

## Helpdesk Research Report: Voice and Accountability Indexes

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**Query:** Identify tools/indexes/indicators that have been developed to measure the impact of development interventions (policies, programmes, projects) on voice and accountability.

**Enquirer:** DFID

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### Overview

Because 'voice and accountability' is a broad term comprising several areas of donor intervention - including civic education, rights awareness, empowerment, democracy promotion and support to civil society and the media - the literature on tools and indicators for measuring the impact of development interventions on voice and accountability is highly fragmented. With the exception of the 2007 joint donor evaluation of voice and accountability by the Overseas Development Institute, there has been little attempt to develop distinct methodologies and combined indicators to measure the impact of these various types of donor interventions on voice and accountability.

This report includes three sections:

1) Tools: This section includes examples of approaches to evaluating programmes that aim to impact on citizens' voice and accountability. Theory-based approaches are prevalent, and there is some consensus about the value of participatory evaluation and mixed-methods designs combining surveys and interviews. It was not possible, however, to identify any cases of the use of rigorous impact evaluation methodologies to assess changes in voice or accountability as the result of donor interventions.

2) Indicators: There does not appear to be a single set of combined indicators for assessing voice and accountability - indeed this may not be possible or desirable (ODI, 2007). This section draws together some of the indicators used to measure the composite elements of voice and accountability - including access to information, budget oversight, local government financial accountability, and empowerment.

3) Indexes: This section tables current/ongoing sources of national and local data (indexes) on voice and accountability. The most widely cited aggregate indicator for voice and accountability is the World Bank's Voice and Accountability Index (part of the Governance Indicators dataset). This draws on multiple sources, surveys, and other indexes, some of which are also listed in the table. This section includes indexes across the range of voice and accountability interventions. These indexes commonly draw on indicators of participation, budget transparency, access to information, freedom of the press, the status of women, and citizens' views of the quality of democracy.

## 1. Tools

### **CommGAP, 2007, 'Evaluation Framework for Governance Programmes, Communication for Governance and Accountability Program (CommGAP)', World Bank**

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTGOVACC/Resources/MDTFEvaluationFrameworkFINALC.pdf>

This paper presents a framework for evaluating the outcomes of the Communication for Governance and Accountability Program (CommGAP), which has 4 objectives:

- 1) legal and regulatory reforms to improve access to information;
- 2) strengthening government communication capacity (national and local), including accountability institutions;
- 3) building citizen competence and demand for accountability (e.g., budget information and expenditure tracking) and; and
- 4) strengthening media systems (e.g., liberalisation, licensing regime, ownership, and advertising).

The approach proposed is a programme theory/logic model; the choice of indicators is based on what is seen to be measurable and easy to operationalise; and means of measurement is through existing data sources, including population-based surveys and interviews with key informants.

Outcomes, indicators and means of measurement for each of CommGAP's 4 objectives are presented on pp.13-21.

### **Forest, M., O'Neil, T., and Hudson, A., 2007, 'Evaluation of Citizens' Voice and Accountability: Evaluation Framework', Overseas Development Institute, London**

<http://www.norad.no/items/14302/38/1855520330/Final%20FrameworkCCS%20Methodology.pdf>

This paper describes the methodology used in a 2007 joint donor evaluation of voice and accountability. The methodology comprised a theory based results chain for V&A Interventions. The framework comprised 4 components:

- 1) Opportunities, constraints and entry points for V&A;
- 2) Institutional, organisational and individual capacities;
- 3) V&A channels: actors and mechanisms;
- 4) Changes in policy, practice, behaviour and power relations; 5) Broader development outcomes. Areas of change, criteria and indicators are presented on p. 22.

### **O'Neil, T., Foresti, M., and Hudson, A., 2007, Evaluation of Citizens' Voice and Accountability: Review of the Literature and Donor Approaches, Overseas Development Institute, London**

<http://www.norad.no/items/14302/38/1855520330/Review%20of%20the%20Literature.....pdf>

Part 4 (p.29) of this literature review (prepared for the joint donor evaluation above) discusses the application of theory-based approaches to the evaluation of voice and accountability interventions. It concludes that an all-encompassing evaluation model to be applied in all contexts by all donors is neither possible nor desirable. Whilst it is desirable to have comparable indicators that can be applied across a number of countries and sectors, it is also increasingly recognised that what determines democracy or human rights outcomes is highly context-dependent and that the available measures are often insufficient for demonstrating which explanatory factors lead to different results.

