioral change.

Three key actors have a role to play in strengthening social accountability. Firstly, Governments have a central responsibility to implement the important political, legislative and judicial reforms needed to achieve a democratic transition. All Arab States have ratified various international human rights treaties and more than 16 countries have committed to implement the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Such international legally binding instruments codify the minimum standards that need to be achieved by duty-bearers at all levels of society—but especially organs of the State – and against which they will be held accountable. Newly formed governments headed by new political powers/actors need to recognize the crucial and foundational value of accountability to the citizens and foster mechanisms for citizens participation. Enabling legal environment guaranteeing the freedom of association and access to information, ensuring citizens’ rights to public information and opening up public budget and expenditure records etc., has to be put in place. To ensure state responsiveness to the needs of its people, governance systems on local level need to be strengthened, with power and resources decentralized. To foster social accountability in the Arab region, social accountability infrastructure comprised of institutionalized and sustainable mechanisms that remain in place even after a change of the government, is required. There is also a need for an analysis of past failures in development policies and a systematic examination of accountability practices and codes of conduct that have been used in the past by governments and civil society in the region.



Secondly, civil society emerged as a growing actor that can and should play an active role holding the State accountable and advocating for policy proposals to advance social justice agenda based on research evidence. Also, as many of the underlying grievances in the region that led to the revolutions come from socially excluded, poor, vulnerable, migrant and rural parts of the society, it is important to ensure that their voices are heard. Basic public services (water, sanitation, health, education) are vital for their welfare, and social accountability initiatives ensuring citizen oversight of such services and their participation in decision-making can significantly improve the quality and accessibility of such services.

Youth-led uprisings testify to a process of emergence and renewal of civil society after decades of control that have profoundly weakened societal organization. Social and youth movements (especially those using social networks and information and communications technology), volunteer initiatives, new civil society organizations, independent labor unions, and new political parties are on the rise, and established civil society organizations are growing in strength. Civil society organizations need to play a more active role in advocating for improved legal frameworks for access to information and freedom of association. Coordination among CSOs focusing on similar issues needs to be improved, to foster complementarity instead of competition.

Thirdly, both traditional media and new social media play a crucial role in amplifying the voice of the citizens and facilitating the dialogue between the civil society and the state. A strong, independent media has a powerful role to play in promoting social accountability, amplifying the voice of the citizens, facilitating the dialogue between the citizens and the state, acting as a sounding board for government policies, and fulfilling the watch dog function to protect against abuse of power. In times of transitions, the role of the media is even more complex. With many forces actively involved in the political process, such as the military, the revolutionary movement, the representatives of the old regime, traditional religious institution, figures of the opposition, to name just some of them, media has to strive for a delicate balance, of providing voice for all of those forces, but also holding them all accountable. The role of citizen journalists in offering alternative view to the public, alongside other sources of information, is also very important, and should be protected. Media should be playing more prominent role in educating citizens about their rights and responsibilities, placing a special emphasis on projecting a more positive and active image of the role of women in the society, and on advocating for the rights of women. Complementary relationships should be developed between the social and traditional media.

The lack of accurate, timely and relevant governance data affects the ability of citizens to hold their governments accountable and hinders efforts of national government and other stakeholders to ensure good performance management and measure progress in governance. As it stands, the Arab region is the poorest in the world in terms of data for reporting on MDGs, and in terms of publicly available data in general. In most Arab countries, the institutional framework for producing and disseminating traditional statistics is weak, and data critical for understanding how the state is governed (e.g. revenues of natural resources, budget allocations, salaries of governmental employees, and distribution of public and private investments by geographical location) is not publicly available.



Executive Summary

The practice of nationally-owned governance assessments with emphasis on the process of active collaboration between policy-makers, national institutions, citizens and civil society in indicator definition and data collection, can contribute to regenerating the legitimacy of government and for enhancing the efficiency and efficacy of government service delivery. If such assessments are done in a highly participatory manner, they could empower citizens by informing them about their human rights and establish an initial, but very critical, means of communication between citizens and the government on all levels.

To ensure that the data on governance is collected and used for demanding accountability, the right to access public information needs to be established through relevant legislation and policies, and currently existing restrictive laws, policies and institutional arrangements need to be revised. The role of non-state actors in collecting and producing data on governance is also extremely important. Studies conducted by independent research organizations and universities and indicators of governance constructed by civil society organization generate independent debate about the quality of governance, key problems and proposed solutions, and contribute to informed dialogue with governmental actors.

Local governance assessments are particularly topical, as they allow establishing practices of dialogue between the citizens and the state. Citizens not only contribute to the assessment process by providing their opinions about the quality of service delivery and governance on the local level, but are also learning about the limitations faced by the local governments.

To identify differences in perspectives and access to services by women and men and boys and girls, assessment methodologies have to be inclusive and use gender sensitive indicators, and whenever possible carried out with direct participation of women and youth people. This could allow tracking the differing impacts of governance reforms on women and men and ascertain whether interventions are positively or negatively affecting one group more than the other.

Other mechanisms can support the various actors in strengthening social accountability in the region. The evolution of the social contract between the State and the people also requires a strong national and international human rights system to address inequality and discrimination, and to support both political and economic inclusion. The Governance Week took a closer look at one specific area where both OHCHR and UNDP have come together to support national partners, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

The UPR is a State-driven peer review process which underscores State responsibility to respect, protect and fulfill all human rights and fundamental freedoms, aiming at improving the human rights situation on the ground. The outcomes of the UPR cover diverse human rights issues, from accessibility of public services, gender equality, to human trafficking. Therefore, following up on these issues enables a holistic approach to development orientated programming and an investment in the capacity of all branches of the State and other relevant stakeholders.



Arab States have now entered into their second cycle of the UPR Process, which focuses on evaluating the implementation of the recommendations received during the first review. Considering the on-going changes in the region, the preparations for the UPR review are a unique opportunity to engage governments, civil society and media in a dialogue on human rights, re-enforcing cooperation on human rights related issues, and realizing the full potential of UPR as an important mechanism for social accountability.

More specifically, this mechanism presents a unique opportunity for civil society to have its voice heard. Indeed, it benefited from the lessons learnt from the difficulties of other mechanisms and now offers the possibility to present facts and also recommendations on how to address the human rights challenges in a certain country. The media also has an important role to play in defending human rights. However, to ensure that this collaboration is successful, both the media and civil society actors have strong responsibilities.

The UPR presents an important opportunity for inclusive participation, for strengthening collaboration between civil society and governments, and for promoting accountability of public authorities. This process should be seen as a tool to foster meaningful dialogue between all interested actors, at national, regional and international level. Because this mechanism requires the involvement of all three actors, the UPR process also creates demand and opportunities to enhance international and regional partnerships with organizations such as the League of Arab states or the United Nations in supporting national efforts on human rights, and, given its focus on a wide spectrum of issues.

However, it is important to understand that the UPR is not a stand-alone process or an end in itself. It enables joint planning, programming, and reaching across disciplines, all necessary for States to engage on their commitments towards more sustainable development and poverty reduction. The recommendations, as the second step of the cycle, can also be used to increase knowledge of human rights in the country. In the context of change of the region, it is also critical to link the UPR to other mechanisms of social accountability to ensure coherence and consistency.

This report is based on the key messages drawn from the deliberations of the event, as well as background papers commissioned prior to the event and other relevant UNDP policy documents.



Chapter 1: Social Accountability

1.1 Defining Social Accountability ¹

Broadly speaking, accountability can be defined as a relationship between two bodies, in which the performance of one is subject to oversight by another. In the context of public administration, for oversight to be exercised, two distinct mechanisms need to be in place - “answerability” defined as the obligation of public officials to inform and explain what they are doing, and “enforcement”, defined as the ability to impose sanctions on those who violate their mandate.

In a democracy, the main instrument that citizens can use to hold the legislative accountable is periodic elections, a key mechanism of vertical accountability. In practice, as has been shown by many studies, free and fair elections are insufficient to ensure that duty bearers and service providers adhere to the principles of good governance like rule of law, transparency and accountability. The system of checks and balances between the institutions of the state is referred to as horizontal accountability. It includes the ability of the legislative (parliament or council) to hold the executive politically accountable (political oversight) through planning and budgeting and ministerial oversight. In many countries, the parliament and the judiciary are supported to implement their oversight function by various secondary institutions like ombudsmen offices, human right commission and anti-corruption bodies. Independent judiciary is playing a powerful role in holding executive branch to account. Horizontal accountability is also exercised through fiscal mechanisms, like formal systems of auditing and financial accounting, and administrative mechanisms like hierarchical reporting, public service codes of conduct, etc.

Vertical and horizontal accountability measures are not sufficient to ensure that public money is actually spent in accordance with existing regulations and standards and for the purpose it is intended. Additional accountability mechanisms allowing for more direct participation of citizens in accountability processes beyond elections are termed diagonal or social accountability.

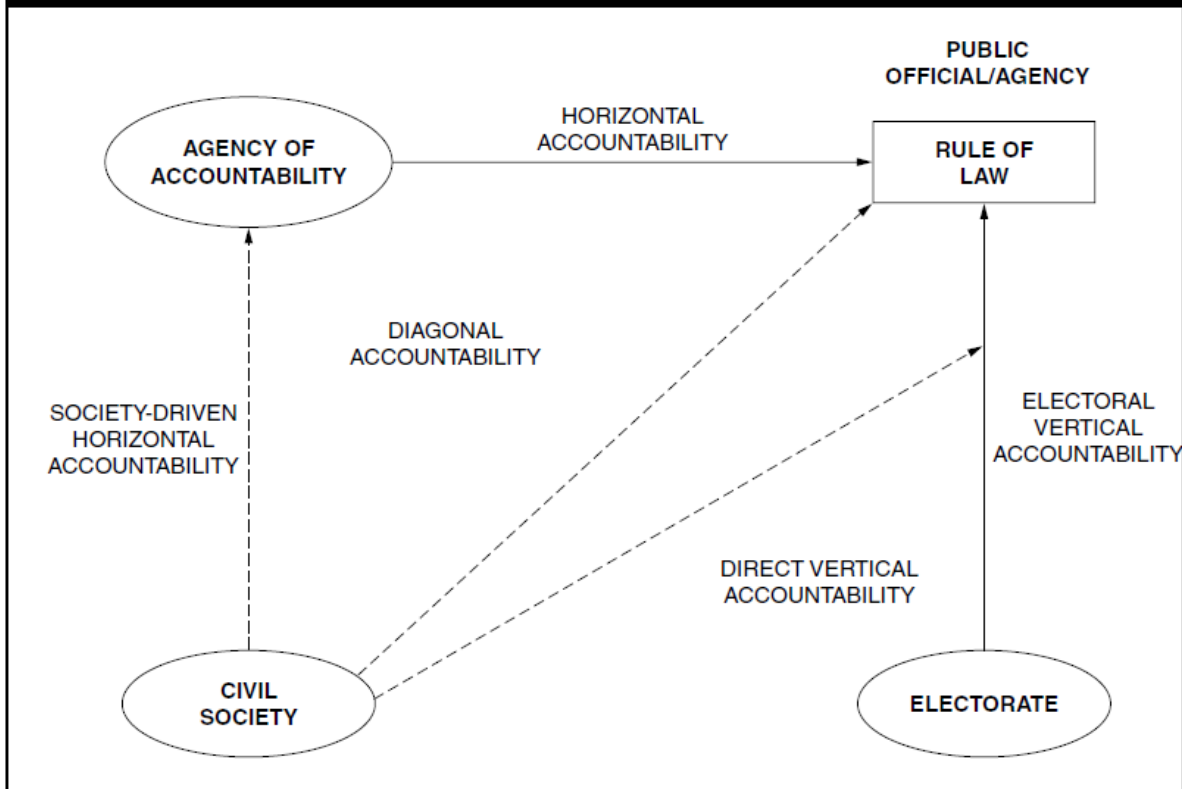
Social accountability refers to a form of accountability that emerges through actions by citizens and civil society organizations [CSOs] aimed at holding the State to account, as well as efforts by government and other actors [media, private sector, donors] to support and respond to these actions ². The goal of social accountability is not to replace but to reinforce and complement existing (horizontal and vertical) accountability mechanisms. It affirms the fundamental principle that duty-bearers (public officials and service providers) are accountable to rights-holders (citizens) and offers a rich set of approaches and tools for applying that principle into practice. Social accountability approaches can be applied at local to national level and can target a range of governance issues and processes including: public information-sharing, policy-making and planning; the analysis and tracking of public budgets, expenditures and procurement processes; the participatory monitoring and evaluation of public service delivery, as well as broader oversight roles, anti-corruption measures and complaints handling mechanisms.

¹ This introductory section is based on the background paper “Challenges and opportunities for improving Social Accountability at the local level in the Arab region; how can local governance assessments contribute?” by Paul Van Hoof, IDASA, commissioned by UNDP.

² UNDP (2010) Fostering Social Accountability: From Principle to Practice, Guidance Note



FIGURE 1: ACCOUNTABILITY AND CIVIL SOCIETY



World Bank, 2004, State-society synergy for accountability: lessons for the World Bank, working paper 30)

There are differences between social accountability mechanisms and horizontal accountability mechanisms. The latter are based on a formal obligation of the duty bearer to be answerable to his/or her superior or to parliament and they are backed up by legally defined sanctions that should ideally prevent, or at least punish misuse of office. As there is usually no formal obligation of duty bearers to account to the public, such reporting often remains voluntary and can only be stimulated using social or media pressure. In addition, citizens or civil society organizations usually lack mechanisms to sanction misuse of office. For social accountability to be effective in terms of disciplining misuse of office by duty bearers, it depends on subsequent corrective actions taken by government itself through one of the other two mechanisms of accountability. Social accountability therefore has a strong signaling function especially if the media are actively involved in exposing misuse of office. It is important to realize that social accountability remains complementary to and dependent on other forms of accountability in order to be effective and it can't replace these other mechanisms.



Another difference between social accountability and legal and political accountability is that the objective of improving social accountability is more encompassing than that of legal and political accountability. All three forms of accountability promote the practice of good governance by reducing misuse of office and thus improve the trust and confidence citizens have in the state as a legitimate institution. Because social accountability aims to alter the relationship between those who govern and those who are governed, or those who provide and receive services, it has a strong enabling function as well. By making or holding duty bearers and service providers answerable to the public, it reinforces (or sometimes even establishes) the notion that those who govern can only do so based on the mandate given to them (directly or indirectly) by the electorate and that the mandate can be withdrawn or altered. On the other hand, improved social accountability aggregates the voice of people and helps to change passive “subjects” into active “citizens” and offers them an alternative to move beyond protesting and to engage constructively with government.



Figure 2: How Social Accountability Works (from presentation by Jeff Thindwa, Social Accountability Practice, World Bank Institute)

Improved social accountability is not only a mechanism to punish and control misuse of office. If applied in a constructive manner and institutionalized in regular government procedures and behavior, it is also a mean to structure communication between a government and its citizens and could contribute to a change in the relationship between the two parties, from a “producer-consumer” type of relationship to one where they work together to improve services (co-production) .



1.2 Social Accountability in the Context of Transition in the Arab States ³

Most governments in the Arab region have recently experienced, either directly or indirectly, the vigor of ordinary citizens holding their governments accountable. Partly because there was a lack of formal institutions regulating and facilitating proper legal, political and social accountability, citizens used the only power they had, showing their resentment of the former regimes by protesting in huge numbers. This realization that a ruler can ultimately be held accountable by citizens created a temporary impetus for reinforcing the mechanisms and institutions that are essential for democratic governance. Establishing a democratic state involves more than building the basic institutions and mechanisms for democratic rule, like free and fair elections, a powerful and enabled legislative body and an independent judiciary. Democracy cannot function without institutionalized communication mechanisms in place between the state and its citizens that create a minimal level of trust and legitimacy.

Experiences of transitional processes from other parts of the world show that transitions seldom follow a predictable path. We are yet to see whether the countries emerging from transformative changes in the Arab region would accept globalized norms of constitutionalism, good governance, and human rights, adapting them to local socio-cultural context; or would attempt a full reinvention of a developmental state. Transitional processes also require a delicate balance to nurture the evolution of indigenous governance structures, including the re-emergent political Islam, with values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The process of re-writing society's values into new constitutions highlights the tensions between secular and religious worldviews. These new constitutions will be setting the legal framework for accountability, and the process matters as much as the substance, necessitating inclusion of diverse voices.

Three key actors have a role to play in strengthening social accountability: the State, civil society, and media. First, the State has a central responsibility to implement the important political, legislative and judicial reforms needed to achieve a democratic transition. All Arab States have ratified various international human rights treaties and more than 16 countries have committed to implement the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Such international legally binding instruments codify the minimum standards that need to be achieved by duty-bearers at all levels of society—but especially organs of the State – and against which they will be held accountable. The State is also responsible for creating an enabling environment for social accountability relations, guaranteeing the freedom of association and access to information, ensuring citizens' rights to public information and opening up public budget and expenditure records, improving internal systems of transparency, etc.

³ This section draws on the presentations in the session “1: Understanding accountability in the context of transition”



Second, civil society has emerged as a growing actor that can and should play an active role in holding the State accountable and advocating for policy proposals to advance the social justice agenda. Since many of the underlying grievances in the region that led to the revolutions and uprisings have come from excluded parts of the society, including the poor, vulnerable, migrant and rural parts of the society, it is important to ensure that their voices are heard. Basic public services (water, sanitation, health, education) are vital for their welfare; social accountability initiatives ensuring citizen oversight of such services and their participation in decision-making could significantly improve the quality and accessibility of such services. Related efforts have begun to emerge in a number of Arab countries, but are still limited in scope and impact.

In the Arab region, organized civil society has suffered from different modalities of control, and often retained a narrow focus on service provision. At the same time, the events of the “Arab spring” have demonstrated the power of new emerging forms of civic engagement. Yet, these emerging civil society movements are still in the process of identifying modes of engagement with other stakeholders that could lead to constructive and positive contributions to the process of change, beyond street mobilization. In the given, highly volatile, environment that characterizes the transition period, it can also be very difficult for external actors to effectively assess the most appropriate entry points for working with civil society.

Third, both traditional media and new social media could play a crucial role in amplifying the voice of the citizens and facilitating the dialogue between the civil society and the state. The media can pressure the State for accountability by disseminating information about social and economic inequity, and, more importantly, framing those issues in a way to hold the state accountable and to encourage a sense of empowerment.

Finally, while accountability is often presented as a triad equation, there is a need to consider the role of the fourth player, one that has significant influence, particularly in so-called developing countries. That fourth player is international agencies, including the World Bank and IMF, the foreign governments that push certain policies within these agencies – such as the US and the EU, and the agreements that result. In the past, these organizations and foreign governments have played a role in shielding governments from being accountable to the citizens. International indices, such as the Human Development Index, have often been used by the Governments to make claims about developmental progress. Conditionality imposed by Bretton Woods’s institutions can actually undermine policy space for collaborative action by the State and civil society in charting a new development course in the post Arab Spring context. Consequently, discussing social accountability as if it was solely a national issue, one that can be dealt with amongst and between state actors, civil society, and media, fails to recognize the significant and detrimental threat to social accountability imposed by external actors, a threat that includes limiting information, curtailing the rights of civil society, and distorting national accountability.



Bi-Lateral and Regional Free Trade Agreements

As reported by OXFAM⁴, Bi-Lateral and Regional Free Trade Agreements, led by the US and the EU, have severely undermined the rights of governments and their citizens by transferring power from governments to largely unaccountable multinational firms. They also severely curtail the participation of civil society, thus denying the voices of small businesses, trade unions, women's groups, and others. The worst of the agreements strip developing countries of the capacity to effectively govern their economies and to protect their poorest people. Going beyond the provisions negotiated at a multilateral level, they impose far-reaching, hard-to-reverse rules that systematically dismantle national policies designed to promote development. In some FTAs, developing countries are committing themselves to let foreign investors into public utilities if the sector is opened up to domestic private companies. The investment chapters of FTAs and bilateral investment agreements make governments vulnerable to being sued by foreign investors if a new regulation is perceived as damaging the investor's profits, even when such reforms are in the public interest.

Finally, it is important to remember that social accountability is exercised on a continuous basis – we see it manifested through the media, the judiciary, public hearings, campaigns and demonstrations. It can be both formal and informal; but it must be exercised responsibly. As Nelson Mandela once said, "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

1.3 Social Accountability: The role of the State ⁵

Given the dominance of the political economy of rent in the region, to move from a situation where the citizens have traditionally been dependent on the State to one of mutual accountability between the state and citizen is a major challenge. The access of the State to a direct source for funding its operations out of revenues from political and economic rents has underpinned a social contract whereby the citizen is forced to trade the right to participate in decisions on how the State is organized and uses the wealth of the country for a minimal level of public services. The events of the Arab Spring, however, herald the potential demise of the traditional social contract and the ever more widespread demand for a new social contract of mutual accountability between the state and citizen.

⁴ Signing Away The Future, Oxfam Briefing Paper, March 2007

⁵ This section draws on the presentations and discussions in the session "2: Social Accountability: The Role of the State".



