POLITICAL PARTY
PROGRAMMING GUIDE

National Democratic Institute

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that responds to the aspirations of people around the world to live in democratic societies that recognize and promote basic human rights.

Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to support and strengthen democratic institutions and practices by strengthening political parties, civic organizations and parliaments, safeguarding elections, and promoting citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

With staff members and volunteer political practitioners from more than 100 nations, NDI brings together individuals and groups to share ideas, knowledge, experiences and expertise. Partners receive broad exposure to best practices in international democratic development that can be adapted to the needs of their own countries. NDI's multinational approach reinforces the message that while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies.

The Institute's work upholds the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also promotes the development of institutionalized channels of communications among citizens, political institutions and elected officials, and strengthens their ability to improve the quality of life for all citizens. For more information about NDI, please visit www.ndi.org.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

Political party assistance is undergoing a transition. In recent years, a growing number of implementers have become involved in party assistance, and donors who had previously been reluctant to support these programs have expressed a new interest in the sector. These developments present challenges as well as opportunities. Broader recognition of party development as a critical element of democracy support is long overdue. However, it has been tempered by concerns about poor public perceptions of political parties in both emerging and established democracies, the need to better demonstrate results, and frustration over the slow pace of party reform in many countries. Simply put, while party assistance has greater legitimacy in the democracy support community, there is also increased awareness of, and concern about some of the challenges involved in supporting party reform. At the same time, the increased variety and interest in the party assistance community creates greater opportunities for dialogue regarding emerging trends, lessons learned, and challenges facing the sector. The Political Party Peer Network – an informal network of party assistance providers and donors – is serving as one forum for some of these discussions.

For more than 30 years, NDI has worked with democratic parties in over 90 countries around the world to create more open political environments in which citizens can actively participate in the democratic process. While party assistance has always been at the core of its mandate, over the years the Institute has adapted the assistance it provides based on new trends in party organizing, shifting political landscapes, the needs of its partners, and an ever increasing body of knowledge and expertise. Today, more complex programs, increasingly diverse operating contexts and approaches, and the quest to improve monitoring and evaluation require assistance providers to update the tools and frameworks they once used to design and evaluate their work. Similar efforts are underway across various sectors in international development.

The Will, Space, Capacity Framework is part of NDI's efforts to meet the challenges of a new era in party assistance. The framework is designed to help donors, assistance providers and evaluators consider how formal and informal rules and institutions, the general political environment, and other factors influence political will and opportunities for party reform in different contexts. This has implications for how theories of change are framed, program strategies are developed, expectations are set about the likely pace and type of reforms in different operating environments, and program successes and shortcomings are analyzed. While the framework does not offer instant solutions to the various complexities of party assistance, it should help readers gain new insights into the obstacles to and possible approaches for supporting the development of more effective and inclusive parties.

The Institute is grateful to those who helped bring the framework to fruition.

Kenneth Wollack   Ivan Doherty
President   Senior Associate
                                         Director of Political Party Programs

"Finally after decades of international assistance for political party development, here is a guide to the subject well-informed by the lessons of extensive practical experience, the recognized need for better contextual analysis, and attention to the rigors of monitoring and evaluation. Certain to be useful to practitioners and party activists everywhere engaged in this challenging but vital enterprise.**"**

—Thomas Carothers
Vice President for Studies
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLES

TEXTBOXES

POLITICAL PARTY
PROGRAMMING GUIDE

National Democratic Institute

INTRODUCTION

In every region of the world, public opinion polls show widespread support for democracy as the best form a government. People want the ability to participate in government and public affairs and to choose their political leaders. They also want to benefit from accountability in government, respect for human rights and equality of treatment. To be successful and maintain popular support, however, democracies must also produce visible improvements in citizens' quality of life, a key factor in preventing autocratic regimes and anti-system movements from gaining ground.

In democratic systems, final authority lies with the people. Political parties are one of the primary avenues through which citizens can exercise that authority and participate in political life. When citizens join political parties, donate money or time, help to shape party policies, or stand for office under a party ticket, they are exercising some of the basic rights that are part and parcel of democracy. Democracy is more likely to develop and endure when all segments of a society are free to participate and influence political outcomes without suffering bias or reprisal. How political parties define, engage and mobilize their constituents has implications for the extent to which citizens feel included in public affairs, represented by political leaders, and able to hold their leaders to account.

Political parties contribute to democratic governance by aggregating and representing the interests of their constituents. They play that role through certain key functions. Parties propose policies that are representative of their members. They campaign on those policies and strive to implement them when in power. When in opposition, parties help hold governments accountable by contributing to oversight of the executive and critiquing or presenting alternatives to ruling party policy proposals. This competition of ideas encourages each party to refine its own proposals and seek common ground with others; it can also result in better outcomes for the public. Thus, parties provide citizens with a space to express their policy preferences, opportunities to influence the direction of their government, and a means to hold that government accountable at election time. Moreover, how parties formulate and seek to advance their policy proposals has implications for the extent to which governments are able to improve public welfare.

In healthy multiparty systems, there is sufficient party competition to allow the electorate a meaningful choice: too many parties may cause the political landscape to be fragmented and unstable, whereas too few may lead to a highly polarized political environment. Parties in vibrant democratic systems embrace civil competition but are also capable of the debate, dialogue and compromise required for government to function.[1]

While civic groups have key roles to play in developing and sustaining democracy, vibrant political parties are equally necessary. Civil society without effective parties and political institutions creates a void, giving opportunities to demagogues and extremists who undermine democratic governance. While there are parties without democracy, there can be no democracy without political parties. Parties in many countries may be flawed, but they are also indispensable in democratic governance.

For more than 30 years, NDI has worked with democratic parties in over 80 countries around the world to create more open political environments in which citizens can actively participate in the democratic process. The Institute shares tools, strategies and techniques that parties can use to develop stronger connections to the public, mount competitive electoral campaigns, and perform more effectively in the legislature. The Institute's multi-partisan programs seek

---

1. Peter Burnell, *Building Better Democracies: Why Political Parties Matter* (London: Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2004), 5.

to foster vibrant, competitive, and sustainable multiparty systems rather than to promote particular parties or ideologies.

In recent years, the international community has shown an increased interest in supporting political party development as a component of democracy assistance. A growing number of implementers have become involved in party assistance, and donors who had previously been reluctant to fund these programs have expressed a new interest in the sector. The nature of party assistance has also changed. Implementers now work with parties in a broader range of contexts than in the past. Although trends vary from one region to another, recent years have also seen longer-term funding for political party programs, enabling implementers to move beyond an elections focus and to engage parties in organizing and outreach outside campaign periods. In addition, assistance has moved beyond basic capacity building to attempts to support reform both in individual parties and at the party system level. While support to parties in closed political environments is hardly new, a renewed wave of pushbacks – often more sophisticated and more aggressive than in the past – is challenging assistance providers to explore new strategies.

As party assistance has evolved, questions have arisen about how programming can be better tailored to different operating contexts, take into greater account some of the underlying factors that shape party behavior, and be more effectively monitored and evaluated. Simultaneously, the changing nature of relations between political parties and citizens, and widespread disenchantment with party politics in many established democracies, has spurred debate about whether party assistance is based on models of party organizing that are unrealistic or obsolete. For instance, given that many political parties in established democracies face declining membership numbers, some have questioned whether the mass-based party is a 20th century institution and whether assistance providers promote idealized versions of party organizing.[2] In recent years, there has been substantial debate within the party assistance community regarding these and other new developments, emerging trends, and lessons learned. This has led to the emergence of the Political Party Peer (PPPeer) Network, which serves as a forum where assistance providers discuss these and other issues affecting their field.[3]

More complex programs, increasingly diverse operating contexts, and the quest for improved monitoring and evaluation require assistance providers to update the tools and frameworks they use to design and evaluate their work. This guide and its companion *Context Analysis Tool* are designed to help meet that challenge. They recognize the need for:

- Conceptual frameworks that can be applied to a wide range of environments;
- Context analyses that more explicitly consider the incentive structures that influence party behavior;
- Program design that is informed by more insightful context analyses;
- More explicit theories of change; and
- Improved monitoring and evaluation.

The guide includes two main sections. The first section describes the Will, Space, Capacity Framework, which defines the key functions through which political parties fulfill their representative role in democracies: proposing policies, competing in elections, and participating in governance. The framework goes on to outline the attributes, in the form of key principles and competencies, which enable political parties to fulfill this role effectively and democratically. It recognizes that while parties' core functions remain constant in democracies, how they define

their constituencies, and how they interpret and perform these functions, evolves over time and varies from country to country and from party to party. Finally, the framework outlines three key drivers of party behavior – political space, political will, and capacity – and discusses the components of each. The framework is designed for use by program staff, donors, and evaluators who seek a greater understanding of issues to consider in designing, managing and evaluating party assistance.

The second section provides guidance on designing more strategic and effective party programs using the Will, Space, Capacity Framework. It is primarily targeted to assistance providers but may also be of interest to others in the assistance community. The second section loosely follows the lifecycle of a typical program. "Laying the Groundwork" discusses research and analysis that should be conducted prior to designing a program. (*Context Analysis Tool* that serves as a companion to this guide provides further details on how to assess operating environments based on key concepts outlined in the framework.) "Developing a Strategy" raises issues to consider in determining program goals, objectives, and theories of change, and in choosing activities. "Measuring Change" outlines common challenges in monitoring and evaluating political party programs, and some potential solutions. Finally, the section discusses "Managing Relationships," and includes guidance on selecting parties for assistance and working with program stakeholders.

While the publication is primarily based on NDI principles, there are numerous approaches to party assistance. (A summary of the Institute's approach is included in Textbox 1.) For instance, while the Institute employs a multipartisan approach with the long-term goal of fostering competitive multiparty systems, some party institutes focus assistance on like-minded – or so-called fraternal – parties. As a result, some of the specific approaches outlined may not be relevant for all users; nonetheless, many of the ideas discussed can be applied to a broad range of party and democracy assistance programs.

Textbox 1: NDI's Approach

The Institute seeks to help parties improve the quality of political representation by helping them to propose policies, compete, govern more effectively, or contribute constructively in opposition, through the development of organizing skills and a strengthened commitment to democratic principles. In addition, NDI works with parties and other democratic actors to improve the overall party system.

Multipartisan: NDI takes a multipartisan approach to political party assistance, seeking to foster competitive party systems where citizens are offered a meaningful choice between political parties with contrasting policy proposals. As a result, in a given country, rather than seeking to advance a particular ideological position, NDI typically works with a broad range of democratically-oriented political parties that represent different political views.

Peer-to-Peer Engagement: Political parties learn best from peers that understand their strengths, weaknesses and sensibilities. Founded as a political party institute, NDI maintains a loose affiliation with the United States Democratic Party but takes no position on U.S. elections or political issues. In its political party development programs around the world, NDI works closely with the international groupings of political parties. It is the only organization to have official standing in the three largest international groupings of political parties representing social democratic, liberal, and centrist democrat ideologies. The Institute's relationships also extend to European party groups, as well as to a range of political parties in established and emerging democracies. As a member of the global club (both formal and informal) of democratic parties and party institutes, NDI is able to facilitate the sharing of experiences and lessons learned on a wide range of sensitive

---

topics with high-level politicians who have undergone transitions or reforms in their own countries or parties. This engagement between peers can strengthen the motivation of parties to adopt reforms that reflect international democratic norms.

Respect for Party Confidences: While parties perform many unique and vital functions in democratic systems, given their competitive nature, they have strong interests in keeping certain information confidential. In some cases, this impulse is reasonable and necessary for healthy competition. NDI's work is most effective when partners trust the Institute enough to openly share their concerns and operational challenges. The Institute respects party confidences, given that this is often a prerequisite for working with partners on sensitive organizational and strategic changes.

Day-to-Day Work With Parties: The vast majority of the Institute's political party programs are implemented by staff based in program countries. This approach allows the Institute to combine formal technical assistance activities with ongoing, hands-on, informal support and consultations as political parties/activists put new techniques, skills and knowledge to use. Staff based in program countries can also: develop a broader range of relationships within parties and among other democratic actors and are better placed to identify and rapidly respond to new opportunities for, or challenges to, political party support.

Tailored Assistance: Even within one country, there are often significant differences in parties' needs and priorities. In addition to adapting programming to each country context, the Institute tailors its assistance to each partner's specific situation and interests. This may involve party-specific assistance within the context of a program that engages multiple parties.

30-Day Rule: Regardless of legally-defined campaign periods, NDI normally suspends partisan assistance to political parties and candidates for the last 30 days leading up to an election. Partisan activities include those that are primarily designed to help parties or candidates enhance their competitiveness in elections. Specifically, prohibited activities within this period include but are not limited to assistance with outreach strategies or planning, platform or message development, and "get out the vote" activities. Activities permissible within the 30-day window include party pollwatcher trainings, multiparty forums designed to promote peaceful and legitimate elections, and multiparty debates organized to raise voter awareness. The primary purpose of this long-standing internal policy is to minimize or avoid the perception of direct involvement in campaigns. A number of donors, including the National Endowment for Democracy and the United States Agency for International Development, have similar guidelines.

Material Assistance: NDI is primarily a provider of technical assistance and does not provide direct material assistance – in the form of grants, reimbursement of costs for organizing party activities, or in-kind donations of equipment or services – to political parties or candidates. In many cases, domestic law prohibits these types of foreign assistance to political parties even when provided in a multipartisan fashion. The following are generally not considered as material assistance to political parties or candidates: subsidizing travel costs for party activists' participation in NDI activities; providing general training materials as part of the Institute's programming; and hosting resource centers where parties can access libraries, the internet, and group meeting spaces. In extremely rare circumstances and in particularly difficult environments, NDI has made exceptions to its material assistance rule when the funding allows recipient parties to better apply broader technical assistance. These exceptions have also included strict prohibitions on funding for direct campaign activities by candidates, parties, or coalitions of candidates/parties.

THE WILL, SPACE, CAPACITY FRAMEWORK

In democratic systems, the primary role of a political party is to aggregate and represent citizen interests. A range of local factors, such as social norms, history and individual incentives, influence how parties interpret this role and what citizens expect of them. For instance, over the past few decades, political parties in Western Europe have seen drastic declines in party membership. The number of voters registered as members of a political party has taken a similar dip in the United States. Increased individualism and social mobility, higher levels of education, developments in communications technology, and lack of confidence in politicians have contributed to this decline.[4] How political parties in the West will respond to these challenges remains to be seen. However, many are adopting new forms of organizing and outreach, and are reinterpreting their longstanding values in a changing world. In emerging democracies, different sets of contextual factors shape party behavior. Political parties in such environments will also have to respond to challenges resulting from changing landscapes and evolving citizen expectations. For instance, in Tunisia, where political debate was severely restricted until President Zine El-Abadine Ben Ali was ousted in 2011, fledgling parties had to quickly establish internal structures, form coalitions, and compete in elections. At the same time, they began responding to demands for increased women's participation by forming new women's wings, conducting outreach, and in one case, implementing an internal quota.

As societies and citizens' expectations of their parties and governments evolve, so too do definitions of what it means to be participatory, inclusive and accountable. If parties are to remain representative, they must evolve in response to their political environments. Regardless of the political context or operating environment, parties can strengthen their contributions to a vibrant multiparty democracy by striving to encourage more participation and conduct better outreach – even as standards change. Further, over time, party methods for conducting outreach, policy research, and other activities may change to reflect new organizational approaches and technological tools.

Given the varied nature of political parties and their environments, there is no ideal model for political parties in developing democracies to emulate. Nevertheless, there is consensus that parties must meet certain basic standards of openness and accountability. Efforts to articulate broadly-accepted guiding principles for democratic parties include NDI's *Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties*[5] and the Council of Europe's *Code of Good Practice for Political Parties.*[6] Further, despite significant differences in operating environments, there is a long tradition of party-to-party exchanges for sharing effective organizing practices.

---

4. "Lonely at the top: Is the mass political party on its way out? And does it matter?" *The Economist*, August 4, 2012, http://www.economist.com/node/21559901.
5. NDI, *Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties* (Washington, DC: NDI, 2008).
6. Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 1546, "Code of good practice for political parties," April 17, 2007, http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta07/ERES1546.htm.

Figure 1: How Parties Contribute to Representative Governance
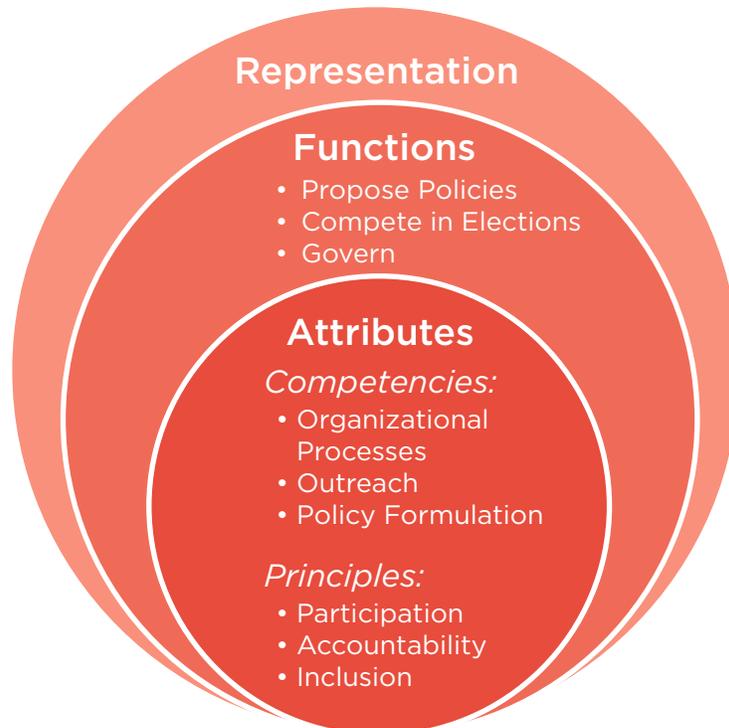
The Will, Space, Capacity Framework outlined below focuses on the key functions through which political parties aggregate and represent the interests of their constituents. Rather than putting forward a rigid set of criteria or benchmarks for party functioning, it outlines core principles and competencies that parties require in order to effectively perform their representative functions. Figure 1 illustrates how party attributes and functions contribute to representation. Parties attempt to represent citizen interests by carrying out certain core functions. Parties' attributes – the principles and competencies they employ in their performance of those functions – impact how well they aggregate and represent those interests, if at all. Because it addresses each of these elements separately, the Will, Space, Capacity Framework is flexible enough to be applied in diverse environments and to political parties of varying size, ideology, membership base, and age. In addition, it incorporates contextual factors and key drivers that influence party behavior.

The Will, Space, Capacity Framework outlined in Figure 2 has three levels that build on one another to outline:

- The functions through which parties represent the interests of their constituencies, including proposing policies, competing in elections, and governing;

- The attributes, including competencies (technical skills and resources) and principles (values), that parties require in order to effectively fulfill their functions; and

- Three key influences or drivers – political space, political will, and capacity – that shape party behavior.

Figure 2: The Will, Space, Capacity Framework
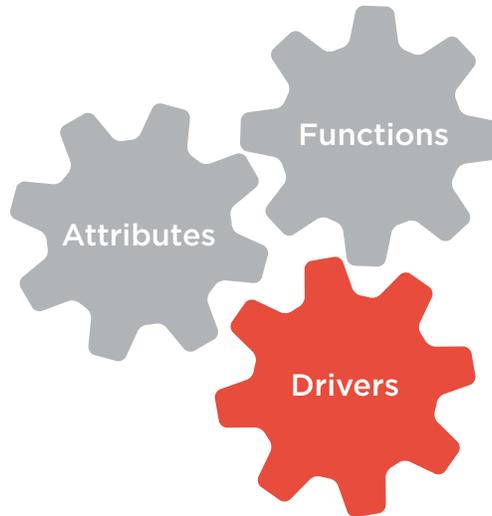
The functions are the mechanisms by which parties represent their constituents within the larger democratic system. In order to be effective and truly aggregate citizen interests, parties must approach the functions with the goal of representing their constituents, and with an understanding of their concerns. The extent to which this is the case is based on their commitment to democratic principles and their access to technical skills and resources. The drivers outline the underlying factors that lead parties to behave the way they do. Loosely, these three concepts relate to what parties do, how they do it, and why they behave the way they do. The levels of the framework, along with their subcomponents, are described in greater detail below.

FUNCTIONS

Figure 3: Party Functions

- Propose Policies
- Compete in Elections
- Govern
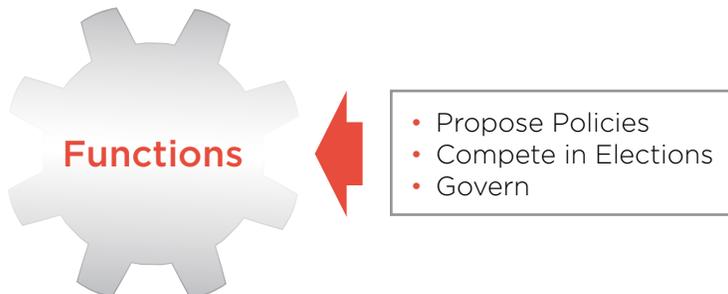
In democratic systems, political parties represent their constituencies by performing three main functions (shown in Figure 3).

1. ***Propose Policies:*** Political parties propose public policies regarding how the country should be governed;

2. ***Compete in Elections:*** They compete for power through elections, ideally by promoting the policies they formulate; and

3. ***Govern:*** Both ruling and opposition parties are critical to democratic governance. When in power, political parties are responsible for the direction of their government; in opposition, they help hold government accountable by voicing credible alternative policies. Parties should try to implement their policy proposals while in government, or advocate for them when in opposition.

Ideally, these three actions are related: parties should propose policies that they believe to be in the best interest of their constituencies, compete in elections based on those policy positions, and implement them once in government or advocate for them in opposition. All of the actions a party undertakes contribute in one way or another to these three core functions. For instance, when parties recruit and train candidates, they improve their chances of winning at election time and enhance their ability to implement their policy proposals in government. Similarly, parties enter into parliamentary coalitions in order to participate in government and gain the opportunity to implement portions of their policy agenda.

PARTY ATTRIBUTES

Figure 4: Party Attributes

Principles:
- Participation
- Accountability
- Inclusion

Competencies:
- Organizational Processes
- Outreach
- Policy Formulation

Attributes

The extent to which a party embodies principles of participation, accountability and inclusiveness indicates its commitment to democratic practices. But parties also require certain core technical skills and capacities in order to function and properly aggregate constituent interests. Together, these attributes contribute to how effectively parties aggregate and represent citizen interests in carrying out their functions. Figure 4 outlines key attributes for effective and democratic functioning. Each is described in further detail below.

Textbox 2: Democratic Principles

The principles outlined under party attributes – accountability, participation and inclusion – stem from certain underlying rights and freedoms that, taken together, form the basis for representative democracy. Many of these values are captured in the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, adopted by the United Nations in 1948. Central to these values is the precept that all citizens are free to contribute to the direction of governments. One of the means by which citizens shape government is by joining political parties, participating

in party activities, and standing for office. When they are accountable, participatory and inclusive, political parties play an important role in promoting rights that are fundamental to democracy. Parties that do not espouse these principles weaken or jeopardize democratic governance. Core democratic freedoms and rights include the following:

- **Right to participate in government:** Citizens must have the right to participate in their government by voting, standing for elective office, or taking part in public service. A democratic government should have representative institutions at every level. It should be formed on the basis of a universal secret ballot. Elections must be regulated fairly and impartially, and must avoid intimidation by state or non-state actors.

- **Freedoms of expression and association:** Democracy requires due legal process; the rights of free expression, assembly and association; and a free and impartial media. Citizens should be free to hold opinions and express them, and to form economic, social or political associations to advocate for them.

- **Accountability:** Elected officials are held accountable to the public through free and fair elections.

- **Rule of law:** The law must apply to all citizens equally, and the power of all public officials must be defined by law and interpreted by an independent and impartial judiciary.

- **Tolerance of diversity:** Citizens and governments should accept diverse opinions, cultures and identities. All citizens must have the right to participate on equal terms, regardless of race, gender, language, religion, national or ethnic origin, political opinions, or socioeconomic class.

- **Informed citizenry:** A democratic society must be committed to educating its citizens so they have the capacity, resources and information to effectively participate in government.