**Sarles, M., 2007, 'Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of USAID's democracy and governance programmes', Chapter 2 in Evaluating Democracy Support: Methods and Experiences, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency**  
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/14/6/41434218.pdf>

This chapter describes some of the tools used by USAID to measure the impact of its democracy support programmes, including national surveys to gauge citizens support for democracy (the Democratic Indicators and Measurement Survey (DIMS) - first piloted in Guatemala). These surveys measure changes in attitudes, perceptions and behavioral characteristics before beginning a programme, as well as monitor change during the life of the project and evaluate the final effects at the end — 'before' and 'after'. Specific clusters of questions and indices developed from the surveys are used to monitor and evaluate programmes.

USAID has also piloted large-scale quantitative analyses - 'Voices from the Field' – which, rather than rely on worldwide longitudinal data sets and indicators, focus on extracting rich details through interviews with experienced democracy field officers.

**Crawford, G., n.d. 'Evaluating EU Promotion of Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance: Towards a Participatory Approach', University of Leeds**  
<http://www.edpsg.org/Documents/Dp22.doc>

This paper evaluates the methodologies used for assessing the impact of the EU's democracy and human rights promotion programmes. It finds there is no consistent methodology or agreed set of indicators, and proposes an alternative approach based on three core concepts: 1) political analysis; 2) linkages between micro, meso and macro level analysis of impact (since the meso level is often neglected); 3) the use of participatory approaches. Participatory evaluation, it argues, not only provides that essential input of local knowledge and critical analysis, but also the very process of a participatory evaluation is akin to the process of democratisation itself.

**Blair, H., 2007, 'Gauging Civil Society Advocacy: Charting Pluralist Pathways', Chapter 7 in Evaluating Democracy Support: Methods and Experiences, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency**  
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/14/6/41434218.pdf>

This chapter presents a civil society advocacy scale - from community awareness, mobilisation and voice, to representation, transparency and pluralism- as a means of measuring the impact of advocacy work and donor support to civil society. The author advocates for the thorough analysis of specific advocacy efforts, using intensive interviews with participants, surveys and focus groups to provide a 'thick description', as the principal technique for measuring impact. This approach would not require large evaluation budgets.

**Powell, A., Čelebičić, I., Bratović, E., Šišić, A., 2008, 'Outcome Mapping Evaluation of Six Civil Society Projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina', Sida Evaluation 2008:17**  
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/32/61/42139512.pdf>

This paper describes the use of outcome mapping to measure the immediate outcomes of Sida support to civil society. The evaluation methodology comprised questionnaires and in-depth interviews based around individual projects' progress markers. The paper argues for the use of the 'outcome mapping' approach to evaluate the impact of support to civil society either in place of or combined with the more limited and monolithic logical framework approach.

Outcome mapping is distinguished from log frame or results based management approaches in three ways:

1. It focuses on a limited number of “boundary partners” with whom a programme or project has direct contact rather than on a larger number of final beneficiaries.
2. It has a narrower emphasis on outcomes, conceived primarily as changes in boundary partner behaviour and relationships, rather than on impact.
3. It introduces the concept of progress markers as a graduated ladder of specific changes in boundary partner behaviour and relationships which define and describe progress towards each outcome challenge.

**AMARC, 2007, Community Radio Social Impact Assessment: Challenges, Findings, Reflections, Experiences, Lines of Action for Community Radio stakeholders, AMARC Global Evaluation**

[http://evaluation.amarc.org/evaluation\\_2007.pdf](http://evaluation.amarc.org/evaluation_2007.pdf)

This report assesses the impact of local community radio on voice, empowerment and local ownership of communication processes. It argues that quantity indicators don't tell the whole story: quality indicators such as life stories of individual and collective social change are important in determining how programmes have a social impact. The report advocates participatory evaluation, and sets out indicators for measuring the social impact of community radio on p. 40.

## 2. Indicators

**Andrews, M., 2005, 'Voice Mechanisms and Local Government Fiscal Outcomes How Do Civic Pressure and Participation Influence Public Accountability?', Chapter 8 A. Shah [ed] in Public Expenditure Analysis, World Bank**

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PSGLP/Resources/PublicExpenditureAnalysis.pdf>

This paper reviews case study evidence of the impact of voice mechanisms on making governments more accountable and responsive to citizens. The research identified the following accountability indicators (p. 224):

- *Changes in resource responsibility*: official concern for public revenues and for behaviour within codified fiscal processes.
- *Changes in responsiveness and performance*: measured through adjustments in service expenditure allocations.
- *Changes in process transparency*: measured through access to information.
- *Changes in corruption*: governments with high levels of accountability are less corrupt.
- *Changes in political and administrative accountability*: Voice mechanisms that develop relational links and reward and redress avenues that tied officials more closely to citizens were seen to enhance accountability.