The main challenge that remains is continued access of the State to economic and political rents, which can lead to the development of a new set of clients of the State who oppress the rest of the population while continuing to exploit an unequal share of public revenues. The weak capacity of civil society actors and media in exercising social responsibility is an additional challenge. Transition towards deeper social accountability of the state will be challenging due to an entrenched culture of centralized and government centric state institutions and civil servants. As the powerful messages articulated by the Arab events run the risk of becoming fainter, new governments may perceive strengthened social accountability as a threat and could focus primarily on consolidating their newly gained power and subsequently reinstating the viscous cycle. For change to take hold and to yield the desired transformation in people's lives, both the newly forming and reforming governments and civil societies carry a shared responsibility to take this difficult process forward.

Newly formed governments headed by new political powers/actors need to recognize the crucial and foundational value accountability of the state to its citizens and to foster mechanisms for citizen participation in governance processes from local to national level. To ensure state responsiveness to the needs of its people, governance systems on local level need to be strengthened, with power and resources decentralized. Only when municipalities are empowered to properly perform their function, can the citizens hold them accountable as well. The State also plays a crucial role in creating the enabling environment for civil society development, introducing progressive legislation governing the work of NGOs and protecting the right of assembly. Evolving states and reforming governments in the Arab Region can benefit from learning from the experiences of other governments around the world who went through similar and relevant stages of transformation while keeping in mind the specificity of their regional and country contexts.

Civil society needs to keep up its constructive and proactive pressure on evolving state structures and on governing political parties – civil society actions must become institutionalized to increase effectiveness and sustainability and most critically, must remain peaceful. At the same time civil society should also see itself as partners and advocates of the government, especially on the local level, helping the government internalize the concept of “government by the people and for the people”.

In the Arab region, bridges of trust - between governments and civil society – still need to be built, and proactive measures on behalf of the state are required. To enable civil society organizations to hold the State to account, access to information has to be ensured through relevant legislative acts and changing practices of the civil servants. A transparent relationship with the media is also important. Participation of CSOs in national development planning should also be made mandatory.

In Tunisia, the Ministry of Regional Development and Regional Planning has been applying participatory processes to discuss distribution of resources, using a transparent set of indicators. A number of meetings between the government and NGOs were organized to draw on their recommendations. More than 600 focus groups were held to discuss strategic vision and projects that should be implemented on the ground. In Sudan, the Government has taken measures to reach out to CSOs through the mechanism of General Review Report. In Egypt, Social Fund for Development is focusing specifically on reaching out to and working with civil society organizations.



To live up to its role in holding the state to account, civil society organization should also demonstrate the same levels of transparency and accountability that they demand from the governments. Internal governance structures of the CSOs in the region need strengthening, and their capacities built through continuous trainings.

1.4 Social Accountability: the Role of Civil Society ⁶

Social accountability mechanisms have the potential to channel current, and sometimes volatile, levels of “social energy” in a constructive and productive manner. In contrast to some forms of advocacy and social activism that adopt confrontational approaches and aggravate citizen-state relations, social accountability approaches often result in strengthened citizen-state relations, while fighting corruption and achieving institutional/behavioral change. Emerging civil society movements are still in the process of identifying modes of engagement with other stakeholders that could lead to a constructive and positive contribution to the process of change, beyond street mobilization.

To be effective agents of social accountability, CSOs must be able to access information, mobilize citizens, make their voices heard and negotiate a response from public authorities. CSOs must also themselves strive to be legitimate, transparent, democratic and accountable organizations. Fundamentally, social accountability is about transforming relations between civil society and state actors - creating new forms of balanced, evidence-based and “critically collaborative” relationships, based on a shared understanding of each other’s respective legitimate rights and responsibilities.

Experiences from transitions in Eastern Europe highlight that “democracy is a marathon, not a sprint”, as it requires long-term focused trust building and establishment of sustainable mechanisms of interaction.

In Croatia, during the years of transition, a long journey for nurturing trust between civil society and government actors, based on mutual respect and a shared understanding of respective rights and responsibilities, was undertaken. To have accountability mechanisms properly set up and functioning in the transition countries, a vision of what needs to be achieved is necessary along with the mechanisms and systems specifically designed to the context and needs of the individual country. The National Foundation for Civil Society Development in Croatia was created with the support from the state to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations. It was one example of a mechanism for dialogue, collaboration and partnership between civil society and government.

⁶ This section draws on the presentations and discussions in the session “3: Social Accountability: The Role of Civil Society”.



To foster social accountability in the Arab region, social accountability infrastructure comprised of institutionalized and sustainable mechanisms that remain in place even after a change of the government, is required. There is also a need for an analysis of past failures in development policies and a systematic examination of accountability practices and codes of conduct that have been used in the past by governments and civil society in the region. To achieve constructive engagement, governments must realize that although civil society wants to engage with the government and participate in its policy making and decisions, it nevertheless has a right to scrutinize and contest government's decisions. Unfortunately, although CSOs now have the possibility to reach high level government officials, such access has not led to an optimal level of transparent information-sharing or increased their influence on policy-making.

Case-study 2.1 The Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in the Arab World (ANSA-AW) is the first regional network that focuses on promoting social accountability. The ANSA-AW targets four main actors namely: Government, Civil Society, Media and Private Sector. The ANSA-AW is the result of several national and regional consultations, culminating in Regional Launching Conference held in Morocco in 2012. That conference brought together more than 100 representatives of the civil society, the government, the private sector and media personnel, and a number of donors and regional and international social accountability practitioners.

ANSA-AW's objectives include: Raising Awareness on the theory and practice of social accountability and participatory governance; Developing and Building the Capacity of the network's members on the concepts and tools of social accountability; Providing Technical and Financial Support to interested members in applying social accountability tools; and Strengthening Communication and Knowledge and Experience Exchange between members and regional and international stakeholders. The ANSA-AW currently includes members from 7 Arab countries (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen). The focus of its work has been on the following pillars: Access to Information; Budget Transparency; Improving Service Delivery; and Freedom of Association.

Amr Lashin, CARE Egypt/ ANSA AW Executive Secretariat. <http://www.ansa-aw.net>

Youth-led uprisings testify to a process of emergence and renewal of civil society after decades of control that have profoundly weakened societal organization. Social and youth movements (especially those using social networks and information and communications technology), volunteer initiatives, new civil society organizations, independent labor unions, and new political parties are on the rise, and established civil society organizations are growing in strength. Yet, many of these actors are still relatively weak, and lack the required capacities and tools to propose and to advocate for the necessary interventions, whether at a policy or program level, that could affect the desired change. One of the major dimensions of the needed transformative change in the Arab region is the independence of civil society. Authoritarian regimes had manipulated and captured civil society through various mechanisms of selective repression, cooptation, clientelism and corruption. The governments in the region should take active measures to empower CSOs, trade unions and other professional associations through legislative frameworks and other incentives. They also need to recognize civil society as an equal partner in the governance process, creating institutionalized mechanisms for engaging citizens and CSOs in policy making.



In this context, one of the main development challenges in the Arab region is to pass from an instrumental approach that uses civil society to achieve developmental objectives, such as democratization and poverty reduction, to an approach that focuses on supporting civil society development as an end in itself. Therefore, development work should focus less on the participation of CSOs in the execution of programs and activities and more on the utilization of these development programs and activities as opportunities to solicit and facilitate civic engagement. Work should focus on the development and strengthening of the capacities of new civil society organizations through their participation in these programs and through development planning and policy processes at large. In other words, the issue in the situation of transition is less on how to programmatically partner with existing CSOs than on how to harness evolving civil society movements into constructive outlets for public goods that lead to representative developmental States.

1.5 Social Accountability: the role of media – both traditional and social media ⁷

A strong, independent media has a powerful role to play in promoting social accountability, amplifying the voice of the citizens, facilitating the dialogue between the citizens and the state, acting as a sounding board for government policies, and fulfilling the watch dog function to protect against abuse of power. To enable media to play a prominent role in holding the government accountable, it needs to have a functioning infrastructure, professional skills and editorial independence, financial sustainability, as well as a broader enabling environment, which includes the legislation, regulatory frameworks and other institutional factors.

In times of transitions, the role of the media is even more complex. With many forces actively involved in the political process, such as the military, the revolutionary movement, the representatives of the old regime, traditional religious institution, figures of the opposition, to name just some of them, media has to strive for a delicate balance, of providing voice for all of those forces, but also holding them all accountable. Transition periods have broken numerous taboos. For example, in Egypt before the revolution, the idea of media monitoring military institutions or big religious figures was unthinkable; now it is a common practice. New media is increasingly playing a leading role in this process, initiatives such as Morsi Meter and Askar Kaziboun in Egypt, as shining examples of that. Twitter, facebook and youtube could be seen as the social radars and social warning systems, providing indicators of how society moves towards a certain trend. But the absolute freedom for this type of media also raises concerns about its credibility as the source of news.

Although the discussion about the media revolved around the new approaches to dealing with the news, some of the speakers have questioned the degree to which the media has actually changed post-revolution. Some speakers argued that there are not many differences between traditional and new media except for technology, and that the present performance of the media does not differ that much from the past - talk shows are filled with opinion, rather than facts and in-depth analysis.

⁷This section draws on the presentations and discussions in the session “4: Social Accountability: The Role of the Media”.



Furthermore, although the role of the media in strengthening governmental accountability is critical, there is also a need to ensure media credibility. Yet accredited streamlined mechanisms for ensuring credibility are weak and many journalists gather their news based on their contacts and present news based on their bias. The Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities (MNRA) is one example of such mechanism that was discussed. A recent meeting of MNRA in Lisbon adopted a declaration on the fight against gender stereotyping in the audiovisual media and a set of indicators and assessment tools that identify sexism and discriminatory stereotypes in the audiovisual media .

The issue of media accountability in relation to the sources of funding was also debated, and arguments made for the need to introduce legislation to shield the media from control by the funding sources. Media outlets owned by governments or businessmen, who have their own interests to promote, cannot be perceived as independent. Although fully independent media does not exist, media environment that ensures some independence has to be created. The recipients on information should be free to receive all messages, representing different political views and interests, without control or censorship.

The role of citizen journalists in offering alternative view to the public, alongside other sources of information, is also very important, and should be protected. Bloggers and journalists have an important role to play, both in distributing information and in influencing conventional media. Bloggers, offer an alternative opinion to what is presented in the mainstream. Citizen journalism is investigative journalism by people reporting directly from the events. However, citizen journalism is still overwhelmingly limited to the Internet.

1.6 Conclusions and Recommendations ⁸

There are numerous actions necessary to promote social accountability, actions that all actors- from government officials, to civil society and the media, and to citizens themselves - must undertake. The first prerequisite at the country level is to define social accountability within the country setting so that it fits its social, economic and political context. A broad dialogue in which all parties participate is fundamental and requires a basic awareness among all stakeholders (government, private sector, CSOs including media and citizens) about the importance of social accountability, including the true meaning of citizenship with both its rights and responsibilities. Raising awareness about social accountability should be accompanied by stimulating the emergence of a culture of respecting and fulfilling human rights in society and increasing citizens' knowledge of their rights as these are the basic values to which a government can be held accountable.

The establishment of a minimum legal and institutional framework to create an enabling environment for social accountability is another step. If citizens cannot access relevant information, either because such information it is not systematically collected by the service provider or not made available by government and government is not transparent in the way it allocates resources and provides services , it becomes very

⁸ This section draws on results of discussions during the working groups of Session 5: Social Accountability: key challenges and opportunities in the Arab region.



difficult for citizens to hold their government to account. Even in countries where certain information should be made public by law, government institutions have a tendency to be secretive and regularly frustrate efforts to access such information. In addition to access for information, additional rights and freedom are necessary, including the freedom of expression and the freedom of association and an independent judiciary.

An additional action is to ensure consistency and balance. To enhance the capacity of civil society actors in holding governments accountable, civil society organizations and media need to become more transparent and accountable to their constituencies as well. Simultaneously, legislation governing NGOs should not impair the free functioning capabilities of the organizations.

Building the capacity and ability of citizens to demand accountability and to manage the process itself is also crucial. What is needed is a culture of asking critical questions to those in power. Citizens need to regard basic services not as generous gifts from government officials but rather the fulfillment of their rights. Even if such awareness exists, experienced civil society organizations are necessary to collect and analyze information, to involve the media, to generate wider public support and understanding, and to negotiate with the government.

Of course, the willingness and capacity of the government to listen and respond to citizens also has to be strengthened. For the government to respond adequately to demands for improved services there needs to be sufficient pressure from higher levels in government or from the public to enforce decision makers to respond. Failure to respond could lead to potential sanctions like not being re-elected or being reprimanded by the system. Service providers should be willing to respond, and, fundamentally, must have the ability to respond to citizen feedback.

During the discussion, no clear consensus on which actor should take a primary, leading role in promoting social accountability was evident. Disagreements arose as to whether civil society actors or the government itself should take the lead. Government officials spoke of a concerted effort, while civil society actors revealed a deep mistrust of the government and spoke of their fear that the government would lead to influence and circumvent the process itself. One government official spoke of his distrust of civil society organizations, and complained that CSOs must not criticize the government's policies after officials had conceded to a meeting with them. Thus, critically, much depends on the attitude and openness of government and its willingness (i.e. political will) to create a conducive environment for improved social accountability. For governments to enhance their legitimacy and build trust, they must begin by taking a clear and strong stance against corruption, beginning with in-house anti-corruption actions. In addition, what was and remains evident is the importance of an organized civil society working with or influencing an independent media; their constant monitoring of the social accountability process cannot be over-stated. For social accountability to work in transition countries, it is necessary to build trust among actors, and to establish stable mechanisms and infrastructure of interaction between government and CSOs.



Based on plenary discussions, as well as working group deliberations, the following recommendations were proposed for the four actors:

For the State

- While social accountability is important, horizontal accountability also needs to be strengthened, by building capacity and ensuring independence of the judiciary, as well as audit and oversight institutions.
- Access to information and particularity disclosure of information related to budgets on national and local levels is essential for increasing efficiency of government institutions through improved accountability. Freedom of information legislation should be prioritized by the Government.
- Decentralization should be clearly addressed in the new constitutions in the region. Comprehensive strategies for gradual decentralization should be developed, considering issues of budgets, allocation of functions, service delivery and capacity development. Implementation of national policies on local level should also be monitored, opening up access to local level information and introducing sound information management and monitoring systems at local level. Possibilities for creating public/private partnership to increase the revenues of the municipalities should also be studied.
- State Institutions should view CSOs as partners, encouraging civil society participation in planning, budget allocation and service delivery; recognizing their legitimate role in contesting government's decisions. Legislation on the freedom to assemble and organize, as well as freedom of speech needs to be revised. Laws on NGOs should also be revised to reflect a more constructive and equal relationship between the state and society.
- The role of the media in promoting accountability should be recognized by the civil servants, who should cooperate with the media in sharing information with the public.

For Civil Society

- Civil society organizations need to play a more active role in advocating for new laws on access to information, freedom to assessable and NGO laws. They should also more actively advocate for decentralization as means to foster grass-roots democracy.
- Coordination among CSOs focusing on similar issues needs to be improved, to foster complementarity instead of competition.
- CSOs should also work on improving their standards of performance, ensuring transparency of their operations, and strengthening internal governance systems.
- For CSOs, especially on the national level, outreach at the grassroots level is crucial, to ensure they are accountable to the citizens and communities, not external actors.
- It is necessary to revisit definitions of civil society, particularly to include those outside the professional NGO sector (e.g. community-based organizations and social movements).



For the Media

- There is a lack of legislation in the region to enable media to hold government, political parties, and other actors accountable. Access to information is crucial for media to play a more active role in promoting accountability. Mass media, both traditional and social media, should be looking at ways to partner with civil society organizations to lobby for freedom of information legislation and monitor its implementation.
- Media should play a more active role in educating citizens about their rights and responsibilities. Special emphasis should be placed on projecting a more positive and active image of the role of women in the society, and on advocating for the rights of women.
- Complementary relationships should be developed between the social and traditional media.

For International organizations

- International organizations should play a more active role in promoting social accountability. They hold a convening power to bring together state actors, civil society and media to discuss complex governance issues (Arab Governance Week is example of such work). By promoting multi-stakeholder consultation processes, such as country-led governance assessments, they create platforms for potentially constructive dialogue focused on objective criteria, such as indicators, allowing for more constructive discussions.
- Accountability standards should also apply to the operations of international organizations. They should strive to be fully transparent by disclosing information about budgets and their operations, and inclusive, by involving and consulting a wide range of civil society organizations.



Chapter 2 : Governance Assessments and Governance Indicators in the Arab Region

2.1 Introduction

Multiple reviews of MDG achievements have highlighted governance as a missing link in the achievement and sustainability of MDG results. As international attention is focused on the outcomes from Rio+20, and the discussion of the post-2015 framework, questions are raised about the role governance would have in new international commitments, and, accordingly, how advances in governance may be measured and for what purposes. On the national level, the improved supply of and demand for high quality data on governance could result in improved social accountability -- with the active engagement of multiple stakeholder groups. Active collaboration between policy-makers, national institutions, citizens and civil society in indicator definition and data collection processes could be a more powerful catalyst for long term improvements in democratic practice than measurement of results alone.

The attempts to translate complex concepts of governance into numbers that can be measured over time and across countries have intensified since the late 1990s. Global indices that rank countries performance on various aspects of governance and democracy, such as Worldwide Governance Indicators of the World Bank, Corruption Perceptions Index of Transparency International, USAID-funded Freedom in the World Index, are often used to determine development assistance decisions by the donors. While such global rankings and indicators play important role in invigorating the discussions about the state of governance, they are often criticized for a variety of conceptual and methodological limitations. The concept of governance is suffering from lack of theoretical grounding. The quality of data collection differs dramatically among countries in the samples, raising questions about appropriateness of comparisons. Moreover, starting points among countries with the same ranking are very different. Consequently, simplified ranking cannot capture the evolution of a specific country, or demonstrate its commitment to reform. The measures are often based on surveys of expert perceptions, which do not necessarily reflect the experiences of population at large, especially the marginalised groups. Some governments in developing countries regard the indicators as biased and not relevant to understanding the reality in their countries. Furthermore, they do not allow for disaggregation beyond the national level, and do not capture in-country regional variations. So the results of such global comparison measurements cannot be used for policy reforms on national level. In addition to these technical issues, externally driven assessments raise issues of legitimacy and national ownership, as they are often conducted by international experts, and are not part of broader sustained efforts to tackle the underlying problems.

Recognizing the limitations of global measurements and acknowledging the importance of local targets and measures on democratic governance, a number of international organizations and bilateral donors, including UNDP, have been advocating for and promoting country-led governance assessments .



Such assessment could serve many purposes. It can enhance a country's capacity to evaluate measure and monitor progress towards democratic governance today and in the future. An assessment makes it easier to understand the quality of governance. With better understanding comes more effective action to improve the practice of democratic governance. An assessment can, for example, help to identify institutions and practices that perpetuate unfair and sub-standard provision of services to marginalized and vulnerable groups. The process also can provide opportunities for the poor to voice their concerns .

UNDP's Global Programme on Governance Assessments

The UNDP has been advocating for and supporting implementation of country-led governance assessments through its Global Programme on Governance Assessments since 2004. The programme is coordinated by the Oslo Governance Center. The UNDP approach to governance assessments is built on in-depth institutional and context analysis, and is driven by the strategic principles of national ownership, capacity development, and alignment to national processes. Key activities of the Global Programme include strengthening national ownership through multi-stakeholder engagement, supporting countries in defining and selecting indicators that are country-contextualized, pro-poor and gender sensitive, assisting in the development of national databases on democratic governance, and promoting the uptake and use of governance indicators in policy making. In October 2011, it organised the Oslo Governance Forum ⁹, which brought together more than 270 policy makers, experts and practitioners. One of the outcomes of the Forum was the adoption of the "Oslo Principles on Democratic Governance Assessments" ¹⁰. As a regional follow up, in November 2011, the Africa Forum on Civil Society and Governance Assessments showcased innovation and leadership in Africa in using assessments and technology to promote social accountability on the continent. The consultation in the context of the Arab Governance Week was envisioned as a second regional follow up.

Producing data is just one in a series of steps in the process of conducting a governance assessment. It is often the least problematic. For assessments to have an impact on governance performance, the data need to be used by key stakeholders able to influence policies. The road to policy influence varies with the kind of actors who lead the assessment. Where the assessment is led by actors external to the government, activities such as lobbying, advocacy and outreach become important in strengthening the uptake of data in policy process. Such assessments can serve as critical social accountability and transparency mechanisms for governance performance and citizen voice. Country-specific and disaggregated indicators allow targeting specific institutions and practices that have to be changed.

⁹ <http://gaportal.org/events/detail/the-oslo-governance-forum-democratic-governance-assessments-for-social-accountability-oslo-2011>

¹⁰ <http://www.oslogovernanceforum.org/images/stories/PDFs/oslo-principles.pdf>



Governance Assessments and Governance Indicators in the Arab Region

Governance assessments can be initiated by the service-providing institution, like the Ministry of Health, by a semi-independent institution, like a Governance Performance Administration or Information and Decision Support Center, or by civil society organizations or by a combination of these institutions. Civil society should be actively involved at both the national and local level and during all stages of design, implementation, data collection and analysis. By doing so, the governance assessments can strengthen both the supply and demand side of good governance and build the capacities of civil society organizations to enter into a constructive dialogue with government at various levels .