Principles

Every society and community comprises different interests, views, values and ideas. Because of this diversity, it is generally impossible for a particular party or leader to represent an entire society. Some may seek to represent certain socioeconomic groups such as workers, farmers or business owners, or may organize around specific issues like the environment or internet freedom, while others may identify with regional, ethnic or gender groups. When parties are accountable to their constituencies, and promote inclusion and participation, they become an important space for citizens to participate in the political process and hold their government accountable. Moreover, when political parties apply these principles in their interactions with other democratic actors, they promote democratic competition and participation in the party system as a whole. These principles flow from certain core tenets that underpin democracy, such as the right to participate in government, freedom of expression, and accountability. Textbox 2 summarizes some of these broader principles.[7,8]

7. David Beetham, "Democracy: Key Principles, Institutions, and Problems," in *Democracy: Its Principles and Achievements*, ed. Inter-Parliamentary Union, (Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1998), 28-29, http://ipu.org/PDF/publications/DEMOCRACY_PR_E.pdf.
8. Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Universal Declaration on Democracy," in *Democracy: Its Principles and Achievements*, III-VIII.

1. ***Participation:*** Political parties contribute to political participation by recruiting and training members, seeking donations, and engaging voters in political discussions. In addition to providing their supporters with opportunities to shape the decisions that affect their lives, political parties should respect the rights of all citizens to join and form parties of their choice, and to recruit and mobilize support. This includes rejecting the use of violence.

2. ***Accountability:*** Political parties should be accountable to their members as they develop their policy proposals, manage their finances, and select leaders and candidates. They should act responsibly, both in opposition and in government. Moreover, they should support processes and institutions that allow citizens to hold their governments accountable, including an independent media, a vibrant society, and free and fair elections.

3. ***Inclusion:*** Regardless of how they define their constituency, parties should not bar others from participating in political processes as candidates, activists or voters because of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or race. They should promote inclusive participation in the political process and ensure that all citizens have access to the necessary institutions, processes and information for meaningful political participation.

Textbox 3 summarizes the norms outlined in NDI's *Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties*.[9]

Textbox 3: Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties

- At the most fundamental level, all democratic parties benefit from, and should support, the rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- Democratic political parties agree to accept the will of the people as expressed through legitimate elections as the basis for government.

- Parties should respect the chosen electoral procedures, including voter registration laws, polling station regulations, and vote certification processes.

- All democratic parties have a right to expect that they and their supporters may freely express their opinions; governing parties and state institutions have an obligation to protect these rights, and to safeguard the environment of free competition.

- Democratic parties in democratic systems reject the use of violence as a political tool.

- Parties should communicate their principles, policy proposals, and accomplishments with party members, party supporters, and other citizens.

- Parties benefit themselves as well as the broader democratic society when they foster political participation. Efforts to cultivate participation by historically excluded or underrepresented groups – including women and ethnic or other minorities – can often benefit parties by broadening their support. Simultaneously, they can enhance the legitimacy of the political system within which the parties compete.

- Parties that win a mandate to govern alone or in coalition should govern responsibly.

9. NDI, *Minimum Standards*.

- Parties may use their statutes to establish their legal name and to specify who may use the party label.

- Party rules should define membership eligibility requirements and spell out members' rights, roles and responsibilities.

- Party statutes can clarify lines of communication, authority and accountability between a party's various layers.

- Party statutes should anticipate conflicts and should provide frameworks for fostering, but also for containing, healthy internal debate.

- Parties benefit from having clear rules about the regular selection (and possible de-selection) of party leaders and party candidates. In order to minimize internal wrangling, and to enhance the legitimacy of those selected, parties should strive to establish clear rules well in advance of each contest.

- Party officials and employees should adhere to party rules for making decisions, including selection decisions for candidates and leaders.

- Political parties should keep sound and proper financial records, which serve to generate confidence, enhance credibility, and encourage contributions to finance party operations. In addition, officeholders and party units need to be internally accountable for party finances within their domains.

- Parties should take responsibility for their officeholders and other leaders who abuse their positions for personal gain.

The full set of Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties is available on the NDI website.

Competencies

Regardless of their democratic intentions, if parties are not competent in certain core areas, they are unlikely to be effective in aggregating citizen interests or performing their functions. The core competencies that political parties require can be broken into the following three categories.

1. ***Organizational Processes:*** Political parties need systems to organize themselves internally, including clear by-laws and mechanisms for making decisions, managing resources, and tracking members and activists.

2. ***Outreach:*** Parties require channels of communication with their members, supporters and citizens. These include mechanisms for gathering input about member concerns and policy priorities, as well as for disseminating party policies and campaign messages to the general public.

3. ***Policy Formulation:*** In order to fulfill their role in proposing policies, political parties need the capacity and resources to define policy issues, research them, and identify possible solutions.

KEY DRIVERS OF PARTY BEHAVIOR

Political parties are products of their operating environment. The contextual factors that shape party behavior can be grouped into three sets of drivers: political space, political will, and capacity. Political space describes the environment in which political parties operate and how they interact with it; political will refers to the incentives that influence political parties and the individual actors within them; and capacity refers to the "nuts and bolts" of party organizing and activity. As Figure 5 demonstrates, there is significant overlap between space, will and capacity. For instance, while history and social context shape the political space in which parties and citizens interact, they may also impact the way political leaders respond to proposed reforms, thus impacting political will. Key questions to consider for assessing each driver are included in the section below on laying the groundwork, and are discussed in more detail in the *Context Analysis Tool* developed as a companion to this guide.

Figure 5: Key Drivers of Party Behavior
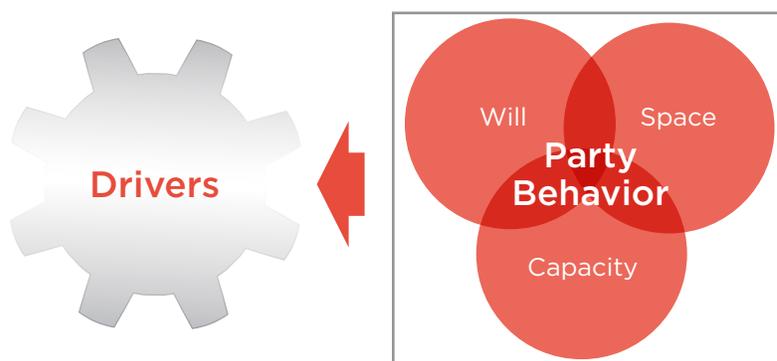
Political Space

Political space refers to the ecosystem within which political parties operate, and the freedom that organizations, groups and individuals have to participate in the democratic process. At the systemic level, this includes the freedom with which parties are able to perform their core functions: proposing policies, competing for office, and participating in governance. In addition, it refers to the nature of interparty relations and interactions between political parties on the one hand, and between parties and other institutions and individual actors on the other.

There are a number of common impediments to political space. At the most extreme, authoritarian governments may use force, intimidation, or legal measures to restrict the activities of opposition parties. In other cases, the restrictions may be softer: ruling parties may use state resources or misuse power to obstruct competition. In conflict situations, citizens may be afraid to be associated with a party for fear of retribution, or the environment may be too dangerous or restricted for them to conduct or participate in political activities. Where patronage is prevalent in politics, citizens may see parties primarily as distributors of money, jobs and benefits, rather than as a space for meaningful political participation.

While political parties require an open environment in order to perform their basic functions, they should, in turn, provide a space for citizens to voice their public policy interests and influence the direction of their government. Parties contribute to the space available for groups and individuals to participate in democratic processes. When they are inclusive, transparent and internally democratic, political parties provide important avenues for individuals to participate in public life. When political space is limited within parties, individual members or particular groups may be sidelined in party processes as well as in democracy more broadly.

Key Components of Political Space

Formal Institutional Context: This refers to the "written" or official rules that govern political parties, as well as how democracy works, citizens are represented, and winners are chosen in a given country or region. These may include constitutional provisions, electoral and political party regulations, and parliamentary rules and procedures. However, formal rules may be enforced selectively, not at all, or may be trumped by informal social customs, norms, or traditional power structures. For instance, a legislature may pass a gender quota law, but if it is not enforced, parties may choose not to comply.

Informal Institutional Context: This refers to the "unwritten" rules of the game. Whereas the formal institutional context may be thought of as the theoretical regulations governing party behavior, the informal context refers to day-to-day practices. Traditional power structures, such as religious institutions or clan politics, may play important if unofficial roles in the way parties relate to one another and to citizens. Political culture – the operating norms that determine how various political actors interact with one another in the political system, and within parties themselves – is also an important component of the informal institutional context. Additionally, there may be practices, such as patronage networks, that are simply not reflected in the official rules. The informal institutional context may be equally important in shaping political space as the formal one, or even more so.

Historical Context: A country's history and the origins of individual political parties may also play an important role in how they behave and are received by the public. Many parties emerge from social movements, and so they will naturally have an allegiance to certain social groups. In other cases, political parties may emerge from opposing sides in an armed conflict, leading to tense interparty relations. Similarly, citizens' perceptions of political parties are likely to be influenced by their shared experiences.

Social Context: Social attitudes regarding gender, class, or other social cleavages may contribute to the shape of party structures and the opportunities available to different groups within them. Certain parties may have developed over time to represent certain social, regional or religious groups. Even where that is not the case, ethnic or regional differences may exist within party structures or affect where they can draw support. Societal attitudes toward gender equality and the inclusion of marginalized groups are also likely to impact how parties approach those issues.

Political Will

The term "political will" has been used by development professionals to describe a variety of related concepts referring to the desire of political leaders to engage in a particular proposed reform. For the purposes of this manual, the term is used more broadly. Political will refers simply to the motivations of various stakeholders, including political leaders, activists, and groups, which influence their behavior in one way or another. Political will may be shaped by a multitude of factors, many of which are discussed below. They include values, culture, personal history, a desire for financial gain or power, or personal perceptions of the political landscape and its risks and opportunities. So political will may refer to a desire for democratic reforms, the continuation of a non-democratic status quo, or even the passage of changes that would hinder democratic development. Just as political space can favor or hinder democracy, and capacity can enhance or restrict a party's ability to aggregate and represent citizen interests through its performance of the functions, so too political will may be for or against democratic interests.

Key Components of Political Will

Individual Values and Interests: Each actor within a political party will be driven by a distinct, often complex, set of incentives and disincentives. For instance, party leaders may be motivated by a desire to see the party succeed, while also wanting to maintain their position within the organization. They may be reluctant to implement reforms that could give the party a competitive advantage if they are concerned that those changes could also weaken their stature. Party leaders, staff and activists may be motivated by personal ambition and access to resources, their values, or even a desire to be socially accepted. Perception may also shape political will. For instance, opposition leaders in single party dominant or authoritarian systems may have little motivation to try new campaign techniques if they feel elections are a foregone conclusion.

Organizational Priorities and Values: Political parties are competitive organizations and are most likely to undertake actions that they feel will provide them with a competitive advantage at election time. Several of the external factors outlined above as components of political space also impact institutional incentives. For instance, the political calendar can play a major role in determining where parties decide to focus their attention at different times. Internal factors may also shape institutional incentives. For instance, a party's history and ideology is likely to have an impact on how it approaches its functions.

Capacity

The competencies outlined in the section on party attributes – organizational management, outreach, and policy formulation – describe the types of technical expertise that parties require in order to fulfill their functions. Capacity refers more specifically to the skills, information, systems, relationships, and financial resources that parties need to conduct outreach, manage an organization, and formulate policies. For instance, party staff and activists need certain skills to perform their day-to-day duties. However, even the best trained staff cannot operate effectively if there are no functional structures in place. Effective organizational systems for internal communication, administration, and financial management are equally critical to political parties' overall effectiveness. Finally, in order to function, parties also need resources to organize activities, hire staff, pay rent, and cover other operating expenses.

Key Components of Capacity

Individual Skills: Political parties require skilled leaders, staff and activists in order to carry out their functions. Party staff should have a range of knowledge and skills which roughly correspond to the competencies outlined in the previous chapter: organizational processes, outreach, and policy formulation. In other words, party staff, collectively, should have the education, skills, information and experience required to do several things: conduct outreach, which includes disseminating the party's message and soliciting feedback from the public on policy concerns; develop policy proposals, including managing the policy development process as well as having enough expertise in the required topic area to respond to public concerns; and administer the party's organization, which includes managing staff and finances, and developing and maintaining internal communications systems.

Organizational Management: The individual skillsets of party staff and activists contribute to overall organizational capacity. However, the structures a political party has in place to put those skills to use are equally important. For instance, effective constituency outreach conducted at the local level is only useful if the party's message is consistent and feedback received from constituents is communicated to the appropriate party units in a structured way. As with any organization, administrative practices such as accounting, finance, and human resources management are also critical components of a party's day-to-day operations. Additionally, some

parties rely heavily on volunteers and members to conduct outreach and other party activities, so the ability to recruit, retain and manage volunteer activists is an important component of organizational management.

Strategic Connections: Power and power relations are at the heart of politics. Regular access to elected officials and other influential actors such as election management bodies, the business community, the military, civic groups, and the international community can be an important component of party capacity. These types of connections can improve parties' ability to advocate for their policy positions, position them to play a greater role in informal negotiations that take place outside of formal governance processes, and provide increased access to information, allowing them to respond to new issues in a timely manner. Smaller or newer parties may have less access to those formal power structures.

Access to Financial Resources: Political parties need funds in order to pay rent; purchase airtime or space for advertising on television, radio, and in print; and train and pay their staff. While the use of volunteers can reduce the need for skilled, paid staff, an individual party's access to resources is likely to have a direct effect on its ability to carry out its representative functions and may be affected by a number of systemic and organizational factors. How parties fund their activities can vary greatly, even within a country. Some parties may rely on wealthy candidates, leaders, or other domestic or international benefactors; others may rely on public funding or may operate largely using funds collected in the form of membership dues.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Will, Space, Capacity Framework

The Will, Space, Capacity Framework provides a structure for analyzing how political parties fulfill their representative role. It outlines a series of building blocks for assessing what parties do, how they do it, and why they behave the way they do, using three key concepts: party functions, attributes, and key drivers of party behavior.

- **Party functions:** Parties represent the interests of their constituencies by proposing policies, competing in elections and contributing to governance.
- **Party attributes:** Political parties require key competencies in organizational management, outreach and policy formulation in order to perform their functions effectively. To contribute to representative governance, they must adhere to democratic principles of participation, accountability and inclusion.
- **Key drivers of party behavior:** Contextual factors that shape party behavior can be divided into three categories: political space; political will; and party capacity.

This framework that can be applied to a wide range of environments, helping practitioners to:

- Conduct context analyses that more explicitly consider the incentive structures and environmental factors that influence party behavior; and in turn
- Develop better informed programs, set more realistic objectives, articulate more explicit theories of change and improve monitoring and evaluation efforts.

DESIGNING AND MANAGING POLITICAL PARTY PROGRAMS

This chapter outlines how the Will, Space, Capacity Framework outlined above can be used to design and manage their programs.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

This section focuses on the context analysis that should be conducted to inform programming. Context analysis can be broken into three stages: political context, party functioning, and problem analysis. Ideally, it should be performed prior to designing a program strategy or selecting activities. However, most party assistance programs take place in fluid environments and the political context may change over time. In many cases, it will be helpful to revisit these analyses at various points during the life of a program. The section on ongoing reflection and analysis provides more detail and additional resources for monitoring programs during implementation.

In addition, as a supplement to this guide, NDI created a _Context Analysis Tool_ for political party assistance programs. The tool provides key assessment questions, as well as guidance on conducting desk research, key informant and stakeholder interviews, and data analysis. Ideally, every party assistance program would be informed by a thorough context analysis. In practice, political events, limited funding, and grant schedules may limit the timeframe or resources available for conducting assessments. For instance, unexpected political breakthroughs, as in the case of the Arab Spring, may require implementers to respond quickly without the benefit of an in-depth context analysis. The companion tool recognizes these challenges by proposing an approach that can be adapted depending on the time and financial resources available to a program.

Regardless of whether a rapid or a more in-depth approach to context analysis is chosen, the approach outlined in the Will, Space, Capacity Framework and the companion tool can help practitioners develop a more complete understanding of party behavior by connecting what happens within the party and the party system to the environment in which they are situated. Based on a context analysis informed by the Will, Space, Capacity Framework, users should be in a better position to identify the specific changes they seek to create and some of the challenges or opportunities their strategy should seek to address.

Figure 6: Context Analysis

1. Political Context
Examine the broad political context, including the extent to which parties propose policies, compete in elections and contribute to governance.

2. Party Functioning
Assess the internal functioning of political parties.

3. Problem Analysis
Analyze the root causes of democratic deficits identified in Steps 1 & 2.

Consider the extent to which political will space and capacity influence party behavior.

The *Context Analysis Tool* outlines three main steps in analyzing a given context. Figure 6 summarizes these steps. Additional details on each of these steps follow in the next sections. (For additional information on data collection, please see the *Context Analysis Tool*.)

Step 1: Political Context

The first step in conducting a context analysis is to assess the general political environment, including the extent to which parties are able to carry out their functions. Various types of political contexts may have different implications in terms of how parties behave, the challenges they face, and the options for political party support. It may be helpful to first identify how the party system could be categorized. The following loose categories may be helpful in grouping systems that exhibit certain similarities: authoritarian/semi-authoritarian; single party dominant; and multiparty competitive. The focus here is on identifying different types of party systems with a view to highlighting the challenges and opportunities that each commonly poses for political party development. In addition to identifying three broad categories of party systems, this loose typology highlights three crosscutting themes: fragile, conflict/conflict prone parties play peripheral roles in governance. Additional information on each of the contexts and cross cutting themes is available in the *Context Analysis Tool*. Further details are also provided in Appendix 1.

Below are some broad questions that should be considered in analyzing a political context. The companion *Context Analysis Tool* discusses these questions in further detail and provides guidance on data collection.

- What is the general political environment and what roles do parties play in politics?
- To what extent are interparty relations and relationships between political parties and other state institutions or actors conducive to democratic governance?
- What are the most significant weaknesses in the party system and what are the common challenges that parties face?

If problems in the party system exist or are perceived to exist, they will arise at this stage in the analysis. Problems internal to parties themselves will likely surface later.

Step 2: Party Functioning

Having assessed the political context, the next step is to examine the political parties themselves, their internal functioning, and how they relate to one another. Where the first step focuses on the political environment, party system, and functions, the second step focuses on party attributes. Below is a list of broad questions that should be considered in assessing party organizations. The companion *Context Analysis Tool* discusses these questions in further detail.

Principles

- How do political parties interpret their roles and to what extent do they:
    - » Propose policies that are representative of their members' interests?
    - » Have mechanisms that allow members or supporters to hold their leaders to account?
    - » Provide opportunities for member/supporter participation in party decision-making processes?
    - » Accept all citizens who wish to participate in their activities as members, activists and candidates?

Competencies

- To what extent do individual parties have:

  » The rules and systems in place for sustaining an organization?

  » The organizational structures and systems in place to conduct outreach and campaign effectively?

  » The expertise required to research and formulate policy proposals?

This analysis will lead to more detailed conclusions about specific weaknesses in each of the areas identified above, some of the underlying causes, and the possible implications for programming. For example, if a number of branch-level respondents within a party talk about the lack of information available to them about party activities at headquarters level, then it will be necessary to explore the reasons for this weak connection (as given by respondents and as found through secondary data). Similarly, if there are structural issues with the party system that are preventing parties from consolidating their support bases in parliament, it is important to identify the reasons for the persistence of these problems.

Step 3: Problem Analysis

Political party programming should be designed to address specific democracy problems. How implementers prioritize which problems to address varies on a case-by-case basis and may be influenced by a wide range of factors, including:

- Institutional approaches and comparative advantages;
- Contextual factors;
- Donor priorities; and
- Funding levels.

While representational problems can typically be identified using the functions and attributes, uncovering their underlying causes often requires further examination. Although every situation differs, most commonly the causes of these problems stem from one of the drivers: a shortage of political space, will or capacity. Once a specific problem(s) has been identified, the next step involves considering what specific aspects of political space, will and capacity could be the underlying causes. Below are some broad questions that can be adapted depending on the specific problem that assistance providers choose to focus on. Additional details are provided in the *Context Analysis Tool* that serves as a companion to this guide.

Questions for Assessing the Impact of Political Space

To what extent is the problem caused by environmental factors? Consider the following:

- What formal rules govern and influence party behavior? These may include the electoral system, legal and constitutional provisions, and parliamentary rules.
- How does the political calendar, including factors like election frequency, conventions, or other political timetables, impact party behavior?
- What informal rules or customs influence party behavior? For instance, is there a history of patronage or clientelism? Do tribal, religious, or other traditional power structures play significant roles in national or regional politics?
- What is the current security environment and how does it affect parties?
- What are the prevailing gender norms and attitudes toward religion? Are there historic ethnic or regional tensions, and what is their current state?
- Are there any legal barriers that prevent certain groups from voting, running for, or holding office? For instance, are there any age restrictions that prevent young people from holding certain positions?

Questions for Assessing the Impact of Political Will

To what extent is the problem caused by a lack of political will? Consider the following:

- What motivates influential party actors? Are they primarily driven by:

    » Financial ambitions;

    » A desire to advance within party structures and build their personal influence; or

    » Ideological or specific policy interests?

- Who controls party decision-making and finances, and what does this say about the party's organizational culture, including values and priorities? For instance:

    » To what extent are mid-level officials, and rank and file party members, able to participate in party decisions?

    » How are party policies and platforms developed and approved?

    » How and with what frequency are party leaders and candidates selected?

Questions for Assessing the Impact of Party Capacity

To what extent is the problem caused by a lack of capacity? More specifically:

- Do elected officials, party staff, and activists understand their roles and have skills in such areas as outreach and policy development?
- Does the party have effective internal communications structures, organizational and member management, and policies?
- Are parties state-funded, and if so, how are those funds allocated?
- Are there any restrictions on a party's ability to raise funds?
- How is the party placed in terms of access to information, and does it have relationships with influential groups and individuals?

A "problem tree" analysis is a common approach to reaching consensus on core problems and distinguishing between their causes and effects. The process involves using a visual representation of a tree, with participants identifying elements of the problem as branches (effects/symptoms) or roots (causes). As factors are identified as roots and branches, they are subsequently rearranged on the chart, forming new sub-roots and branches on the problem tree. The discussion and debate generated during this process is an important component of the process. The dialogue is likely to generate ideas and insights on additional problems, concerns, possible risk factors, and solutions, and can help participants come to a shared understanding of the problem. The process can be repeated for however many problems a program plans to address. Elements of the resulting problem trees can be adapted for different components of a program's results framework.

A sample problem tree, Figure 7, is taken from a recent NDI proposal. The core problem it analyzes is, "Political parties are not well managed and do not provide clear choices for the electorate, nor do they effectively represent the policy positions of a strong grassroots constituency." The effects, arranged above the problem, reflect a combination of the functions and attributes. The causes, arranged below the problem, can be tied to one or more of the drivers – specifically, a lack of space, will or capacity.

Figure 7: Sample Problem Tree

➤ Citizens believe most candidates will "promise anything" to get elected and deliver little thereafter.

➤ Party candidates have limited opportunity to be trained on campaigning, party organization or policy.

➤ Campaigns are characterised by opportunistic bidding by candidates to "fund" local development projects and individual problems.

➤ Citizens have very limited information about parties (mainly basic party ID but not "what they stand for").

➤ The very few staff that parties have nationally or at constituency and district level are poorly trained and not valued.

➤ Parties do not consult with members, supporters or voters when developing their manifesto.

➤ Parties do not use policy platforms to engage citizens.

➤ Citizens' electoral choices are limited by the lack of policy alternatives.

Core Problem:
Political parties are not well managed and do not provide clear choices for the electorate nor the effectively represent the policy positions of a strong grassroots constituency.

➤ Poverty drives a significant minority (20-30 percent) to demand personal favors.

➤ Period between electoral contests.

➤ Parties have very limited funds between election periods to sustain national or local party offices.

➤ Parliamentarians believe they must respond to citizen demand for personal goods.

➤ There are very few sanctions (except bankruptcy), incentives or role models as an alternate to clientilistic politics.

➤ There is very limited information or opportunity for citizens to influence MPs/parties.

➤ MPs are neither beholden to the party nor believe that echoing a "party" line will them support.

➤ Collective actions - legislative/reallocation of budgets or responses - take time and suffer from impletention failures.

➤ Party leadership is often absorbed in intraparty factionalism at a national level.

Table 1 below takes a few of the effects and causes from the problem tree above and illustrates how they relate to different components of the Will, Space, Capacity Framework.