**Alsop, R., 2006, 'Empowerment in Practice: From Analysis to Implementation', World Bank Washington**

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEMPowerment/Resources/Empowerment\\_in\\_Practice.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEMPowerment/Resources/Empowerment_in_Practice.pdf)

This book presents case studies of methodologies and tools for measuring and evaluating empowerment. It advocates a mixed-methods approach to describing and explaining trends and patterns in empowerment. A typology of indirect and direct indicators of empowerment is included p.36-37. These include indicators for citizen voice and accountability in relation to politics (participatory democracy, voting choice, accountability) and in relation to service delivery.

**UNDP, 2006, 'A Guide to Measuring the Impact of Right to Information Programmes: Practical Guidance Note', UNDP**

[http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/A2I\\_guides\\_righttoinfoimpact.pdf](http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/A2I_guides_righttoinfoimpact.pdf)

This guide aims to help UNDP staff choose and apply appropriate indicators for assessing the impact of right to information-focused interventions. Indicators are presented in relation to four outcomes:

- 1) legal regime;
- 2) implementation of legislation;
- 3) use of the right to information by civil society and the general public;
- 4) use of right to information by the marginalised poor.

Indicators of these outcomes are explored in detail pp.13-24.

**Parliamentary Center, 2008, 'Indicators of Parliamentary Performance in the Budget Process', Parliamentary Center**

[http://www.parlcent.ca/indicators/budget\\_process\\_e.php](http://www.parlcent.ca/indicators/budget_process_e.php)

This web page provides a list of indicators for parliamentary performance in the budget process, including indicators of transparency, participation, and policy and programme impact.

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**Websites visited**

Center for Global Communication Studies, World Bank, World Bank Participation and Civic Engagement, USAID - Development Experience Clearinghouse, IDS Participation Group, UNDP Evaluation Office, OECD Evaluation Resource Centre, UNDP Evaluation Resource Center, MandE, 3ie, Poverty Action Lab, International Budget Project, GSDRC, Google, Google Scholar, UNIFEM, UNRISD, Eldis, Oneworld, Save the Children, Oxfam, Logolink, Civicus, International Development Evaluation Association (IDEA), Informaworld, Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), International IDEA, UNDP Oslo Governance Centre.

**About Helpdesk Research Reports:** Helpdesk reports are based on 2 days of desk-based research. They are designed to provide a brief overview of the key issues; and a summary of some of the best literature available. Experts are contacted during the course of the research, and those able to provide input within the short time-frame are acknowledged.

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**Annex: Indexes**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Index</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>URL/Notes</b>
Afrobarometer	Afrobarometer	Public attitude to democracy and civil society.	<a href="http://www.afrobarometer.org/data.html">http://www.afrobarometer.org/data.html</a>
Asian Barometer	Asian Barometer	Citizens' attitudes to politics, power, reform, democracy, and citizens' political actions in Asia.	<a href="http://www.asianbarometer.org/">http://www.asianbarometer.org/</a>
Bertelsmann Transformation Index	Transformation Status Index and Management Index	Status of democratic development, including political participation; political and social integration.	<a href="http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/11.0.html?&amp;L=1">http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/11.0.html?&amp;L=1</a> See methodology at: <a href="http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/fileadmin/pdf/Anlagen_BTI_2008/4_Criteria_and_Methodology.pdf">http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/fileadmin/pdf/Anlagen BTI 2008/4 Criteria and Methodology.pdf</a>
Civicus	Civil Society Index	Civic engagement; level of organisation; practice of values; perceived impact; external environment (conditions within which civil society operates).	<a href="http://www.civicus.org/csi">http://www.civicus.org/csi</a> Note this index is a needs assessment and action planning tool for civil society.
Economist Intelligence Unit	Democracy Index	60 indicators grouped in five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture.	<a href="http://a330.g.akamai.net/7/330/25828/20081021185552/graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy%20Index%202008.pdf">http://a330.g.akamai.net/7/330/25828/20081021185552/graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy%20Index%202008.pdf</a>
Freedom House	Freedom of the Press Index	Legal environment (including laws, regulations, regulation, registration requirements); Political environment (including political control, level of independence, freedom from harassment/intimidation); Economic environment (including transparency, ownership, corruption).	<a href="http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=16">http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=16</a> See breakdown of indicators at: <a href="http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fop08/Methodology2008.pdf">http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fop08/Methodology2008.pdf</a>
Freedom House	Freedom in the World Survey/ Political Rights Index	Accountability, openness and transparency indicators include: right to information; budget scrutiny; public asset scrutiny.	<a href="http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=351&amp;ana_page=341&amp;year=2008">http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=351&amp;ana_page=341&amp;year=2008</a>