2.2 Governance Data ¹¹

The lack of accurate, timely and relevant governance data affects the ability of citizens to hold their governments accountable and hinders efforts of national government and other stakeholders to ensure good performance management and to measure progress in governance. In most Arab countries, the institutional framework for producing and disseminating traditional statistics is weak. Institutional arrangements that establish independence of statistical offices are lacking, and data-collection activities are monopolized by the state because non-governmental actors are not allowed to collect data. For political reasons, the methodology for data collection by national statistical offices is often constructed in a manner that does not allow for data to be disaggregated below the level of large regions. Thus, regional disparities are hidden. Statistical offices can suffer from inability to attract the most qualified human resources, so the quality of traditional statistical products varies. In addition, the skills for interpreting and communicating results, and explaining to the users the limitations of the data, are traditionally weak in the Arab region. Furthermore, the lack of creativity in developing new statistical products that satisfy the needs of politicians, media, business community, and civil society is making statistical offices more and more irrelevant to the public sphere. Consequently, official statistics on traditional economic and social data, such as unemployment, inflation, and minorities, is not always perceived as credible. While indicators on socio-economic situation of the population are regularly collected by the National Statistics Offices, governance data is not considered to be part of their responsibilities. The work of Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, featured in Case-Study box 2.1 is an example that could be considered for replication by other statistical offices in the region .

¹¹This section draws on presentations and discussions in sessions “7a: Challenges and Opportunities for Governance Data”, “8a: Critical analysis of regional and national efforts in producing comparative data on governance” and “10a: Accountability in public budgets and expenditures”, as well as background paper “Production and utilization of governance data in the Arab region” by Dr. Magued Osman, Cairo University, commissioned by UNDP.



Case-study 2.1 Governance Surveys of Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Over the last decade, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) has developed methodologies and tools for measuring governance through a number of local, national and regional projects, and established a separate governance statistical unit. In 2010 governance survey aimed to assess perceptions and first-hand experiences of citizens on various issues related to governance, with a particular focus on corruption indicators. The civil servant module included questions on budget administration, personnel management, decision-making process and reporting of corruption. The household module covered questions related to actual experiences with public services (mainly health, education and judicial), and experiences of corruption in PA institutions. The survey outputs were produced in two separate descriptive reports, widely distributed, and uploaded on the website of PCBS, with raw data available upon request. Bilateral consultations were also held with selected Ministries and service providers to discuss survey results and identify strategies to improve performance on governance.

Mustafa Khawaja, Palestinian Center Bureau of Statistics, occupied Palestinian territory

Significantly, data critical for understanding how the State is governed are typically not made available to the public. Such data includes revenues from exploring natural resources, budget allocations, salaries of governmental employees, and distribution of public and private investments by geographical location. Furthermore, data that can be used to measure inequalities in access to opportunities are not even collected, or, when collected, also not made available. Such data includes political representation, income distribution, and access to credit by social groups (gender, ethnic groups, tribal affiliation, residence and income groups). This lack of transparency in governance data protects politicians and government employees from being accountable to their citizens, builds mistrust that can, and has in several countries already, turn to justifiable frustration.

The collection and dissemination of governance data in the Arab region is complicated by the lack of freedom of information legislation. Restrictive laws, policies and institutional arrangements further confound access to information. While there have been initiatives in the region aiming to regulate access to information, some of these initiatives have quite restrictive provisions. For example, Jordan enacted a “Free Flow of Information Act” in 2007, but some of its provisions actually make access to information more difficult. More recently, Tunisia adopted a Decree-Law on Freedom of Information in 2011, and published the circular regulating its implementation on 3 May 2012, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day. But some important issues, such as protection of whistleblowers, were left out of the law, and there is not independent oversight mechanism provided to properly implement the Decree.

In Morocco, the new Constitution adopted in July 2011 includes a provision guaranteeing access to public information.



Governance Assessments and Governance Indicators in the Arab Region

In the Arab region, there have been multiple initiatives to enhance the use of ITCs in maintaining and facilitating information flows between government departments. For example in Egypt, the Ministry of Local Development has set up “RABET” - an electronic information management system to improve planning and policy making at the local level in Egypt. It connects all local administrative units from villages to governorates to the Ministry, systematically collecting data on a wide range of socio- economic and governance indicators to share it with decision-makers on all levels. In the future, the data would also be accessible to the citizens, so they can use it to monitor the situation on the ground.

Other examples from Egypt include Egypt Information Portal and the Egyptian Government Portal. While these portals do aim to provide access to information to the citizens, their interface is not very use-friendly, the registration requirements are cumbersome, and a lot of information can only be requested on-line, and yet has to be collected in person. The portals also carry blanket disclaimers about the validity of information. The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics is solely responsible for production of information according to the current legislation in Egypt. Meanwhile, successive governments since the revolution have issued several Law drafts that promote restrictions on freedom of information, and put the final word in the hands of the security services to determine what is available and what is obscured. Such restrictive governmental drafts have emerged despite the presence of a legislative draft prepared by non-governmental organizations in line with international standards. If the NGO’s draft were adopted, it could be classified among the world top five laws promoting the free flow of information.

In Yemen, in June 2012, the Parliament approved the Access to Information Law, making Yemen the second country in the region to pass such legislation. This step was a result of several years of advocacy work by civil society organizations in the country. The Economic Media Centre was at the forefront of advocacy work, forming a team of advocates, including lawyers, human rights activists and journalists, holding seminars inside government agencies to educate employees about the law’s implications, and sending regular text messages to parliamentarians on the subject. General information campaigns to raise awareness among the public were also organized. The next steps will involve developing a procedure to uphold the right of access to information outlined in the law and implementing the law’s provisions in all institutions and government bodies.

The ability of citizens and CSOs to access information about public budgets and expenditures and to monitor and influence processes related to the allocation and management of public resources is essential for building safeguards against corruption. It is also critical for ensuring that public resources are allocated equitably. This requires a paradigm shift in the society, from a culture of secrecy to one of transparency, which entails a fundamental change in the mindsets of politicians and bureaucrats and recognition from citizens that information is their right.



A case-study of an in-depth analysis of municipal budgets carried out in Jordan revealed that the budgets of the municipalities come mostly from the central government, thus encouraging accountability towards the central government rather than the residents of municipality. The inter-governmental transfers system does not take into account indicators of poverty and unemployment; rather, it tends to reinforce existing socio-economic inequalities. Despite highly centralized governance system in Jordan, municipal authorities have the legal authority to collect a relatively significant number of taxes and fees, yet these taxes and fees are all too often not collected. At the same time, citizen's lack structured mechanisms to access information on financial budgets of municipalities or to hold them accountable.

In Sudan, the Ministry of Finance and National Economy, experimented with participatory approaches to budgeting. Civil society organizations, research institutions, political parties, civil servants and representatives of the private sector were involved in budget preparation at the level of the local government unit, the governorates or al-Wilayat, the Wilayah legislative councils and the central government. When stakeholders from different areas of society work together on budgeting and expenditures concerning strategy, programs and priorities, they increase the possibility that the needs of different groups would be equally addressed. In 2013, the Government of Sudan plans to increase and further institutionalize the open participation of all stakeholders to share ideas on budgeting and budget management with local authorities.

The role of non-state actors in collecting and producing data on governance is also extremely important. Studies conducted by independent research organizations and universities and indicators of governance constructed by civil society organizations generate independent debate about the quality of governance, key problems and proposed solutions, and contribute to an informed dialogue with governmental actors. Such assessments also represent a paradigm shift, demonstrating that the citizens have the right and responsibility to rate state performance on all governance levels. Strengthened political commitment to evidence-based policy making on behalf of the governments, demonstrated by creating enabling environment for public accessibility of basic governance-related data, is necessary to enable such initiative to contribute to improved governance in the region.

There are several initiatives aimed to produce indicators of governance by Arab experts based on international standards and tailored to the Arab Region. Those initiatives include: the Arab Human Development reports, produced with UNDP support; Arab Democracy Barometer and Arab Democracy Index work, led by the Arab Reform Initiative; State of Local Democracy in the Arab World, produced by International IDEA; and Arab Opinion Index, produced by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS). Three case-studies of such assessments are presented below. Regional efforts to construct governance indices are relatively new and critical discussions of methodologies for collection and analysis of data are needed to sharpen the tools and to ensure policy impact of the results. Positive trends demonstrated by various international and regional assessments by a number of countries on the eve of the Arab Spring attest to the need to focus more closely on inequalities within countries.



Governance Assessments and Governance Indicators in the Arab Region

Case-study 2.2 Local Democracy Assessment in the Arab Region

IDEA carried out research on the State of Local Democracy (SoLD) in the Arab World in four Arab countries (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Yemen) on the eve of the uprisings. (The report was produced in late 2010). In each country, four municipalities were selected for in-depth research, taking into account diversity of geographic and developmental conditions. SoLD methodology assesses the level and quality of local democracy in two main measures: by focusing on representative democracy (elections, political parties and elected officials) and participatory democracy (popular participation, civil society and non-governmental organizations, and consensus-based policymaking); and by examining the institutions of representative and participatory democracy and the processes and practices involved in the implementation of local democracy on the ground. Assessment process is driven by municipal officers, administrators, NGOs and civil leaders - all at the local levels. The questionnaire encourages users to engage in systematic analyses of positions of power in local democratic institutions and practices, to focus on the most significant problems in each area and to make recommendations for improvements.

The assessment aims to answer the following questions:

- What are the elements of democracy that are currently excellent, satisfactory or failing?
- How effective have previous reform efforts been and what lessons could be learned from the past?
- What actions can be undertaken by city/local authorities and other stakeholders to develop and sustain more democratic governance?

Ayman Ayoub, Director of West Asia and North Africa region, International IDEA

Case-study 2.3 Arab Democracy Index

The Arab Reform Initiative is a network of independent Arab research and policy institutes. Since 2008, it has produced three reports on the Arab Democracy Index to provide a regular Arab evaluation of change in the region. Data collection for the fourth report is underway. The Index allows a numerical reading of 40 different indicators chosen to reflect the democratic pulse of the Arab region based on the prevailing democracy paradigm. The Index uses two kinds of indicators: those that measure the means of democratic transition (such as legislation), and those that measure the practices of democratic transition (such as elections). The indicators are also divided among four principles or values: those that measure the strength of public institutions (e.g. the separation of powers or the accountability of government); those that gauge respect for rights and freedoms (e.g. the freedom of political parties or ability to organize demonstrations and protests); those that measure the reach of the rule of law in the political regime (for example, the independence of the judiciary or the prevalence of arbitrary detention); and finally those that measure equality and social justice (e.g. gender equality, illiteracy rates among men and women, and the proportion of male and female university graduates).

Mudar Kassis, Birzeit University, occupied Palestinian territory.



Case-study 2.4 Jordan Reform Watch

The Jordan Reform Watch project was launched in 2012 to translate the process of reform into simple numbers that could be updated on monthly basis and monitored over time. It focuses on three indicators: anti-corruption and transparency (performance of anti-corruption commissions; performance of the parliament; performance of the government; law and legislations); political reform (civic liberties; women in reform; political participation; role of civil society; performance of the parliament); and economic and social policies (right to education; right to healthcare; right to work; right to suitable living conditions; right to benefit from science and culture; role of civil society; role of the parliament; role of the government). The value for each sub-indicator is agreed upon in a consensual manner at a meeting of experts with different backgrounds based on the research about on-going political and economic processes.

Mohammed Hussainy, Director of Identity Center, Jordan

2.3 Local Governance and Assessments ^{12 - 13}

Due to their mostly rentier economies and centralized character of the State, most, if not all, Arab countries missed out on the wave of decentralization that took place in many low and middle income countries during the last few decades of the 20th century. In the Arab region, local government is usually not seen as a separate sphere of government, and therefore is not well defined (and protected) in the constitution or in related legislation. Local governments thus operate isolated from the other spheres of government dealing with “left over” social services that are deemed too insignificant for concern from the line ministries. For most regimes, the institution of local government has been, and remains in some cases, more an instrument for central government to exercise control over its citizens than to stimulate and facilitate development.

¹² This section draws on presentations and discussions in sessions “9a: Country-cases of Local-level Assessments” and “10c: Citizen/community-led monitoring of public service”, as well as the background paper “Challenges and opportunities for improving Social Accountability at the local level in the Arab region; how can local governance assessments contribute?” by Paul Van Hoof, IDASA, commissioned by UNDP.

¹³ A useful source for practitioners designing a tailored local governance assessment, is A Users’ Guide to Local Governance Assessments, which compiles existing knowledge on decentralization and local governance measurement and provides a platform for understanding and navigating the array of assessment tools that exist. <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/democratic-governance/oslo-governance-center/governance-assessments/a-users-guide-to-measuring-local-governance-/LG%20Guide.pdf>



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The first (and sometimes only) step in the direction of decentralization in the region is the institution of an elected local council. These elected councils, whose main function is to monitor the delivery of services provided by deconcentrated ¹⁴ units of line ministries, have no legislative power and very limited implementing capacities. Therefore, in the Arab region the term 'local government' actually refers to a 'hybrid' model of an elected council together with a purely appointed set of executive officials. Local governments have no fiscal autonomy because their authority and capacity to claim local taxes and user charges for services are quite limited. Therefore, they depend completely on mostly earmarked grants from central government - which may not even reach the municipalities. Thus, the upward accountability structures are reinforced and the autonomy of these local authorities is further limited. The lack of authority to make political decisions independent of central government leaves them unable to respond adequately to demands from citizens, even for the limited functions they have and the services they are obliged and expected to provide, because they remain under strong control of the national ministries and are guided by national policies rather than local priorities.

As a result, local governments seem to operate in isolation, disconnected from their citizens. Basic economic, social and statistical data relevant for the proper management of the municipality or district are either not collected or, if collected, not made available to the public, further hampering efficiency and accountability. In addition, there are hardly any communication and consultation mechanisms between local governments and their citizens. Public meetings are rarely organized, there are no consultation structures or partnerships with civil society, and complaint mechanisms for citizens do not exist. At the same time, given its direct impact on the everyday lives of individuals, the local level plays a key role in democratic reform processes, contributing significantly to achieving further progress towards the consolidation and promotion of democracy at other levels of governance.

Governance assessments can be the first form of constructive dialogue between the state and its citizens. The process of assessment empowers citizens as they get used to the idea that they can ask critical questions and begin to hold service providers accountable by providing feedback on their performance. Assessment could also contribute to a mind shift among service providers and decision-makers: while paid by the state, they are actually working for and accountable to the public. This section presents the five case studies of local governance assessments, presented during the 2 sessions of the Arab Governance Week, and draws some common themes from the discussions that followed the presentations. Each case-study illustrates how such process could be carried out, and what outcomes could be expected, while the two detailed case-studies presented in the text boxes also elaborate on the methodology.

¹⁴ The term "deconcentration" is used in the literature on local governance to describe administrative decentralization, when administrative responsibility for specified functions is assigned to the units at lower level of government, without delegating decision-making authority. Although based on local level, these units are accountable directly to the central level, and do not have local accountability.



Case-study 2.5 Assessment Toolkit for Promoting Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in Palestinian Local Government Units (LGUs)

The Assessment Toolkit was developed through a joint project of UNDP and the Ministry of Local Government to help identify bottlenecks in the LGUs' performance, and to develop interventions to improve their tasks and functions, and to effectively address the needs of the citizens. It is a diagnostic tool that identifies the strengths and weaknesses of each municipality in six main areas of municipal performance: Administrative Regulations and Human Resources, Council (chair/mayor and members), Finance, Engineering & Planning, Supplies & Procurement and Community Participation. This toolkit aims at measuring the the quality of performance of the LGU, its relationships with citizens, the availability of procedures and mechanisms to strengthen integrity, and the degree of compliance by the LGO with prevailing laws and regulations.

Data collection methodology includes questionnaires targeting the municipality and its employees (weight 35%), focus group discussions of municipal officials and of citizens and civil society organizations (weight 20%), revision and verification of public documents and records (weight 20%), interviews (weight 10%), and a questionnaire for citizens and public audience (weight 15%). The toolkit allows for both quantitative and qualitative analysis of LGU performance. Each question carries a range of responses with a value from 0 to 10. The data is then entered into an excel sheet to facilitate understanding of the results for any reviewer of the performance of the piloted municipality. In addition, a qualitative analysis report is usually attached to the quantitative findings to assist the reviewer in understanding the municipality's strengths and weaknesses, and developing an intervention 'reform' plan for each weakness. Thus, the toolkit is useful for objectively measuring the performance of LGUs and presenting it in a manner that is both accessible and unbiased. This unbiased presentation of performance results is particularly valuable for strengthening democratic values and fighting corruption in a politically and socially sensitive environment where political loyalties are dictated by other factors.

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Case-study 2.6 Local Governance Assessment in Egypt

Local Governance Assessment in Egypt is a UNDP-supported project piloted in El-Fayoum Governorate by the Social Contract Center (SCC), affiliated with the Information and Decision Support Center in the Cabinet of Ministers and Local Development Observatory. The Observatory itself is affiliated with the Ministry of Local Development. The Assessment is based on a generic governance assessment framework for Egypt developed in consultation with representatives of sectoral ministries and civil society organisations. It focuses on the following local services areas: water and sanitation; health, education; electricity; transport and roads; and solid waste management. The indicators for each service area are constructed around the following dimensions of governance: accountability; participation; transparency; rule of law; control of corruption; responsiveness; equity; efficiency; and effectiveness.

Data collection for the assessment is carried out through a household survey, covering 6400 respondents (using multistage stratified random sampling) and incorporating interviews with key informants (civil servants, civil society leaders, local academia etc.). To ensure sustainability of the assessment process in the future, local Information Centres of the Ministry of Local Development were used for carrying out the household surveys under the supervision of SSC and LDO. Once the initial reports based on the research finding were drafted, validations workshops were organised on local, governorate and national levels. The objective of these workshops was to start the dialogue process about the assessment findings and discuss the strategies for improving local governance.

The Social Contract Center also undertook a participatory evaluation of the government's comprehensive community development program implemented in 151 poor rural villages in Egypt. The evaluation focused on introducing a citizen community evaluation scheme through providing communities with the tools and skills to assess public services. A more intensive, advanced program of training and evaluation was further piloted in 8 villages. The concept of the project was to empower citizens to evaluate services through very simple scientific methods, and to shift their attitude from passive consumers of services to active participants or partners. The major problem of this approach, however, was that it created numerous expectations on the side of the service users that could not be fulfilled.

Yasmin Khodary and Dalia Bayoumi, Social Contract Centre

Khaled Abdelhalim, Local Development Observatory, Egypt



In Morocco, the National Observatory on Human Development (NOHD) was established to ensure that policy decisions are backed by research evidence. NOHD's mission is to follow up and to evaluate the Human Development policies. The Observatory began by monitoring the implementation of human development programmes at the local level, and then proceeded to design a monitoring framework for local governance. This assessment process aimed to diagnose which aspects of the local governance system may need to be strengthened to improve human development results. The methodology framework adopted by NODH focused on the local level as both an implementation base for services delivery and as an essential territorial base to implement human development policies and to combat poverty. The analysis on the local scale required checking the inter-relations between local, regional and national levels. Special focus was made on assessing core principles of governance criteria - participation, transparency, equality, and the coherence of diverse human development and poverty policies implemented on local level. This study piloted an innovative research approach on local levels and tested a set of qualitative indicators related to local inter-sectorial coherence of the national programs.

Services delivered at the local level, by the local government units and local departments of central ministries are the key areas where the state and citizens interact. Basic public services in the areas of health, education, water, sanitation are essential to citizen well-being and of particular importance to poor and disadvantaged social groups. As a result, many social accountability initiatives focus on improving the quality and accessibility of these services through citizen participation in processes of decision-making and oversight.

In Tunisia, the Tunisian Active Network for Social Accountability has piloted a Participatory Budgeting initiative at the municipal level in Sayada municipality. It has started when some newly-elected mayors realized they could improve their public image by engaging citizens in difficult decisions about resources through public meetings involving communities and government representatives. They have created mechanisms for citizens and the civil society and government to discuss budget constraints together and make trade-offs and optimize the use of scarce public resources. Such participatory budgeting approaches help to allocate scarce resources to those citizens who needed them most, and to push the decentralization agenda forward. The process of participatory budgeting educates the citizens about their rights to access information, to voice their opinion, to vote for public policy priorities, and to hold decision makers accountable for allocation of government budget. At the same time it informs the citizens about the limitations in terms of resources and capacities of the local governments.

The Gaza Office of the Coalition for Accountability and Integrity/AMAN carried out a national campaign to enhance the role of the citizens and media in examining how public resources are spent, focusing specifically on the use of public cars by civil servants for private purposes. A public awareness campaign, including meetings, information billboards, radio and television episodes, was organized to encourage citizens to report vehicles misuse. More than 500 notifications from citizens about government vehicles used outside official working hours were received. As a result of the campaign, a set of policies by the Cabinet to pool cars from certain job categories and identify their uses within the Council of Ministers was introduced. Overall, the collaboration with the Ministry of Transportation was successful, although there were challenges due to a lack of understanding and willingness by some of the officials. The public was also empowered: the



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Every month, they compared their data with the existing government data. This mechanism proved to be an efficient and effective tool to hold government accountable.