Table 1: Cause and Effect Analysis Using the Will, Space, Capacity Framework

EFFECTS	FUNCTIONS & ATTRIBUTES
Parties do not consult with members, supporters or voters when developing their manifesto.	**Participation Principle:** Parties do not wish to give supporters or members a say in the policy development process. **Outreach Competency:** Parties may not know how to reach out to members and incorporate their feedback into the policy development process. **Functions:** The lack of party capacity and willingness to involve members in policy development are affecting the extent to which parties propose policies and how they compete in elections.
Citizens believe most candidates will "promise anything" to get elected, and deliver little thereafter.	**Accountability Principle:** Parties are not accountable to their supporters and, in turn, fail to hold the government accountable. **Functions:** Governance is not based on party policy proposals or parties' ability to deliver on campaign promises.
Party candidates have limited opportunity to be trained in campaigning, party organization, or policy.	**Organizational Process Competency:** If candidates are poorly trained across the board, this is symptomatic of organizationally weak parties. **Functions:** Poorly prepared candidates negatively impact the competiveness of elections. If poorly-prepared or unqualified candidates are elected, this could also affect the quality of governance.
CAUSES	**DRIVERS**
Parties have very limited funds between election periods to sustain national or local party offices.	**Capacity:** Parties have limited access to financial resources.
Parliamentarians believe they must respond to citizen demands for personal goods	**Political Space:** A history of patronage impacts candidates' interest in campaigning on policy positions, and citizens do not expect parties to propose policies or to fulfill their promises. **Will:** Candidates feel they will be less likely to win elected office if they do not respond to citizen demands for personal or material favors.
Party leadership is often absorbed in intraparty factionalism at a national level.	**Political Will:** Political leaders are primarily motivated by the desire to control party resources, and policy is not a priority.

Tools to Assist with Problem Analysis

- *Problem Analysis:* A short guide to problem analysis developed by NDI's in-house Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team is included as Appendix 2.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

This section discusses how the information from the context analysis and the Will, Space, Capacity Framework can be used to develop a program strategy. This includes conducting a stakeholder analysis; developing program goals, objectives and development hypotheses; and selecting activities. This publication uses the following definitions:

- *Goal:* The widespread, societal aim to which the program or project will contribute.
- *Objective:* The result that the program or project will achieve by the end of the life of the program.
- *Theory of Change:* A set of beliefs or principles about how change happens, which informs program design.
- *Development Hypothesis:* An explicit statement about the relationship between the proposed development intervention and the expected change in the development problem. If-then statements are used to describe the development hypothesis.

The context analysis should lead to a better understanding of the operating environment, including not only how parties behave but the underlying factors that influence that behavior. Through a problem analysis, the causes and effects of the specific problem(s) chosen to be addressed will have been mapped. Before deciding on a strategy, however, stakeholder perspectives need to be examined in order to identify potential participants and/or implementing partners, as well as to determine what issues to consider in engaging these groups and individuals.

Stakeholder Analysis

A wide range of actors have the potential to influence a program as implementers, decision-makers, direct participants, or donors. Additionally, each actor is likely to have a unique interest in the program's outcomes. Understanding these interests can help inform the identification of appropriate entry points and implementing partners, strategies for engaging different actors, and possible internal and external impediments to program goals. The sections below focus on two types of stakeholders: political parties and external groups.

Party Stakeholders. Within each party, the people with whom the assistance community may interact can be loosely grouped into three categories.

- *Party Leadership:* Each party includes a group of individuals responsible for setting the overall direction of the organization. Typically, they are party executives, controlling information and resources. While some program activities involve direct work with party executives, in the vast majority of cases most direct participants in program activities will be drawn from other organizational layers.

- *Direct Participants:* This group refers to the individuals who may become the primary targets of programming. Depending on the program context, scope and focus, this may include elected officials, candidates, branch or mid-level officials, or members/activists from marginalized groups. In some cases, a program's direct participants will be pre-determined by the specific problem. In others, a program may have the flexibility to choose which intraparty group(s) to engage as direct participants, requiring that staff consider which party unit(s) would be the most strategic partner, given the various interests at play within the organization.

- *Informal Party Contacts:* These may include participants from past activities or other contacts who have no direct involvement in the program but can help provide valuable insights into the political context and help them make the case for changes in party practices. Depending on the range of relationships cultivated, they may exist at any level within a party. In some cases, the most influential individuals in a particular party may hold no official position whatsoever, but wield significant authority due to their personal influence, financial support, or history with a party.

External Stakeholders. In addition, the party assistance community may interact with a range of external stakeholders. These include a variety of interested organizations and individuals outside political parties that the assistance community may need to engage through the course of a program. These may include civil society groups, election management bodies, the media, the academic community, and international partners. These groups and individuals may be involved in programming to varying degrees. For instance, in certain cases, NDI has provided technical assistance to civil society groups advocating for a gender quota, while simultaneously working with political parties to prepare them for implementation of the new requirements. The case study on Burkina Faso, included in Textbox 4, outlines an example of this approach.

Through an analysis of each of these groups, users will be better placed to determine with whom to work and how, including what issues they should take into account when developing their engagement strategies. Table 2 summarizes some of the common types of participants and implementing partners for political party programs, and outlines some issues that should be considered in determining whether and how to engage them.

For each group of stakeholders or potential contacts within a political party, and for external stakeholders, the following questions should be considered, taking into account issues of space, will and capacity.[10]

---

10. NDI Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team, "Stakeholder Analysis" (Unpublished Internal Report, NDI, 2013).

Textbox 4: Burkina Faso - Mobilizing Civil Society
for Political Change

Women in Burkina Faso are adversely affected by gender stereotypes and are particularly disenfranchised within Burkinabe political parties. There is little training for aspiring female leaders and a dearth of opportunities for women to demonstrate their leadership potential. To address this marginalization, NDI collaborated with an informal group of Burkinabe civic groups, most of which had little or no experience advocating for legislation at the National Assembly, in advocating for the adoption of a gender quota on party candidate lists. NDI helped to guide the groups in developing strategies for sensitizing political parties and other authorities, and in preparing advocacy strategies. In particular, the National Assembly's gender caucus requested technical assistance to allow these civic groups to develop draft legislation on a 30 percent quota, which was subsequently enacted into law in April 2009. Once passed, the law stipulated that parties that do not respect the quota would lose half of their allocated public election campaign funding.

After the law passed, NDI hosted forums for the Burkinabe Coalition for Women's Rights (CBDF), a network of 13 organizations working to promote women's participation within Burkinabe parties and the government. During these forums, CBDF discussed various challenges in implementing and enforcing the quota, and sent their recommendations to government ministries, political parties, the election commission, and other groups. The Institute also helped 11 political parties to evaluate the status of women within their respective structures and to develop action plan to promote female participation. Working with party leadership, NDI held sessions that led parties through self-assessment exercises to analyze their success in attracting women members and fielding them as candidates. Parties identified specific practices and perceptions that, if altered, would enable the parties to better support, recruit and retain women as leaders, developing strategic plans on how to better integrate women into leadership and decision-making positions.

As a final push for greater implementation of the quota law, prior to voter registration and the campaign period in 2012, the Coalition for the Implementation of the Quota Law – comprising eight civil society organizations and three political parties – was formed, with support from the Institute. In June, the coalition convened members of political parties, the election commission, government ministries, and the National Assembly to evaluate the technical challenges of applying the provisions of the quota law in the upcoming elections. As a result of this forum, the Ministry of Interior worked with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to clarify guidelines for the implementation of the law, exemplifying the possibility that outside actors can influence the space in which parties operate, and thus increase political will.

The 2012 elections were the first opportunity to test the new quota law. The new Burkinabe National Assembly now includes 24 women MPs, a 3.6 percent increase over the previous legislature. Many political parties satisfied the basic requirements of the law, with certain parties employing strategies to elect women that could be duplicated. For example, a woman could gain an elected position when a successful male candidate vacates his seat to return to a ministerial post. Additionally, out of the 11 parties that worked with NDI, nine respected the quota for the legislative elections and all 11 respected the quota for the municipal elections. Challenges were also identified, including women's placement on the lists, which was often too low for the spirit of the quota law to be respected. This could be overcome, however, if election lists alternated female and male candidates.

- *Interest:* What is their potential interest in the project? How might they be affected negatively or positively by this project?

- *Influence:* What is their potential influence on the project's ultimate success or failure? What are their relations with other stakeholders (conflictual, cooperative, etc.)?

- *Participation:* What is their capacity or motivation to participate in the design or implementation of the project? When, how and where should this participation take place?

Within each group, there are likely to be different interests at play. As such, different trends within each group should be identified in order to develop appropriate strategies. Since even nascent political parties can be complex organizations that bring together disparate individuals, each motivated by a combination of influences, it should not be expected or assumed that political parties and the different groups within them are monolithic.

Bearing in mind the resources available to a program – such as time, money and people – implementing partners and direct participants should be identified as well as appropriate strategies for engaging other stakeholders as needed. Some stakeholders will only need to be kept informed of program developments through periodic written or verbal communications. Others may need to be consulted more actively and regularly so that their input can be factored into program decision-making. Table 3 summarizes the stakeholder analysis and engagement strategy developed for a policymaking program.

Table 2: Engaging Different Program Stakeholders

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS & STAKEHOLDERS	REASONS FOR ENGAGEMENT	ISSUES TO CONSIDER
Party Leadership & Management	• Securing high-level program buy-in. • Improving organizational systems and processes. • Strengthening interparty dialogue to reduce interparty tensions or to promote consensus on regulatory reforms (party law, electoral rules, etc.).	• Could party leaders perceive proposed reforms as a threat to their power base? • How might skeptical party leaders be persuaded to embrace reforms? • Who are the key influencers – formal and informal – within the party? • Given the prevailing political, economic and social trends, how much can the program influence interparty relations?
Wings – for Youth, Women, LGBT Individuals, or Other Marginalized Groups	• Increasing the capacity and participation of marginalized groups. • Mobilizing agents/constituencies for reform within or across party lines.	• What factors, aside from capacity, limit the participation of marginalized groups and how might they be addressed? • What disincentives might exist for change agents to promote reform, and how might they be addressed? • What current or past efforts have been made to promote participation (e.g. wings) and what are/were their strengths and weaknesses?

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS & STAKEHOLDERS	REASONS FOR ENGAGEMENT	ISSUES TO CONSIDER
Members of Parliament/Local Councilors	• Improving parliamentary group organizing and functioning. • Policy development and implementation. • Strengthening communication between citizens and elected representatives.	• What is the nature of relations between elected officials and other party officials? • How might formal and informal parliamentary and party rules and functioning influence MP/local councilor behavior and prospects for reform? • What is the primary basis for engagement between MPs/local councilors and voters, and how might this shape prospects for reform?
Party Training Units	• Leadership development. • Increasing prospects for sustainable skills development.	• What opportunities exist for trained party members to take on increased responsibilities and/or how might these be created? • Do parties have the resources, support and will to invest in building sustainable organizations?
Party Branches	• Mobilizing or empowering grassroots party structures. • Leadership development. • Increasing direct contact between parties and citizens.	• What opportunities exist for trained party members to take on increased responsibilities, and/or how might these be created? • What factors, aside from capacity, limit grassroots participation in party life, and how might they be addressed? • What is the primary basis for engagement between parties and members/voters, and how might this shape prospects for reform?
Civil Society	• Promoting more inclusive or representative policy development. • Raising citizen awareness about party policies.	• To what extent does civil society have the capacity and interest to engage parties around policy issues? • How does civil society interact with parties, and what implications does this have for reform? • Do parties have the capacity and interest to engage civil society?
Election Management Bodies (EMBs) & Other Enforcement Agencies	• Increasing the legitimacy of electoral processes. • Improving regulatory systems that affect parties.	• To what extent is there will on different sides to improve political processes? • What mechanisms or opportunities for regular engagement – across party lines and between parties and EMBs/enforcements agencies – already exist, and what are their strengths and weaknesses?
Media	• Raising citizen awareness of party positions and activities. • Reducing political tension. • Mobilizing constituencies for reform.	• To what extent is the media independent, and how might this affect their interest in the program?
Other Groups Implementing Party Programs	• Coordination in order to avoid duplication. • Collaboration to maximize impact.	• To what extent are the organization's goals and philosophy compatible with NDI's? • How is the organization perceived by political parties?

Table 3: Stakeholder Analysis for a Policy Development Program

Stakeholders	Stakeholder Interest in the Project	Risk of Weak Engagement by Stakeholder	Engagement Strategy/Risk Mitigation
1. Political party leadership	Desire for party to be viewed as responsive to, and representative of citizens, in order to enhance popularity of party and its leaders.	Medium (varies by party)	• Initial focus group research to demonstrate need for and value of project, followed by regular consultations to provide updates on progress of party's research, policy development, and outreach branches.
2. Research, policy development, and outreach structures within parties	Desire to demonstrate value-added to others in party, advance personal political careers, and make their parties more responsive to citizens and more competitive in upcoming elections.	Medium	• Baseline assessment to better understand party strengths and weaknesses. • Direct technical assistance and on-going support to advance individual and organizational capacity, and streamline processes in line with international best practices. • Exposure to international examples to understand long-term value of such practices beyond electoral periods.
3. Youth and other party volunteers	Desire to contribute to party activities, advance personal political careers, and help parties better understand concerns of citizens like them.	Low	• Assistance to parties to recruit and train volunteers for research initiatives. • Engage parties in analysis of findings, development of responsive policies, and dissemination of policy messages so that they see the value of their contribution from start to finish and maintain interest.
4. Civic groups and issue experts	Desire to share expertise with parties – institutions capable of implementing policy change – and advance their positions in the national policy conversation.	Low	• Exposing parties to international best practices and providing technical assistance in identifying points in policy processes where outside expertise is needed; reaching out to relevant civic leaders and/or issue experts, and integrating their ideas into policy development process.
5. Citizens	Desire to shape policy outcomes to more closely match their needs and concerns.	Low	• Training for research and outreach coordinators, as well as volunteers, in effective methods for engaging with citizens, particularly given widespread suspicions and/or disenchantment toward political parties.

Tools to Help with Stakeholder Analysis

The short guide to **stakeholder analysis** included in Appendix 3 outlines how to identify and assess project stakeholders around five criteria: interest, influence, relationships, participation and resources is included in Appendix 3. Two accompanying templates are designed to help staff map each stakeholder along these five criteria and to determine when and how each stakeholder should be engaged at different stages in the project.

The Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix allows groups or individuals to map the extent to which different stakeholders are aligned with or support a particular idea, are interested in it or view it as a priority, and have the influence to implement it. Originally designed for use in advocacy and policy work, it can be adapted for use in mapping different intraparty interests and developing strategies for building momentum for change. For more information, see ODI's The Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix, A Guidance Note.[11]

Program Goals, Objectives and Theories of Change

Based on the Will, Space, Capacity Framework presented earlier in this publication, successful political parties need to exhibit certain key attributes in their work to fulfill their democratic functions. At the party system level, political parties need space in which to operate. In addition, how parties interact with each other and with other institutions may affect the extent to which a multiparty system can be perceived as democratic. Further, party behavior is shaped by political space, will and capacity. Thus, in the absence of political will to implement new organizing practices, skills-building alone is unlikely to change political party behavior. Similarly, even if a political party has the will, skills and resources to adopt new practices in citizen outreach, widespread insecurity may limit their ability to put these new ideas into practice.

If the role of political parties in a democratic system is to represent the interests of their constituencies, party programming aims to help parties better fulfill their representative role. Given the emphasis that this guide places on issues of political will, it is worth saying a few words about ownership. In democracies, final authority rests with the people. Political parties are one of the institutions through which citizens exercise that authority. In most of the environments where party assistance programs unfold, given nascent and/or weak democratic institutions, political leaders have significant and disproportionate influence over their organizations and how the party system functions. Without their buy-in, party development programs are far less likely to succeed. At the same time, the goals of party assistance, which include promoting global democratic norms in party functioning, often seek to shift power relations by increasing participation, inclusiveness and accountability. Thus, they may run counter to the personal interests of individual leaders, who seek to centralize power in the hands of a few. Ideally, political leaders express or develop a commitment to reforms. However, even when party leaders are resistant to change, local ownership of reform efforts may derive from reformers or grassroots activists within individual parties, marginalized groups who seek to play a greater role in their country's politics, or civil society and media groups who seek to improve democratic governance in their country. In some cases, programming may even involve broadening the decision-making process to include political leaders. For instance, during Somalia's constitution-drafting process, NDI brought party leaders together to consider different options for electoral system design and party regulation, and to formulate comments on the draft document.

Since assistance should be designed to address the root causes of weaknesses in party systems and party functioning, programs will usually seek to change party behavior by addressing political space, will and/or capacity. For example, a party assistance program may be working with two parties in the same country that are at similar stages of development, with the goal of

---

11. Enrique Mendizabal, *The Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix (AIIM)*, (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2010).

increasing member participation in the policy development process. In one case, party leaders may have requested assistance in improving their policy development processes. Here, change may be as simple as facilitating one-on-one consulting to help the party amend its statutes and make the corresponding changes to its organizational processes, along with conducting a comprehensive training program to ensure that party staff and activists have the required skills to carry out the new processes. In this case, political will for change exists and the program's role is to help build the capacity to create change. Unfortunately, things are rarely so simple. The other party's leadership may be reticent to involve more members in policymaking, and it may be necessary to seek pressure points to build the case for reform or create political will. Working with civil society groups and the media to increase advocacy and reporting on quality of life issues, or to organize debates, may build external pressure on party leaders and increase incentives for them to place greater emphasis on policy development. In addition, identifying short-term experts from countries or parties that program participants view as role models, who can help make the case for reform may be helpful.

Table 4: Addressing Space, Will and Capacity

Strategies for Building Political Will	Addressing Issues with Political Space	Strengthening Capacity
• Mobilizing internal agents of change and creating opportunities for them to engage on proposed reforms. • Drawing upon international norms or the influence of peers to make the case for reform. • Using public opinion research to highlight citizens' expectations of political parties. • Supporting indigenous efforts to introduce new legal requirements for parties. • Working with citizen or media groups to strengthen monitoring of, advocacy toward, or coverage of political parties. • Making the case for how reforms can help individuals or political parties meet their goals. • Working to counter erroneous information about reforms.	• Creating opportunities for dialogue. • Supporting regulatory reforms to level the playing field and improve electoral integrity. • Improving access to media. • Working with parties to explore alternate methods of outreach when they face security constraints or repression.	• Training workshops and consultations. • Hands on support and assistance as parties apply new skills and knowledge. • Producing resource materials (e.g. party agent forms, campaign handbooks). • Introducing new or enhanced tools (e.g. party databases). • Providing information that parties may otherwise have difficulty accessing on their own. • Establishing mentoring relationships.

Table 4 outlines some strategies for addressing political space, will and capacity. In addition, Appendix 1 outlines some of the common challenges associated with different types of party systems and presents possible strategies for working with them. Not all programs can or should be required to address space, will and capacity. However, the Space, Will, Capacity Framework can be used to more purposefully identify: the type of change that might be expected from various activities; the risks programs may face; and the assumptions that should be reflected in program design documents. A short-term program may legitimately focus on skills-building. For example, Figure 8 outlines a program based on skills-building for individuals. In order for change to occur at a systemic level, the targeted individuals must first increase their skills, then change their own behavior and work to precipitate reforms in party practices. These developments may eventually result in system-level change. However, only increases in individual skills fall within the direct

influence of the program. All other levels of change can only be indirectly or remotely influenced by the program. Other factors will also play a role in shaping prospects for wider change. Thus, understandably, in most cases, the results framework for short-term programs focused on skills-building should not outline transformational change as one of the anticipated outcomes.

Figure 8: Putting Change in Perspective
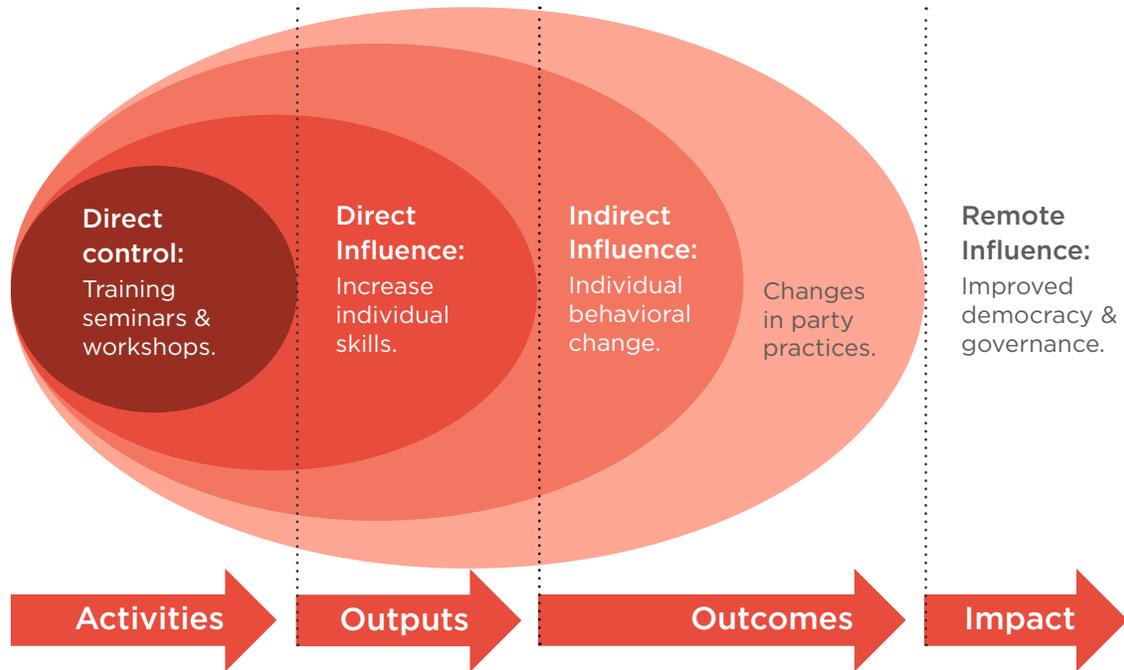
Even for longer-term programs that include strategies for increasing political will or space for new organizing practices, it is important to resist the temptation to underestimate the disincentives for reform. Institutionalizing new organizing practices often requires a much longer timeframe than is possible during the average grant. Often, it also involves changes in political will. As Thomas Carothers notes, "Laments about top-down resistance to change are the most common complaint that party aid workers express about their work."[12] Indeed, there are often powerful interests and overarching political events and trends that affect how political parties behave. Several of these factors – some of which were highlighted in the section on key drivers of party behavior – fall outside the control of the average program. They include the general security environment, foreign policy issues that affect political processes, party relations with international actors, entrenched patronage networks, election results, and party access to resources. However, because they can play powerful roles in shaping party behavior, by being more conscious of these factors, it should be possible to develop more strategic activities and set more realistic program objectives. The political calendar may also be an important factor in deciding where political parties choose to focus their attentions. Figure 9, below, outlines key stages of the political calendar and possible ramifications for party programs. There may be internal and/or external pressure to promise transformational change. However, given that creating institutional change in political parties involves a combination of space, will and capacity to embrace and implement new organizing practices at multiple organizational levels, it may be helpful to think about the extent to which direct participants in program activities have the space, will and capacity to change organizational practices, and to distinguish between the short-term and long-term outcomes anticipated under the program.

12. Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, 177.

Figure 9: The Political Cycle

Pre-Election Period

Naturally, as elections draw near, parties increasingly turn their attention to campaign details. International standards require that the legal framework for elections be finalized at least one year before the polls. Where this benchmark has not been met or finer details about election procedures are still under discussion, dialogues between parties and election management bodies may help clarify the rules of engagement, facilitate consensus and reduce tensions. Ideally, parties will have spent the preceding years laying the ground work for the campaign. In many cases, there will be a scramble to develop a platform and put together campaign teams and strategy. Often, this is also the time when candidates are officially selected. However, even before official selection takes place, informal deals may have been cut. This close to the election, changes in nomination procedures and other significant organizational reforms are likely to be disruptive.

Post-Election Period

Elections are the ultimate test of a party's organizational capacities and the appeal of its candidates and messaging. Even in the absence of a level playing field, aspects of electoral organizing can provide democratic opposition forces opportunities to test and strengthen their organizational capacities. Whether a party wins or loses, this is a great time to engage parties on strengths and weaknesses that came to light during the campaign. Such a post mortem with each party can help lay the ground for a long-term plan to capitalize on strengths and address identified weaknesses. Parties who lose an election and are willing to take a critical look at their performance may be more open to internal reforms. Successful parties may face challenges of their own, particularly if their best qualified officials and activists all end up in government leaving party structures in the hands of less capable members. With the campaign now behind them, parties' attention is likely to shift to the legislative and executive branches as these structures are more likely to play lead roles in shaping policy agendas and the party image.

Campaign & Election Day
(NDI 30 day rule limits on party assistance)

Pre-Election
- Coalition-Building (Electoral Alliances);
- Campaign Strategy and Skills Training;
- Part Pollwatching;
- Non-Partisan Elections Observation;
- Electoral Codes of Conduct;
- Debates & Voter Guides; &
- Multiparty and Party - Electoral Management Body Dialogues About Electoral Processes

Post-Election Period
- Party-Specific Reviews of Electoral Performance and Results (Can set the stage for organizational reforms, especially with unsuccessful parties), &
- Coalition-Building (Government Formation).

Midterm
- Platform Development; &   - Internal Organizational Reforms
(including candidate selection and other changes to party rules).