Source	Index	Indicators	URL/Notes
Global Integrity	Global Integrity Index (GII)	The <i>existence, effectiveness and access</i> to public integrity mechanisms: transparency of the public procurement process, media freedom, asset disclosure requirements, and conflicts of interest regulations.	<a href="http://report.globalintegrity.org/">http://report.globalintegrity.org/</a>
International Budget Project	Open Budget Index	Public access to budget information; legislative and supreme audit institution oversight.	<a href="http://www.openbudgetindex.org/">http://www.openbudgetindex.org/</a>
International IDEA	State of Democracy	Public assessment of popular control over public decisions and decision makers and equality of respect and voice between citizens in the exercise of that control. Indicators of government effectiveness and accountability include: public confidence; level of scrutiny. Indicators of participation include; range of voluntary associations and citizen participation, equality of access to political office.	<a href="http://www.idea.int/publications/sod/index.cfm">http://www.idea.int/publications/sod/index.cfm</a> See methodology at: <i>International IDEA, Democracy Assessment: The basics of the International IDEA Assessment Framework</i> <a href="http://www.idea.int/publications/sod/upload/demo_ass_inlay_eng_L.pdf">http://www.idea.int/publications/sod/upload/demo_ass_inlay_eng_L.pdf</a>
International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX)	Media Sustainability Index (MSI)	Free speech and access to information; professional journalism; multiple news sources; editorial independence; supporting institutions.	<a href="http://www.irex.org/">http://www.irex.org/</a>
Mo Ibrahim Foundation	The Ibrahim Index of African Governance	Includes indicators on Participation and Human Rights: Free and fair executive elections; Participation of the opposition in executive elections; Free and fair legislative elections; Participation of the opposition in legislative elections; Respect for physical integrity rights; Respect for civil rights; Press Freedom Index; Women's Rights.	<a href="http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index-2008/index.asp">http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index-2008/index.asp</a> <i>For index on participation and human rights, see:</i> <a href="http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index-2008/bycategory/participation.asp">http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index-2008/bycategory/participation.asp</a>
Reporters without Borders (RSF)	Worldwide Press Freedom Index	Violation against journalists; legal environment for media; freedom of information.	<a href="http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=11715">http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=11715</a>
Transparency International	Corruption Perceptions Index	Public perceptions of corruption.	<a href="http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi">http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi</a>



Source	Index	Indicators	URL/Notes
UN Habitat	Urban Governance Index	<p>Participation sub-index: <i>Representative democracy</i> - elected Mayor; elected Council. <i>Participative Democracy</i> -Voter turnout and voter participation by Sex; Public forum; Civic Associations per 10,000 population.</p> <p><u>Accountability sub-index</u>: <i>Transparency</i> - access to information; <i>Integrity</i> -codes of conduct; citizen complaints); <i>Responsiveness</i> - measures of control by higher level of government; <i>Corruption</i> - independent audit; disclosure of assets; anti-corruption commission.</p>	<p>See:<a href="http://ww2.unhabitat.org/campaigns/governance/documents/UGIndex%205%20pager.pdf">http://ww2.unhabitat.org/campaigns/governance/documents/UGIndex%205%20pager.pdf</a>  See methodology at:  <i>UN-Habitat, 2004, Urban Governance Index: Conceptual Foundation and Field Test Report</i>  <a href="http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&amp;catid=25&amp;cid=2167">http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&amp;catid=25&amp;cid=2167</a>  Note this is a locally compiled index.</p>
UNDP	Gender Empowerment Measure	Women's political participation and decision making power; economic participation; and command over resources.	<a href="http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/indices/gdi_gem/">http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/indices/gdi_gem/</a>
UNIFEM	Progress of the World's Women 2008/9	Political accountability; women in parliaments; electoral quotas; political party membership; women in ministerial positions.	<p>See <i>Chapter 2, Politics</i>:  <a href="http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008/vs_politics.html#vstats">http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008/vs_politics.html#vstats</a></p>
World Bank: Worldwide Governance Indicators	Voice and Accountability Index	Perceptions of extent to which citizens are able to participate in selecting their government; freedom of expression; freedom of association; free media.	<p><a href="http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp">http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp</a></p> <p>See full list of (over 50) components of aggregate 'voice and accountability' indicator on p.72 in:  Kauffman, D., 2008, <i>Governance Matters VII: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators, 1996-2007, World Bank</i>  <a href="http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1148386">http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1148386</a></p>