The common theme from these examples is the focus on facilitating a dialogue between various stakeholders on both the supply and demand side of governance, and to identify solutions that can be implemented collectively at the local level. Citizens contribute to the assessment process by providing their opinions about the quality of service delivery and governance on the local level and learning about the limitations faced by the local governments. Understanding that local government has limited resources and authority and an increased insight in the actual decision-making process about the use of these limited resources might help citizens to become more realistic in their expectations about what their government is currently able to provide. At the same time, expectations of the citizens involved in the social accountability process at the grass-roots level need to be managed carefully, as many problems and shortcoming cannot be addressed at the local level, due to lack of powers and capacities of local authorities to deal with specific issues related to service delivery that are to be addressed at the higher – district or national levels.

By measuring the actual performance of both elected and centrally appointed government institutions at local levels in various critical aspects of governance (like accountability, transparency, participation, equity, etc.), these assessments identify the shortcomings in the present mechanisms of service delivery. Additionally, they shed light on the local political economy dynamics that explain why services are not up to standard and why the present delivery mechanisms are functioning inadequately. By establishing the relationship between the quality of governance and the quality of service delivery, such assessments can underline the systemic failures that need to be addressed, thus triggering a debate at various levels and fora in society about the need to strengthen democratic governance structures at the local level. In order for increase the policy impact of such assessments, it is necessary to have them institutionalized and engage in dialogue and collaboration with different levels of government, i.e. from central level (ministries) to local level (municipalities).

2.4 Inclusion of women and youth in the governance processes and assessments ¹⁵

Women across the Arab world played, and continue to play, a remarkable role in the transitions of their respective countries. Although there is a common tendency to discuss and analyze what has become known as the “Arab Spring” as a monolithic phenomenon, women’s experience, of each of the “Arab Spring” countries, has been distinct, particularly since each country has undergone change in its own way. Consequently, the occurring transformation defies generalization. Nevertheless, the theme for women’s involvement in the uprisings across the transitioning countries is the same: a demand for justice and gender equality. Women who participated in the transitions did not only call for the change in the oppressive regimes; they also sought greater empowerment and gender equality in all spheres: political, economic and social.

¹⁵ This section draws on presentations and discussions in sessions “11a: Focus on Gender” and “12c: Generating youth-sensitive governance data”.



Regardless of the ongoing fluidity of the situation, a rare opportunity now presents itself for the advancement of greater, women's real political participation in decision-making. This current historic period of transformation also offers significant opportunities for the promotion of gender equality principles within the constitution. Different political processes, including constitutional reform, are now taking place in several countries. In addition, there is a real potential for a dynamic exchange of lessons and experiences gained in countries with similar contexts. To respond to the demands of both women and men, it is critical to promote the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment principles within state institutions, structures and practices; one of the most important entry points for this effort is constitutional reform.

Women and men often have different needs and interests in many areas of governance, and their experiences with institutions vary. Differences also apply by age groups among both genders. In addition, poor people and rural dwellers experience service provision differently from affluent city dwellers. These differences are important when assessing governance to ensure that the voices of marginalised groups are included in the assessment process. Systematic analysis of government institutions and policies needs to be carried out to ensure that the needs of women and youth are properly reflected. To identify differences in perspectives and access to services by women and men and boys and girls, assessment methodologies have to be inclusive and use gender sensitive indicators. Such analysis has to be carried out with direct participation of women and youth people. This could allow tracking the differing impacts of governance reforms on women and men and ascertain whether interventions are positively or negatively affecting one group more than the other.

Gender Sensitive Indicators

According to UNDP's Measuring democratic governance- a framework for selecting pro poor and gender sensitive indicators, indicators can be considered to be inclusive and gender-sensitive if they are:

- Gender specific, such as the number of seats reserved in parliament for women;
- Implicitly gendered, such as maternal mortality or ratio of sexual harassment cases reported vs. prosecuted;
- Chosen separately by men and women and indicate differences in priorities or preferences;
- Disaggregated by sex, and age.

Disaggregated indicators can reveal inequalities between men and women in relation to poverty, public service access, education, employment or participation in governance and decision-making. However, without gender sensitive indicators, the underlying sources of inequalities would not be revealed, and would not be framed as part of policy discussions or reforms proposals.

Analysis of policies from the perspective of particular needs of women allows addressing inequalities in a targeted manner. The process of budget allocation has the potential to either worsen inequalities, or contribute to creating more equitable policies and achieving development goals .



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Gender Responsive Budgeting is the process to ensure that government planning, programming and budgeting contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfillment of women's rights. In Egypt, UNWOMEN has provided extensive support for developing Gender Responsive Social Budgeting Strategy for Education, Health, Water, Manpower, Food Security and Social Security sectors. It was piloted in 27 governorates in partnership with Ministry of Finance, the National Council for Women, Academic institutes, and UN Women. A gender analysis of the national budget, the National Development Plan (2007-2012), and other government policies related to budget were carried out. Media seminars and civil society workshops were organized to raise awareness about gender-responsive budgeting. Training activities and an Arabic e-learning platform were launched to build capacity of MOF employees working on the processes of planning, reviewing and execution national budget. Consequently, gender-responsive budget methodology was institutionalized by the Ministry of Finance.

Focusing the analysis on the local level, and specifically on service delivery, is particularly important from the gender perspective. The delivery of services is especially important for women because their primary gender roles as mothers, housekeepers and caregivers are more dependent on basic services such as health care, water supply, sanitation and education for children than are men's roles. Basic governance services such as political and electoral services, justice and police services and civil registration are also strategically important for women in the pursuit of gender equality and the realization of their human rights. The MDG indicators show that governments are currently failing in their obligations to ensure that services are delivered effectively, particularly to women.

A useful methodology for analyzing how women experience services on local level is the community-based scorecards approach, which is a hybrid of techniques of social audit, community monitoring and citizen report cards. In Albania, UN WOMEN Albania has supported the process of Women Focused Community Based Scorecards. Approximately 2,000 people, 91% of whom were female, took part in 110 meetings and opened forums in 7 targeted regions. The process included community-based performance evaluation, dialogue meeting between community and providers, development of input tracking scorecards, self-evaluation by service providers. Upon completion of the process, scorecards were adopted by service providers as part of their monitoring systems. This exercise allowed the identification of the core challenges that local women face, and created a new culture in which women were empowered to interact regularly with community leaders and local authorities interact regularly.

Another example of UN WOMEN's support to the analysis of women's experiences with service delivery was drawn from the work with the Ministry of Justice in Morocco. A service user survey was carried out in the context of UN Women support to the Ministry of Justice and Freedom in Morocco to improve the quality of services of local family courts in line with the new Family Code. The survey was targeting service users to assess the quality of access to family court services, identify barriers and obstacles, and formulate solutions. It followed legal service users through all stages – from the reception and registration of requests to the notification and implementation of judgments. It tested accessibility, speed of file processing, and the quality and consistency of services provided .



This was the first time that a service user-satisfaction survey had been implemented by a service provider in Morocco. It established a baseline against which service-user satisfaction will be evaluated periodically. The methodology of the survey was also replicated to conduct a study of national-level justice services.

In patriarchal societies, opportunities for young people to influence governance processes are typically limited. Young people have different, and frequently unrecognized, needs in terms of the services provided on local level. At the same time, the youth are increasingly looking for innovative ways to hold the state accountable and to engage in constructive dialogue about policies that directly affect their lives. At the same time, the Arab region has witnessed increased youth participation in political affairs since events unfolded in early 2011. Youth of all ages and backgrounds have been taking to the streets with demands that their voices be heard. In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, a plethora of youth initiatives are coming to life, in the shape of civil society organizations, volunteer initiatives and to some extent new political parties. Through these activities, youth are continuously demanding a greater say in the political developments of their countries and the region as a whole. As such, the role of Arab youth cannot be relegated to the periphery or confined to street protests that -on occasion - result in violence. Rather youth engagement should be central to all discussions and transformative change efforts.

Entry Points for Youth Political Participation

UNDP's Enhancing Youth Political Participation throughout the Electoral Cycle: A Good Practice Guide ¹⁶ offers an overview of entry points for the inclusion of young people in political and electoral processes and compiles good practice examples of mechanisms for civic and political empowerment of young people. It argues that a youth-friendly legal framework is crucial in enabling youth political participation.

Measures such as introducing youth and women's quotas in electoral laws, aligning the minimum voting age and the minimum age of eligibility to run for office, as well as addressing other legal barriers to youth participation, such as simplifying the process of registering youth-led participation, could create enabling legal environment. Mechanisms for their civic and political participation provide them with opportunity to learn the principles of governance from direct experience, and also allow policy makers to incorporate perspectives of young people in policy decisions and to tap into the creative energy of youth in designing policy solutions. Formal participation channels, such as school student councils, town youth councils, national youth councils and regional youth platform, need to be actively supported by the state. Incubators for innovative youth-led initiatives, such as Social Innovation Camps in Armenia, should be encouraged. Formal avenues for communication and advocacy with elected representatives should also be opened for young people, through such mechanisms as shadow youth councils and parliaments, dialogues with legislators, training and internship schemes. During elections, youth should also be included in electoral management body advisory boards, as poll station workers and election observers. At the same time, policy makers should also explore the channels of informal engagement with young people through consultations that give young people an opportunity to generate their own data about governance processes and conduct youth-focused analysis of policies.

¹⁶ http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/electoral_systemsandprocesses/enhancing-youth-political-participation-throughout-the-electoral/



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The UNV Regional Project “Arab Youth for Volunteering for Better Future” places special emphasis on civic education. The best approach is through learning by doing, by creating spaces and opportunities for young people to participate through schools and universities, community-based and voluntary organizations, youth wings of political parties, using online platforms etc. Volunteering has proven to be an effective means to this end, as it strengthens and facilitates the constructive participation of youth, through encouraging both formal and informal participation. Engaging youth as volunteers contributes to the process of peace and development through harnessing their boundless energy, creativity, and knowledge towards the effective provision of services and the development of new and innovative ways for improving their communities. Volunteerism can serve as a way in which girls and young women can socialize and escape the structures of traditions that confined them to their homes.

In Yemen, with support of UNDP, a Yemeni Youth Observatory was established as a non-partisan inclusive and sustainable public oversight organization working to mainstream the interests of youth in policy development. It aims to study and assess the needs and aspirations of the youth, to strengthen the role of youth in the field of policy analysis and to create a strong public opinion in support of youth issues. CARE Egypt, has been working on local level to empower the youth to participate in decision making on service provision. Activities have included raising awareness with local youth leaders on concepts of the social contract between the citizens and the state, and trainings on practices to engage with local officials, getting involved in community consultation and the monitoring of local budgets.

Center for Intercultural Dialogue in Macedonia aims to address youth participation in a systematic manner. Formal systems of support to young people in Macedonia include three elements - (1) mechanisms for involving young people in the governance systems, through structured dialogue between authorities and youth-led decision making; (2) support to youth-led initiatives and projects by both informal and formal youth CSOs; (3) professional youth work offered through youth centers. Young people should be encouraged to define the end results of any type of youth-focused interventions, thus taking ownership and responsibility for their work. Barriers to participation, including language and cultural divides, asymmetric information, formal attitudes, should be removed to ensure active participation of all young people. Process should be based on non-formal learning principles ensuring accessible learning and encouraging questions, thereby empowering the exchange and creation of ideas and approaches.

UNDP Armenia has supported Social Innovation Camp model, providing a forum that unifies people, ideas and digital tools to create innovative web-based solutions to social challenges. The Camps engage with youth organizations working on social issues through an intensive phase of online outreach and participatory workshops. This approach generates many perspectives on social challenges and new ideas on how to address the issues identified. At the final event, ideas are accelerated through the developmental process with software and an accompanying business model often produced within 48 hours. The process injects energy into the projects and creates a collaborative space for “techies”, government and youth to co-create. Each event produces 6 projects conceived, designed and implemented by youth volunteers. Examples of the projects emerging from the events in 2011 and 2012 include a citizen journalism website, a web-based platform for monitoring pre-school education in Yerevan and the digitization of the Armenian National Blood Registry (currently a paper-based system).



Analysis of government institutions and policies carried out the perspective of women and young people and whenever possible, with their direct participation in the process, has the potential to identify systemic mechanisms of exclusion, and come up with recommendations for more inclusive policies. Assessments are part of a political process, not just a technical exercise, so it is important to understand the broader political and cultural context, in which changes in attitudes towards women and youth could be properly targeted. Results of assessments focused on the perspectives of traditionally excluded groups can become important tools for evidence based advocacy and policy making to ensure greater equality in the society.

2.5 Corruption ¹⁷

Anti-corruption activities are identified as one of the key priorities in the region, both by citizens demanding change and by governments trying to respond to those demands. To provide targeted technical support for this process, UNDP has launched the regional project on Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Arab Countries (ACIAC), which currently offers a unique platform that promotes targeted and participatory policy reforms and collective action against corruption across the region. Expert consultations in the region, carried out by ACIAC, have emphasized the need to sharpen the focus on social accountability linking national anti-corruption agenda more closely to the aspirations and expectations of the peoples. Policy initiatives to combat corruption have to be based on solid research evidence. Therefore, assessments measuring the extent of corruption and the way it affects political institutions and service delivery need to be prioritized.

The Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) was adopted at the third session of the Conference of States Parties (CoSP) in 2009. As a result, countries will be increasingly required to closely examine the progress of their implementation efforts and take more concrete steps in the fight against corruption. The Review Mechanism is an intergovernmental process whose overall goal is to assist States Parties in the implementation of the Convention. It is expected to promote and facilitate the provision of technical assistance by enabling States Parties to identify and substantiate specific needs in this regard. It is also expected to provide the CoSP with information on successes, good practices and challenges related to UNCAC implementation, thus promoting a more sustainable knowledge exchange among States Parties.

Each review phase is composed of two review cycles of five years. The first cycle will review chapters III (Criminalization and law enforcement) and IV (International cooperation), and the second cycle will review chapters II (Preventive measures) and V (Asset recovery). Each cycle includes four annual rounds with one fourth of the States Parties selected, by the drawing of lots, to be reviewed during each round. The review process starts with a self-assessment exercise conducted by each country, using the comprehensive UNCAC Self-Assessment Checklist (Checklist). Afterwards, the self-assessment report is analyzed by two other States Parties, which are also selected by drawing of lots. The reviewing States Parties may request additional information through dialogue with the State under review and possibly direct means of information gathering such as a country visit or joint meeting as agreed.

¹⁷ This section draws on presentations and discussions in sessions “12a: Measuring Corruption”.



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The findings of the process are then developed into a country review report, based on a blueprint to ensure consistency, and submitted to the CoSP. The executive summary of this report is made public.

The Review Mechanism is therefore the formal mechanism and the internationally agreed framework of minimum requirements for assessing UNCAC implementation. Indeed, the Review Mechanism sets out a number of obligatory steps that States Parties are required to undertake in this regard, but also opens the door for willing countries to engage in more elaborate and inclusive assessment exercises, should they wish to increase the usefulness and reliability of the assessment exercise as a whole.

Jordan and Morocco have officially completed their reviews and published their executive summaries. Many other Arab countries, including Algeria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Yemen, have participated in reviewing other countries. Iraq, Kuwait, and UAE are in the final stages of their first review, and Djibouti, Tunisia, Qatar are preparing to start theirs. However, the involvement of non-governmental actors in these reviews has so far been very limited. Instead, separate non-governmental initiatives were launched in various countries including Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and the occupied Palestinian territory.

The Palestinian National Authority, although not formally required to do so, has committed itself to active participation in the UNCAC self-assessment exercise. Rasha Amarneh, Director of Legal Department at the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission, occupied Palestine talked about the experience of completing the self-assessments process in 2011, using a participatory approach, and involving both CSOs and the private sector. The results of the evaluation revealed good levels of implementation of the mandatory UNCAC provisions, but limited implementation of non-mandatory provisions. The exercise helped the PACC identify gaps and reform needs and technical assistance requirements in a more effective manner.

With the establishment of the UNCAC Review Mechanism and the increasing awareness in the Arab region on the importance of assessments as a cornerstone for evidence-based anticorruption reforms, the demand for cooperation in the area of integrity and anti-corruption assessments is expected to increase significantly. However measurements of corruption are not straightforward. Corruption has no universally-agreed upon definition. Even UNCAC has a list of corrupt practices, rather than a definition. That list includes different disciplines, is multi-dimensional, and covers different aspects in the public and private domains. Corruption practices take on different forms, including bribes, embezzlement, misuse of authority, and nepotism. The majority of the recognised indicators of corruption, such as the well-known Corruption Perceptions Index developed by Transparency International, are based on perceptions. However, in recent years, there has been some of progress in approaches to measuring the incidence of corruption, from describing the channels through which it operates and in testing potential policy interventions to combat corruption.



Measuring Corruption

Users Guide to Measuring Corruption¹⁸, produced jointly by Global Integrity and UNDP, provides a comprehensive overview of global cross-country indices of corruption and a selection of tools that could be used to assess corruption on national and sub-national levels. While measurement tools have multiplied in the recent years, despite similar-sounding titles, they often measure very different things. The measurement tools tend to cluster around 2 types: measures of the existence and quality of institutions, rules and procedures (the “inputs” of governance and anti-corruption measures); and measures of the outcomes of those inputs – the reduction of the levels of corruption in the country. Surveys that look at citizen’s experience with bribery and corruption, and interviews with respondents that explore public service delivery and trust in government come closest to directly measuring corruption outcomes. However they do not tell what is causing a problem nor point to potential solutions. The measures of inputs have the advantage of providing clear, straightforward information about the existence and strength of laws, regulations and policies, thus pointing to potential solutions. So a well-designed corruption assessment process needs to combine both types of measures. Transparent and efficient performance of public administration is essential for the success of anti-corruption efforts¹⁹.

Specific examples of measuring corruption in the region, included the work of the Social Contract Center in Egypt has experimented with measuring corruption on local level in education, health, water and sanitation sectors. The assessment combined several different kinds of indicators: direct indicators, including citizens’ perception on corruption prevalence in the sectors, and their actual experienced facing corruption and indirect indicators, such as availability of information, accessibility of Information when requested, and the effectiveness of accountability measures. Another example came from the work of the World Health Organization, which has developed a methodology to assess corruption in pharmaceutical sector. The results of the assessment suggest that more work needs to be done on drafting laws to sanction the unethical practices of the private sector, as well as increasing the bottom-up approach for the ethical use and marketing of medicines.

It was argued that the independence of anti-corruption commissions is of critical importance for their ability to have impact and build their reputations with the public, local institutions and international agencies. UNCAC review mechanism can be seen as a comprehensive assessment of governance issues, and can promote national dialogue and develop national anti-corruption plans and strategies, but the role of civil society organizations in this process needs significant improvements.

¹⁸ <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/anti-corruption/a-users-guide-to-measuring-corruption/>

¹⁹ UNDP’s Users’ Guide for Measuring Public Administration Performance, which provides a review of multiplicity of tools and methods focusing on civil service management, public financial management, government policy making; leadership and service delivery, is another useful reference for designing corruption assessment: <http://www.gaportal.org/sites/default/files/Measuring%20Publica%20administration.pdf>



In measuring corruption emphasis should be made on looking at integrity systems and mechanisms to improve them, rather than only focusing on shortcoming and failures. Civil society organizations play a crucial role in conducting such independent assessments.

2.6 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and governance assessments ²⁰

The use of a diverse array of ICTs—from YouTube videos to mobile phones—as a means of disseminating information, documenting events, and mobilizing mass public movements has been cited as one of the most notable phenomena of the Arab Spring. It has informed a spirited debate among activists from Morocco to Yemen about using modern communications channels to hold public institutions accountable to institute open, transparent, and just governance in the Arab World. Many key activists in the movements in Tunisia and Egypt had long histories of engagement in ICT for dissidence and activism, and credited these tools as powerful aides in crucial mobilization efforts. Since 2011, numerous initiatives have sought to integrate ICT components into their programs as a means of expanding their audiences, improving internal organizational transparency, and offering more participatory mechanisms of engagement to key stakeholders. The regional flowering of ICT projects for good governance represent a number of parallel trends: increased and increasing digital literacy, improved connectivity via mobile network and Internet, the disproportionately large demographic ‘youth bulge’ of those under the age of 35, and the historic absence of alternate public forums for free discourse.

To draw the lessons from the experiences of projects using good governance data and ICTs across the Arab world to generate, collect and disseminate data related to good governance, UNDP has commissioned a research paper ²¹, which identified the following trends common for such initiatives:

- There is a consistent lack of coordination between offline and online activity;
- The majority of initiatives using ICT have weak partnerships with local and national government, although mid-level civil servants are seen as most likely allies;
- While ICT projects tend to demonstrate over-reliance on social media, collaboration with traditional media outlets that remain powerful tools for shaping public opinion, informing citizenry and promoting engagement, is essential for success;
- There is a significant competition among ICT initiatives that could fracture reform efforts and reduce impact.

²⁰ This section draws on presentations and discussion during session “11c: ICT and governance assessments”, as well as background paper “Assessment of ICTs for Governance in the Arab Region”, by Nizar Ghanem and Katherine Maher, commissioned by UNDP

²¹ Ibid; 27 initiatives were mapped by the research, and in-depth interviews conducted with 10 of them.