Midterm

When taken seriously, platform development is a long-term process that includes identifying major policy challenges, researching options for addressing them and consulting various stakeholders on viable options before finally settling on a particular solution. These efforts can be informed by several month's experience in government or in opposition. While many parties leave platform development till the last few months before an election, beginning the process around midterm in the political cycle allows parties sufficient time for research and consultation. As a result, by the immediate lead up to the election, their platforms are close to being finalized and can help inform campaign messaging. In many cases, these activities can also help parties to begin strengthening their image long before election day. At this point, organizational changes are less likely to be disruptive, since there will be sufficient time for the dust to settle before the campaign.

Post-Election/Midterm
- Parliamentary Orientation
- Parliamentary Group Rules and Assignments
- Legislative Agenda Development
- Review and Reform of Legal Frameworks (party law, party finance)
- Strategic Planning
- Communications Between Elected Officials and Other Party Officials/Members
- Constituent Outreach (party branches can play a role)
- Long-term Branch Development (as part of a sustained effort to increase electoral competition)
- Recruitment and Development of Future Leaders (including potential future candidates)

A recent review of results frameworks from a variety of organizations involved in political party development noted the following common problems: "flimsy" indicators, leaps of logic, confusion between outputs and outcomes, and unrealistic goals. It noted:

> *"A common trend found among numerous frameworks is an assumed causal relationship between outputs and outcomes where none exists…One fundamental unstated assumption is often made: that target parties have the political will for reform. Capacity building initiatives may translate to actual reform if the leadership is committed to strengthening the party and is willing to assume the risk to do so. Few frameworks state such assumptions, let alone programme specifically to foster political will."[13]*

Some of these challenges can be limited by using the Space, Will, Capacity Framework to develop more explicit theories of change, and to clarify the types of activities they should implement and the results they hope to achieve. Following are some questions to consider.

- ***What does the program aim to change?***[14] Consider the extent to which political space, will and capacity are required to achieve the desired change. Which of these should and can the program target? What implications does this have for the program's goal and objectives?

- ***What are the specific objectives required to achieve this change?*** Does the objective reflect a realistic assessment of the political space, will and capacity required to address the problem? Does the objective seem achievable during the program timeframe?

- ***How will change be precipitated?*** What changes in space, will and/or capacity will the program create and how?

- ***What are the assumptions on which the program design is based?*** Are the assumptions reasonable? In addition to broad statements about the overall political context – e.g. elections take place as scheduled, civil war does not resume – consider any assumptions involving political space, will or capacity that may affect the program.

- ***What risks does the program need to address?*** What strategies could be used to manage them? A combination of risks deriving from the operating environment as well as how information about the program will be communicated should be considered. For instance, program strategies may need to be tailored to ensure that certain groups are not inadvertently excluded from selection as program participants. Table 5 illustrates some of the risks and mitigating strategies identified for a policy development program.

Tools to Help with Program Strategy

- ***Party Strategy Maps:*** Combine elements of force field analyses with the development of strategies for formal program activities, informal strategies to build support for reforms, and, where relevant, complementary activities with external stakeholders such as the media and civil society. A partially completed party strategy map is included in Figure 10. The data included in the diagram was collected using key informant interviews and facilitated discussions with party activists and civil society actors. It reflects the strategy for a single party rather than for the party system as a whole.

---

13. Oren Ipp, *Study on Results Frameworks: Political Party Assistance* (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy, 2013), 6-7. The study, commissioned by the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy, examined the experiences of various members of the PPPeer Network. It is one example of the self-reflection that party foundations are conducting as part of ongoing efforts to improve the effectiveness of party assistance.
14. Scott G Chaplowe, *Monitoring and Evaluation Planning: Guidelines and Tools* (Baltimore: Catholic Relief Services; Washington, DC: American Red Cross, 2008), http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/countries/acsm/ME_Planning_CRS.pdf.

- *Risk Analysis:* A short five-step guide to identifying, prioritizing and developing plans for risk mitigation is included in Appendix 4. The accompanying template can be used to outline mitigation plans.

Table 5: Analyzing Risks and Developing Mitigation Strategies

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	How the risk will be monitored, possible mitigating actions, and by whom
1. Party leaders choose not to accept external technical assistance.	Medium	High	• Assessment to select parties to be targeted based on capacity and interest. • Preliminary consultations with party leaders to secure buy-in and present initial focus group findings as a tangible example of what the project can offer. • Regular check-ins with participating parties to monitor continued interest in program, combined with assessments of new interest from non-participating parties. • Tailor assistance to individual parties as needed, allowing each party to focus on one or more of the following: research, policy development, and outreach. In some cases, assistance could target youth wings, as this can be perceived as less threatening to the status quo.
2. Parties are not able or willing to dedicate necessary resources to new citizen research, policy development, or outreach initiatives.	Medium	Medium	• Monitor risk in consultation with party liaisons. • Meet regularly with party leadership to reinforce the value of the initiative. • Assist parties in identifying low-cost options for assessing citizens' views and conducting outreach. • Where applicable – e.g. in the event of a presidential election – adjust program to assist with campaign platform development. This would involve helping parties develop many of the same skills and would provide a foundation for post-election work.
3. The government constrains the ability of assistance provider or participating parties to freely conduct research on issues of concern to citizens.	Low	High	• Monitor risk in consultation with participating parties. • Engage national or local government officials on the nature and purpose of the research. If necessary, party leaders and other allies could intercede. • As needed, adapt project plans – for example, by omitting initial focus group research and instead starting immediately to assist parties in improving their own research capacities.
4. The government partially or fully blocks assistance provider from conducting party strengthening activities in the country.	Low	High	• Monitor risk with input from parties. • Engage national or local government officials on nature and purpose of the technical assistance being offered to parties, and/or appeal to party leaders and other allies to intercede if needed. • In the event of significant reductions in political space, adjust programming by, for instance, relying exclusively on nationals for in-country activities or holding offshore events for party members.

Figure 10: Party Strategy Map

In the diagram below, internal and external factors affecting prospects for change are listed on the left and right, respectively. Plus, minus and zero symbols indicate whether particular factors are expected to help, hinder or be neutral in attaining program objectives. This diagram outlines the strategy for engaging a particular party included in a policy development program.

Internal Incentives

+ **Retaining/acquiring talent:** Most talented members in govt., party has been drained of capacity.

+ **Managing growth & internal complexity:** Largest party, yet structures for gathering and sharing information are inadequate. Want a Policy Unit.

+ **Competitive advantage:** Aware that local engagement is important for maintaining supporter base.

+ **Internal dissatisfaction:** Local members feel that party organization prevents them from working effectively at the local level.

- **Leadership:** Accustomed to complete control; also unlikely to see added value to of consultation, given time pressures.

- **Cultural:** Autocratic culture makes members reluctant to make contributions.

Overall: party is very interested in receiving external assistance. It has identified the following areas:

1. **Strengthen policy development skills:** High performing members now in government roles. Need to increase the skills of people in the party, as well as attract new talent.

2. **Improve skills in local engagement:** Party headquarters is preparing a manual to instruct local councilors on how to engage locals; want help from NDI on this.

External Incentives

+ **Legislative change:** Changes to electoral law a concern, though it is unclear whether the party has a response strategy.

+ **EU Integration:** Party is eager to present itself as a modern European party.

O **Interparty rivalry:** Party is dominant and does not appear to worry about other parties posing a competitive threat.

- **Civic groups:** Not regarded as capable of exerting strong demands on policymaking or providing useful policy insight.

- **Media coverage:** Not holding leaders to account or exerting pressure on party activity.

- **Local communities:** Becoming less interested in engagement.

Activities

Informal Engagement with Intraparty Groups

3. **Engage leadership** on how re-organization can improve efficiency.

4. **Assist local leaders** in making the case for changes to their leadership.

5. **Encourage contacts** make the case for changes in how decision making is organized.

Formal Direct Support

1. **Training on policy analysis & development:** Instill best practices for producing representative policy backed by evidence.

2. **Training on consulting external stakeholders:** Assist party efforts directed to strengthen local level activities.

Planned Interventions with External Stakeholders

1. **Strengthen civic groups:** Hold parties to account.

2. **Collaborate with media development:** Strengthen reporting in the media on political issues.

Choosing Activities

Based on the program strategy, the next step is to choose appropriate activities. This section outlines three broad categories of activities: skills-building, organizational systems and processes, and dialogue. It provides overviews of each of the approaches, highlighting common tools and techniques for each. A fourth category captures cross-cutting interventions such as public opinion research, study missions, and resource centers that can be used to support skills-building, organizational systems development, and dialogue.

Broadly speaking, change happens at four levels: individual, group, organizational and systemic. As a general rule, change at the lower levels may, but will not necessarily impact behavior at the higher levels. However, change at the higher level will almost always impact behavior at the lower levels. For instance, increasing the skill set of party activists using new technologies for constituency outreach has the potential to contribute to more responsive parties, but is unlikely to do so in isolation. On the other hand, changes at the systemic level – for instance, a change in the electoral law – is likely to impact parties' organizational behavior, as well as the behavior of individual activists. The categories of program activities roughly correspond to the levels of change:

- *Skills-building* primarily promotes change at the individual and small group level;

- *Organizational systems and processes* includes assistance designed to create change at the group and organizational level; and

- *Dialogues* typically try to affect change at the organizational or systemic levels, seeking to influence the political space where parties operate or the space within the party for smaller groups to participate.

While these categories are a useful way to think about the many options for assistance providers in working with parties, they rarely exist in isolation. Facilitated dialogues may bring parties together to agree on changes to legal regulations that impact the political space in which they operate, but they are unlikely to succeed if the parties participating do not have the requisite negotiation skills or if they have not agreed on an organizational strategy before entering into the dialogue. Similarly, a program working to help a political party implement a new approach to gathering citizen feedback on policy concerns would likely include a component on outreach skills.

Skills-building

Skills-building programs focus on developing the competency of individual party officials, activists or members. These types of programs most directly affect party capacity, but may also be designed to impact incentive structures and thus serve to influence political will or political space within the party. For instance, a program to train women activists in fundraising may also help create an incentive for party leaders to provide opportunities for them once they see that those skills can be broadly beneficial to the party. In other cases, multiparty initiatives may contribute to promoting interparty dialogue by bringing opposing party members together and helping them to create informal working relationships. For instance, NDI multiparty skills-building sessions in Guinea and Mali have helped reduce cross-party tensions during election periods. However, as discussed above, skills-building alone is unlikely to lead to transformative change at the organizational level. Developing individual capacity in discrete areas is only useful if those skills are in demand within the party, trainees will have the opportunity to put their new skills to use, and the resulting increase in party capacity contributes to broader program goals. While there are many different types of skills-building programs, certain common elements bear specific discussion.

Skills-building should usually be considered part of a larger program. While some smaller programs may seek to improve the capacity of political parties or activists in discrete areas, more often party assistance programs seek to build skills in areas that will contribute to larger structural changes. For instance, a program might seek to help party staff develop better constituency outreach skills as part of a larger program aiming to help political parties develop more responsive policy positions. Therefore, in addition to ensuring that the participants are the people who will be conducting the outreach, it is important to take steps to ensure that the participants have the opportunity to put their new skills to use and that the trainings are part of a broader effort in which parties are encouraged to increase outreach and incorporate the resulting feedback into their processes. For instance, over the course of 10 years, NDI's Latin America and Caribbean Political Leadership Program trained young political leaders representing more than 56 parties across the region in leadership, strategic planning, internal democracy, and outreach. The program used a competitive application process and included a requirement that participants implement projects to strengthen their parties. The projects allowed participants to apply newly-acquired skills, thereby reinforcing learning and also helping to demonstrate to party leaders how these young activists could contribute to party goals if given the chance. Several program graduates took on new leadership responsibilities within their parties in part as a result of their training. The section on working with program stakeholders includes additional information on some issues to consider in selecting program participants and working with them to apply newly-acquired skills. Table 6 outlines some common approaches to skills-building and associated activities.

Table 6: Skills-Building Activities

Approach	Activities
Instructor-led group sessions: The most common approach to skills-building includes activities such as workshops and academies.	**Workshops:** 1-3 day training on a specific skill or topic, most useful for teaching stand-alone technical skills such as new software applications or organizing techniques. Can be run as a series or spread out to allow participants to put the skills to use in between sessions. **Academies:** Held over a longer period of time, academies take on broader topic areas such as campaign planning and management, or general party administration. In other cases, they may be used to help activists develop less defined personal skills such as leadership, negotiation or communication.
Guided Practice: Trainees are provided with opportunities to put new techniques, skills and knowledge to use, often conducted in tandem with skills-building sessions described above.	**Experiential Learning:** Trainings may be structured so that they coincide with party needs and the political calendar. Trainees will immediately be able to put their knowledge to use. For instance, participants trained in outreach methods might immediately be sent to regional offices to develop and implement a local-level outreach plan. This approach can help reinforce skills developed in a workshop setting, but requires that participants be in a position to put their skills to use. **Active Engagement:** Allows practitioners to provide ongoing feedback and support to trainees as they apply new skills and knowledge in their day-to-day work.

Distance Learning: Distance learning can help providers extend their reach and connect with political parties and activists where there may otherwise be no access, due to a lack of political space, physical distance, or limited access to resources.

Material distribution: Websites and other web platforms can serve as repositories for information on best practices, allowing motivated activists to access information even when they are not able to attend a workshop or visit a physical resource center. Distributing materials remotely can expand a program's reach, but tracking who is accessing the resources and how they are using them can be difficult.

Online Courses: Can help party assistance providers extend their reach to otherwise unavailable audiences. Because of their interactive nature, they may be more effective teaching tools than an online library. They also make it possible to track progress and test participants' knowledge retention with intermittent tests and quizzes. However, they require good internet connectivity, and in some environments, users may be hesitant to participate for fear of government monitoring.

Online Forums: The online medium has great potential for connecting activists from different regions, countries or even continents. Activists can share experiences through traditional internet forums, or attend online video lectures and other live exchanges.

Organizational Systems and Processes

Party assistance often involves helping political parties design and implement organizational and structural changes to improve their organizational capacity or democratic practices. In some cases, practitioners may work with established parties to reform historic approaches to organizing. In others, they might work with new parties to set up basic nascent organizational systems. For instance, in Libya, where political parties were outlawed for 42 years under Gaddafi's rule, fledgling parties sought NDI's help at the earliest stages of setting up their organizations.

Textbox 5: Peru - Organizational Capacity

Much of NDI's work with parties focuses on improving their internal organizational capacity, a difficult process that requires long-term buy-in and is critical to the effective implementation of policy. Internal reforms are more likely to be successful when party leaders perceive them to be in their party's interests.

In Peru, NDI worked with parties to develop cost-effective means to engage members and citizens nationwide. The Institute designed party websites to help regions that included underrepresented sectors such as ethnic minorities or had limited access to party material to obtain information on political ideas, issues and proposals. The sites have two primary components. On the first component, the public platform, parties can post news clips, information on issues they are currently debating, and party documents that outline their policy positions. The second component is accessible only to party members and serves as a forum where they can internally debate their views on legislation. As Lima tends to dominate the national political discourse, these sites provided a mechanism for involving different party bases – particularly those outside of the capital – into policy discussions. The use of web-based video, commentary, and videoconferencing features helps bridge the geographic divide between Lima and the interior of Peru that makes intra-party communication and coordination difficult.

Initially, NDI worked with five parties – including APRA Party (*Partido Asprista Perunao*), Popular Action Party (AP – *Acción Popular*), and Popular Christian Party (PPC - *Partido Popular Cristiano*) – tailoring its assistance to the unique needs of each. The Institute has

---

had ongoing relationships with many of these parties since 2000, working with them to organize skills-building workshops. This relationship meant that NDI had some knowledge of the parties' institutional capacity and use of information and communication technology (ICT) to promote their image on social networking sites and party websites. The Peru team met with interested party liaisons to explore how they could further use ICTs to improve their internal communication capacity and outreach. Through these bilateral meetings, NDI further assessed each party's needs and interests.

To help ensure buy-in from party leaders, whose support was essential for long-term participation, the Institute gave presentations on how new website features could help improve party outreach. Buy-in from parties was essential to ensure the sustainability of the new platform, as they would be responsible for updating and managing the platform once all the trainings were complete. Once the web platforms were set up, the Institute maintained contact with those parties that continued to update and utilize the platform, focusing its efforts on the partners who demonstrated their commitment and willingness to continue the planned activities. For instance, Lourdes Flores, the leader of the PPC Party, recently used her party's platform to conduct a "Google Hangout" with party members in the department of Junín. Participants discussed economic issues and the importance of investment in infrastructure. However, even with party buy-in, unforeseen events, costs, and time restrictions can mean that some partners are unable to continue with long-term projects. In Peru, parties that were unable to utilize the platform effectively are still involved in other NDI activities and maintain a relationship with the Institute.

Organizational change is difficult at the best of times and is unlikely to take hold without leadership buy-in. For this reason, it is particularly important that political parties, and specifically party leaders, perceive any proposed changes as being in their interest. In addition, while many of the skills-building activities described above can easily be conducted in a multiparty setting, these types of interventions are usually conducted one-on-one. This is because issues of organizational processes and systems often involve strategic questions that political parties will want to keep confidential. Working with political parties on organizational systems and processes is a highly individualized process which varies widely depending on each party's needs and the nature of the program. In most cases, there are three components to implementing structural changes in political parties: some kind of assessment, formal or informal, of the political party's needs; agreement with the political party regarding the changes to be implemented; and finally, technical assistance to the political party on the implementation of the agreed upon changes. The assessment and agreement stages are an important opportunity to establish relationships and build trust with key players in the political parties; they present an important opportunity to build political will in favor of proposed democratic reforms with senior party leadership. Ensuring that senior political party staff are involved in, and sign off on the needs assessments and action plans is important to ensure that the internal political will exists for the proposed changes. Table 7 outlines some common strategies for working with political parties on organizational systems and processes.

Table 7: Organizational Systems and Processes Activities

Approach	Description
Strategic Planning	Strategic planning can help parties implement organizational changes or develop long-term strategies. While there are many approaches to strategic planning, almost all should include the following three elements: • **Goal Setting:** Identifying the organizational problem or long-term strategic goal. • **Planning:** Plans include a timeline with incremental steps or milestones that will collectively lead to the goal. • **Implementation:** Plans are implemented with regular check-ins to assess progress against the initial timeline and, where necessary, reassess.
Deploying New ICTs	New ICTs can help parties improve organizational capacity to conduct outreach, manage data, fundraise, and conduct internal and external communications. A strategic approach is required to ensure that ICTs are appropriate to: the party's needs; the skill set of party staff responsible for deploying the ICTs; and the technological infrastructure environment. Similar to the strategic planning process, ICT assistance should begin by: • Identifying the problems they wish to address; • Developing strategies for tackling those problems; and • Choosing the appropriate technological tools. Textbox 5 summarizes an NDI program in Peru involving the use of ICTs to improve party communications.
Consultations	Many assistance programs include some level of one-on-one consultation with partner parties. Typically, this type of support complements another type of activity. For instance, practitioners may: • Consult with parties to help them develop strategies for incorporating new ICTs at the organizational level; • Conduct assessments to determine organizational needs and identify strategies for improvement/growth; or • Review and provide feedback on draft party bylaws or strategy documents. For instance, in Iraq, NDI conducted organizational assessments of individual parties, presenting party leaders with customized memos outlining findings and recommendations for improvement. This process can also help develop relationships and trust with party leaders and demonstrate that meaningful efforts have been made to understand the party's operations and challenges.

Dialogues

While competition between political parties, the candidates who represent them, and the policies they propose are central features of democracy, dialogue is an equally important feature. Dialogues may occur formally or informally among political parties, or between political parties and civic groups or other democratic actors. Whether public or private, dialogues most often seek to influence or shape the political space in which political parties operate. While competitive elections provide the means to determine the direction of government, for those polls to be considered legitimate there must be consensus on the rules governing the process. Dialogues allow for a civil exchange of views which can improve the overall political environment, promote national cohesion, and allow compromise. They may be used to facilitate consensus and promote legal reforms that improve the regulatory environment in which political parties operate, or to help reduce tensions, thus creating a more serene environment. For instance, in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the Institute brought together political parties, civic groups, and other regional representatives to discuss, and subsequently advocate successfully for reforms. Textbox 6 provides additional information on the effort. Dialogues may

also bring together individuals or factions within a party.[15] For instance, intraparty dialogues may be designed to increase space for women, minorities, or other historically disadvantaged groups to participate in party activities. In addition, when dialogues facilitate communication between party leaders and voters – for instance, through candidate forums – they can help create a more informed electorate, helping to focus campaigns on issues rather than personalities, and strengthen the relationship between leaders and their constituents. Table 8 outlines some common dialogue activities, along with their potential benefits.

Textbox 6: Pakistan - FATA Multiparty Dialogues

Originally formed by the British colonial administrators in the 19th century, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) make up a semi-autonomous region in Northwestern Pakistan. Unlike the rest of the country, this region has lived under a set of laws called the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) that deny the creation of, or participation in, political parties. Those living in FATA were unable to vote and had no representation in Pakistan's Parliament until 1996, when the government granted adults the right to vote for their own representatives. However, political parties were still not allowed to be organized until 2011. The FCR is an example of a regulatory barrier to political space, which has led to stunted party development.

Beginning in 2008 and with support from NDI in partnership with the Shaheed Bhutto Foundation (SBF), more than 300 tribal representatives participated in regional roundtables in FATA that culminated in an agreement on reform priorities, including the extension of the Political Parties Order to the region. An SBF report on the meetings' findings, prepared with NDI support, concluded that unrest in tribal areas posed a threat to global security and underscored the urgency of establishing a democratic and constitutional system of governance there. The report also documented a broad consensus among tribal area leaders that development, democracy and rule of law were imperative to achieving peace and stability in the region. In January 2009, more than 100 of these tribal representatives presented their recommendations directly to President Zardari.

Additional meetings in March and June of 2009 contributed to an announcement in August 2009, by President of a FATA reforms package, which received widespread support from FATA residents and a broad cross-section of political parties. To help sustain the momentum for change, NDI supported ongoing dialogue that led to the creation of the Political Parties Joint Committee on FATA Reforms. The committee discussed the proposed reforms and continued to call on the president to implement them. These efforts were ultimately successful, and in August 2011, President Zardari signed the reforms. They included amendments to the FCR for the first time since 1901, as well as the extension of the Political Parties Order of 2002 to FATA, which allowed political parties to operate in the region. These changes challenged the perception that the antiquated regulations could never be altered and inspired hope for further meaningful reform.

As a result, candidates in FATA were allowed to run as members of a political party in the May 2013 elections. Almost every major party fielded a candidate and turnout was notably higher than the 2008 election. However, while the president signed onto the reforms, not all were adopted; in June 2013, the Political Parties Joint Committee reviewed and approved the Citizens' Declaration for FATA Reforms and developed their own reform priorities. The Citizens' Declaration asked the president to implement the other reforms he signed in 2011 with further updates.

15. Brechtje Kemp et al., *Political Party Dialogue: A Facilitator's Guide* (Oslo: International IDEA; NIMD; Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, 2013), 100.

When designing programs that aim to expand political space, it is important to remember that it is a delicate, gradual and long-term process. As such, NDI's FATA program has continued working to encourage the government to follow through on the promised reforms. The FATA multiparty dialogues and later the Political Parties Joint Committee on FATA Reforms are concrete examples of how programs can partner with local groups to expand political space, but also demonstrate some of the common frustrations and the often languid pace of real change. Long-term programs such as this require a large investment of resources; a long timeframe should be incorporated into the program from an early stage.

Table 8: Dialogue Activities

Approach	Description
Roundtables:	Roundtables are generally closed meetings between parties, or parties and outside actors such as civic groups, election management bodies, or other government actors. They offer participants an opportunity to discuss unresolved conflicts, common problems, or upcoming political events in a private setting. Roundtables may be used in a variety of situations, often in tandem with one of the dialogue approaches listed below. Roundtables may help: • Bring feuding parties together and begin to open lines of communication, or initiate dialogue around smaller, less contentious issues as a way of establishing contact and trust; • Parties organize around a common interest – for instance, in Libya, NDI convened political parties to discuss their role in influencing the design of the electoral framework, agree on a core set of principles, and explore ways to jointly advocate for them; or • Ensure that parties and activists have access to accurate information. For instance, in June 2009, NDI facilitated a roundtable discussion between Kenya's electoral management body and the country's political parties. Discussions at this meeting helped inform the establishment of the Political Parties Liaison Committee comprising representatives from the electoral management body, political parties and the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP). With continued support from the Institute, the PPLC became the primary mechanism for dialogue between political parties, the electoral management body and the (ORPP). Under the auspices of the PPLC, stakeholders in the electoral process resolved issues surrounding procedures for party agent deployment, amendment of the Political Parties Act, among other things. Given the PPLC's role in improving communication and reducing suspicion between parties and election management bodies, similar structures were established at the county level. In 2011, national and county level PPLCs were entrenched into Kenya's legal framework. In the lead-up to Kenya's 2013 elections, PPLC meetings helped keep political parties informed of new regulations on candidate nomination, electoral management procedures, and other issues at a time of significant change and confusion.

Codes of Conduct (COCs):	COCs are formal agreements among political parties to establish rules that govern political party behavior, usually during an election campaign. By promoting inter-party dialogue, tolerance and cooperation in the period leading up to elections, codes of conduct can prove a critical step in reducing political tensions, addressing recurring or anticipated electoral problems and, ultimately, building public confidence in the overall electoral process. In agreeing to the code, individual parties, from leaders to local activists, make a public commitment to each other and to the general public to uphold the principles outlines in the code. Depending on the context, code provisions can address any number of electoral issues including: • Prohibiting vote-buying; • Mandating cooperation with election officials; and • Banning intimidation against political opponents. The process leading to the validation of the code by the various signatories is as important as the documents itself. In addition: • Public awareness lies at the heart of a code's power: voters should be able to evaluate the commitments parties have made and then decide the penalties attendant on parties that violate those commitments, including withdrawing their electoral support. • Active monitoring of party adherence to the code, and the establishment of a mechanisms for filing and resolving disputes over compliance with code provisions are critical to ensure that parties know they are being held to and judged by their compliance with their commitments. For instance, in Macedonia, over the course of multiple elections, NDI has organized code of conduct initiatives encouraging political parties and their candidates to respect democratic norms during campaign period. The code of conduct initiative in the lead up to the 2009 elections featured an extensive media campaign that included billboards, posters, leaflets and campaign buttons that many candidates, broadcasters and members of the international community wore, indicating their support for the codes provisions. In addition, the Institute organized over 730 meetings around the country on the code. Violations of the code in 2009 were far less significant than they had been in the 2008 elections.
Debates:	Debates are public events, often broadcast via television or radio, where competing candidates come together to present their ideas to the public. Civic activists in countries in all parts of the world have begun to make debates a centerpiece of their elections. To date, debates have been held in more than 60 countries to: • Help voters make an informed choice at the ballot box; • Encourage candidates to focus on public policy issues; • Promote comity among candidates, reducing the potential for violence in countries where campaign rallies are often used to vilify opponents; and • Hold elected officials accountable to their campaign promises. Debates also help candidates get their message out in places where one political force dominates the media environment. Despite the many benefits, debate initiatives in some countries have failed when sponsors could not overcome various challenges, including allaying fears that organizers may have a political bias; convincing reluctant candidates to participate; negotiating with competing media outlines; and producing live national television and radio broadcasts, among other issues. NDI and the United States Commission for Presidential Debates have partnered to help debate sponsoring organizations overcome these challenges. These efforts include the development of a practical web-based debate resource center and a comparative guide to organizing debates.[16]

16. "Debates International: A global resource on candidate debates." www.debatesinternational.org

Forums:	Forums are public meetings held between political parties, candidates, or government representatives, and the general public. They help bring political parties and citizens together to discuss issues of common concern, and are a relatively easy and low-cost way to strengthen ties between political parties and the electorate. Forums may be a useful method for parties to stay in touch with citizen concerns when public opinion research is not possible. Forums provide:
	• An opportunity for parties to informally gauge citizen concerns;
	• An opportunity for citizens to provide input to political parties on issues of concern; and
	• A relatively low-cost way for parties to increase their presence at the local level.

Cross-Cutting Approaches

The following programming tools do not fit neatly into any one of the three program types outlined above; they may be used to enhance many different types of activities.

Public Opinion Research: Qualitative and quantitative public opinion can be used to help political parties better understand and prioritize citizen concerns, and to identify potential supporters and develop strategies to target them. This contributes to capacity building but can also help influence political will by illustrating to party leaders how reforms may improve their standing among voters. Despite its potential as a powerful programming tool, public opinion research can cause more harm than good if conducted improperly. To help ensure the validity of findings and analysis, public opinion research should always be conducted by an independent and properly qualified firm or group. Given the potential for biased findings and analysis, parties should not conduct their own polls or focus groups. Informal surveys – such as activist-administered door- to-door surveys – and party-facilitated forums, where members help raise a party's profile in targeted neighborhoods, can provide helpful feedback on party positions, but lack the scientific validity of professionally-conducted research.

Textbox 7, below, summarizes how professional public opinion research might be used to address a series of party problems. In addition, Textbox 8 describes how NDI used public opinion research in Iraq.

Textbox 7: Public Opinion Research

Public opinion research can be used to:

- Help party and civil society leaders identify citizen concerns and prioritize campaign issues;

- Make a case for party leaders to address issues of public concern;

- Provide political parties with information about the differing priorities of various segments of the population;

- Assist political parties in developing improved targeting, message development, and "get out the vote" strategies;

- Illustrate the value of research and the need for improved communication methods and direct voter contact; and

---

- Improve party assistance providers' understanding of the problems they hope to address and, in turn, inform programming.

There are two main types of public opinion research: qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative research – also known as or polling or surveys – employ objective, statistical methods to generate percentages and make extrapolations about public opinion. Surveys involve asking a carefully selected, statistical sample of individuals an identical set of questions. When done properly, the responses of the sample are representative of the large population.

Qualitative findings cannot be projected to a larger population. Instead, qualitative research is marked by observations – words which describe the issue in question. Examples include focus groups and interviews. Focus groups are small, targeted discussions typically compromising six to 10 people with common demographic traits. Using a guide, a skilled moderator leads the group through a discussion that explores participant attitudes and opinions. Focus groups reveal not just what people think, but also why they think that way, how they formulate opinions and how strongly these opinions are held. They are especially helpful in understanding the language people use when discussing particular ideas or concepts.

Study Missions: Study missions can help foster democratic practices in a variety of ways. They can enable activists from emerging democracies to learn from other countries that have faced similar challenges and help them develop innovative solutions, or they may provide an opportunity for party leaders and activists to interact with counterparts from other countries who have faced and overcome similar challenges. In some cases, study missions provide leaders and activists with opportunities to observe new organizing approaches in practice and to interact with a range of host country groups and individuals who can share their perspectives on the advantages of reform.

Study missions can also foster free and productive discussions in a neutral setting, which may be critical in countries where the government severely restricts political space, or where interparty tensions are high. Past study missions have shown that political opponents are more likely to interact and express themselves freely in neutral spaces outside their own borders, where they feel less scrutinized by partisan observers. When carefully structured to focus on targeted issues, they have proven effective at facilitating agreement around contentious issues. For instance, in 1995, NDI organized a study mission that helped South African legislators from seven parties reach the consensus needed to develop and implement a parliamentary ethics code. Prior to the study mission, all but one of the parties had opposed establishing an ethics code. However, drawing on Irish and British experiences, study mission participants worked to reach consensus on a code that was eventually adopted with support from six of the seven parties. Legislators identified the study mission as a turning point in their efforts to pass the code.

Study missions can also help consolidate democratic practices by exposing political party officials to effective, alternative ways of managing their disagreements, thereby improving relations between opposing parties. For instance, following the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 that established the Northern Ireland Assembly, ending 25 years of direct rule from London, NDI sponsored a consultative visit of a 10-member delegation to South Africa. The visit helped Northern Ireland's political leaders learn from the experience of their South African counterparts who had also undergone a transition from sectarian politics with limited self-governance, and allowed them discuss how political trust had been strengthened while political institutions were being built and tested.

Textbox 8: Iraq - How Public Opinion Research Can Help Make the Case for Party Reform

Public opinion research can be a helpful tool for promoting reforms to increase the strength and democratic success of a given party. Initially, polling and focus group data may simply allow curious party leaders and decision-makers to gauge how they are perceived, their level of support, citizen policy priorities and other basic findings. Ultimately, this interest may give assistance providers an entry point to engage leaders on organizational reforms. Nevertheless, party leaders may simply dismiss or refuse to believe the results of research with which they disagree, until repeated bad press or a disappointing string of elections forces party leadership to engage in serious self-assessment. Implementing significant change remains dependent upon a party's own assessment of its needs.

The Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) suffered losses in Iraq's 2009 provincial council elections and the 2010 national election; these losses convinced party leaders to reposition ISCI as a moderate Shia alternative to more extremist parties. NDI shared public opinion research with ISCI, which demonstrated that Iraqi citizens favored issue-based policy platforms. As a result, party leaders rolled out a series of provincial-level policy initiatives and focused their campaign messages on cooperation across party and ethno-sectarian lines. Though ISCI risked failing to distinguish itself from its rivals by stepping away from its religious message, the strategy succeeded in attracting a significant share of voters who had grown weary of Iraq's repeated political crises.

ISCI was particularly cooperative and eager for NDI's assistance for several reasons: party members were seeking explanations in the wake of a failed election, a recent switch in party leadership had brought in a younger candidate who looked favorably upon reform, and ISCI leaders understood the need for accurate public opinion research but did not previously have the necessary skills or funding to undertake it. On this occasion, Institute-sponsored public opinion research proved valuable to the party and served as a timely aid to guide party reform.

Resource Centers: Resource centers can be established at national or regional levels. They may be located in dedicated rental spaces or with an appropriate neutral implementing partner such as a civil society organization. They typically provide a library and central repository for party development documents and resources. Some also include printing and video facilities. Resource centers can provide a neutral space for parties to meet, and a place for parties and assistance providers to host trainings for party staff and activists. For instance, NDI's Sierra Leone resource center hosted weekly roundtables for party leaders and prominent speakers on a variety of topics. In a sensitive post-conflict environment, the resource center helped keep interparty dialogue and communication between parties, the election commission, the government, and the international community alive. In Afghanistan, master trainers were taught at the Kabul center and dispatched to the regional resource centers where they were able to provide ongoing support to parties at the provincial level.

Increasingly, some of the functions traditionally filled by physical resource centers can be carried out online. For instance, NDI has developed an extensive online library of political party resources in Arabic, which can be accessed by parties around the world. Similarly, the Institute's Red Innovación, which targets political and civic activists in Latin America and Caribbean, hosts a variety of online resources, as well as events promoting discussion between party activists and civic innovators. While these online formats can reach a broader audience, and even promote dialogue up to a point, there is a trade-off in terms of the potential to create a safe space for dialogue where practitioners can develop relationships and build trust with party partners.

Developing a Strategy

Party assistance programs should be designed to address specific democracy problems. Through preliminary analysis, the root causes of representational problems should be clearer; programs may be designed to improve parties' functioning or their operating environment by addressing political space, political will and/or party capacity. However, in the absence of political will to implement newly found skills or knowledge, behavior is unlikely to change. In addition, even when they wish to do so, political parties may be unable to apply new organizing skills in closed or insecure environments. Therefore, in designing programs, staff should consider the potential impact of incentive structures and other contextual factors that shape party behavior and prospects for change.

Key considerations in developing a program strategy include:

- Identifying goals that are realistic to the program's political environment (including incentive structures and other contextual factors), funding levels, and timeframe;

- Defining a development hypothesis that clearly spells out the type of change(s) the program hopes to achieve (bearing in mind issues of space, will and/or capacity) and how the various program outputs contribute to it; and

- Selecting program activities that are appropriate for stated anticipated outcomes, the environment, partner capacity, and organizational culture.

MEASURING CHANGE

Efforts to monitor party assistance programs face a number of unique challenges. For instance, as Krishna Kumar notes, most democracy assistance takes place in fluid environments. This increases the chance that indicators, targets and activities outlined during intervention design may not remain relevant throughout the duration of a program. Further, since democracy programs often aim to alter power relations, they are likely to face resistance from vested interests who benefit from the status quo. Moreover, given the complexities involved in institution building – including the wide range of factors that have the potential to affect outcomes – program results are often not visible in the short-term, while long-term consequences are often unforeseeable.[17] In some cases, the relative scale and scope of particular interventions may make large-scale change unrealistic. More specifically, in the case of party assistance, a wide range of confounding or independent factors – new legislation, the emergence of new parties, or assistance from other groups, to name a few – help shape party behavior, making it difficult to assess impact, particularly at higher levels of change. (Randomized control trials can help control confounding factors, but have limited application for political party programs. Additional information is provided in Appendix 5.) Additionally, given the competitive nature of political parties and the trust-based relationships required to work with them on sensitive issues, some party-specific information must be treated as confidential. This sometimes limits the extent to which evaluation data can be made public or ascribed to a particular party or individual.

Given some of the challenges associated with monitoring and evaluating democracy and governance programs, some have argued that the sector is not well suited to the logical framework approach.[18] But while some implementers and donors are experimenting with alternative approaches, the vast majority of donors and implementers currently use approaches that are based – in one way or another – on the logical framework. As a result, the suggestions in this publication assume the use of the logical framework approach.

All programs incorporate some type of system for M&E. These systems vary considerably from program to program depending on the size, scale, country context, donor, and other variables. Nevertheless, common to all M&E systems is the need to:

1. Identify program goals and objectives;

2. Develop indicators that help to measure whether or to what extent these goals and objectives are being met; and

3. Develop a research methodology that will facilitate data collection in a manner appropriate to the context.

This section touches upon various aspects of the second and third points above. However, it does not aim to provide comprehensive guidance on M&E. For instance, it does not provide detailed guidance on how to set up a performance, monitoring and evaluation system at the start, or how to conduct evaluation design. Rather it highlights some specific M&E issues that are likely to arise in a political party program. It is intended to be used in conjunction with more comprehensive materials and guidance on M&E. Further, while it does not provide a detailed roadmap for all party programs, it outlines some general principles to consider when developing indicators and selecting research methods.

17. Krishna Kumar, *Evaluating Democracy Assistance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012), 2-5.
18. Ipp, *Study on Results Frameworks*, 11-12; Gordon Crawford, "Evaluating Democracy and Governance Assistance," ESCOR Research Report, no. 7894 (December 2001); Anne Garbutt and Oliver Bakewell, *The Use and Abuse of the Logical Framework Approach* (Stockholm: SIDA, 2005).

Ultimately, an M&E system should be designed to achieve the following:

- **Strengthen program management** by providing real-time information that allows implementers to adjust activities and strategies as necessary to improve program quality, mitigate unanticipated risks, and leverage emerging opportunities.

- **Inform reporting and enhance accountability** by providing quality data that can be used to demonstrate due diligence in managing donor funds and to publicize an implementer's work.

- **Contribute to organizational learning** by shedding greater light on what strategies are most effective – including in what contexts and why – that can inform more successful programming.

The publication uses the following definitions:

- **Intermediate Results:** In some cases, program results frameworks include intermediate results. These are the mid-project intermediate effects of outputs on "targets" or "beneficiaries." They are the results that must occur by a project's midlife to address the root causes of the problem in question. They contribute to the achievement of the objective.

- **Indicator:** A qualitative or quantitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure change connected to an intervention. Indicators should be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable/achievable, relevant and time-bound).

Indicators

The indicators for any evaluation will depend first and foremost on the specific objectives of a program. Indicators can be qualitative or quantitative. However, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data – that is, mixed methods – often yields much richer information about a program. While statistics can be useful for donor reports, backing them up with qualitative materials helps contextualize numbers, giving them greater meaning. In addition, programs may focus on individuals, political parties as organizations, or the party system as a whole. Where change at one level is expected to spur change at another level, these ripple effects should be reflected in program indicators and monitoring and evaluation efforts. For instance, indicators for a youth program designed to spur change in individual parties or the party system as a whole should be designed to measure whether the targeted youth are improving their skills, but it should also examine the extent to which they take steps to spur change and whether they are successful.

Program activities do not take place in a vacuum: external influences may impact a program's ability to meet its objectives or the validity of its indicators. While some of these influences may be hard to anticipate, others can be identified in the early stages of program design. The following should be considered: the assumptions being made about those outside influences, the possible impact of external forces on program results and indicators, and possible risks to the program if those assumptions do not hold true. Being more explicit and more deliberate about these influences and how they might affect a program can contribute to better defined objectives, indicators, critical assumptions, and more strategic interventions. For instance, the results framework excerpt in Figure 11 shows two intermediate results (IR) and an objective from a recent NDI program designed to enhance women's participation, along with their corresponding indicators. IR 1 describes a change in the capacity of women to fill leadership roles. IR 2 describes an organizational change that is heavily reliant on a shift in political will within the party – specifically, the extent to which the party is open to supporting women in leadership. Together, these IRs should contribute to the objective – that women leaders more fully represent the interests of women. (The original logical framework included additional intermediate results and indicators designed to contribute to this objective and other aspects

of the program goal. For illustrative purpose, only selected objectives and IRs are used below.) In each case, there are external factors that affect the program's ability to achieve the results and/or influence the validity of the indicators. The boxes in the bottom row highlight some of the assumptions the program made regarding those external influences. Staff should make these assumptions explicit in program documents.

In some cases, assistance providers may be required to set specific targets for each indicator in its results framework. In a given country, there are often significant differences in parties' organizational capacities, as well as in their levels of interest in various program components. The different needs and capacities of partner parties should be considered when setting indicators and targets. For example, staff designing training of trainers programs, which require parties to send their trainers out to conduct subsequent trainings at the local or regional level, should consider whether partner parties have the resources to independently conduct subsequent trainings. Similarly, for parties with limited branch structures and communication systems, planning a program based on a limited rather than a nationwide deployment of party agents would be more strategic and appropriate.

Figure 12 outlines selected indicators drawn from different levels of a results framework. The program aims to strengthen political party pollwatcher efforts by training party master trainers. Subsequently, master trainers are expected to conduct follow-on trainings around the country. These trainings and the deployment of pollwatchers are to be carried out independently of the assistance provider. The indicators appear in the cells on the left. On the right are brief comments on each indicator. In some cases, the comments indicate potential challenges with data collection. In others, they point out implicit assumptions that should be made explicit or that should be critically examined before setting any program targets.

For instance, one of the higher-level outcome indicators is the number of party pollwatchers deployed. As the comments note, this will largely depend on parties having the necessary resources and the political will to commit them in recruiting, training and deploying capable party agents. For example, political parties that have limited or weak structures and poorly defined constituencies often find it difficult to recruit reliable party agents and to put in place the systems required to manage a pollwatcher effort. Thus, even when equipped with master trainers who can help train agents, database software and database management skills, some parties may not have the internal communication systems and other capacities required to make use of that assistance. Particularly when party agent assistance is provided as part of a short-term program, there may not be sufficient time to help these parties develop the systems and capacities requried to benefit from such support. A simpler program may therefore be more appropriate. Concerns about absorptive capacity aside, there may also be issues of political will. Party pollwatching costs money. All political parties make decisions about how to allocate their resources. In environments where elections are not particularly competitive, parties may feel that spending money on party pollwatching is not a strategic use of limited resources, since it is unlikely to make the difference between electoral success and defeat.

Figure 11: Results Framework Example 1

Objective: Women leaders more fully represent the interests of women.

IR 1: Capacity of women leaders strengthened

Objective Indicator: Increase in percentage over baseline of public who perceive that women leaders are actively pursuing initiatives that address gender inequalities

IR 2: Political parties support women in leadership positions

IR 1 Indicator: Increased percentage over baseline of women running for local and national office

IR 2 Indicator: Number of parties participating in national forum on women's participation in politics

This indicator is dependent on parties selecting women as candidates; it assumes that there is space within each party for women to compete. Therefore, the extent to which there is an increase in the number of women running for office may be dependent on the success of activities under IR 1, and/or the passage of the quota law.

Depending on the scale of the program, change might not be fast or significant enough to be reflected in public opinion. Further, public opinion may be swayed by myriad factors outside of the program's control. This indicator assumes that the press or other public information outlets will cover the initiatives that women leaders are pursuing. If the public is not aware of those initiatives, then this indicator is unlikely to reflect actual change.

The IR describes a change in political will. While participation in the national forum may indicate that a party is willing to support women in leadership postions, additional indicators would be required to determine how effective the forums had been in promoting that support. The forum is only one of several activities designed to encourage parties to promote women's participation. The indicator assumes that a new quota law will be passed, providing an additional incentive for party leaders who might otherwise have little interest in promoting women's participation.

Figure 12: Results Framework Example 2

Objective: *Political Parties Deploy Trained Party Pollwatchers*

% of pollwatchers conducting themselves professionally at polling stations

- While relevant to the objective, data is likely to be difficult to gather.

# of pollwatchers deployed

- The scale of deployment will vary per party depending on resources, political will, and the condition of party structures.
- Assumes that election management bodies, security forces, and others respect the right of parties to field agents, and that security conditions do not hamper party efforts.
- Numbers may be dificult to track if the parties themselves do not have good internal communication systems to track this data. While election management bodies and other observers may track this information, accessing their data may not be realistc or efficient.

% of pollwatchers demonstrating knowledge of voting procedures

- Assumes political parties have the the resources, systems, and willingness to recruit and train party agents.
- Could be challenging to track the impact of the training on participants without significant commitment and resources from the parties to collect and share evaluation information with NDI.

% of master trainers demonstrating the ability to train party pollwatchers

- Could be measured through pre- and post- tests of master trainers, and spot checks of step-down trainings.

Following is a summary of key questions that should be considered.

- Do the indicators reflect measurement at realistic levels of change?
- What information will be collected?
- Does the data need to be disaggregated by age, ethnicity, gender or other characteristics?
- If targets must be set for each indicator, do the targets reflect the different needs, capacities, and interests of beneficiary parties/groups?

Data Collection and Analysis

Consultations or interviews with political party members or officials are one of the most common data collection methods listed for program indicators. Interviews can be valuable sources of information and there are several ways to structure them. However, in some cases, other types of data collection – for instance, written questionnaires or tests, may be more helpful in addressing participants' knowledge at baseline and after training. The data needs will help determine what type of data collection method is most appropriate, as well as which format to apply in using the selected method. Table 9 outlines some common data collection methods and summarizes their respective advantages and limitations. In addition, Appendix 6 outlines some issues to consider before using public opinion polls to measure program impact.

Table 9: Data Collection Methods

Review of Party Documents or Media Reports	
Possible Uses	**Common Challenges**
Most useful for gathering information about a very specific change that is likely to be clearly reflected in party documents (e.g. by-laws, policy documents). Can also be used where the nature or extent of media coverage of an activity is a measure of program impact. For instance: • A program engaging policy working groups may review policy proposals submitted to the party executive. • A review of media reports may help determine whether a code of conduct attracted significant media coverage.	• Parties may be reluctant to share certain internal documents. • Party documents may be inaccurate or may not contain sufficient information for M&E. For instance, even when parties have considered public opinion research during their policy development processes, it may be difficult to see it directly reflected in policy documents. • There may be significant lag time between program activities and when they are reflected in party documents. For instance, a decision to change party procedures or structures may not be reflected in party rules until the next party congress.
Direct Observation of Party Activities	
Possible Uses	**Common Challenges**
This approach can be used to gather data about the scope, attendance and quality of various party activities. Since program staff and evaluators are collecting the data themselves, they have significant control over the quality of data gathered. May be particularly useful for: • Assessing whether master trainers apply specific training skills and cover appropriate content in step-down trainings. • Spot checking data provided by parties on follow-on activities, such as step-down trainings or town hall meetings.	• Parties may be reluctant to have "outsiders" observe certain activities. • The presence of "outsiders" may impact participant behavior. • Deploying people to multiple locations may prove expensive or present other logistical challenges. As a result, it may only be possible to observe a sampling of party activities.
Focus Groups and Facilitated Discussions	
Possible Uses	**Common Challenges**
May be helpful in situations where it is important to have a group discuss, reach agreement on, and prioritize challenges and successes. May also be useful where sharing experiences can foster relationship-building among a group, or when it is important for participants to exchange perspectives on a specific issue or challenge. For instance: • A facilitated discussion among party officials could shed some light on and help prioritize party challenges, opportunities, needs, and areas where international assistance has been most helpful. • A facilitated discussion among participants in a leadership program could elicit information on common challenges and success stories, and provide feedback to help improve future programs.	• In a group setting, participants may be reluctant to speak as frankly as they would in confidential one-on-one interviews. Convening groups of peers can help limit these risks. • In multiparty settings, participants may seek to overstate their respective parties' strengths and minimize their weaknesses. • The quality of the data will depend on the skill of the moderator. Skilled facilitators may be able to make relevant observations about the group dynamic, or follow up on unexpected comments for more information. Inexperienced moderators may miss those opportunities, or even allow their own bias to affect the conduct or outcome of the discussions.