Case-study 2.8 MORSIMETER, Egypt morsimeter.com

MorsiMeter was conceived of and launched the same day President Mohamed Morsi was announced as having won Egypt's first freely contested presidential elections. MorsiMeter is an online scorecard ranking the performance of President Mohamed Morsi against his campaign promises by assessing the state of campaign promises in the first 100 days in administration. It strives to represent Morsi's record in an unbiased fashion to inform average voters. Media reports are collected via social media, traditional media, and shared directly with MorsiMeter by the President's political aides, opposition politicians, and journalists. Within 24 hours of the launch, the site had gained an audience of more than 20,000 followers on Facebook, and was receiving attention online from mainstream media publications. MorsiMeter –and the data it has generated—has been featured extensively in the Egyptian press, radio, and private satellite media channels, and in dozens of international publications and media outlets. Although it did not intend to cultivate relationships with government institutions and representatives of the opposition parties, the office of President Morsi reached out to MorsiMeter to engage it in the reporting process. Supporters and opponents of the President shared information on a daily basis, acting as funnels for information gathering on the president's performance. The website currently has 2,000,000 unique website visitors (total).

Amr Sobhy, Morsimeter Founder, Egypt

Case-study 2.9: OPENGOV OpenGov.tn, Tunisia

OpenGov.tn is the online presence for OpenGovTN, a comprehensive online and offline program advocating for the institutionalization of open government and transparency as a policy priority in Tunisia. OpenGovTN is an informal collective of interested citizens, formed in the aftermath of the 2011 Tunisian revolution to consolidate gains in institutional transparency and accountability. Although OpenGovTN uses ICT in many of their projects, it is primarily an offline campaign designed to influence policymakers and public opinion for the advancement of institutional transparency, with an online messaging and coordination component. These campaigns have addressed the demand for Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation, advocacy for institutional open data, and transparency in the Constitutional Assembly. Its current campaigns also include efforts to institutionalize open data on the country's national budget.

Malek Guetat, OpenGov, Tunisia

The field of ICT for good governance data remains immature, but offers tremendous growth potential in the Arab world, due to a variety of demographic and socio-economic factors. ICTs expand political and social space through creating alternate forums for discourse that exist in parallel to often-restrictive physical and media spaces. They offer the opportunity for direct communications among communities. In contexts in which governance is weak, this direct communication enables citizens to perform a number of actions that may support and facilitate improved formal governance, or publicly recognize inadequate or weak governance outcomes. At the same time, traditional media outlets are still powerful tools for shaping public opinion, informing citizenry, and promoting engagement.



Governance Assessments and Governance Indicators in the Arab Region

They should be treated with care, and actively solicited by ICT-supported projects for their ability to reach and influence large swaths of the population. Linkages between ICT initiatives and government structures are likely critical to initiating meaningful systematic change. ICTs are tools and cannot be seen as the solution by themselves. Without social movements and a broad spectrum of social coalitions providing backup support, their impact will be minimal. Technical platforms are not a substitute to politics; they are only means to enhancing its sound delivery and impact on national politics.

2.7 Overall conclusions and specific recommendations for each set of actors

The sweeping wave of popular discontent that toppled longstanding autocratic leaders in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen has brought to the forefront the need for transformational change in state-society relations, moving away from rentier economies towards developmental states accountable to their citizens. These changes have a profound effect on the institutional setup, the governance relations between state and society, and the number and the nature of development stakeholders in a country. Governance Assessments have tremendous potential to contribute to understanding this changed landscape. Furthermore, they can generate a solid evidence-base for national dialogue processes and formulating reform policies.

Local governance assessments, focusing on the level at which state and citizens interact, can contribute to regenerating the legitimacy of government and to enhancing the efficiency and efficacy of service delivery. If such assessments are done in a highly participatory manner, they could empower citizens by informing them about their human rights and establish an initial, but very critical, means of communication between citizens and their government at local level. By involving ordinary citizens, the government shows that it respects and values the opinions of citizens, thus fostering democratic values and principles at grassroots level. Particular attention should also be paid to involving women and youth, and reflecting their unique perspectives in the assessment processes.

Governance assessments cannot effectively be discussed in isolation without focusing on creating a more enabling environment in which governance data could be produced and assessment processes carried out. Based on discussions in the various sessions, a set of broad recommendations related to creating enabling environment for evidence-based policy making and using assessments to strengthen governance on national, regional and local levels for each set of actors is proposed below.

For the State

- The state should ensure that freedom of information acts are adopted, based on the understanding that the citizens have the right to public information and the government has the duty to provide it. It should also include provisions ensuring the right of non-governmental actors to collect and disseminate socio-economic and governance data. Such acts should be followed up by implementation strategies, with sets of incentives and effective penalty-reward approach. Investments should be made in building capacity of state institutions, implementing information management systems, adequately keeping records, and progressively digitizing and archiving existing information.



- National strategies on statistics should be developed, enabling countries in the Arab region to build reliable statistical systems that produce objective data, disaggregated, whenever possible, by gender, ethnicity and tribal affiliation (when applicable), income level, and geographical location. Access to statistical data sets and information about data collection methodologies, not only summary reports and statistics, should also be opened up. National Statistical Offices should also include modules on governance data into regular household surveys.
- The state should have strategies aimed to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and to develop proactive strategies of engaging civil society actors in the formulation and evaluation of government policies.
- Local governments also should actively reach out to civil society organizations and citizens at large to engage them in dialogue about planning and implementing local services, with particular focus on involving women and youth. Service Charters could be developed by the service providers at local level in dialogue with the citizens, as a form of a contract about the level of services that could be realistically delivered, with mechanisms to collect feedback from the citizens, evaluating actual performance against the charters.
- Citizen's participation in local budgeting process should also be actively encouraged and institutionalized, including specific mechanisms for ensuring participation of women and young people. This would contribute to creating a culture of public administration in which citizens are empowered to hold local authorities accountable for the services they provide.
- Evidence-based policy making should become a cornerstone principle of public administration. Governance assessments, as means to collect objective feedback on the performance of civil servants, open up dialogue among all stakeholders and identify systemic shortcomings in governance systems, should be actively promoted by the government. Sectoral governance assessments should be launched to identify specific gaps, and proposed solutions, rather than simply flagging up problems.
- Efforts should be made to conduct policy analysis and planning with a specific focus on inclusion, taking into account separate needs and aspiration of marginalized groups in the society. Partnerships with youth and women organizations for policy planning, analysis, and implementation should be actively sought out by relevant Ministries and departments.
- Independence of state institutions ensuring horizontal accountability, such as Audit Institutions and Anti-Corruption Commissions, has to be ensured. UNCAC Self-Assessment tool should be used to promote national dialogue on anti-corruption measures and develop national anti-corruption plans and strategies, with active participation of civil society organizations.
- Governments on all levels should use ICTs more actively to reach out to citizens, not only as a one way communication, but as a platform for dialogue and for harnessing creative energy citizens. Service providers, both on national and local levels, should also explore collaboration with ICT-based initiatives as means for improving efficiency and transparency of services provided.



Governance Assessments and Governance Indicators in the Arab Region

For the Civil Society

- Civil society organizations need to play a more active role in advocating for new laws on access to information, fostering an understanding in the society that public information is the right of every citizen. They should also develop grass-roots campaigns to help communities seek and obtain information in the areas of environment, education, health, public spending, economic and financial activities and public funds management in order to put pressure on government to become more transparent; raising awareness of the citizens about their rights in holding government accountable, particularly on local level. Civil society organizations should be raising awareness also among civil servants and parliamentarians on the necessity and benefits of access to information, and communicating to them the idea that access to information does not pose threats to national security.
- CSOs should work to strengthen their capacity to collect and analyze data in a professional way, carrying out independent assessments of governance, using objective indicators. They should work more closely with the media, partnering to deliver their messages to the general public in the most accessible format.
- Civil society actors should play a more active role in monitoring public works and community-development projects on local level, using methodologies such as governance assessments, budget analysis, community consultations, collect objective data about situation on the local level and initiate critical debates about the quality of services.
- CSOs should play a stronger role in leading independent efforts to assess governance, looking specifically at accountability and integrity mechanisms, identifying bottlenecks and using evidence to advocate for specific reforms.
- Coordination among CSOs focusing on similar issues needs to be improved, to foster complementarity instead of competition.

For the media

- Media organizations should strive to raise the standards of reporting on governance issues, generating debates about governance and accountability drawing on independent studies and objective indicators. Working with research organizations and statistical offices to deliver crucial information in easy to understand format to the general public.
- Media should cooperate with civil society organizations and authorities in conducting participatory assessments of governance, both on national and local levels, and communicating results of such assessments in simple and understandable manner.
- When reporting on governance issues, rather than focusing reporting solely on problems, such as corruption, focus should be given to existing positive potential, such as integrity systems and



For international organizations

- International organizations should contribute more actively to capacity building of state institutions, CSOs and media, improving the ways they deal with information and data, understand and operationalize concepts and principles of governance. Specific emphasis should be placed on advocacy and awareness raising about internationally agreed upon standards and mechanisms, related to governance, as international treaties and conventions, and involving civil society organizations into the processes of assessing their implementation in countries (such as, for example, UNCAC review mechanism).
- International organizations are especially well-positioned for facilitating knowledge exchange between countries in the region, and connecting to those outside the region, as well as identifying best-practices in measuring governance from other countries, and providing support for tailoring it to particular country-context.



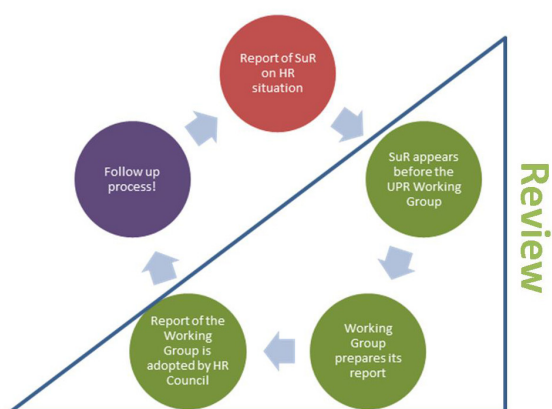
Chapter 3: Universal Periodic Review in the Arab States

3.1 Introduction

The Arab region is going through an incredible moment of change, one that takes various shapes and forms (elections, legal reform, transitional justice, new constitutions etc.). In this current context, it is obvious that different thinking about development is necessary, a thinking that integrates development with the realization of human rights. With human rights at the core of people's demands during the various events that took place in the region since 2011, social accountability is certainly becoming a central issue. The critical role played by human rights in development is particularly relevant in the Arab region. The evolution of the social contract between the State and the people also requires a strong national and international human rights system to address inequality and discrimination, and to support both political and economic inclusion. While many accountability mechanisms would deserve closer attention, such as legal empowerment or increased access to justice, the Governance Week took a closer look at one specific area where both OHCHR and UNDP have come together to support national partners, the Universal Periodic Review.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) was created by the UN General Assembly in 2006 through Resolution 60/251 which established the Human Rights Council²². The UPR is a State-driven peer review process, which reviews the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States once every four-and-a-half years. This mechanism is one of the key elements of the new Human Rights Council, which underscores State responsibility to respect, protect and fulfill all human rights and fundamental freedoms, aiming at improving the human rights situation on the ground. The result of each review is reflected in an outcome report listing the recommendations the State under Review (SuR) will have to implement before the next review.

The UPR is a full-circle process comprising 3 key stages: (1) Review of the human rights situation of the SuR; (2) Implementation between the two reviews by the SuR of the recommendations received and the SuR; (3) Reporting at the next review on the implementation of those recommendations and pledges and on the human rights situation in the country since the previous review.



voluntary pledges made; and (3) Reporting at the next review on the implementation of those recommendations and pledges and on the human rights situation in the country since the previous review.

The review takes place in a Working Group at the Human Rights Council, composed of all UN member-States and chaired by the President of the Council.

²² See General Assembly Resolution from 3 April, 2006, A/RES/60/251, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/502/66/PDF/N0550266.pdf?OpenElement>, visited on 3 December 2012.



Other relevant stakeholders, such as NGOs, national human rights institutions and UN agencies, can attend the Working Group but not take the floor. The SuR presents its National Report and its responses to advance questions that are submitted by States in writing ten days before the review . Following this, an interactive dialogue takes place during which States take the floor to ask questions and make recommendations on the human rights situation in the country, to which the SuR responds. At the end of the dialogue, the SuR presents its concluding comments.

The review applies Public International Law and International Customary Law, including the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Human Rights instruments to which the State is party, voluntary pledges and commitments made by the State (including those undertaken when presenting the candidature for election to the Human Rights Council), and applicable International Humanitarian Law. The review is conducted based on three main documents: 1) the National Report of 20 pages prepared by the State on the human rights situation in the country; 2) a compilation of ten pages prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) containing information from treaty bodies, special procedures, and UN agencies such as UNDP and UNICEF; and 3) a summary of ten pages prepared by the OHCHR containing information from civil society submissions. Importantly, the idea with UPR is to complement, not to replace, other existing mechanisms of human rights monitoring such as human rights treaty bodies that States submit reports to, or Special Procedures, e.g. Special Rapporteurs. The UPR provides, therefore, an unprecedented opportunity for civil society to become an active actor in the process, not only through the submission of a report but also by taking the floor at the Council session when the State report is adopted ²³ .

The outcomes of the UPR cover diverse human rights issues, from accessibility of public services, gender equality, to human trafficking. Following up on these issues enables a holistic approach to development orientated programming, and an investment in the capacity of all branches of the State and other relevant stakeholders. Therefore, the UPR process continues to create demand and opportunities to enhance the role of the UN system in supporting national efforts on human rights, and, given its focus on a wide spectrum of issues, makes a significant contribution towards the broader development agenda.

- The first four years that UPR have provided an environment to raise seemingly sensitive issues in an international forum of peers.
- The preparation and follow up to the UPR has, at the national level, the potential to induce collaboration between various stakeholders.
- The concerted work of ministerial departments, NHRIs, CSOs, media and UNCTs can create the space required for democratic governance to serve the marginalized and voiceless sections of the population, and ultimately for them to enter social contract, and have an equal say in decisions which affect their lives.

²³ See UPR-Info, <http://www.upr-info.org/-UPR-Process-.html>, visited on 3 December 2012.



3.2 The UPR process in the Arab Region: Challenges & opportunities

Arab States have now entered into their second cycle of the UPR Process, which focuses on evaluating the implementation of the recommendations received during the first review. Considering the on-going changes in the region, the preparations for the UPR review are a unique opportunity to engage governments, civil society and media in a dialogue on human rights, re-enforcing cooperation on human rights related issues and realizing the full potential of UPR as an important mechanism for social accountability.

During the Arab Governance Week, the UPR Parallel Stream focused on human rights monitoring as a tool for enhancing social accountability. It discussed challenges for inclusiveness in the UPR process, challenges with implementation of UPR recommendations, roles of civil society and media, and links between UPR and other mechanisms of accountability as well as local, regional and global partnerships for UPR. This section will recap the discussions and focus on key messages including best practices and recommendations.

3.2.1 Challenges of inclusiveness in the preparation of the UPR

The UPR presents an important opportunity for inclusive participation, for strengthening collaboration between civil society and governments, and for promoting accountability of public authorities. This process should be seen as a tool to foster meaningful dialogue between all interested actors, at national, regional and international level.

States can initiate dialogue with civil society actors and benefit from their grassroots experience and outreach capacity. The UPR is also an opportunity for States to strengthen important institutions such as the police, the military, and possibly national human rights institutions. On the other hand, the UPR also provides an entry point for NGOs to improve coordination among them as well, strengthen their national human rights monitoring mechanisms and their own human rights analysis.

While it is important for States to see this process as an opportunity to engage further with civil society on human rights issues, civil society also has the responsibility to prepare adequately for it. Collaboration between the various segments of civil society would improve the analysis of issues of concern, which would facilitate the definition of the priority areas. To do so, it is critical to coordinate and strengthen their action at the national level to engage in the UPR process, to strengthen their public advocacy including through collaboration with the media (see session on media).

It is also important to remember that National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) will also analyze human rights issues, highlight key areas of concern, establish priorities and advise States on them. They can, and should, also play an important role as a bridge between national authorities, civil society actors and various segments of the population.



Case study 3.2.1. : Ukraine

Ukraine has already gone through two cycles of the UPR, and also has a post-Orange revolution context which is of interest to the Arab region. In 2008, civil society had failed to be strong during the first cycle to convey their concerns to the human rights council in Geneva and also to the Ukrainian State. This translated in a very State centered national report. In preparation of the second cycle, an informal coalition that included national and local NGOs was created to make their voices heard. This informal coalition enabled civil society to focus on the process of preparation of the report, avoided overlapping of the reports reflecting the different voices of civil society, and also enabled the elaboration of a list of non-contradictory recommendations as well.

After the submission of the civil society report to the HR Council, the coalition also started a national consultation process, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice (in charge of UPR). Various meetings were held with the MOJ to look at their draft of the national report and present concerns and recommendations. The collation also worked with smaller groups of ministry representatives and national agencies to discuss some of their findings. To do so, working groups were created looking at specific HR issues and to open the dialogue. This was not fully successful for all working groups as this type of dialogue between actors was quite new.

The coalition further worked on the advocacy process and developed a plan to bring human rights closer to the people (indeed, the UPR does not only happen in Geneva and should remain a national process). Because the people are not necessarily familiar with UPR (and human rights), the coalition started a “your voice is important” campaign, which included street and online surveys, to ask what people consider as human rights violations. The objective of the surveys was to determine if the results would correspond to what civil society sees as problematic. The results did not necessarily correspond to priorities highlighted by civil society in their submission, and thus reveal the importance of consulting with the public early so as to reflect their input in the civil society report.

Iryna Fedorovych, informal CSO coalition on UPR/Yuliya Shcherbinina, UNDP, Ukraine

Recent research has shown that Arab states have participated very actively in the UPR Process. National, regional and international NGOs, as well as National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in some cases, took part in the process and submitted information to OHCHR for the purposes of the review ²⁴.

²⁴ AZZAM, Fateh: Arab States and the Universal Periodic Review, Study undertaken on behalf of The UNDP Regional Center in Cairo, 12 November 2012, p. 6.



It can be noted that, in many cases, Arab states and civil society prioritized different human rights issues, thus revealing challenges for national collaboration between States and civil society and for the implementation of UPR recommendations. Indeed, all civil society interventions demonstrated the highest concern with civil and political rights, while economic, social and cultural rights issues were raised by both Arab and non-Arab States in their recommendations more frequently than the other categories of rights. Some common ground can be found however, notably on aspects of economic, social and cultural rights, women's rights, and legal and institutional reform for increased protection of human rights ²⁵.

Case study 3.2.2: Morocco

In Morocco, the Inter-Ministerial Delegation took a very active role in the preparation of the UPR to raise awareness on this process and to collect information. The Delegation organized a national study day about the UPR mechanism and the responsibility of different parties working on preparing the national report. It also organized a national seminar about UPR, regrouping experts of different organizations such as: OHCHR, International Organization of the Francophonie, UPR Watch, National Institutions of Human Rights and different NGOs. Three regional meetings were also organized in collaboration with the Human Rights council to raise awareness. While there was also strong collaboration with the UN in the preparation of the report, Morocco worked on strengthening the participatory approach through the ratification of the draft of the national report. That consulting process offered the opportunities for different parties to express their opinions and views before ratifying the final version of the national report.

Mahjoub El Haiba, Inter-Ministerial Delegation for Human Rights, Morocco

Opportunities for inclusiveness in UPR:

- Civil society forming a national coalition on the UPR and its follow up;
- Holding national consultations on the national report and NGO reports with relevant ministries and the NGO coalition;
- Organizing awareness raising campaigns and surveys among population to spread knowledge on UPR;
- Developing a media strategy and a strategy for engaging with the government/ strategy for engaging with civil society.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 7-16, 34-36. Violence against women was however not an issue prioritized by Arab States (p. 15). They raised issues of women's political participation, women's status under personal status laws, and women's access .



3.2.2 Stocktaking of the UPR recommendations – implementation in the current transition period?

The UPR process is not an end in and of itself. Rather, the recommendations, as the second step of the cycle, can be used to increase knowledge of human rights in the country or as a tool to support work on social accountability. This session provided an overview of the recommendations issued in the Arab States, identified some trends, and presented examples of implementation plans adopted.

During the first cycle of the UPR, Arab States seldom raised civil and political rights, avoiding issues of freedom of opinion and conscience, freedom of expression, association and assembly, which all were major issues of concern for national NGOs. Arab States also made no comments on issues of citizen security, excessive use of force, torture and elections and democratic participation ²⁶. This may point to challenges for collaboration between States and civil society in these areas. However, tentatively some changes in attitudes of governments that have undergone significant change post-Arab uprisings can be noted, in terms of willingness to discuss recommendations on civil and political rights, and with NGOs on the other hand expanding their interventions to broader areas of rights ²⁷.

In the first cycle of UPR reviews, Arab States mainly accepted recommendations from other States that were general and did not require any specific action. They were also much more hesitant than non-Arab States to suggest other countries to take specific actions on human rights issues ²⁸. This may lead to challenges with concrete implementation. Partly, it might be due to the fact that the UPR is a new mechanism and State practice on the UPR is still in the process of developing. It also remains to be seen what the recent political changes in the region would lead to in terms of results from the second cycle of UPR reviews and increased collaboration with civil society and media.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 9 and 16. to decision-making positions. Children's rights and rights of persons with disabilities were also raised by Arab States, as well as trafficking in persons and rights of non-citizens. Most frequently they raised the right to education, and rights related to poverty and development (p. 13).