Individual Interviews	
Possible Uses	**Common Challenges**
Individual interviews are most useful when assessing complex party processes or in situations where nuance or confidentiality may be required. For instance: • Semi-structured interviews may be used to develop an understanding of party procedures, such as policy development or candidate and leadership selection. This format can provide insights into actual practices and how they compare to what is formally laid out in party documents. • One-on-one interviews may also be helpful in assessing political will within the party and the motivations of various stakeholders, including how they might help or hinder the program's objectives.	• Interviews can be time consuming. Similarly, it may be difficult to schedule sufficient time with some stakeholders, particularly senior party actors. • Individual interviews may result in a large amount of qualitative data that may be difficult to sort and analyze. • While stakeholders are more likely to be candid in a one-on-one setting, some may still be reluctant to share sensitive information or express viewpoints that they feel will reflect badly on the party. Establishing trust with interviewees and emphasizing that conversations are confidential may help reassure participants. Securing the approval from party officials prior to conducting interviews often helps informants feel more comfortable.
Written Questionnaires	
Possible Uses	**Common Challenges**
Questionnaires can be used to gather basic information about specific program activities and their impact. For instance: • Questionnaires distributed before and after a skills-building session can help document changes in knowledge. • They can also be used to gather basic feedback on an activity, including what worked, what did not, and how the event might be improved in future iterations.	• Respondents tend to be concise when filling out written forms. As such, this format is generally not recommended where the information requested is complex, nuanced, or may require some explanation or detail. • Response rates may be low, particularly in cases when party contacts are relied upon to distribute the questionnaire and gather responses. This is less common in cases where program staff and evaluators are on hand to gather responses from participants – for instance, before and after a skills training session. • Party officials and activists may be reluctant to provide sensitive party information in writing, due to concerns about confidentiality and how the information will be used.

Through the relationships they develop with political parties, party assistance providers often have access to internal party information. However, political parties may be reluctant or unable to share certain types of information due to the political sensitivities involved or because of limited organizational capacity. These potential risks should be considered in order to determine what information can be collected and how. Textbox 9 outlines some of the common challenges that NDI has faced with data collection. Textbox 10 proposes some potential solutions for the most common problems.

Textbox 9: Common Challenges Associated with Data Collection

Here are some of the common challenges associated with data collection for political party programs, as identified by a cross section of NDI monitoring and evaluation staff working in different regions of the world. Most of the challenges reflect issues with accessing valid and complete data in a timely fashion. Political parties may not be interested in the data that NDI is collecting or understand why it is requested by the Institute.

• Parties may not want to share sensitive information about their membership or structures. In challenging political contexts, it may be especially difficult to access this information.

• Political parties may have different priorities from NDI, making it difficult to receive information in a timely manner. For instance, political party leaders or members may not be accessible during campaign periods.

• Data collected indirectly – where NDI has less control – is often late and/or incomplete. Additionally, secondhand data may not be broken out by gender, age, ethnicity, or other relevant characteristics, leading to a shortage of information on how the program affected different groups.

• An over-reliance on a single source within each party can make data collection difficult. For instance, NDI points of contact may not have sufficient power or authority to release information. Further, changes in party leadership can negatively affect NDI's ability to collect data consistently.

• A party's internal culture can affect the willingness of its members or officials to share information. For instance, in some cases, lower level members simply repeat the instructions of their leaders, making it difficult to gain different perspectives on organizational dynamics.

• When a party is wary of engaging with NDI, it can be very difficult to gain an understanding of the organization's internal dynamics. This, in turn, can make it more difficult to identify needs, develop appropriate program strategies, and collect indicator data.

• Political party members may report valuable information from meetings or conversations within and between parties. However, this can be difficult to verify, since parties do not always document these interactions or have observers present.

• Parties may provide inaccurate or inflated information about their current practices or accomplishments out of a desire to impress or please. In particular, due to their competitive nature, parties may be reluctant to share information honestly in front of other parties.

TEXTBOX 10: SOME POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS WITH DATA COLLECTION

For the most common problems, the following solutions were identified to emphasize the need for staff charged with implementing activities to work closely with monitoring and evaluation staff.

Problem	M&E Staff Roles	Program Staff Roles
Party agendas and activities take priority over NDI activities and data collection.	• Develop an M&E calendar for use in following up with program staff. • Simplify data collection tools.	• Gather information about political party agendas/schedules and ensure that the M&E calendar reflects parties' availability. • Follow up with political parties using the M&E calendar and share information with M&E staff about party activities on a regular basis so that the calendar is updated as appropriate.
Data collected by political parties or intermediaries is of poor quality or late.	• Develop and train program staff on simple, user-friendly data collection tools.	• Help political parties or intermediaries understand the importance of collecting data, and assist them in adopting the user-friendly tools.
Parties provide inaccurate or inflated information.	• Assess data quality risks and develop triangulation protocols to gather data from multiple sources. • Spot check the data for quality.	• Collect data from different sources and triangulate. • Help party officials understand that accurate data is important and that this data is not a competition or comparison of the parties. • Assess feasibility of data collection in party-specific settings, and implement where possible.

Party assistance providers work with political parties on the basis of trust. This requires keeping sensitive party information confidential. Breaches of party confidentiality would jeopardize practitioners' ability to conduct their work and violate research ethics. The party assistance community should also be sensitive to the fact that some party-specific information, if made public, could be used by other parties to their competitive advantage. While donors are the primary audience, grant documents – and any sensitive party information they contain – can become public. In addition, taken out of context, certain types of information could create perceptions of preferential treatment or bias, damaging in-country relationships and the Institute's reputation worldwide.

For these reasons, it is particularly important to maintain ethical standards when gathering and reporting on data. These include the need for informed consent of those participating in evaluation, honoring promises of confidentiality, and doing no harm (as well as taking proactive steps to avoid or minimize any unnecessary harms that might affect stakeholder interests).[19] Informed consent requires that participants not only choose whether or not to participate but also understand the potential benefits and risks of participation. For instance, while numerical indices are used for some citizen participation and legislative programs, NDI has only used them in limited cases for party work, given the risk of the ratings being misinterpreted as

19. American Evaluation Association, *American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators* (Washington, DC: American Evaluation Association, 2004), accessed February 10, 2014, http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=51; Wilder Research, Obtaining Informed Consent (St. Paul, MN: The Wilder Foundation, August 2009) accessed February 10, 2014, http://www.evaluatod.org/resources/evaluation-guides/InformedConsent_8-09.pdf; Paul Oliver, *The Student's Guide to Research Ethics*, 2nd ed. (Maidenhead: The Open University Press, 2010); Alan Bryman et al., "On Ethics and Politics," in *Social Research Methods*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Elisabeth Jean Wood, "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones," *Qualitative Sociology*, 29, (2006): 373-386. Relevant perhaps to a few NDI party programs and a really good grounding in the do no harm principle.

approval ratings, or otherwise damaging relationships with political parties. More recently, a few programs have experimented with indices with mixed results. Appendix 7 outlines some of the lessons learned from programs that have experimented with indices.

Understandably, the political calendar in each program country affects the types of activities in which political parties will be interested at different points in the program. It also has implications for data collection and analysis. For instance, the political calendar can affect the availability of political party officials upon whom the assistance community may be dependent for information. In addition, while baseline information is typically collected during program start up, it may not always be effective to collect all such information at that time. For a program that begins mid-way through the political calendar, collecting baseline information on campaign practices two years after the last election may not be strategic. Given these issues, some programs have used a rolling calendar to conduct their baseline assessments.

Data can be analyzed in different ways. By thinking through how information will be analyzed early in the process – that is, before data is actually collected – data collection tools can be designed accordingly, leading to more strategic and efficient information-gathering efforts. Even for simple surveys or interviews, and in the absence of indices, thinking through how data will be analyzed can lead to more meaningful insights about a program. Table 10 summarizes the research questions, data collection systems, analysis methods, and indicators used to evaluate a policy development program at end-line.

The following should be considered:

- How might data be collected in a manner that takes into account the complexities of the political context and adheres to ethical research principles?

- Do plans for data collection and reporting reflect a realistic assessment of how quickly data can be collected and analyzed?

- Do data analysis and reporting protocols provide necessary protections for sensitive party or individual information that may need to be kept confidential?

Table 10: Data Collection and Analysis

The table below illustrates the research questions and indicators used to evaluate the impact of a policy development program. The evaluation report clearly outlines the research questions, the data collection method (semi-structured interviews), the number of respondents per party, the limitations and risks associated with the chosen approach, and how the data would be analyzed. For instance, given that initially positive reactions from direct program participants do not necessarily translate into changed attitudes or behavior at higher levels within a political party, the evaluator chose to distinguish between short-term or immediate indicators, and evidence of movement towards sustainable change in political parties. Each interview was transcribed and coded according to the five themes/research questions and the indicators. During the semi-structured interviews, participants were given time to discuss the training they underwent. Instances in which respondents referenced changes in their parties as a result of training and without direct prompting from the interviewer were given greater weight in the analysis. This is reflected in a number of indicators below.

Research Questions	Short-term/ Immediate Indicators	Long-term/ Sustainability Indicators
To what extent have there been changes in the capacity of parties to develop policy agendas that reflect citizen priorities?	• # of parties with at least x respondents referencing changes in party attitudes or methods toward including citizen feedback (e.g. plan to use focus groups again or emphasize people's needs as important). • # of parties with at least x respondents referencing, of their own accord, the importance of citizen feedback.	• # of parties with at least x respondents referencing structural change (e.g. the formation of a new committee or group) in the party to improve the policy making process for the future. • # of parties with at least x respondents referencing a new policy made since the end of the training, following methods learned from NDI.
Have the agendas of MPs been influenced by party policy issues?	• # of parties with at least x respondents referencing MPs becoming more responsive to party priorities. • # of parties with at least x respondents referencing the MPs' speeches at the outreach event or in parliament corresponding to stated party priorities.	• # of parties with at least x respondents referencing new mechanisms within the party to ensure more regular contact with MPs in the future.
What is the commitment of MPs to continue attending outreach events?	• # of parties with at least x respondents describing, of their own accord, MPs' renewed commitment to the party and/or indicating the likelihood of MPs attending another event. • # of respondents from parties whose leaders are NOT MPs talking about the MPs attending, performing well, and giving positive feedback about the outreach event.	• # of parties with respondent talking about a future date arranged with the MP(s) to attend another outreach event.
Have the agendas of MPs been influenced by party policy issues?	• # of parties with at least x respondents referencing the process of connecting findings from research to policy.	• # of parties with at least x respondents talking about party's plan to incorporate public opinion into future policy.
To what extent does internal party debate in the policy development process take place now?	• # of parties with mid-level respondents describing, of their own accord, taking an active role in party discussions following the end of training. • # of parties with greater awareness of and access to decision-making, described across all levels.	• # of participants promoted to higher positions or given more authority in the party as a result of NDI training. • # of parties providing evidence of internal structural chances to incorporate more discussion in policy.

M&E During Program Implementation

In most cases, even though a preliminary results framework and program strategy will have been included in proposals, activities and indicators will need to be further refined based on additional consultations with program stakeholders during program start up and once baseline data has been collected.

Collecting baseline data at program start up and making preliminary contact with program stakeholders also provides an opportunity to review the stakeholder analysis and assumptions compiled during program design. If conducted properly, they can provide a more realistic assessment of the operating environment, party needs, priorities, and existing capacity. Hopefully, most of the assumptions and analyses will hold true, but adjustments may be

required to reflect additional information or the latest developments. In addition to providing information against which change over time can be measured, baseline activities can allow teams to assess the feasibility of their proposed data collection and analysis methods.

For medium or longer-term programs, provisions may be made for a midterm evaluation. The results of a midterm assessment can be especially helpful in highlighting program successes and challenges, as well as unanticipated results. Where necessary, program strategies and activities can be adjusted in response to midterm evaluation findings, thereby increasing the chances of program success by end-line.

Ongoing Reflection and Analysis

Most, if not all, programs take place in fluid political environments. The conditions prevalent at the time a program is designed may not remain throughout its duration. Assumptions may not hold true and unanticipated events may create unforeseeable opportunities or risks. In some cases, changes in the overall political environment, or within a particular party or implementing partner, will be so significant and dramatic that they cannot be missed and their impact on the program will be obvious. In other instances, developments can be more subtle, yet still have important programmatic ramifications, including changed relationships with particular stakeholders or an altered ability to focus on results. By regularly setting aside time to reflect on program successes, challenges, risks and opportunities, it should be possible to capture different stakeholder perspectives while they are still relatively fresh. Through ongoing reflection and analysis, opportunities and risks can be better identified and analyzed as programs unfold, strategies and activities can be adjusted accordingly, and this information can be better documented for monitoring and evaluation, reporting, and organizational learning purposes.

Tools to Help with Staff Reflection and Analysis

- *The Outcome Map:* A simple, collaborative and effective tool for capturing the ideas and insights of multiple stakeholders and that helps participants differentiate between a program's short-term change (program processes), medium-term change (program outcomes), and long-term change (downstream impacts). For more information, see Appendix 8.

- *Force Field Analyses:* These can be helpful in identifying different factors that could influence their program and develop strategies to capitalize on helpful forces and mitigate potentially harmful ones. While they can be used during program design or start up, they can also be used midway through a project to ensure that program teams update their strategies to account for changes in their operating environment. For more information, see Appendix 9.

Monitoring and evaluation strategies and activities throughout the project cycle – that is, at design, baseline, during implementation, and at end-line – should help answer the following questions:

- To what extent has the project contributed to its longer term goals? Why or why not?

- What unanticipated positive or negative consequences did the project have? Why did they arise? Did the program's impact on different groups vary?

- What changes have occurred as a result of the outputs and to what extent are these likely to contribute to the project's purpose and desired impact?

- Has the project achieved the changes for which it can realistically be held accountable?

Measuring Change

The goals of M&E are to provide real-time information to inform program management and reporting, enhance accountability, and shed light on which strategies are most effective and why. Efforts to monitor party assistance programs face a number of unique challenges. Legislative changes, the emergence of new parties, the fragmentation or dissolution of established ones, and assistance from other groups may influence party behavior and make it difficult to assess a program's impact. Further, given the competitive nature of political parties, some types of information must be treated as confidential, which may limit the type of evaluation data that can be made public or restrict how information can be used.

- Party programs try to influence political space, will or capacity to create changes in party behavior, so indicators should typically attempt to measure change in one of those dimensions. Clearly identifying which dimension the program plans to address can be helpful in developing appropriate and realistic indicators.

- Gathering data from political parties may present specific challenges. For instance, parties may be reluctant to share sensitive information, may not be interested in gathering the type of data M&E officers require, or may provide inaccurate or inflated information. A realistic assessment of data reliability should be conducted including how quickly data can be collected and analyzed. Data collection needs will vary according to each program and its specific indicators, and collection methods should be tailored accordingly.

- Political party programs are particularly susceptible to shifts in the political landscape. Even a subtle change in public perception or local power structures may significantly impact program goals. Ongoing reflection and analysis can help identify new opportunities and risks as they arise, so that program strategies and activities can be adjusted accordingly.

- Finally, it is important to adhere to ethical research principles, such as respecting commitments made regarding party/informant confidentiality. Because political parties are competitive organizations, establishing trust with party counterparts can be critical to achieving program goals. Maintaining confidentiality is crucial in building those relationships.

MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

Managing relationships with a range of stakeholders – including program participants, implementing partners, and donors – is a key element of program management. While donors are undoubtedly an important part of the equation, this section will focus on relationships with political parties and external stakeholders who may be involved in, or affected by program activities. Relationship building strengthens programs by broadening implementers' access to a range of stakeholders, and deepening understanding between assistance providers and their program partners.

Reputation: Program-specific relationships are obviously important in how an organization carries out its work in a given country, but they also affect how an organization is perceived internationally. Through a combination of country-specific and international relationships, in multiparty systems, NDI has developed a reputation as a neutral and trusted actor capable of providing relevant assistance and drawing upon a range of political party experiences. Given the Institute's official standing with the world's largest networks of political parties, political leaders often perceive the Institute as a peer that understands their challenges and sensitivities.

This reputation is key to NDI's work around the world and is the basis of its ability to convene groups who might find it difficult to come together in the absence of trusted partner.

Access: Relationships with political parties and external stakeholders around the world provide NDI with access to information. Through access to comparative party and country experiences, the Institute is able to identify and provide a range of examples that can help inform the work of partner political parties. When NDI has access to sensitive internal party information, the Institute is better positioned to work with political parties on issues of strategy and to engage them on the case for reform. Through relationships with a range of stakeholders, NDI is able to access and provide political parties with information about developments in their own country that may affect how they operate.

Understanding: Relationships foster understanding. While NDI will not always agree with its partners, cultivating a number and variety of relationships at different levels within each party – including with reform elements within parties – and with external stakeholders allows the Institute to gather better information about party systems and individual parties – including the conditions that shape behavior – that can be used to improve programming. Engaging political parties and external stakeholders on their priorities and the anticipated outcomes of NDI's programs can yield helpful insights about potential risks to, and opportunities for programming; it can also improve their buy-in to program activities and expand options for monitoring and evaluation.

Selecting Which Parties to Work With

Although NDI works with parties across the political spectrum, it is rarely in a position to work with *all* the parties in a program country. By working with too many parties, assistance providers risk spreading resources so thinly that it fails to achieve any meaningful impact. Further, some parties may not have the capacity to absorb the assistance or apply the skills and lessons learned that assistance providers share with them. At the same time, working with too few parties can undermine an assistance provider's reputation or limit its ability to engage willing partners.

At a minimum, NDI does not work with parties that advocate or carry out violence. In emerging democracies and democratic systems, the Institute seeks to work with a broad range of parties that are committed to democratic processes. In non-democratic environments, NDI may choose to work solely with democratic parties or coalitions of democratic parties. In most countries additional criteria are developed to keep the number of NDI partners manageable. These criteria should be objective and easy to explain. They should also allow the Institute to work with the most significant political parties in a given context. While a party's "significance" may be interpreted relative to its level of support, in some environments, a party's significance may be defined by its representation of marginalized groups, or, in highly polarized environments, its potential to help form a "democratic middle" or to serve as a coalition partner.

Since partner selection is highly context specific, NDI has no universal detailed criteria for determining with whom to work. However, common requirements include the ability to absorb assistance, geographic reach, a significant base of popular support, and representation of specific minority or marginalized groups. In highly fluid environments – post-conflict and transition countries, for example – applying clear selection criteria can be difficult. In these situations, the Institute often engages a relatively wide range of parties until a more settled environment makes greater selectivity possible. Additionally, in some cases, programs establish different tiers of assistance with some parties receiving more intensive and more tailored assistance than others. Table 11 outlines the criteria for different tiers of political party partners and their respective levels of assistance, used in two separate programs.

On occasion, exceptions to normal NDI practice may be warranted. Program teams that decide to work with a party that would not normally be eligible for assistance – or to exclude a party that normally would qualify for assistance – should have clear institutional justification for doing so. In all cases, the medium- to long-term impact of decisions about partner selection should be considered. Political party fortunes change over time. Large parties may lose their support and outsider parties can quickly become part of the mainstream. In addition, a party may refuse assistance, but channels of communication should be maintained with these groups as a way of demonstrating openness.

While programming in a given country should be tailored to the individual needs of specific parties, assistance should be – and seen to be – provided on an equitable basis. Inevitably, some parties will be more receptive to external assistance than others. However it is important to develop and balance relationships across the political spectrum. As such, any allegations of bias should be discussed and addressed promptly.

While the Institute cannot – and in many cases should not – work with all parties, there are often ways to keep lines of communication open and to share advice or materials with a broad range of political parties. Gestures that do not require significant investments of resources – sharing of materials, occasional informational meetings, and inclusion of a wide range of parties in multiparty events – can go a long way to foster good will. Fringe or fledgling parties that join the mainstream may remember these gestures when they become influential members of the political class.

Managing Relationships with Political Parties

As indicated above, with each party that a program is in contact with, the assistance community may interact with party leadership, direct participants in program activities, and informal contacts. A network of contacts within each party and with external stakeholders should provide better insights into the dynamics within and between parties, and help with planning program activities and relationship management. For instance, over the course of its programs, NDI often engages with marginalized groups and agents for reform, working with them to build momentum for change within their political parties or in the party system as whole. In these efforts, the Institute needs to strike a delicate balance. Pushing too hard can lead to a loss of the trust and support of party leaders who may be concerned that program activities seek to undermine them. Further, it may unwittingly damage the relationships and reputation of internal change agents, or create unreasonable expectations about the potential for, and pace of reform. However, by striking the right balance, program teams can enhance prospects for program success while maintaining relationships with key contacts.

Table 11: PARTY ASSISTANCE TIERS

Example 1		
Tier	**Criteria**	**Assistance**
A	• Registration as a political party; • A physical national office with a functional secretariat; • Presence outside of the capital (branch organizations); • Minimum 10 MPs; and • Commitment to democratic principles, nonviolence, and the objectives of the program.	• Multiparty and single-party support.
B	• Registration as a political party; • A physical national office with a functional secretariat; • Some presence outside the capital (branch organizations); • A presence in parliament; and • Commitment to democratic principles, nonviolence, and the objectives of the program.	• Multiparty training program for potential candidates; • Ad-hoc multiparty forums to discuss major reform issues; and • Multiparty training of trainers.
C	• All registered political parties.	• Dialogue events with election management body; and • Party agent training.

Example 2		
Tier	**Criteria**	**Assistance**
A	At least three of the following characteristics: • Commitment to the development of a vibrant multiparty democracy; • Broad base of support in numerous geographic areas of the country; • Commitment to include women in most, if not all, aspects of operations; and • Demonstrated ability to be competitive at the national level.	• Structured trainings at both the national and branch level wherever possible; • Individual party consultations and strategic planning advice at all levels of party development; and • The primary developmental goals for each party will correspond to the targeted needs of the parties involved.
B	Several of the following: • Commitment to the development of a vibrant multiparty democracy; • Broad base of support in at least one area of the country; • Commitment to include women in most, if not all, aspects of operations; and • Demonstrated ability to be competitive at a regional level or to be a potential coalition partner at the national level.	• Little or no direct consultation but offered single-specific trainings on a broad range of general party assistance topics, such as volunteer recruitment, voter contact, strategic planning, and constituency service; and • Inclusion in multiparty trainings on a periodic basis on the major elements of party organization, candidate training, and party outreach.
C	• Demonstrated desire to work with NDI and play a constructive role in the development of a multiparty democracy.	• No direct consultations; occasional inclusion in multiparty workshops and distribution of written training materials.

As NDI notes in "*A Guide to Political Party Development*":

> *"Having a core group advocating for NDI's assistance can be an excellent way to gain greater support for activities. While the leadership is important, staff should also build relationships with activists on different party levels (local, regional, headquarters) or within specific organs/units (e.g. parliamentary group, youth, or women's wings). These individuals often have a good understanding of how assistance can improve operations and be effective in appealing to party leaders."[20]*

Similarly, it may be necessary to balance relationships with political parties and external stakeholders. In some cases, program stakeholders will have some pre-existing knowledge of, or relationship with, various party assistance organizations, and initial interactions will be shaped by previous experiences, whether negative or positive. In other instances, it may be necessary to develop new relationships that require providing basic information about the organization and its work around the world. Based on the stakeholder analysis conducted during program design, a strategy should be developed for managing relationships with different groups as programs are implemented.

Engaging Party Leaders

Even when programs do not directly involve party headquarters or national officials, getting their support for program activities is critical. By virtue of the influence they wield and the resources they control within their respective organizations, party leaders can play determining roles in a program's success by approving the release of internal party information, encouraging their members to participate in program activities, and mobilizing any resources or political will that may be required for party activists to apply newly-acquired skills or information. In an ideal world, party leaders would issue sweeping instructions to all party members and officials and make any necessary resources available to advance reforms. However, in practice, aspects of the assistance programs could be perceived by tightly-controlled party organizations as a challenge to the status quo and, thus, party leaders' authority.

Party leaders may not be direct about their true perceptions of assistance providers or their programming. Even at the highest level within each organization, party leaders may be conflicted over engagement with assistance providers. This may result in mixed signals from party leadership or the rank and file. Depending on their own priorities, interests and style, party leaders may endorse participation in some activities while blocking others, or simply take steps to sideline officials or activists they perceive as threats to their objectives. More typically, they may invest varying degrees of effort into different program activities. For instance, they may approve plans for a training of trainers but fail to make the resource available for step-down trainings; or they may sign a pledge to increase women's political participation that is not properly implemented. They may even purposefully identify individuals who are committed to the status quo and unlikely to implement new approaches to organizing as participants for program activities.

Party programming is most effective when partners trust assistance providers enough to openly share their concerns and operational challenges. When assistance providers work with parties that compete against each other, they should assure partners that their conversations and any strategy documents they share will not be passed to other parties or organizations. Program details should be discussed with party leaders – particularly during the initial stages of a project. These can include:

- Program goals and the benefits they can expect to see;

- The limits of NDI's assistance and partnership;

20. NDI, *A Guide to Political Party Development* (Washington, DC: NDI, 2008), 5, https://www.ndi.org/files/2297_handbook_PoliticalPartyDev_pdfen_041108.pdf.