²⁷ Ibid., p. 22-25 and 31. The study compares Morocco (having stayed stable throughout Arab uprisings but initiated certain reforms), Tunisia (having experienced mass protests and regime change) and Bahrain (having experienced mass protests but no regime change), countries that have gone through their second cycle of UPR in the 13th session (first session of 2nd cycle) in 2012.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 18-23.



During the first day of the Arab Governance Week, many interventions underlined that social justice and accountability of State institutions were some of the main demands of the Arab uprisings. Building trust and cooperation between civil society and governments was seen as equally crucial. UPR is certainly a mechanism that provides for opportunities in this regard. In some Arab countries, there has already been a change in how governments view the role of civil society. Many speakers saw new opportunities for engaging with governments through the use of strategic entry points. National consultations on the UPR were encouraged to be held between State and civil society before the review of the second cycle and before writing the report. Keeping the media informed was seen as critical for UPR to function as a mechanism for social accountability. Establishing a permanent coordination mechanism to coordinate the collaboration surrounding the preparations of the national report as well as the alternative reports of NGOs and of national human rights institutions (NHRIs), was also suggested by several interventions²⁹.

Both NGOs and governments were encouraged to focus on specifics in their UPR reports, providing enough information to avoid vague recommendations. States were reminded that they do not actually reject recommendations, rather they are to take note of the recommendations they do not deem to be able to accept and revisit those recommendations later on.

Inclusiveness does not only apply to the preparation of the UPR reports: it is also critical at the stage of implementation of the recommendations. Possible entry points for cooperation with civil society on the implementation of recommendations of Arab States would be economic, social and cultural rights, women's rights, legislative and institutional protection of human rights, refugees and trafficking in persons and rights of migrant workers. These issues form a basis for common ground and common priorities of States, NGOs, donors and the UN. Collaboration on the mentioned issues for the UPR could open the door for collaborating on civil and political rights as well, which are very much linked to the exercise of economic, social, cultural and other rights.

²⁹ More specific recommendations to different actors can be found page 11.



Case study 3.2.3: Malaysia

Malaysia presents an interesting example of the role played by the NHRI to support the implementation of the UPR recommendations. Following the first cycle of the UPR, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia, more popularly known by its acronym in the Malay language “SUHAKAM”, published a series of booklets that were widely distributed to stakeholders, including government departments and civil society organizations. The booklets sought to inform stakeholders about the UPR recommendations that had been accepted by the Government. The Commission also convened a meeting with all government agencies for the purpose of identifying measures that have been taken by the government in the implementation of the UPR recommendations. These meetings showed that Government agencies were, for the most part, not very familiar with the UPR recommendations, which may have contributed to them being slow and unenthusiastic in their implementation of these recommendations. This highlighted the need for greater capacity building, awareness-raising, and technical collaboration. One of the lesson learnt is that even for those governments that are prepared to effect change, they prefer to proceed gradually and incrementally and at their own pace, on the claim that time is needed to make these changes due to constitutional, legal and administrative constraints, and due to the need to change public attitudes.

Hasmy Agam, Chairman, SUHAKAM, Malaysia

Opportunities for improved UPR implementation :

- Governments to establish a national human rights coordinating committee including government officials responsible for the implementation, involving NGOs specialized in specific human rights issues;
- Governments to establish an NHRI Committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations by the government, using different tools to inform both government agencies and the general public on the results of the UPR;
- States to submit measurable and actionable recommendations to facilitate implementation by SuR.

3.2.3 Working Groups on implementation of UPR recommendations

At this stage of the discussions, participants were able to split into different groups to discuss more specific examples of challenges and opportunities for more inclusive work around certain specific topics that were identified in the UPR recommendations. Below is a summary of some of the points that were raised.



Freedoms of Expression and Association

Challenges:

- Inefficient laws enforcing the implementation of these rights, despite their presence in the countries' constitutions;
- Interference and control of security bodies in the implementation of these rights in some countries;
- Absence of active NGOs working on the promotion of these rights in some countries;
- Lack of National Human Rights Institutions or obstruction of their function in some countries.

Recommendations:

- Establish an appropriate legislative mechanism to implement human rights (including Freedom of Association and Expression) ;
- Ensure the independence of the judiciary;
- Establish a regional complaints mechanism;
- Activate the role of NGOs in promoting these rights, and bridge the gap between the public and the state;
- Ensure the independence of the media;
- Raise awareness on the concepts of freedoms of association and expression.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)

Challenges:

- Violations of economic, social and cultural rights important triggers for the revolutionary developments in the Arab region but require long term work to address;
- Unequal wealth and resource distribution ;
- Falsification of statistics leading to difficulty in establishing present economic situation as baseline for future development;
- Inadequate stakeholders' capacity to measure ESCR, and insufficient understanding of what the principle of progressive realization entails.

Recommendations:

- Rights to work, health, education and housing to be considered as the most important for the region, and to be protected in constitutions and national legislation. Increased government and stakeholder capacity to support implementation of those rights.
- Various mechanisms to be used to bring together NGOs and government – depending on the particular context in the particular country. (For example, in Yemen, ESCR could be integrated into the national dialogue on human rights. In Bahrain, labor unions would be best placed to discuss the right to work. In Egypt, the main player is the executive, which would need to be controlled tightly by the Parliament.)



Women's Rights

Challenges:

- Inequality between men and women in national legislation;
- Difficulty to reconcile women's rights with interpretation of some religious principles;
- Cultural perception against women

Recommendations:

- State and NGOs to work on gender-disaggregated data to advance gender equality and women's rights through programming and policy-making based on up to date data;
- States to guarantee full participation of women in politics and access to decision-making positions in Arab countries; civil society to work on raising awareness on these rights;
- States, civil society and UN to work together to address problematic traditionalist interpretations of Sharia law that may sometimes prevail, (although not based on the Koran), and undermine women's rights, for instance related to FGM, early marriage, women's rights to inheritance and to own property etc.
- States to take adequate measures to address violence against women;
- States to guarantee that personal status laws do not undermine rights of women;
- States to implement, or accede to the CEDAW Convention, without reservations.

3.2.4 The role of civil society and media in the UPR ³⁰

The UPR presents a unique opportunity for civil society to have its voice heard. This new mechanism benefited from the lessons learnt from the difficulties of other mechanisms and now offers the possibility to present facts and also recommendations on how to address the human rights challenges in a certain country. The media also has an important role to play in defending human rights. However, to ensure that this collaboration is successful, both the media and civil society actors have strong responsibilities. Civil society should, of course, provide media with information, but should also make sure that the source of information is accurate and can be confirmed. Another important point is to provide information that is accessible to the people – as opposed to dry and technical reports. This was indeed one important challenge that was faced by Iraqi news outlets that could not use the information provided by civil society. This sometimes led to newspapers completely ignoring any information provided by CSOs or Human rights organizations. On the other side, it is also important for the media to be proactive in seeking the information from civil society. This necessarily leads to another important challenge which is the independence of the media. In the past, the issues of state control over the media was predominant. Today, new means of communicating information have emerged .

³⁰ The video of this session is available at http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLd5qvC4XqzFBTKd-hRcAP17R8envUb20u&feature=edit_ok



The accuracy and the reliability of the information conveyed are sometimes considered as a weakness of these new media means. Some interventions highlighted that it is also important to ensure that these new media do not deepen the rifts, especially in the societies that are already divided on political issues. It would, therefore, be important to work on a code of ethics and also the issue of professionalism and specialization.

The relationship between civil society and media in the region leaves room for improvement, which can be achieved through closer collaboration. UPR was seen by participants as an opportunity to have a broad dialogue between State, civil society, and the media, facilitated by a coalition formed by NGOs. Also, it was suggested that specialization of both media and NGOs on certain issues helps for having a professional and productive dialogue on human rights.

Case study 3.2.4: Bahrain and Egypt

Given that the human rights developments on the ground in both countries is under examination, the governments approached the UPR process as a relatively important mechanism towards establishing international credibility to a system of governance that appeared to be losing its national legitimacy. Likewise, the existing local civil society was aware of the importance of the mechanism and thus also engaged on it extensively.

In Egypt, media coverage and the general interest of the media was highly determined by the activities initiated and conducted by civil society. The coverage reflected a somewhat moderate stance in most of the newspapers and media outlets, focusing more on particular human rights theme of relevance to the circumstances in Egypt, which Egyptian civil society organizations pushed for. This is because the government seemed to have determined that it was in its strategic interest not to adopt a hostile stance against civil society organizations working on the UPR, but rather, appeared to engage in a “dialogue” with them, irrespective of whether such dialogue reflected a genuine political will towards reform or not.

In Bahrain, a review of local media coverage of its first UPR in 2008 and on its more recent second cycle UPR in 2012 shows how the nature of the relation between the government of Bahrain and independent civil society, being largely antagonistic, has determined the scope of media coverage. In fact, media coverage in Bahrain has either been largely narrations of merits and successes by the government or direct attacks against civil society actors and a number of independent human rights organizations.

Soheir Riad, Researcher, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) (full paper available on the Governance Week website)



Case study 3.2.5.: Kenya

The Kenya Stakeholders' Coalition for the Universal Periodic Review (KSC-UPR) was initiated during a stakeholders meeting convened by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR). The coalition comprised of almost one hundred national and international organizations and institutions working on human rights and development concerns. A steering committee was set up and mandated to provide strategic guidance and propose activities geared towards collecting data for Kenya's review under the UPR.

Coalition members were sub-divided into various thematic human rights clusters (based on the key human rights issues identified by stakeholders) for purposes of developing cluster reports. The coalition was able to undertake a unified and joint advocacy strategy i.e. the Advocacy Charter. It was also clear that the media is a good channel through which the UPR recommendations can be popularized, hence enhancing citizen's engagement in seeking accountability from the State on its human obligations. Therefore, a Media Team was tasked with coming up with a media strategy on how to create awareness around the whole UPR process. Stakeholders also engaged both national and international press in Geneva, one before the review and a press conference after the review. Media 21 mobilized the international media to attend KSC-UPR's press briefings in Geneva and a meeting between the KSC-UPR team and Kenyan journalists attending a UPR training activity in Geneva. Due to the connections KNCHR enjoyed in Geneva, they facilitated the hosting of the side event and got assistance to mobilize the attendance of the media. The representatives of the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs in Geneva assisted KNCHR organize meetings with state delegations and international organizations, widely disseminating the stakeholders' advocacy material and coordinating logistical issues including arrangements for the side and media events.

Hellen Mutellah, EACH Rights, Kenya



Recommendations for civil society:

- Strive for more strategic participation of NGOs in the UPR, e.g. through establishing specific thematic clusters working on UPR on different human rights issues;
- Civil society or a UPR coalition of NGOs to draft a joint stakeholders report to lobby States on human rights issues;
- Conduct effective advocacy to influence the content of UPR recommendations that will be made by other States to the relevant country, e.g. on the basis of a joint stakeholders report;
- Organize briefings with the media, both State- and private owned media, packaging the issues for the purpose of getting the interest of the media in their country;
- Civil society to develop a communication strategy on how to disseminate the information to the broader public- the language used on UPR has to be understandable for laymen;
- Develop an advocacy and lobbying roadmap premised on the need for a structured engagement in the whole UPR process, outlining initiatives to be undertaken during the specific phases of the UPR;
- Conduct surveys, consultations during UPR, so that peoples' voices and opinions are heard, using media for dissemination;
- Organize press clubs or trainings of the media on human rights and the UPR;
- Conduct capacity building in ESCR and budget monitoring for NGOs and media.

3.2.5 Linking the UPR to other accountability mechanisms to support democratic transition

The Universal Periodic Review is a very important mechanism to support development process. Other mechanisms also exist to support social accountability such as other international human rights mechanisms, or other national processes. In the context of change of the region, the Universal Periodic Review needs to be linked to other mechanisms of social accountability to ensure coherence and consistency.

Presentations during this session highlighted linkages between the UPR and other critical UN human rights mechanisms, such as the human rights Treaty Bodies and the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Indeed, General Assembly resolution 60/251, which mandated the establishment of the UPR, provided that it shall “complement and not duplicate the work of treaty bodies”. For example:

- Whereas the UPR serves to cover the overall human rights situation, the work of treaty bodies, while also based on periodic reporting, is specific to the subject matter of the relevant treaties.
- Whereas treaty bodies are composed of independent experts and the review is focused on legal obligations of the State, the UPR is an inter-governmental process.

Therefore, adopting an integrated and holistic approach to implementing recommendations from different mechanisms will maximize the benefits drawn from the work of the different mechanisms, including the UPR, the Treaty Bodies and the Special Procedures, with a view to enhancing social accountability in a changing region.



Interventions by participants encouraged States not to see the human rights system as a system à la carte. The different human rights mechanisms are mutually re-enforcing and complementing each other, and none of the mechanisms should be neglected. However, this does not go without challenges. Governments often feel overwhelmed by too many ratified international instruments, each with its own reporting obligations (every 2 to 4 years on average). The specific experience of Kuwait, and the work carried out to support the State in the implementation of CEDAW obligations and recommendations showed that the State-party government staff members may also face additional challenges, including lack of capacity to write the jargon laden reports, difficulties to get the right data, limited knowledge of international law and human rights principles, etc. work invested by various actors (State, Civil society, or United Nations) for these mechanisms should also support the UPR to avoid duplication and also ensure coherence and consistency.

It was also highlighted that UPR recommendations often support and strengthen accountability at the national level by promoting the integration of internationally recognized human rights standards in constitutional or legislative drafting, and by strengthening mechanisms to improve access to justice, particularly for vulnerable or marginalized groups. In Saudi Arabia, for example, the UPR happened at a time of increasing local calls for progress on rights protections related to civil rights, women rights, minority rights, migrant worker rights, combating human trafficking, rights of the child, and rights of the disabled. As a response, the new UN Common Country Strategic Framework (2012-16) identified UN cooperation in social accountability and human rights, and UNDP Country Programme (2012-16) identified social empowerment as a key outcome. In 2012, a Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the National Human Rights Commission. Consequently, a first UN/UNDP human rights programme will be launched in Saudi Arabia, looking at NHRI capacity development and rights of vulnerable groups.



Case study 3.2.6: Sudan

The UPR recommendations for Sudan had pointed to the need for reform of constitutional and legislative framework. More specifically, it was recommended to start an open, inclusive and transparent dialogue about the new constitution. Sudan considered this recommendation and put it as one of the priorities of the implementation action plan. A Constitution-making forum was organized in Khartoum as a joint activity between the Ministry of Justice and the UNDP and with the participation of civil society organizations. This activity was followed by another 14 forums in 14 states of Sudan. These forums included government officials, parliamentarians, tribal leaders, civil society organizations, academics, university students and others. This specific case showed that linking the UPR to constitution making process led to:

- Inclusive engagements of all actors as an international and national obligation as well.
- Positive involvement of international mechanisms in the promotion and protection of human right (with the support of the UN).
- Establish a solid ground for the accountability of the government internationally and nationally.
- Encourages states to have a clear implementation action plan, short, medium and long term.

Muaz Tungo, Head of Advisory Council for Human Rights, Ministry of Justice, Sudan

Recommendations to improve linkages between UPR and other accountability mechanisms:

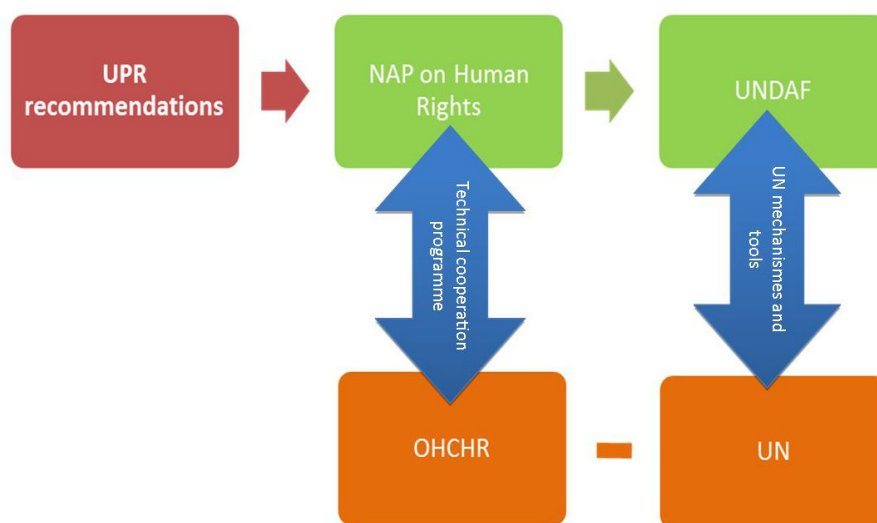
- The UN, Governments of Arab States and civil society to work together for the implementation of recommendations from the different human rights mechanisms, including the UPR, human rights treaty bodies such as CEDAW, and the Special Procedures;
- Governments to work together with the UN and religious leaders to improve reporting to treaty bodies such as CEDAW with a view to better understanding the situation regarding women's rights and other human rights;
- Technical support to be provided by the UN for mainstreaming UPR and other recommendations in policies and programmes implemented by governments;
- Governments to organize forums with citizen participation on the Constitutional process to obtain inputs and recommendations from participants, organize a media campaign, link the Constitution writing process to the UPR and make it an inclusive process;
- Civil society and governments to use concrete base lines or indicators to monitor compliance with UPR recommendations and recommendations emanating from other human rights mechanisms.



3.2.6 Broadening Partnership and Engagement of the UPR at national, regional and global levels?

While the UPR lends itself to strengthening the relationship between the people and the state, there are also regional and global actors that can support the work carried out at country level, and enhance communication between countries for stronger cooperation. This session was an opportunity to link the UPR to other resources or mechanisms of support available, including the League of Arab States, regional networks (e.g. the Arab Organization for Human Rights), or UN regional offices. It informed participants on the mandates of these actors and opportunities for linking UPR recommendations with other areas of actions, such as rule of law and the legal empowerment of the poor.

The United Nations can develop a technical cooperation programme for the implementation of the UPR recommendations. This programme can take different shapes, such as a UPR implementation plan or a national action plan on human rights – NAP (which is the recommended option). In the latter case, the NAP can become part of the UNDAF and evolve into a Technical Cooperation Programme on HR between the Government and OHCHR. This option presents the strong added value of being nationally owned and would take into account citizens' needs, along with and eventually Special Procedures and Treaty Body's recommendations. This would also facilitate the establishment of benchmarked goals that can be monitored and evaluated by the UN tools. Other UN agencies also play an important role. The UNDP regional centre provides support to country offices and national partners for the implementation of UPR recommendations (e.g. development of project document for the setting up of a national human rights institution in Yemen; collaboration with regional civil society networks to review court cases in various countries that refer to economic and social right; etc.).



From Andrea Ori's presentation on regional cooperation on UPR



Recommendations for increased regional partnership:

- Increase communication and cooperation between UN and the Arab League, as well as national institutions;
- The Arab League to assist governments in following up the implementation of UPR recommendations;
- The Arab League to hold discussions on establishing a tribunal on human rights for the region;
- OHCHR and UN to provide technical assistance and expertise on human rights, including support in the implementation of UPR recommendations;
- The UN to establish an Inter-Agency Task Force on UPR at the country level, and prepare a consolidated report on UPR;
- The UN to provide training to NGOs on human rights and UPR, strategizing with them on how to best work with the State, thinking about how to counter-balance the stakeholder report's content, its priorities, and the message NGOs want to send to UPR, emphasizing the quality of the NGO reports;
- OHCHR to provide support for developing a national action plan (NAP) on human rights and on the UPR by governments, adding NGOs members to the committee to cooperate inclusively in developing the NAP;
- The UN to integrate the NAP on human rights into the UNDAF, gradually developing a technical cooperation programme on human rights with the government;
- States to commit measurable, actionable, political will for implementing their NAP and UPR recommendations

3.2.7 Summary of Joint Recommendations for Action

For the fourth day of the Arab Governance Week, the participants were divided into country groups and asked to come up with key messages and recommendations stemming from discussions during Governance Week, and key action steps to advance social accountability in the countries present. Many points were raised and recommendations made, some of which are summarized here considering their relevance for human rights monitoring and the UPR process.

Numerous delegations commented on a need for a better, common understanding of what social accountability means. There is lack for clarity with regard to its definition, as well as to the roles of various stakeholders. Nevertheless, social accountability mechanisms such as the UPR were seen as opening up opportunities for increased dialogue between stakeholders. Many delegations stressed the importance of holding national consultations, of coordination and cooperation between all stakeholders. Access to information, capacity building, transparency, legal reform, awareness raising, and gender mainstreaming were important issues raised with regard to enhancing social accountability and mechanisms such as the UPR. While the recommendations below sometimes remain fairly generic, they would need to be tailored to country specific context and needs when applied at national and/or local level.