- Their party's responsibilities; and

- How success will be measured.

In addition to discussing program details with party leaders at program start up, it is best practice to establish formal channels or periodic meetings where party leaders can be briefed on activities implemented, as well as on successes and challenges. These meetings should also provide party leaders with opportunities for input on program direction and content, and can bolster the leader buy-in that is often crucial for programming to be successful.

Particularly for programs involving one-on-one assistance to political parties, a preliminary assessment process can be an opportunity to develop relationships and trust with party leaders. Presenting leaders with a balanced analysis of their party's strengths and weaknesses, and specific suggestions for improvement, can help demonstrate that time and effort have been invested in understanding the party and the challenges they face, as well as in identifying individualized solutions. Further, party leaders and senior members may be more invested in activities if they can see how those efforts will contribute to the accomplishment of program goals.

NDI programs in several countries, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Tanzania have used Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with political party officials to clarify expectations for programming. While the contents vary from one program to the other, Textbox 11 describes some typical MOU provisions and some recommendations for using them effectively. Despite the advantages of a written document that spells out roles and responsibilities, reaching agreement with a party on an MOU can take time. Thus, the benefits must be weighed against the time that may be required to finalize the document. In addition, MOUs should supplement, not replace, a strategy for developing a variety of formal and informal relationships within each partner party, and with other stakeholders.

NDI staff and evaluators have used a combination of interviews and facilitated discussions – in the form of strategic planning sessions and force field analyses, for instance – to gather insights into political party priorities, perceptions of program objectives, and the opportunities and risks that programs may face in meeting their objectives. For instance, in Nicaragua, NDI staff used the force field analysis approach to engage party representatives on:

- Organizational objectives;

- Various factors that were negatively or positively affecting their ability to achieve their goals;

- The extent to which previous NDI assistance had improved the party's capacity to address or mitigate hindering forces and to capitalize on positive forces; and

- Which additional strategies could be used to address the results of the force field analysis.

The session took place shortly after seriously flawed municipal elections that considerably changed the political environment in which the program was operating. Participants identified a number of new technical assistance needs, including outreach strategies for youth, database creation, use of Short Message Service (SMS) to improve outreach, continued technical assistance to the Women's Network, and capacity building for local level leaders. Based on the results of the session, NDI adapted its Nicaragua program activities and strategy.

Textbox 11: Party Memoranda of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) lays out the agreements and obligations made between a political party and NDI, clarifying a shared understanding and commitment to program activities. It presents an opportunity for partner parties and the Institute to pursue deeper interactions and more strategic relationships.

Common Provisions

While the MOU's content will vary depending on the program context, common provisions include:

- An outline of the technical assistance the Institute plans to provide;

- Guarantees to NDI of access to the information required to design, monitor and evaluate programming;

- Assurances that NDI will keep sensitive party information confidential;

- Criteria for identifying political party participants;

- Costs to be covered by the political party;

- Party leaders' commitment to encouraging active participation by their members; and

- The dates during which the MOU will be in effect.

Recommendations

- Carefully consider whether an MOU is appropriate in the program context;

  » The benefits of a signed document clarifying the program scope, roles and responsibilities should be weighed against the time it can take to reach agreement on an MOU.

  » MOUs may not be appropriate at the very early stages of a relationship between NDI and a political party, as they may put things on an overly formal setting. Party willingness to sign an MOU may also depend on the socio-cultural context; some cultures place a greater emphasis on signed documents than others.

- Treat the document as a goodwill gesture, not as a legally enforceable document that will expose the party to sanctions;

- Introduce and discuss the idea verbally before developing or sharing a draft;

- Use clear, simple language; and

- Allow for some flexibility and changes in the ongoing relationship.

Working with Direct Participants

Political party programs work directly with a wide range of party leaders and members, including party executives, members of parliament, local elected officials, branch activists, and representatives of marginalized groups. Engagement strategies will obviously be informed by the types of participants, the program strategies and activities envisaged.

Party assistance programs sometimes provide allowances to help participants cover travel expenses – including transport, accommodation and meals – incurred while attending events. While these disbursements may make it possible for disadvantaged groups to participate in program activities, they should never be designed to compensate or reward participants for their time. In some cases, depending on the amounts involved and local conditions, individuals may feign interest in program activities, primarily to benefit from these allowances. Parties may even have the resources to cover program activities but simply choose to prioritize other expenses. As such, assistance providers should carefully negotiate what costs will be covered by the program and what expenses parties will be expected to bear.

Some NDI programs have found that the allowances other organizations provide may raise participant expectations about the types and level of payments to be provided. While every situation is different, warning signs to look for include groups or individuals who threaten to boycott activities unless they receive a certain level of financial support, or oversubscription of events by individuals whose identity and affiliation cannot be verified. These limits can be mitigated by researching typical costs for transportation and other expenses in order to establish reasonable allowances. Working with party officials to obtain and confirm participant names ahead of time can also help minimize these problems. Even when participants do not have photo identification, matching the names they provide against the list given by their parties, or calling party liaisons to confirm last minute changes in their participant lists, can help. Further, where program activities are publicly advertised, staff should also avoid drawing undue attention to any allowances.

For some types of programs, questions may arise about how to select participants. In many cases, party leaders will play some role in selecting these individuals. Assistance providers should be clear with party leaders or other points of contact about the types of participants they feel would benefit most from the program, as well as about selection criteria and any other requirements (e.g. a particular number or percentage of individuals from marginalized groups such as women or youth). Providing advance notice of the types of individuals to be targeted, the time and resource commitments involved, the proposed activity timeline, and any follow-on activities that participants may be expected to implement can increase the chances that political parties will identify appropriate participants. In some cases, it may be worth considering and conducting additional, targeted outreach to ensure that certain groups that might otherwise be excluded are invited to participate. For instance, NDI's Nicaragua team reached out to LGBT and disabled people's organizations in advance of the new cycles of their leadership program. While these groups had previously been underrepresented in the program, targeted outreach efforts led to an increase in successful applications from members of those groups.

In some cases, it may be possible to more directly influence the selection of program participants through an open application and selection process, for instance. Any nomination or application procedures should be tailored to the program context. Particularly in the case of programs that involve significant time and resources in individual party members or officials, some teams have used a competitive selection process. Although the selection process can take time, it can provide programs greater flexibility in choosing participants than relying completely on party leaders. At the same time, without the support of their party's leadership, trained activists or officials are likely to face significant constraints in applying the skills they have just learned. Steps should be taken to ensure that trainees are in a position to advocate for putting new methods into practice, and/or that they have the support of more senior party members who are. As a result,

some program teams have requested that participants submitting applications for competitive selection processes include a letter of support from a senior level party official. For many years, this was the approach used by the NDI's Latin America and Caribbean Youth Leadership Program. In addition, the authors of the letters of support were often called upon to mentor participants in leadership programs. A second option sometimes used for training of trainer programs is to have party leaders or points of contact identify or pre-select a pool of individuals from which a smaller group of participants can be selected. For instance, for some training of trainer programs, practitioners have organized selection events where short-listed participants can be interviewed, receive some introductory training, and perform workshop exercises. Based on their performance, staff then selected a smaller group to complete the full course of training of trainer sessions.

In selecting topics, it is important to consider how best to strike a balance between the topics or skills that participants are interested in for their own growth, and those that are in highest demand by their parties.

Cultural or other practices, including sensitivity to dietary restrictions or breaks that participants may need for prayer should be considered and provisions made for them. In designing activities, the following should be considered:

- How activities should be planned to minimize disruptions to participant schedules;

- Whether separating participants by party, gender, age or other criteria would allow them to participate more freely; or

- If additional time should be built into the schedule to allow for participants to get used to working together. For instance, in polarized contexts, bringing together political party representatives who are not used to civil interparty dialogue may require preparatory work in single party settings or additional time in the schedule for the airing of past grievances.

Direct participants should be briefed on the program's purpose, the assistance to be provided, and anticipated results. They should also engage participants on their perceptions of the risks and opportunities that the program may encounter, as well as participants' own perceptions of what success might look like. Checking in with program participants in between events and after activities have concluded helps with data gathering about program outcomes, in addition to strengthening relationships and helping to inform follow-on activities. Where check-ins with program participants have a monitoring and evaluation purpose, a pre-identified list of questions that can be repeated with all participants should be considered. Where skills-building programs include a series of modules or events that are spread out over time, each session can begin with a brief discussion of how participants have been applying any new skills, as well as successes and challenges.

For the leadership component of the Nicaragua program, based on program indicators and input from implementing partners and local staff, NDI developed a scale outlining different levels of participation in political life, including belonging to a civic or political organization, holding a leadership position, and participating in a political campaign. Through participatory discussion, program graduates identified their levels of political and civic participation since participating in the program, the obstacles and challenges that they face in engaging politically, the tools from the program that had been most beneficial in increasing or improving their participation, and how the program could be improved. Based on the exercise, NDI made a number of changes to improve future cycles of training, including reducing class sizes to facilitate learning, placing greater emphasis on practical rather than theoretical learning, and using social networking to facilitate interaction between program graduates.

Providing direct participants with an opportunity to showcase their newly-acquired skills or knowledge can be empowering for them, while it simultaneously raises awareness among party leaders about what these individuals can contribute if given the chance. Some of the strategies

used by program teams include inviting party leaders to attend workshop sessions where they observe their members applying new skills, working with participants to apply new knowledge in implementing program activities, and organizing "graduation" or "certificate" ceremonies that feature party leaders and/or other honored guests. For instance, NDI's Georgia's Future Women Leaders Program culminates with a certificate ceremony where participants are recognized for completing a one-year course on such topics as leadership, public speaking, campaign management, and project oversight.

Developing Informal Contacts

By definition, many of the interactions between assistance providers and informal party contacts will take place outside formal structured program activities. However, these individuals can bring insightful perspectives on intraparty dynamics and the party system as a whole that can be incredibly valuable for program managers. In some cases, these informal relationships may be the only contact practitioners have with a particular party. Over time, as programs change, these relationships may form the basis for new partnerships. Over coffee, dinner, sporting events, or myriad social activities with informal contacts, assistance providers have been able to identify agents for change, gain a better understanding of program risks and opportunities, strengthen perceptions of the Institute and its work, and identify resource persons for future programming.

Working with External Stakeholders

Relationships between assistance providers and external stakeholders will vary based on the program's scope and context. Often, the Institute's role is to foster constructive engagement between parties and other democratic actors or institutions. This may include making the case for political parties to be included or consulted in the drafting of legislation or constitutions, or bringing together political parties and civil society groups to discuss policy issues. Or it may be a case of maintaining separate relationships with parties on the one hand, and civil society or other stakeholders on the other. In all cases, staff should consider the following:

- How could relationships with external stakeholders be perceived by political parties, and how should they be presented? Similarly, how might external stakeholders perceive the implementers' relationships with political parties?

- Can relationships with both external stakeholders and political parties be used to benefit the political party system, and if so, how?

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Managing Relationships

Relationships are a key aspect of program management. Good relationships with political parties and external stakeholders strengthen party support, improve the assistance community's access to a range of stakeholders, and enhance understanding between development partners and the groups they seek to assist. Party assistance providers have contact with a number of groups over the course of a program, including:

Party leaders: Understandably, party leaders wield significant influence over their organization and thus play a critical role in shaping prospects for program success. Regardless of their primary entry points within each party, program details should be discussed with party leaders early on and contact should be maintained with them over the life of the program. This should include establishing clear expectations regarding program goals and benefits, as well as the limits to the assistance being provided, and engage them on respective responsibilities and how success will be determined.

Program participants: This group may include party leaders, parliamentarians, local officials, branch activists, or representatives of marginalized groups. Participants should be carefully selected to ensure that they are appropriate for the activity and for the program's goals. They should be briefed on the program purpose and anticipated changes, including how any information and skills provided will be put to use.

External stakeholders: Relationships with external stakeholders vary according to the type of program and its context. In some cases, programs may engage with democratic institutions or actors in order to facilitate constructive engagement with political parties as a part of the program's goals. In others, assistance provider may be working simultaneously with parties and other groups on separate programs. The assistance community should consider how relationships with non-party actors might be perceived by political parties, and vice versa.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: COMMON CHALLENGES IN VARIOUS PARTY SYSTEMS

Context	Common Challenges	Possible Strategies
Authoritarian/Semi-Authoritarian		
Political parties face significant formal and/or informal restrictions to their operations, including but not limited to unreasonably high thresholds for registration, and intimidation or harassment of party officials and activists and their partners (including assistance providers). Elections – if they do occur – repeatedly feature widespread fraud and produce overwhelmingly large majorities for the ruling party/incumbent president. Additional democracy deficits may include formal and informal restrictions on freedom of expression, association and movement, including major limits on press freedoms.	• Fear of intimidation or government reprisals may deter parties from outreach and may also discourage citizens from participation. • Parties may have a heavy focus on the challenges of their overall operating environment, finding it more difficult to confront and address their own internal weaknesses. • Depending on how repressive the regime is, implementers may face decisions about whether and how to engage the ruling party or whether to work only with democratic groups. • Harassment of program participants and implementers may raise concerns about security.	• Work with parties to identify and utilize untapped and/or secure spaces within the system that could be used to increase outreach. • Work with civil society to document and raise awareness about electoral fraud and other abuses. • Support efforts to raise international awareness (e.g. in partnership with party internationals and other networks of democrats) and mobilize international support for democratic reform. • Consider options for third-country programming as needed. • In the absence of competitiveness as a significant incentive for changes in party practices, reforms are likely to occur much more slowly and assistance should focus on more modest gains that are realistic, given the constraints parties face. • Support the efforts of the democratic forces (e.g. political parties and civil society) to coordinate joint action.
Single Party Dominant		
Political parties face no significant formal or informal restrictions in their operations and a wide range of democratic freedoms are generally observed. Even in the absence of significant fraud, elections repeatedly return the same party to power and there is little prospect of another party forming government in the near to medium-term future. Due to the overwhelming majority held by the ruling party, opposition parties rarely have the influence to hold the government to account.	• Ruling party may see no value added in engaging with assistance providers. • Significant disparities exist in the needs and interests of ruling and opposition parties. • Parties may see limited value in organizational or internal reforms as a means to increasing their competitiveness.	• Consider ways to diversify program scope to include forms of assistance that could appeal to both ruling and opposition parties. • Place particular emphasis on tailoring assistance to the respective needs of ruling and opposition parties. • Limit the use of multiparty sessions. • Identify and engage reform-minded elements in the ruling party. • Seek opportunities to institutionalize opposition rights.

Context	Common Challenges	Possible Strategies
Multiparty Competitive		
Elections are frequently competitive, with some history or short- to medium-term prospect of power transitioning from one party to another. Depending on the context, there may be two or more major parties and a number of medium or smaller parties that contest elections and shape political discourse. A range of freedoms – including association and expression – are observed, allowing citizens access to information about different political parties and leaders.	• The most significant parties may be locked into similar patterns that provide few opportunities or incentives for reform.	• The desire for a competitive edge may create incentives for parties to improve outreach, invest in building more sustainable structures, or engage in other reforms. Offer equitable but differentiated assistance that is adapted to meet the unique needs of each party and work with each to increase its competitive advantage. • Engage second tier/medium-sized parties who may be more open to new organizing practices (perhaps providing assistance that is less intensive than that given to the largest parties). • Support civil society and media efforts to hold parties accountable.
Fragile		
The political landscape may be characterized by multiple parties, with highly volatile bases of support. Party splits may be common and leaders may frequently reinvent themselves under new party names. There may be significant and unresolved questions over major framework issues, including the electoral system and how parties should be regulated. These environments are also marked by uncertainty over the party system and include backsliding or breakthrough contexts.	• Frequent party splits and a fluid political landscape may create disincentives for party leaders to invest in developing sustainable party structures. • The legal framework may be under development or revision, or is contested. • In breakthrough environments, citizen expectations of change may be very high, while political leaders may be primarily focused on the struggle for power. • Political party weaknesses may create openings for populist or radical movements to gain support.	• Assistance may need to engage a broader range of parties than in other environments due to high levels of political uncertainly. • Support efforts to reach agreement on the legal framework. • In backsliding environments, consider strategies (e.g. assessment or monitoring efforts) that could help raise "early warning signs" both domestic and internationally. • In breakthrough environments, support efforts to help ensure successful reforms. • Support mechanisms for dialogue.

Context	Common Challenges	Possible Strategies
Conflict/Conflict-Prone		
Due to high levels of polarization, recent and/or historical conflict, there is a significant risk of a breakout or resumption of violence. This may be limited to particular parts of the country, or the pattern may be geographically diverse.	• Political leaders may be primarily focused on the struggle for power, placing less emphasis on quality of life issues. • Security conditions may impact parties' ability to conduct outreach and affect citizens' willingness to participate in public political activities. • Parties' role in conflict may affect citizen perceptions of political parties and their role in governance, creating attitudes that can be difficult to change. • Spoilers may threaten to derail efforts to secure peace.	• Use public opinion research to engage political leaders on the gap between their priorities and citizens' main concerns. • Support mechanisms for dialogue at different levels (e.g. local, national, among women, youth) and across different societal groups/layers (e.g. political leaders and citizens, different ethnic groups). • Work with the international community to support peace efforts.
Parties Play Peripheral Roles in Governance		
Political parties are allowed to operate to some extent but only play peripheral roles in political processes. The center of power for may lie with the military, a royal family, or another structure or institution.	• Given their limited role in government, political parties may see few benefits in citizen outreach. • Citizens aware of parties' peripheral role may see limited point in engaging political parties.	• Support party and other stakeholder efforts to negotiate a broader role in governance for parties. • Assist parties in identifying untapped opportunities to engage citizens and contribute to governance.

From NDI's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team's "Tips and Tools"

What?

A tool to collaboratively analyze the root causes & consequences of a core problem.

Why?

To design a program that addresses the root causes of a core problem.

When?

Before the program is designed and objectives set.

How?

Collaboratively in a small group.

Who?

Key stakeholders involved in program design.

Contribution to Evaluation?

Evaluations not only assess program performances, but change the core problem the intervention was intended to address. If the intervention addresses the root cause of a problem, then changes in the negative effects provide us with indicators or change in the core problem.

Prepare:

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Implementation Time:

1–2 hours

Materials:

• Flip chart with tree diagram
• Pink and green sticky notes
• A blue paper sheet
• Blue/black pens

Democracy and governance problems are rarely discrete, straightforward challenges, but are nested within interconnected webs of problems specific to a society's history, geography, peoples and resources. Before designing an intervention it is essential to:

a. Clarify the core problem the program will address; and

b. Distinguish between the causes and effects of the core problem.

The Problem Tree is one simple tool that can assist in this complex analysis.

1. **Identify the core problem the program will address:** The first step is to identify a core problem or "focal" problem. Core problems are identified in numerous ways – through field assessments, donor-sponsored studies, secondary data analysis and/or academic research. Once participants agree on the core problem, write it on blue paper and place at the trunk of a tree image (see Figure 7: Sample Problem Tree).

2. **As a group, brainstorm causes and effects related to the core problem:** Participants generally find it easier to brainstorm effects first, but you can begin with either causes or effects. You can also jump from causes to effects and back throughout the brainstorming process.

3. **Write the causes on pink sticky notes and place them in the tree's roots:** The root causes are the underlying reasons for the core problem. Although your intervention will not address all root causes, the group should list as many as possible. To draw out the root causes the team should ask:

a. Why has this problem occurred?

b. What factors cause the problem?

4. **Write the effects on green sticky notes and place them in the tree's leaves:** The effects are the symptoms of the root causes. We do not design programs around negative effects, but they are important to identify in relationship to the root causes. Ask the group to brainstorm on the "symptoms" of the core problem and its root causes.

5. **Draw lines between causes and their related effects:** By drawing physical lines connecting causes and effects, teams can easily see their relationships on the tree. Note that a cause can contribute to multiple effects, just as one effect can have more than one cause.

6. **Identify one to two root causes your program will address:** In choosing root causes the group should consider the following:

a. Which root causes are the most important to address?

b. Which root causes are the most realistic for the program to address?

c. How much funding and time is available?

7. **Repeat steps 2-6 for the remaining core problems your program will address.**

Appendix 3: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

From NDI's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team's "Tips and Tools"

Stakeholders exert influence and/or are influenced by the project. Stakeholders must be identified and analyzed during the program design, to develop the most effective, relevant intervention. There are many ways to conduct an analysis of stakeholders. These tips represent just one way and should be tailored to the unique needs of each program.

What?

A tool to identify and assess all stakeholders around five criteria.

Why?

To survey all the people who have a stake in the project and analyze their relationship with it.

When?

Before the problem and objective analysis during program design.

How?

Collaboratively in a group.

Who?

Program implementers.

Contribution to Evaluation?

The baseline, midterm and final assessments will require information and/or data from the stakeholders noted. The analysis of stakeholders is useful throughout program design and evaluation.

Prepare:

Prep Time: 45-60 minutes

Implementation Time:

1–2 hours

Materials:

• Flip chart
• Markers
• Stakeholder Analysis Tool A
• Stakeholder Analysis Tool B
• Sticky notepads in five colors

1. **Convene the implementation team:** Those who will be implementing the program should convene to analyze program stakeholders. Table 12: The Stakeholder Analysis Tool A, outlines one example of how this can be organized, using a flipchart to identify different stakeholders' interests, influence, resources, etc.

	Stakeholder	Interest	Influence	Relationship	Particip.	Resources
Particip.	youth					
	politicians					
Implem.	NDI					

2. **Identify stakeholders:** As a group, brainstorm stakeholders on a blank sheet of a flipchart. Group the stakeholders into the following categories and place them on Table 12: The Stakeholder Analysis Tool A. Some may fall into more than one category and additional categories may need to be added due to the uniqueness of each program and operating environment:

   • **Participants:** target groups, people, parties or institutions participating in program activities.

     » e.g. youth in specific districts, the six major political parties, etc.

   • **Implementers:** persons or organizations implementing activities.

     » e.g. NDI, subgrantees, external trainers, etc.

   • **Decision-makers:** people who will make decisions that affect the program.

     » e.g. senior leadership, political leaders, etc.

   • **Donors:** the people or institutions financing the project.

     » e.g. SIDA, USAID, etc.

3. **Analyze stakeholders:** Analyze how each stakeholder relates to the program along the five criteria below. The facilitator might want to provide participants with sticky note pads to post or remove from the Stakeholder Analysis Tool A as they brainstorm and share ideas.

   • **Interest:** What is their interest in this project? How might they be affected, negatively or positively, by this project?

   • **Influence**: What is their potential influence on the project's success or failure?

   • **Relationships:** What are their relations with other stakeholders?

   • **Participation:** What is their capacity or motivation to participate in the design of this project? When, how and where should this participation take place?

4. **Use the analysis:** The assistance providers should return to the stakeholder analysis throughout the project cycle, for example, when they design the baseline assessment. Table 13: Stakeholder Analysis Tool B can be used to further break down the program, identifying stakeholders around key events throughout the project cycle.

Table 12: Stakeholder Analysis Tool A

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS (FOR PROJECT DESIGN)					
STAKEHOLDERS	INTEREST	INFLUENCE	RELATIONSHIP	PARTICIPATION	RESOURCES
	What is their interest in this project? How might they be affected, negatively or positively, by this project?	What is their potential influence on the project's ultimate success and failure?	What are their relations with other stakeholders (conflictualual or cooperative)?	What is their cappacity or motivation to participate in the design of the project? (When, how, where should this participation take place?)	What are the practical resource requirements (time, people, money) to involve this stakeholder?
PARTICIPANTS					
IMPLEMENTERS					
DECISION-MAKERS					
DONORS					

Table 13: Stakeholder Analysis Tool B

This stakeholder tool is organized by project cycle phase. To complete this, it may help to have a completed Table 12: Stakeholder Analysis Tool A.

What?

A tool to identify and assess all stakeholders around key project cycle events.

Why?

To survey all the people who have a stake in the project and analyze their relationship with it at different points in the project cycle.

When?

Before the problem and objective analysis, and updated throughout the project cycle.

How?

Fill in cells of the table through a participatory process.

Who?

The program implementation team.

Type of stakeholder participation ➡	Who needs to be informed?	Who needs to be consulted?	Who needs to work in partnership?	Who needs to manage this stage?
Definitions ➡	**Informed:** stakeholder is kept abreast through copies of reports, e-mails or other communications.	**Consulted:** stakeholder is more actively solicited for input (information, knowledge, decisions, etc.).	**In Partnership:** stakeholder is actively involved with a strong voice in decision-making.	**Manage:** stakeholder is responsible for performance – getting things done.
I. PROJECT DESIGN				
Concept Note				
Project Design Analyses				
Proposal Writing				
II. PROJECT START UP				
Detailed planning/ work plan				
Baseline				
M&E System Setup				
III. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING				
Activity Implementation				
Reporting				
Midterm Assessment				
IV. PROJECT EVALUATION				
Final Evaluation				
Close-out				

Appendix 4: RISK ANALYSIS

From NDI's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team's "Tips and Tools"

What?