Recommendations to Governments of Arab States

- Focus on implementing UPR recommendations, not only on writing the report;
- Make UPR a nationally owned process which happens at home, not in Geneva;
- Build confidence and increase interactions between the State, civil society and other actors;
- Capitalize on the on-going change in culture towards cooperation and open dialogue in Arab States between civil society and governments;
- Organize national consultations on the national UPR report with relevant ministries and NGOs;
- Establish a national human rights coordinating committee including government officials responsible for the implementation of UPR recommendations, involving NGOs specialized in human rights;
- Develop a strategy to engage with civil society on UPR, and a strategy to engage with media on the same;
- Establish an appropriate legislative mechanism to implement Human Rights (including Freedom of Association and Expression);
- Ensure the independence of the Judiciary;
- Establish a Regional Complaints mechanism;
- Comply with human rights obligations under international treaties through reporting to treaty bodies and making use of Special Procedures, in addition to the UPR;
- Provide gender-disaggregated data on the situation of women in Arab States for the purpose of advancing gender equality and women's rights through programming and policy-making based on up to date data;
- Guarantee full participation of women in politics and access to decision-making positions in Arab countries;
- Address problematic interpretation of Sharia law- traditional interpretations still prevail that are not based on the Koran but undermine women's rights, for instance related to FGM, early marriage, women's rights to inheritance, to own property, rights in marriage;
- Address the issue of violence against women, breaking taboos surrounding it;
- Guarantee that personal status laws do not undermine rights of women;
- Give women the right to transfer their nationality to their children;
- Implement, or accede to the CEDAW Convention, without reservations;
- Work together with civil society to prepare the report to the CEDAW Committee;
- Work together with the UN and religious leaders to increase understanding of women's rights and collaboration on the CEDAW Convention;
- Organize forums with citizen participation on the Constitutional process- getting input and recommendations from participants, organizing a media campaign- linking the Constitution writing process to the UPR making it an inclusive process;
- Develop a National Human Rights Action Plan, including on UPR, with the assistance of the UN;
- Use concrete base lines or indicators (e.g. based on the national action plan) to monitor compliance with UPR recommendations;
- Ensure the independence of the media.



Recommendations to Civil Society

- Capitalize on the on-going change in culture towards cooperation and open dialogue in Arab States between civil society and governments; convince States that NGOs should be part of the process as cooperating partners;
- Revisit the role of NGOs according to what you are trying to achieve, and what is deemed to be the best way to act to achieve certain change;
- Form a national coalition on the UPR and its follow up;
- Organize awareness raising campaigns and surveys among population to spread knowledge on UPR;
- Develop a media strategy and a strategy for engaging with the government on the UPR;
- Establish a national human rights coordinating committee including government officials responsible for the implementation, involving NGOs specialized in specific human rights issues;
- Develop an advocacy and lobbying roadmap premised on the need for a structured engagement in the whole UPR process, outlining initiatives to be undertaken during the specific phases of the UPR;
- Use economic, social and cultural rights, women's rights and other rights that governments prioritize as entry points for broad cooperation with the government on human rights;
- Address the issue of violence against women, breaking the taboos surrounding it;
- Work with governments and the UN to prepare CEDAW Committee reports;
- Strive for strategic participation in the UPR, e.g. through establishing specific thematic clusters working on UPR;
- Draft a joint UPR stakeholder report to lobby States;
- Conduct effective advocacy to influence the content of UPR recommendations that will be made by other States to the relevant country, based on the joint stakeholders report;
- Organize briefings with the media, both State- and private owned media, packaging the issues for the purpose of getting the interest of the media in their country;
- Develop a communication strategy on how to disseminate the information to the broader public, in a language that is understandable for the larger public;
- Take a number of steps before the UPR, including local awareness raising and use of the media;
- Make peoples' voices and opinions heard through use of media and through surveys and consultations during the UPR;
- Organize press clubs or trainings of the media on human rights and the UPR;
- Conduct capacity building in ESCR and budget monitoring for NGOs and media;
- Use concrete base lines or indicators to monitor compliance with UPR recommendations;
- Differentiate and separate the work with specific issues and the work for specific political interest; mixing the two affects the credibility of organizations, also in the eyes of governments;
- Ensure quality of the information provided for the UPR.



Recommendations to Media

- Improve the relationship with civil society, both contacts and cooperation including on human rights issues and UPR;
- Capitalize on media's potential role as a defender or promoter of human rights;
- Use simplified language when needed, but report on human rights issues including UPR that are concerns of the whole population;
- Fill the information gap on human rights related issues by increased reporting, and participate in trainings on human rights issues to specialize and build your capacity and knowledge on the same.

Recommendations to NHRIs

- Take on important role in case national institutions do not function properly e.g. post-conflict and in transitions;
- Play a role in developing human rights action plans and strategies on UPR in cooperation with the government;
- Play a role in training civil society and providing technical advice to the government on the implementation of its UPR recommendations;
- Establish an NHRI Committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations by the government, using different tools to inform both government agencies and the general public on the results of the UPR;
- Provide technical assistance to stakeholders on how to write actionable and clear recommendations;
- Lobby with States to receive support from a UPR Fund, administered by OHCHR

Recommendations to the UN and donor community

- Play the role of broker, facilitating relations and dialogue between State and civil society;
- Provide technical assistance, capacity building or training in human rights and the UPR process of both civil society and government representatives, including sharing experiences from different countries or regions, providing a platform for national actors to discuss;
- Include NGOs as much as possible in UN programming and in discussions with the State, using their expertise as serious actors when talking to States;
- Join hands with civil society and governments to document and research UPR recommendations in a systematic manner and to monitor compliance with recommendations;
- Conduct research on best practices on the UPR and monitoring implementation of recommendations;
- Mainstream implementation the UPR recommendations' into the UNDAF;
- Provide technical assistance to stakeholders for how to write actionable, measurable and clear recommendations;
- Assist governments in developing National Human Rights Action Plans, including necessary steps to implement UPR recommendations;
- Organize a regional forum focused on Judiciary independence;
- Replicate forum on social accountability on the country level in MENA countries;



- Strengthen inter-agency coordination on human rights, democratic governance, development and human rights indicators;
- Remember to follow up of all work, including outcome of consultations or conferences.

3.3 Concluding remarks on the UPR

Some general conclusions can be made with regards to the future of human rights monitoring and the use of social accountability mechanisms such as the UPR in the Arab region.

The currently on-going social and political changes in the region are contributing to a greater interest by governments in improving their human rights situation (or the perception of their human rights situation), including through completing democratic transitions or rule of law reforms with the aim of meeting demands of the people. This interest opens up possibilities for greater participation by the general public and civil society organizations through broad dialogue and collaboration with Arab governments on human rights issues. The media- both 'traditional' and 'social' media- is currently reporting more on issues related to social accountability and human rights due to current events.

While the UPR provides strong opportunities to support greater social accountability, the perception and understanding of the process need to be improved. The UPR is a process for accountability to the people, and not just to the human rights council in Geneva. In addition, there is a critical need for increased dialogue between States and civil society to create a shared perception of social accountability; this dialogue would require a longer term "education" process to change years of confrontational behaviors. Indeed, it seems to be very hard to break the reflex of disagreeing instead of taking to time to see if there are common grounds between the two actors. Finally, there should be a change in the perception about the role and responsibilities of civil society: civil society does not have the monopoly of advocacy and should engage more with the media for better outreach to the people.

Working on these elements opens up possibilities for improving dialogue and collaboration between civil society and media as well. The on-going changes are thus contributing to a new culture of cooperation and open dialogue in Arab States between civil society, media and governments.

There remains an important role for the UN to play in facilitating this collaboration and dialogue. This can be done through providing platforms for discussions and interaction, conducting capacity building and providing technical support for government representatives, civil society and media on social accountability, human rights, the UPR, rule of law reform, inclusive development. This collaboration can also be done through confidence-building initiatives where state and civil society are both partners in joint projects. It is also important for the UN to keep bringing examples of good practices from other countries or regions to show that these changes, although difficult, are possible.



To employ its full potential as a mechanism for social accountability, the UPR Process should be used as an entry point for facilitating a long-term, inclusive national dialogue on human rights. Developing yearly national action plans on human rights and the UPR, with the assistance of the UN, contributes to institutionalizing this dialogue and to holding the government accountable for its obligations. By holding national consultations, forming national coalitions, and communicating with the media, a nationally owned and effective UPR process can be achieved, which gradually will have an effect on the human rights situation on the ground. In addition, promoting this type of long-term national dialogue is also important because of its potential to build trust and prevent conflict between citizens and state. It also paves the way for marginalized groups to have their voices heard by governments, and for meaningful participation of women in the dialogue on human rights.

Arab governments have in the first cycle of UPR review prioritized inter alia economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), certain rights pertaining to the status of women and women's participation, rights of children, non-citizen, persons with disabilities. These priority issues can be used as entry points for cooperation with Arab governments on human rights, and as entry points for UN programming on human rights issues in the Arab States.

It should be noted however, that current changes in the region could be used as a positive momentum to enter into broader cooperation with Arab governments on all critical human rights issues, including civil and political rights, violence against women, rights of minorities and marginalized groups, as well as transitional justice; issues that have not been previously prioritized by Arab governments. The dialogue and cooperation on UPR is one way of making use of this momentum.



Chapter 4: Concluding remarks

The core aim of the Arab awakening was to overcome regimes that were serving the interests of political and economic elite, and in their place build a future based on inclusion, rights and dignity. A common thread running through the discussions of the Arab Governance Week was the understanding that transitions are fluid and non-linear. For decades the focus of democratic governance was on elections as the central tenet of democracy, but they are time bound intermittent processes. Social accountability is exercised on a continuous basis and requires active participation of the state, the civil society and the media.

Participants have argued that the lack of legal and institutional framework that allows for citizen participation in governance decision making and demanding accountability, coupled with lack of responsiveness of government institutions to the demands and the needs of the citizens, resulted in the failure of the Arab development model. The new development framework for the region should be based on participation and mutual accountability between the state and citizens, facilitated by transparent and responsive governance institutions, and resulting in economic development policy that gives priority to social justice, to the fight against poverty and unemployment, and to ensuring social rights of all citizens in health, education and decent work.

To achieve this, existing accountability mechanisms need to be further strengthened. Legislative branch should play a stronger role in holding the executive branch of the government accountable through planning, budgeting and ministerial oversight. The independence of the judiciary needs to be ensured to enable them to hold the executive accountable through checks and balances that are built into the administrative system of government. Independence and capacities of audit institutions need to be increased. Such accountability mechanisms are based on formal obligations of the duty bearers and legally defined sanctions that should ideally prevent, or at least punish misuse of office. However, there is a widespread recognition that these formal mechanisms and institutions are not sufficient to ensure that public resources are spent on the needs of the people.

Spaces need to be created for direct participation of citizens, civil society and the media in holding the state to account, through a variety of social accountability mechanisms. They can be applied at local through to national level and can target a range of governance issues and processes including: public information-sharing, policy-making and planning; the analysis and tracking of public budgets, expenditures and procurement processes; the participatory monitoring and evaluation of public service delivery, as well as broader oversight roles, anti-corruption measures and complaints handling mechanisms. Social accountability mechanisms can be seen as constructive alternatives to street protests in amplifying the voice of the citizens. Improved social accountability is not only a mechanism to punish and control misuse of office. If applied in a constructive manner and institutionalized in regular government procedures and behavior, it is also a means to structure communication between a government and its citizens and could thus even contribute to a change in the relationship between the two parties, from a “producer-consumer” type of relationship to a relationship in which they work together to improve services (co-production).



Building the capacity and ability of citizens to demand accountability and to manage the process itself is also crucial, particularly with regards to empowering the younger generation as an investment in the future of the region. What is needed is a culture of asking critical questions to those in power. Citizens need to regard basic services not as generous gifts from government officials but rather the fulfillment of their rights. The culture of respecting and fulfilling human rights needs to be fostered, increasing citizens knowledge of their rights as these are the basic values to which a government can be held accountable. Even if such awareness exists, experienced civil society organizations are necessary to collect and analyze information, to involve the media, to generate wider public support and understanding, and to negotiate with the government. A strong, independent media has a powerful role to play in amplifying the voice of the citizens, facilitating the dialogue between the citizens and the state, acting as a sounding board for government policies, and fulfilling the watch dog function to protect against abuse of power. At the same time, for social accountability to be effective in terms of disciplining misuse of office by duty bearers, it depends on subsequent corrective actions taken by government in response. The State is also responsible for creating an enabling environment for social accountability relations, guaranteeing the freedom of association and access to information, ensuring citizens' rights to public information and opening up public budget and expenditure records, improving internal systems of transparency, etc.

The importance of improving and regulating free access to information as a condition for improved transparency and accountability was emphasized. Balanced legislation that protects the freedom of association and the independence and integrity of NGOs and the media, but at the same time stimulates a responsible and constructive attitude of these actors would be important as well. New Constitutions that are currently being drafted in the region should include commitments to transparency and accountability. Broader advocacy campaigns on the importance of governance and accountability, and practical application of the concepts, need to be organized.

It also became clear that neither of 3 actors could drive the change alone. Representatives of CSOs, media and government all agreed that cooperation between 3 actors is essential. In countries with a more open and truly representative government that is seen to be legitimate and trusted, government itself could take a lead in bringing various actors together. In other countries, with more repressive and defensive government, civil society and the media should joint hands and continue to put pressure on government to demand for increased accountability. In the Arab region, with a long tradition of state dominance, civil society and the media will have to work hard to establish their equal, recognized and respected position.

Discussions in the parallel stream on governance assessments revolved around challenges and opportunities of accessing, collecting and analyzing data about governance on local, national and regional levels, and using it to influence policy change. In addition to advancing access to information legislation, capacity of state institutions to manage information and enforce monitoring mechanisms needs to be strengthened. There is a need for a shift from a culture of secrecy to one of transparency which entails a fundamental change in mind-sets of politicians and bureaucrats, as well as building public awareness to encourage active exercise of the right to know. While access to information is vital, to ability to critically analyze information, by civil society and citizens at large, also needs to be fostered.



Concluding remarks

In the transformation process towards more democratic societies in the Arab region, governance assessments can play an important role in the introduction of democratic values and principles at various levels of society. Local governance assessments that are done in a highly participatory manner actively involving citizens, can empower citizens by informing them about their human rights and establish an initial but very critical means of communication between citizens and their government at local level, where the state and citizens interact directly. Special consideration should be made for addressing the interests of constituencies that are often excluded from formal governance processes, such as women and youth.

Discussions of the parallel stream on the Universal Periodic Review showed that the main challenge in the region is the need to change perceptions.

- First, perception about what the UPR really is: The UPR is a process for accountability to the people, and not just to the human rights council in Geneva! It opens the door to effective collaboration with civil society, and from there with the people they serve.
- Perception about the relation between State and civil society should be: There is a critical need for increased dialogue between States and civil society – this requires a longer term “education” process to change years of antagonistic relations.
- Perception about the role and responsibilities of civil society: civil society does not have the monopoly of advocacy and should engage more with the media for better outreach to the people.

As mentioned on several occasions, the responsibility does not rely solely on the shoulders of the 3 actors, State, civil society and media. The UN can certainly support them on this challenging work by bringing examples of good practices from other countries or regions where these changes are possible, and by supporting confidence building initiatives where State and civil society are both partners in joint projects. These actions must be collective.



Annex 1: Agenda

Day 1 - Monday November 26	
8.30-9.00	Registration
9.00 – 9.30	<p>Welcoming remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anita Nirody, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative - Alia Al Dall, Manager, Regional Bureau for Arab States - Regional Centre in Cairo <p>Opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ambassador Omar Abu Eish, Director Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt
9.30 – 9.45	<p>Introduction to the Governance Week</p> <p>- Rani El Masri, UNDP Regional Centre</p>
9.45 – 10.45	<p>Session 1: Understanding accountability in the context of transition</p> <p>The region is going through an important moment of change that has already led to important milestones: Indeed, several countries in the region held elections, witnessing the rise of new political powers, started working on national dialogue, constitutional reforms, or started the long process to address transitional justice, all with very different results. This will reflect on these processes, addressing more specifically the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining social accountability in relation to other forms of accountability - Reflecting on the transformative processes on-going in the region, with case-studies from some of the countries in transition - Outlining the relevance of social accountability in the context of transformative change, drawing on experiences from around the world <p>Session chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geoff Prewitt, Deputy Head of the UNDP Regional Centre <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geoff Prewitt, Deputy Head of the UNDP Regional - Jeff Thindwa, Manager, Social Accountability Practice, World Bank Institute - Khaled Ali, Egyptian Center for Social and Economic Rights, Egypt



10.45 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.15	<p>Session 2: Social Accountability: the role of the state</p> <p>This session will focus on the role of the state in creating enabling environment for social accountability, including ensuring practicing horizontal accountability and ensuring responsiveness of state structure to the needs of the citizens. More specifically it would address the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Internal/horizontal accountability mechanisms of the state- Right to information- Right to assembly and association- Channels for public participation in policy making and monitoring of implementation <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Azmi Shuaibi, Palestine, Coordinator of Regional Anti – Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET) Non-Governmental Group- Jameleddine Gharbi, Minister of Regional Development and Regional Planning, Tunisia- Hassabo Mohamed, Minister, Higher Council for Decentralization, Sudan- Ghada Waly, Managing Director, Social Fund for Development, Egypt
12.15 – 13.30	<p>Session 3: Social Accountability: the role of civil society</p> <p>This session will focus on the role of civil society in demanding democratic governance and social accountability, as well as promoting social accountability, drawing on examples from the region and around the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Capacity of civil society and informal movements- Enabling institutional environment- Freedom of expression- Availability of channels for constructive engagement with the state <p>Session chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Carmen Malena, Social Accountability Expert <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cvetana Plavska Matic, Director, National Foundation for Civil Society Development, Croatia- Hossam Bahgat, Director, Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, Egypt- Amr Lashin, Affiliated Network of Social Accountability, Arab Word (ANSA AW)
13.30 – 14.30	Lunch



14.30 – 16.00 Session 4: Social Accountability: the role of media – both traditional and social media

This session will focus specifically on the role of the media in promoting social accountability, drawing on examples from the region and around the world. More specifically it would deal with the following issues:

- Capacity of the media in the region
- The role of social media
- Access to information
- Freedom of expression

Session to be broadcast live on OnTV, in the format of a talk-show co-hosted by Liliane Daoud, lead anchor at OnTV and Ayman AlSayyad, Editor-in-Chief of Weghat Nazar magazine.

Moderator : Liliane Daoud, Talk show Anchor, OnTV

Chair : Ayman Al-Sayyad, Senior Advisor to the President of Egypt

Guest Speakers :

- Dima Al-Kahtib, Palestinian Journalist, Venezuela Bureau Chief - Al Jazeera
- Hassan Hamed, Head of the Egyptian Radio & Television Union and Media Production City
- Liliane Wagdy, Egyptian Citizen Journalist/blogger
- TBD, Tunisian blogger/internet activist.

16.00 – 16.30 Coffee break

16.30 – 18.00 Session 5: Social Accountability: key challenges and opportunities in the Arab region

This session will use an interactive format of the World Café to allow participants to reflect on the key messages of the plenary presentations of the day, as they apply to the context of their own work on the ground, and come up with consensus-based list of the key challenges and opportunities for promoting social accountability in the Arab region today.

Objectives:

- Active involvement of all participants in the discussion and searching for solutions
- Collect innovative ideas of how to promote social accountability in the Arab Region
- Participants share ideas and make new contacts
- Active interaction across government and non-government actors



Agenda

World Café format session, facilitated by Paul Van Hoof, IDASA

Table hosts/facilitators would be appointed among UNDP participants, planning session held during coffee-break

Core questions to address:

- What is the most important action or change that should take place to enhance social accountability in your country?
- Who should take a leading role in these processes?
- What can be done to achieve this?



DAY 2 - Tuesday November 27	
9.00 – 9.30	Recap of Day 1
9.30 – 11.00	<p>Session 6: Introductory remarks on the Universal Periodic Review and Governance assessments as mechanisms that can support social accountability</p> <p>This session will present the two mechanisms and how they can support social accountability. The discussion will also highlight the relation that can be established between the two mechanisms and how they can support constructive interaction between the three actors. Furthermore, links with the global consultations on governance in post-2015 framework would also be outlined.</p> <p>Session Chair: Geoff Prewitt, Deputy Head of the UNDP Regional Centre</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Christophe Peschoux, UPR division, OHCHR - Mitra Motlagh, Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Regional Center - Nina Kolybashkina, Governance Assessments Specialist, UNDP Regional Center Cairo - Helena Bjuremalm, Senior Programme Manager, Democracy and Development Programme, International IDEA - Joachim Nahem, Global Programme on Governance Assessments, UNDP Oslo Governance Center
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 13.00	<p>PARALLEL SESSIONS</p> <p>Session 7a: Challenges and Opportunities for Governance Data</p> <p>This session would focus on the challenges to accessing, producing and disseminating governance data in the Arab region, as well as opportunities to address those challenges presented by the new democratic space opened by the Arab Spring. Lack of accurate, timely and relevant governance data affects the ability of citizens to hold their governments to account for their performance, as well as hinders efforts of national government and other stakeholders to ensure good performance management and measure progress in governance. This session will look at the issues related to access to information, national capacities, as well as the interplay of technical and political issues in data collection and analysis.</p>
	<p>Session 7b: Challenges of inclusiveness in the preparation of the UPR</p> <p>The preparation of the Universal Periodic Review and the various reports is a first important step in the UPR cycle, and presents a unique opportunity for different actors to collaborate and initiate dialogue on various important issues in the country. For example, certain countries used the UPR as an open door to initiate policy dialogue between NHRI and various ministries, which acted as a catalyst for more systematic dialogue.</p> <p>This session will discuss how the UPR relates to the role of the different actors, and how it offers each with opportunities to cooperate with the others in addressing social/economic/human rights concerns. It will highlight how inclusiveness in the preparation of the UPR, particularly in fragile States, can support initial engagement between the State and the civil society,</p>



Agenda

<p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marwan Abisamra, Civil Society and Social Policy Advisor, UNDP Regional Center Cairo <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Magued Osman, Managing Director, Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research (Baseera) "Review of challenges and opportunities for governance data" - Ahmad Khir, General Manager of Support For Information Technology Center, Egypt "Comparative Analysis of Access to Information Legislation" - Mustafa Nasr, Director, Studies & Economic Media Center, Yemen "Advocating for the Access to Information Law in Yemen" - Representative of government (TBC) 	<p>serve as platform for dialogue and can be used as conflict prevention mechanism.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Christophe Peschoux, UPR division, OHCHR</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iryna Fedorovych, informal CSO coalition on UPR/ Yuliya Shcherbinina, UNDP, Ukraine - Ali Dabbas, National Commission for Human Rights, Jordan - Mahjoub ElHaiba, Inter-Ministerial Delegation for Human Rights, Morocco
13.00 – 14.00 Lunch	
<p>14.00 – 15.30 Session 8a: Critical analysis of regional and national efforts in producing comparative data on governance</p> <p>This session would critically review some of the key efforts on regional and national level in the Arab region to come up with indicators of governance. The presentations would look at different methodological approaches, but would also reflect on the issues around disseminating research findings, initiating public discourse about governance and aiming to achieve policy impact.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Nina Kolybashkina, Governance Assessments Specialist, UNDP Regional Centre Cairo</p>	<p>Session 8b: Stocktaking of the UPR recommendations – implementation in the current transition period?</p> <p>The UPR process is not an end and the recommendations, as second step of the cycle, can be used to increase knowledge of human rights in the country or as a tool to support work on social accountability. This presentation will give an overview of the recommendations issued in the Arab States, identify possible trends and present examples of implementation plans adopted.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Mohammad Abu-Harthieh, UPR division, OHCHR</p>



<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ayman Ayoub, Director, West Asia and North Africa region (WANA), International IDEA "Local Democracy Assessment in the Arab Region" - Mudar Kassis, Birzeit University, "Arab Democracy Index" - Mohammed Hussainy, Director, Identity Center Jordan "Jordan Reform Watch" - Hisham Abdel Rahman, Ministry of Local Development, Egypt "Rabet: electronic information management system for local level" 	<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fateh Azzam, independent consultant - Moath Al-Mula Hwaish, Ministry of Human Rights, Iraq - Hasmy Agam, Chairman, SUHAKAM, Malaysia
<p>15.30 – 16.00 Coffee Break</p>	
<p>16.00 – 17.30 Session 9a: Country-cases of Local-level Assessments</p> <p>Services delivered on local level and the work of the local government units are the key areas of interface between citizens and the state. Assessments of governance on local level provide an opportunity for citizens to provide direct feedback on quality of services provided, but also on the quality of governance processes on local level. They can also contribute to the processes on monitoring by the national governments. This session will review several examples of local-level governance assessments and will reflect on their potential to influence policies and strengthen governance.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Aladeen Shawa, Senior Advisor, UNCDF</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ibrahim Bisharat, Birzeit University: "Integrity Assessment Toolkit for Local Government Units" 	<p>Session 9b: Working Group on implementation of UPR recommendations</p> <p>Participants will be divided in groups to discuss the implementation of the UPR recommendations. The groups will identify: (a) what are the opportunities to implement the UPR recommendations; (b) what are the challenges; and (c) how to overcome implementation challenges in a collaborative spirit. Each group will comprise of state representatives, as well as civil society, NHRI, and UN colleagues.</p>



Agenda

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Yasmin Khodary, Governance Team Coordinator, Social Contract Center, Egypt “Local Governance Assessments – implications for sectoral governance”- Khaled Abdelhalim, Executive Director of the Local Development Observatory, Egypt “Local Governance Assessments – implications for strengthening Local Government Units”- Abdallah Herzenni, National Observatory on Human Development, Morocco “Local Governance Indicators”	
<p>20.00 - 22.00 Social Dinner for Conference Participants – Egyptian Nights Restaurant, in the pool area of Fairmont Hotel</p> <p>(Dress code – informal; please bring some warm clothes, as the dinner would be outdoors)</p>	



DAY 3 - Wednesday November 28	
9.00 – 9.30 PARALLEL SESSIONS Recap of day2	Recap of day 2
<p>9.30 – 11.00 Session 10a: Accountability in public budgets and expenditures</p> <p>The ability of citizens and CSOs to access information about public budget and expenditures and to monitor and influence processes related to the allocation and management of public resources is essential for building safeguards against corruption and ensuring that public resources are allocated equitably so that the interests and needs of poor and marginalized groups are adequately addressed. This session would review several innovative approaches used by CSOs to advocate for improved financial transparency, looking at issues of access to information about public expenditures, the openness of budgeting processing and levels of “budget literacy” among the general population.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Heba El Kholi, Director, Oslo Governance Center, UNDP</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marwan Abisamra, UNDP Regional Center, “Using Budget Analysis to assess Local Governance; The Jordanian example” - Naema Mohamed, Undersecretary of Finance, General Development Directorate Social Sector, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Sudan 	<p>Session 10b: The role of civil society and media in the UPR</p> <p>While the media does not provide a report as part of the UPR, they still can play an important role for the provision of information, and for the monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations. Civil society, meanwhile, has a formal, recognized, and crucial role to play in the UPR as an accountability process: monitoring, reporting, advocacy, dialogue, follow-up, support, etc. This session will discuss these particular roles and also how the media and civil society can benefit for each other to increase the impact of the UPR on social accountability.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Mona Salman, news programme anchor, Al Jazeera</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soheir Riad, Researcher, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) - Zuhair al Jezairy, Editor-in-Chief of Aswat al Iraq - Hellen Mutellah, EACH Rights, Kenya - Khaled Daoud, Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights - Mohammad Abu-Harthieh, OHCHR



Agenda

Session 10c: Citizen/community-led monitoring of public services

Basic public services (in the areas of health, education, water, sanitation, etc.) are essential to citizen well-being and of particular importance to poorer and disadvantaged social groups. As a result, many social accountability initiatives focus on improving the quality and accessibility of these services through citizen participation in processes of decision-making and oversight and through a range of citizen/community-led monitoring and evaluation tools for holding the government accountable for its commitments. This session will review several case-studies from the field and review on their potential for scaling-up.

Moderator:

Rania El Masri, UNDP Regional Center Cairo

Speakers:

- Moufida Oueslati, Tunisian Active Network for Social Accountability
- Wael Balousha, Gaza Office Manager; Coalition for Accountability and Integrity)AMAN(- Palestine "Reduction of Public Revenue Misuse: Cutback of Governmental Vehicles Use"
- Dalia Bayoumi, M&E Team Coordinator, Social Contract Center Egypt, "Community-led Evaluation of basic service delivery: Towards a new social accountability model"

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee Break



<p>11.30 – 13.00 Session 11a: Gender</p> <p>Women and men often have different needs and interests in many areas of governance, and their experiences with institutions vary. The same applies to differences by age groups among both genders. Poor people and rural dwellers experience service provision differently from affluent city dweller. It is important to take these differences into account when assessing governance, and ensure that voices of marginalised groups are included in the assessment process. This session will present analytical framework for introducing sensitivity to gender, age and poverty in the assessment process. It would also review several case-studies of on-going work in the area in the region and outside, and will reflect on how these experiences can be mainstreamed.</p> <p>- Moderator:</p> <p>Ana Lukatela, UNWOMEN NY</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maya Morsi, UNWOMEN Egypt “Gender responsive social budgeting” - Seloua Ben Saida, Head of division of monitoring and updating of texts of laws, Ministry of Justice, Morocco “User Satisfaction Barometer” - Fiorela Shalsi, UNWOMEN Albania “Gender-focused Community Score Cards” - Jamal Eddine Naji, Director, Higher Council of Audio-visual Communication, Morocco “Gender stereotyping in the audiovisual media” 	<p>Session 11b: Linking the UPR to other accountability mechanisms to support democratic transition</p> <p>The Universal Periodic Review is not an end in itself but an important mechanism to support development process. It does not work in isolation and as standalone. Other mechanisms also exist to support social accountability such as anti-corruption. In the context of change of the region, the Universal Periodic Review needs to be linked to other mechanisms of social accountability to ensure coherence and consistency. This session will identify some of the entry points with other work on social accountability of relevance to the region.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Mohamed El Ghannam, Governance and Rule of Law, UNDP Somalia</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Torsten Schackel, OHCHR - Khadija Moala, Kuwait, independent consultant - Muaz Tongo, Head of Advisory Council for Human Rights, Ministry of Justice, Sudan - Kishan Khoday, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Saudi Arabia
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Session 11c: ICT and governance assessments

New technologies and social media have played a significant role in facilitating the events of the Arab Spring. Their potential for collecting governance data that could be used for demanding social accountability and carrying out a constructive dialogue with the government needs to be explored further. Various initiatives in the region and outside can be highlighted as good examples. This session will critically review such initiatives, aiming to identify ways for enhancing cooperation between civil society and government actors to ensure that data generated by citizens is used to improve governance at local and national levels.

Moderator:

Amr Lashin, Affiliated Network of Social Accountability, Arab World (ANSA AW)

Speakers:

- Christopher Wilson, Communications Analyst, Oslo Governance Center
- Malek Guetat, OpenGov, Tunisia
- Amr Sobhy, Zabatek/Morsi Meter, Egypt
- Ghada Moussa, Director, Governance Center, Ministry of State for Administrative Development

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30 Session 12a: Measuring Corruption

Due to its clandestine and illegal nature measuring corruption is extremely difficult, both in terms of the extent of corruption as well as how corruption affects political institutions and service delivery. There has however been a fair amount of progress in methods for measuring the incidence of corruption, describing the channels through which corruption operates, and in testing potential policy interventions to combat corruption.

Session 12b: Broadening Partnership and Engagement of the UPR at national, regional and global levels?

While the UPR lends itself to strengthen the relation between the people and the State, there are also regional and global actors (UN, LAS, etc.) that can support the work carried out at country level, and enhance communication between countries for stronger cooperation. This session will present and discuss the role some of these actors can play.



<p>This session will review some best-practice cases on measuring corruption from the Arab region, as well as internationally, and discuss the challenges and opportunities in strengthening national efforts in measuring corruption in the region.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arkan El-Seblani, UNDP Regional Anti-Corruption Project <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rasha Amarneh, Director of Legal Department at the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission, "Country-specific assessment experience of UNCAC implementation" - Mona Salem, Governance Specialist, Social Contract Center, Egypt "Measuring Corruption in Service Delivery" 	<p>Moderator:</p> <p>Roland Sarton, Governance, UNDP Algeria</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elham Alshejni, Director of Human Rights department, League of Arab States - Alaa Shalabi, Secretary General, Arab Organization for Human Rights, Egypt - Andrea Ori, OHCHR Regional office North Africa, - Mitra Motlagh, UNDP Regional Office for the Arab States
<p>Session 12c: Generating youth-sensitive governance data</p> <p>In the patriarchal societies, opportunities for young people to influence governance processes are limited. Young people also have different needs in terms of the services provided on local level, which are not often recognized. At the same time young people are increasingly looking for innovative ways to hold the state to account and engage in constructive dialogue about policies that directly affect their lives. This session will look at several case-studies of initiatives that give young people an opportunity to generate their own data about governance processes and conduct youth-focused analysis of policies.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Kawtar Zerouali, Regional Youth Programme Manager, UNV</p>	



Agenda

<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - George Hodge, UNDP Armenia “Social Innovation for Governance Data and Social Accountability” - Stefan Manevski, Macedonia, Center for Intercultural Dialogue “Youth-led Community Score Cards” - Mohamed Qenawy, Governance and Civic Engagement Programme Field Supervisor, CARE Egypt - Yemeni Youth Observatory 	
15.30 – 16.00 Coffee Break – END OF DAY 3	
<p>16.00 – 17.00 Recommendations and follow up to be presented on the next day – session moderators and focal points only</p> <p>This session will recapitulate the main messages that came out of the plenary sessions and group work and will provide a final opportunity to close discussions left open during the two days of parallel session.</p>	<p>Recommendations and follow up to be presented on the next day – session moderators and focal points only</p> <p>This session will recapitulate the main messages that came out of the plenary sessions and group work and will provide a final opportunity to close discussions left open during the two days of parallel session.</p>

SIDELINE EVENT

<p>16.00 – 18.00 Meeting on Global Democratic Governance Report</p> <p>The objectives of the consultations are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To get inputs on the discussion paper and the thematic chapters of the Report in the context of pre and post Arab Spring events, focusing more specifically on a) (In)equalities and how institutions have contributed to it; b) (In)securities and vulnerabilities; and c) Governance and weakened legitimacy. - To seek case studies and inputs from the Arab region comparing status of DG in varying political systems of Arab states -To get the insights and perspective from the participants of the Arab Governance Week on social accountability, political participation and gender responsive governance in the Arab region.



DAY 4 - Thursday November 29	
9.00 – 9.30	Recap and introduction to the day
9.30 – 10.30	Country working groups Participants group by country to discuss how to take the recommendations forward in their respective countries
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee Break
11.00 – 12.00	Presentation of the results of the country work
12.00 – 13.00	Conclusions, recommendations and Closing remarks
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch

SIDELINE EVENT

14.00 – 17.30	<p>Regional Consultation on Governance and Accountability in the Post -2015 Framework The objectives of this Regional Consultation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to a broad-based dialogue on the role of governance and accountability in the post-2015 development framework that includes civil society and other non-state actors; - Propose key elements, issues and initial recommendations from the regional perspective on the role of governance in the post-2015 development agenda.
14.00 – 14.15	<p>Introduction to Regional Consultation on Governance and Accountability in the Post-2015 Framework Elissar Sarouh, Special Advisor, Democratic Governance Group, UNDP</p>
14.15 – 14.40	<p>Brief overview of the Post-2015 Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beniam Gebrezghi, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP “Brief overview - Joachim Nahem, Oslo Governance Center, UNDP “Measuring Governance in Post-2015 framework” - Ana Lukatela, UN WOMEN “Ensuring gender perspective in Post-2015 framework” - Questions and Answers
14.40 – 14.50	Introduction to group questions
14.50 – 15.30	<p>Break in three groups (one for each Guiding Question) to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify key elements and issues on governance and accountability for post-2015 - Identify initial recommendations for post-2015
15.30 – 16.30	Report on the results of group work and agree on initial recommendations (plenary)



List of Participants

Annex 2: List of Participants

	Name	Organization/ Institution	Country
1	Abdalhameed Yarbou	General National Congress committee on follow up of accountability bodies (auditor general, integrity commission anti-corruption)	Libya
2	Abdallah Herzenni	ONDH (Observatoire national du développement humain)	Morocco
3	Abdel Azziz Abul	Parliament - Shura Council	Bahrain
4	Abdelaziz Latrach	Central Authority for Corruption Prevention in Morocco (ICPC)	Morocco
5	Abdelaziz Latrach	ICPC	Morocco
6	Abdelkhalek Benzekri	AMDH	Morocco
7	Abdelouahab REZIG	CNES National Economic and Social Council of Algeria	Algeria
8	Abdelrahman El Mahdi	Sudan Government	Sudan
9	Abderrahmane ARAR	CSO	Algeria
10	Abdourahman Ali Said	SGG	Djibouti
11	Abdul Wahhab Abul-qasem Dabboub	Audit Bureau	Libya
12	Ahmed Kadhim Hujairi	Bahrain Human Rights Society	Bahrain
13	Ahmed Sulaiman Al Ajel	Supreme council for Planning and Development	Kuwait
14	Ahmed Khir	Support For Information Technology Center, Egypt "Comparative Analysis of Access to Information Legislation"	Egypt
15	Ahmed Sebai	Association Marocaine des Parlementaires contre la Corruption	Morocco
16	Aladeen Shawa	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
17	Ali Al-Za'tari	UNDP	Sudan
18	Ali Mohamed Abdou	NHRC	Djibouti
19	Ali Dabbas	Jordan National Center for Human Rights (NCHR)	Jordan
20	Ali Ibrahim AbdelKarim	LTA Libyan Transparency	Libya
21	Alia Al Dalli	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
22	AlRashed Imhemed Mohamed	Audit Bureau	Libya
23	Altaf Shaher Ali Al Mohammed	Youth Observatory	Yemen



24	Alyaa Nabil	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
25	Amal Hassan Babiker El Tinay	National Human Rights Commission NHRC	Sudan
26	Amin Sharkawi	UNDP	Sudan
27	Amr Lashin	Affiliated Network of Social Accountability, Arab Word (ANSA AW)	Egypt
28	Ana Lukatela	UN Women	USA
29	Andrea Ori	OHCHR	Tunisia
30	Anita Nirody	UNDP Egypt	Egypt
31	Anouar Mouala	Media / Expert en Sciences de l'Information et la Communication	Tunisia
32	Ayman Al-Sayyad	Senior Advisor to the President of Egypt	Egypt
33	Ayman Ayoub	International IDEA	Egypt
34	Ayshanie Medagango-da-Labe	UNDP	Morocco
35	Azmi Shuaibi	Anti-corruption and integrity network (ACINET)-nongovernmental group	OPt
36	Benamor Brahim	Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA-Africa)	Tunisia
37	Beniam Gebrezghi	UNDP	USA
38	Boshra Mahdi Hassan		Sudan
39	Bouho Abdillahi Hassan	UNDP	Djibouti
40	Bruno Pouezat	UNDP	Morocco
41	Carmen Malena	Social Accountability Expert	Canada
42	Christophe Peschoux	OHCHR	Geneva
43	Christopher Wilson	Oslo Governance Center	Norway
44	Cvetana Plavsa Matic	National Foundation for Civil Society Development	Eastern Europe - Croatia
45	Dalia Bayoumi	Social Contract Center Egypt	Egypt
46	Darah Al Joudar	UNDP	Kuwait
47	Dima Al-Kahtib	Palestinian Journalist, Venezuela Bureau Chief - Al Jazeera	Venezuela
48	Donia Abou Taleb	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
49	Ebraheem Ali Almaslami	Youth Observatory	Yemen
50	Edem Bakhshish	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
51	Ekkehard Strauss	Independent consultant	Morocco



List of Participants

52	El Hacene El Bey	Government	Algeria
53	Elham Alshejni	LAS	Egypt
54	Elissar Srarouh	UNDP RBAS	USA
55	Eltayeb Mustafa Abu-Ghanai	Anti-Corruption Commission	Sudan
56	Entesar Mohamed Al-Adhe	UN Women	Yemen
57	Evariste Sibomana	UNDP	Sudan
58	Fateh Azzam	Independent consultant	Lebanon
59	Faten Tibi	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
60	Fiorela Shalsi	UN Women	Albania
61	Geoff Prewitt	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
62	George Hodge	UNDP CO Armenia	Eastern Europe -Armenia
63	Ghada Moghny	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
64	Ghada Moussa	Ministry of State for Administrative Development	Egypt
65	Ghada Waly	Social Fund for Development	Egypt
66	Ghazi Abdulrahman Naji ABDULRAB	Activists Organization for Development and Human Rights (AODHR)	Yemen
67	Gihan Abou Taleb	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
68	Hala Alahmadi	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
69	Hanan Elbadawi	Young Egyptian Academic	Egypt
70	Hanan Mohammed Salam Ali al-Maqtari	Youth Observatory	Yemen
71	Hasmy Agam	SHUAKAM	Malaysia
72	Hassabo Mohamed	Higher Council for Decentralization	Sudan
73	Hassan Hamed	Egyptian Radio & Television Union and Media Production City	Egypt
74	Hassan Krayem	UNDP Lebanon	Lebanon
75	Hazaa Hasn AlHemiary	Youth Observatory	Yemen
76	Heba ElHedidi	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
77	Heba ElKholi	Oslo Governance Center	Norway
78	Helena Bjuremalm	International IDEA	IDEA
79	Helene Opsal	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
80	Hellen Mutellah	The Kenya Stakeholders Coalition for the UPR in Kenya (KSC-UPR)	Kenya
81	Hisham Abdel Rahman	Ministry of Local Development	Egypt



82	Hocine KHALDOUNE	CNPPDH, Commission Nationale de Promotion et de Protection des Droits de l'Homme	Algeria
83	Hoda Nahlawi	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
84	Hossam Bahgat	Egyptian Initiative for Human Rights	Egypt
85	Houssein Ahmed Aydid	Ministry of Justice and Judicial Affairs, Somaliland	Somalia
86	Huda Saleh AlDakheel	UNDP	Kuwait
87	Ibrahim Bisharat	Birzeit University	OPt
88	Imad Mehonna	Lebanese Transparency Association	Lebanon
89	Intisar Saleh	UNDP - RCC	Egypt
90	Iryna Fedorovych	Social Action Centre "No Borders" Project	Eastern Europe -Ukraine
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