A risk analysis chart is a participatory tool to assess the risks to a proposed program.

Why?

To assess the likelihood of risks and negative impact on a program; to develop a plan for mitigating risks.

When?

During program design and periodically throughout the life of a program.

How?

A group brainstorm and analysis of risks, using a risk analysis chart.

Who?

The program implementers analyze the risks with an M&E facilitator.

Contribution to Evaluation?

Risks should be part of a program's ongoing monitoring plan. When changes to critical assumptions and risks are well documented over time they provide evaluators with contextual information that not only serve to justify changes in a program's strategy, but provide evidence for how contextual factors have impacted the results of the program.

Prepare:

Prep Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time:
1-2 hours

Materials:

- Risk analysis chart (flipchart)
- Notes on risks
- Sticky notes in two colors
- Markers

Instructions:

1. **Set up the risk analysis chart:** Use the diagram below to create a flipchart and hang it on the wall for all participants to see.

High Risk / Low Impact / High Impact / Low Risk
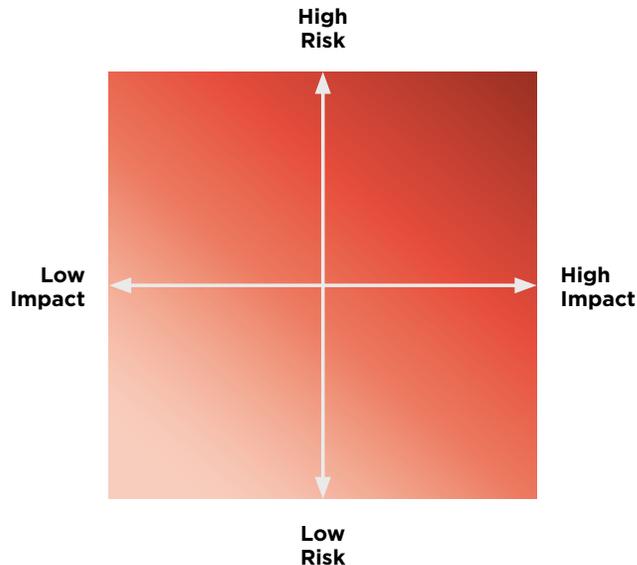
2. **Review critical assumptions:** The facilitator and participants review critical assumptions that must hold true at each level of the logframe for the program to achieve the desired results.

3. **Brainstorm risks:** Participants receive sticky notes in two colors; the first color represents risks to critical assumptions at a lower level, for example: delays in funding; lack of human resources; or partners unwilling to sign and Memorandum of Understanding; etc. The second color represents risks to critical assumptions at a higher level, for example: political repression of partners; delays in elections; a violent coup d'état; etc.

4. **Assess risks:** The facilitator will read the risks to participants, asking: "what is the potential impact of this risk?" for each one. If the impact is high, the facilitator moves the sticky note to the far right of the horizontal line (see image above). The facilitator then asks: "what is the likelihood this risk will occur?". If participants believe it is highly likely the risk will occur then the facilitator will place the risk high along the vertical axis. This activity helps participants distinguish between four kinds of risks: low impact/low risk; low impact/high risk; high impact/low risk; and high impact/high risk. The group then creates strategies to mitigate risks for the last category – high impact/high risk.

5. **Plan to mitigate risks:** Once participants identify the priority risks, they are asked to identify steps the program can take to mitigate the risks. These steps should be integrated into the program's risk mitigation and contingency plans.

Table 14: Risk Analysis – Results Framework

RESULTS FRAMEWORK					
"Development Hypothesis"	Results Statements	Indicators of change	Data Source & Collection Methods	Critical Assumptions	PMEP
Outcomes — Goal					**Evaluate**
Objective 1					
Intermediate Results					
Processes — Outputs					**Monitor**
Activities					
Inputs				[not applicable to M&E]	
"Development Hypothesis"	Results Statements	Indicators of change	Data Source & Collection Methods	Critical Assumptions	PMEP
Outcomes — Goal					**Evaluate**
Objective 1					
Intermediate Results					
Processes — Outputs					**Monitor**
Activities					
Inputs				[not applicable to M&E]	

Appendix 5: RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIALS AND POLITICAL PARTY PROGRAMMING ~ ISSUES TO CONSIDER

In randomized control trials (RCTs) – also known as experimental design or impact evaluation – a group is randomly selected to receive assistance. To evaluate the impact of the intervention, program participants are compared with those who did not receive assistance. Quasi-experimental design refers to instances where participants are not randomly selected. However, they still involve comparing program participants' outcomes with those of groups or individuals who have not benefited from assistance. In recent years, RCTs have been described as the "gold standard" for evaluation. However, monitoring and evaluating the impact of party assistance through the use of RCTs poses a number of challenges.

According to the National Research Council's study on Evaluating Democracy Assistance, RCTs are most effective under the following conditions:

- The intervention is discrete, with immediate, measurable causal effects;
- The sample size is relatively large;
- The cases within the sample are similar enough to be compared (or adjustments to the research design can compensate for differences);
- The program design is relatively stable; and
- Beneficiaries can be selected either randomly or through similar processes.[21]

When entire parties are considered the unit of analysis, the sample size is often too small to make the use of RCTs effective. The extent to which individual parties operating within a particular country are similar enough to be compared is also debatable. Further, excluding entire parties from assistance for purposes of an RCT is neither ethically nor politically feasible in most cases. This approach may be more appropriate when the units of analysis are individuals (e.g. participants in a leadership program) or subnational units, thus creating a larger sample size.

Even where random selection of participants is not possible in these cases, options may exist for comparing program beneficiaries with groups or individuals who have not received assistance. This approach could be used in situations where a leadership program receives more applicants than it can accommodate, or where only a certain number of branches are targeted or assistance is rolled out in phases. For instance, a USAID-funded leadership program in the Dominican Republic used a lottery system to select participants for training (the number of applicants exceeded the number of people the program could accommodate). A quota system helped ensure balanced representation of the country's political parties in the program. The RCT evaluation compared the skills and activities of participants with those whom the program could not accommodate.[22]

In Cambodia, NDI used an RCT to evaluate the impact of constituency dialogues on individual citizens. While some citizens participated in dialogue events alone, others participated in deliberative sessions before attending dialogue events. In addition, a control group was established. Through the evaluation, NDI was able to capture the differences between the two groups (those who participated in the constituency dialogues alone and those who participated in deliberative sessions before attending the constituency dialogues) and to compare these groups with a control group (individuals who had not attended a deliberative session or a constituency dialogue).

---

21. National Research Council, *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2008) http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12164.
22. Scott Morgenstern et al., *Evaluation Approaches for Political Party Assistance: Methodologies and Tools* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2011), 20-21.

Even in cases where party programs can accommodate RCT-like evaluation designs, the following should be considered:

- The potential for spillover (when program participants/beneficiaries share knowledge with others) and its effect on the comparison of participants with a control group;

- The level of technical expertise required to effectively design and implement an impact evaluation;

- The costs associated with implementing RCT-like evaluation designs, including the technical expertise referenced above, as well as the staff time required to manage the process from the planning stages of the evaluation to the final report;

- How any changes in program design or conditions could impact RCT-like evaluations; and

- Other evaluation methods that can be used to supplement RCT findings, giving them greater meaning.[23] [24]

NDI experiences with RCTs in Cambodia, Sudan and Uganda led to the following conclusion:

"[G]iven the high level of effort, cost, and complexity of impact evaluations, RCTs need to be used strategically. However, NDI has found partnerships with academic researchers to be a highly effective strategy in navigating the sometimes perilous cost of experimental design."[25]

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

RCTs and Political Party Programming

RCTs have been described as the "gold standard" for evaluation. However, the use of RCTs to monitor and evaluate the impact of party assistance is often challenging when entire parties are considered the unit of analysis. RCTs may be more feasible when individuals or sub-national party units (e.g. party branches) are considered the unit of analysis. Nonetheless, it is important to carefully consider the type of intervention, the evaluation question, the resources available, and their operating context to determine whether the approach is appropriate for evaluating the impact of their program.

23. Kumar, *Evaluating Democracy Assistance,* 102-113.
24. Morgenstern, *Evaluation Approaches*, 19-27.
25. Kumar, *Evaluating Democracy Assistance*, 113.

Appendix 6: POLLING FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION ~ ISSUES TO CONSIDER

In democratic systems, political parties provide a means for citizens to influence the direction of government. For this reason, some have suggested the use of polling as a high level indicator of change in party behavior. This is based on the theory that citizens are well placed to determine whether political parties are fulfilling their representative role more effectively.[26] While citizen perceptions do provide some indication of party performance, the following should be in considered in determining whether polling is an effective way of assessing program impact.

What is the research question?

The first step in determining whether polling may be effective is clarifying the research question. Understandably, a program that is designed to improve internal communication will not lend itself as easily to monitoring and evaluation through polling as a program on citizen outreach. Even for citizen outreach programs, questions that are so broad that they may give no indication of impact should be avoided. For instance, in emerging and established democracies alike, citizens rank political parties among the least trusted institutions.[27] Trust and perceptions of representativeness are complex issues. While relatively few studies have attempted to pinpoint the determinants of low levels of trust in political parties, it is likely that they are varied.[28] General questions about the degree of citizen trust in political parties, or perceptions of parties' representativeness, are thus typically too broad to capture the types of change that most programs can realistically be expected to create. The more closely polling questions are related to a program's specific interventions, the more likely they are to generate helpful information about a program.

Given the scale of the program, are changes in party behavior likely to be reflected in a poll?

Depending on the scale and focus of a particular intervention, it may be unreasonable to expect changes that are significant enough – or in some cases, rapid enough – to affect citizen perceptions of political parties as measured in a poll.[29] A realistic assessment of scale of change anticipated should be conducted including whether citizen perceptions of political parties – as indicated in a poll – are likely to change as a result of the program.

What other factors could affect polling results?

Political parties change their behavior in response to a wide range of stimuli, including changes in the legal framework, the emergence of new competitors, political events, and economic conditions. Citizen perceptions of political parties are also shaped by a wide range of factors, such as political scandals, economic crises, media coverage, and access to information about party activities. Many of these factors fall outside a program's control, yet may be more likely to shift polling results than the average party assistance program. Further, historical attitudes

26. Tim Meisburger, "An Alternative Approach to Party Assistance in Developing Democracies," The Asia Foundation: Occasional Paper, No. 7 (The Asia Foundation, 2011) http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/AnAlternativeApproachtoPartyAssistance.pdf. Miesburger presents surveys as an effective if indirect means of assessing changes in party functioning and the extent to which constituents feel they are able to influence political parties and government.
27. World Value Research, "Confidence: The Political Parties," *World Values Survey*, 2004-2008, http://www.wvsevsdb.com/wvs/WVSAnalizeQuestion.jsp. (February 19, 2014). To illustrate, in the 2005/2008 wave of the World Values survey, less than 25 percent of respondents in France, Germany, Guatemala, Moldova, New Zealand, and Thailand rated their confidence in parties at "a great deal" or "quite a lot". While the numbers for these countries ranged from 11.7 percent in Guatemala to 23.3 percent in Thailand, in the same wave, over 93 percent of respondents in Vietnam, over 35 percent in Mali and over 87 percent in China expressed "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in their parties.
28. For instance, one attempt to pinpoint the determinants of low trust in political parties in Latin America identified the level of belief in the legitimacy of the system of government, government performance (service delivery) at local and national levels, and general interest in politics or affiliation with parties as some of the major factors.
29. Morgenstern, *Evaluation Approaches*, 15-16.

towards political parties can be difficult to shake, regardless of the scale of change. Other factors that could affect polling results and possible mitigation strategies should be considered.

When might polling make sense and what are some alternatives?

As indicated above, the more closely polling questions are related to a program's specific interventions, the more likely they are to generate helpful information about a program. Hypothetically, for a program that uses polling data to improve party outreach to "persuadable" voters, follow-on polling to assess whether "persuadables" changed their minds and why could give both political parties and assistance providers helpful information on whether the campaign strategies were effective. For a program that includes debates, focus groups or surveys among people who watched the debates could give some indication of whether the debate helped raise awareness about candidate positions or helped voters make informed decisions about whom to support. For additional information on different data collection methods, see Page 68 in this guide.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Polling for Monitoring and Evaluation

Citizen perceptions of political parties are shaped by a wide range of factors and can be very difficult to change. Further, the size and scope of most political party programs is rarely significant enough to noticeably shift national-level views of political parties. For these reasons, the use of public opinion research to monitor and evaluate party assistance should be approached with extreme caution. The type and scale of the program and the evaluation questions should be carefully considered in order to determine which research methods are most likely to generate relevant data on program impact.

An index is a statistical measure used to compare group or individual performance according to selected indicators. For example, the Human Development Index ranks countries based on socioeconomic indicators such as life expectancy, levels of education, and income. In the case of political parties, there is no single widely-used index. However, a few NDI programs have developed program-specific indices for measuring party performance, with mixed results. Based on those experiences, here are some questions that should be considered in determining whether an index is an appropriate method for measuring program impact.

How can the political sensitivities involved in comparing or ranking political parties be managed?

As indicated elsewhere in this guide, sensitive party information, if made public, can be used by political opponents to their competitive advantage. For ethical reasons, sensitive party information must be treated as confidential. Further, attempts to rank or compare parties could become public. Taken out of context, this information could be misinterpreted, creating perceptions of bias and affecting assistance providers' ability to engage political parties. Given the program's operating context, focus and indicators, the following questions should be considered:

- How sensitive or public is the information that the index will reflect?
- How would parties react if index ratings became public and what implications could this have for the implementer?
- What steps can be taken to preserve party confidentiality while presenting the data in a meaningful way?

In Example 1, below, a number of steps were taken to address these sensitivities. First, the index was developed to measure whether parties were meeting specific benchmarks tied to the program's policy development cycle. As such, it did not provide a general assessment of parties' performance. This helped limit the potential for any ratings – if leaked – to be perceived as an approval rating of parties. Second, internal controls were established, restricting access to data within the NDI office. Data files were password-protected and only selected staff could access them. (As an additional layer of security, the parties being scored in the index could be coded to preserve anonymity.) Third, program reports only provided cumulative ratings; parties were not compared to each other, and no party-specific ratings were listed.

What dimensions and ratings should be included in the index?

Previous attempts at indices have used a variety of dimensions. Those who have framed their dimensions in terms of broad organizational performance and change – see Example 1, below – have struggled to capture change. Those who have used dimensions and ratings that are simpler, more narrowly-defined, more directly within the program's influence, and more realistic within the program timeframe – see Example 2, below, for instance – have had greater success with indices. As much as possible, teams should avoid dimensions or ratings that rank competing parties.

What data will the ratings be based on and how will it be collected and analyzed?

As with all indicators, it is important to consider what information will be used to determine the ratings and how the information will be processed. (See the section on Measuring Change in this guide for additional information on data collection for political party programs.) In

the case of Example 1, below, for instance, the ratings were based on data collected via direct observation by NDI staff (captured on checklists) and interviews with program participants. In Example 2, the ratings were based on data collected through semi-structured interviews.

Does the scale of the program warrant the level of effort required to manage the index?

Given the variety of approaches to party organizing and differences in program foci, program teams have generally developed grant-specific indices. Depending on the program scope and focus, developing an index and thinking through how to collect and analyze (and in some cases secure) the information can be time consuming. It is important to consider whether an index is appropriate, given the level of effort that may be required and the program scope or resources available.

What are some alternatives?

Depending on the program context, developing profiles may be an option. Like indices, they assess party performance and progress in targeted areas using dimensions that are customized to a program. However, instead of comparing parties to each other, they compare a party's performance at baseline and post-intervention in selected areas. Party profiles can be presented in narrative prose or can feature checklists comparing party capacity before and after program interventions (see Example 3, below, for instance). Regardless of the approach used, teams should be as specific as possible when framing their dimensions and recording data at baseline, midterm and end-line.

The following examples are excerpts from indices and party profiles that were used to monitor and evaluate three separate NDI programs.

Example 1: Party Policy Drafting Scale

Policy draft is defined as policies in any form prior to being sent to leadership. The completion of a policy draft is defined as the drafts being formally presented to leadership (e.g. sending all the policy drafts to the party leader). Once the policies are sent to leadership for review, they are considered complete by the Policy Working Group (PWG), but are still pending approval by the party. If the leadership chooses to accept the policies, in part or wholly, into their manifestos or other party platforms (e.g. bills), this will be considered incorporation.

Scale 1-3 deals with the drafting process. Scale 4-5 deals with completed policy drafts. A draft is considered complete when it has been sent to party leadership.

1 = PWG does not attempt to draft any policy documents for any of its priority issues (actual conversion rate is 0%)

2 = PWG attempts to draft a policy document for at least one of its priority issues, but has not completed them (actual conversion rate is 1-30%)

3 = PWG attempts to draft a policy document for at least two of its priority issues, but has not completed them (actual conversion rate is 31-60%)

4 = PWG completes policy drafts for three of its priority issues (actual conversion rate is 61%-90%)

5 = PWG completes policy documents for three of its priority issues and sends them to party leadership (actual conversion rate is >90%)

Example 2: Party Index Dimension on Representation of Women & Youth in Leadership and Decision-making

1 = The party has structures for women and youth (women and youth branches)

2 = Women and youth structures are represented in party decision-making bodies

3 = Women and youth participate in party decisions and compete for leadership posts

4 = Women and youth are part of candidate lists, parties establishes minimum quotas for women and youth candidates on the lists, and women and youth hold significant party offices

5 = Policies that favorably impact women and youth are part of the party program, not just that of the women and youth forums

Example 3: Party Profile Dimension on Parliamentary Group Meetings

In this case, the party profile included various aspects of parliamentary group functioning, including one on caucus meetings. For each question, in addition to the option of checking "yes" or "no" where appropriate, comments could be added. The profile was completed at baseline, midterm and end-line.

- How regularly are caucus meetings held?
- Is there an established time and place for caucus meetings?
- Are there written rules of procedure for the conduct of meetings, quorum, and the taking of decisions?
- Is there an agenda and is it followed?
- Is it circulated before meetings?
- Is there an opportunity for input on the agenda from caucus members?
- Is there an opportunity for all members to contribute at meetings?

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Using Indices for Monitoring and Evaluation of Party Programs

Using indices to monitor and evaluate political party programming is highly sensitive because of the risk that the scores – if they inadvertently become public – could be taken out of context. Parties may perceive them as approval ratings or view them as violations of their confidentiality agreements with NDI. The resultant accusations of bias and breach of trust could damage the Institute's reputation and relationships globally. Teams that choose to use them should have a clear rationale for adopting them and should take appropriate steps to limit any potential damage to NDI.

Appendix 8: OUTCOME MAP

*From NDI's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team's "Tips and Tools"*

Effectively capturing the processes, outcomes and impacts of a program requires more than tallying up indicator data for reports. It requires those who know the program best – program implementers and partners – to periodically reflect on their program's process in a structured way. The outcome map is a simple, collaborative and effective tool for capturing the ideas and insights of multiple stakeholders in the run-up to the reporting deadline. It helps participants differentiate between a program's:

- **a.** short-term change (program processes);
- **b.** medium-term change (program outcomes); and
- **c.** long-term change (downstream impacts).

The outcome map can help a team structure their discussion to track the program's logical framework or results chain. The results of the discussion can be captured on sticky notes and on a laptop.

Steps:

1. **Compile program data and information:** The first step is to have the M&E facilitator compile all relevant indicator data for the reporting period into a user-friendly format. This should include any other relevant information, such as activity summaries and/or major achievements. The data and information should be distributed in summary form to the participants at least one day before this session.
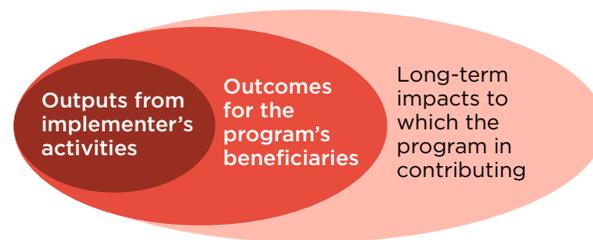
2. **Create an outcome map:** On two large flipcharts (turned sideways) draw three concentric ovals as shown in the diagram above. Each oval should be large enough to hold the multiple sticky notes that will be generated in each category. Post the outcome map at the front of the room and place a blank, colored sticky note on the corresponding area as a visual clue for participants.

3. **Create small groups:** If the group is small (e.g. 2-4 people) and they are working on similar parts of the program it may make sense to keep them together. If they work on different aspects of the program or if your session includes partners, then it will make sense to break them into smaller brainstorming groups. This will help to capture information and insights from different aspects of the program.

4. **Brainstorm:** Give each group a set of colored sticky notes and ask the following questions:

   - What were the immediate OUTPUTS of your activities during this reporting period?

   - What were the OUTCOMES for the program's beneficiaries?

   - What are the long-term IMPACTS to which the program is contributing? After each question, have each small group brainstorm and write their answers on SEPARATE sticky notes. Then have each group present their ideas to the larger group, before moving on to the next question.

   - made, holding true about the change that is happening?

5. **Large group discussion:** After the groups fill the outcome map, open the discussion up for an analysis on the links between the progress made this quarter, and the emerging outcomes and impacts. Prompting questions include:

- What are the links between the different levels of change?

- What was the most significant change in each of the areas of the map and why?

- Have there been any unexpected results – either positive or negative?

- What opportunities and risks have there been in the operating environment this period?

- Are the critical assumptions made holding true about the change that is happening?

Appendix 9: FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS

From NDI's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team's "Tips and Tools"

What?

A tool to identify the hindering and helping forces influencing a project.

Why?

To design an action plan to strengthen the helping forces and mitigate the impact of hindering ones.

When?

Midway through a project.

How?

Through a group brainstorm captured on a Force Field Analysis Framework.

Who?

The program's implementers and an M&E facilitator.

Contribution to Evaluation?

The force field analysis can help you determine how to improve your program's probability of success by 1) increasing the impact of helping forces, or 2) decreasing the impact of hindering forces. It is a useful tool for planning and risk mitigation.

Prepare:

Prep Time: 5 min

Implementation Time: 1-2 hours

Materials:

• Flip chart with the Force Field Analysis Framework.

• Color-coding circle labels (stickers).

1. **Create a force field analysis framework:** Paste together two flipchart sheets to create the diagram below.
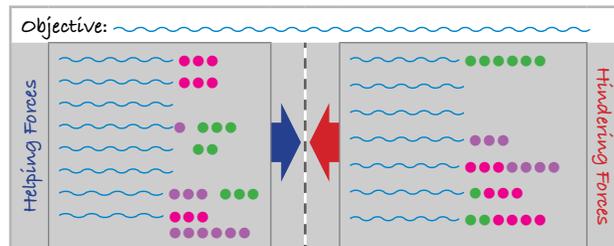
2. **Describe the desired outcome at the center:** At the top write the program's objective if you are using this as a program planning tool. If this is for an evaluation or other event, then write a statement describing the desired outcome.

3. **Identify the helping forces in the column at the right:** Ask participants to share aloud forces that help move the team toward the objective. The facilitator should record all participant input on the column at the left.

4. **Identify the hindering forces in the columns at the left:** Participants share aloud the forces that hinder the team in reaching the desired objective. The facilitator records all the participants' ideas in the column at the right.

5. **Participants rank and identify most important helping forces:** Provide participants with two sets of 10 color-coding circle labels (a total of 20 labels). Tell participants that they must choose the three helping forces that they individually believe are most important to leverage in achieving the objective. Participants divide 10 of their labels among those three forces, giving more labels to the ones they believe are more important. For example, a participant may choose to give force #1 two labels, force #2 five labels, and force #3 three labels. Participants may choose to allocate their labels to any three forces of their choosing. Remind participants that their choices should be made independently and do not have to be the same as everyone else's.

6. **Participants rank and identify the most important hindering forces:** Participants individually choose and rank three hindering forces that are the most important to mitigate for achieving the objective using the remaining 10 labels.

7. **Aggregate staff rankings to identify group rankings:** Count the number of labels participants gave each of the forces. Circle the three helping forces with the greatest number of labels. Circle the three hindering forces with the greatest number of labels.

8. **Categorize risks and create an action plan:** Use the risk analysis tool to categorize the risks and then identify strategies for mitigating the highest risks. You may choose not to conduct a risk analysis, but make sure to create an action plan for mitigating the risks identified in this process and taking advantage of the helping forces.

REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY

American Evaluation Association. "American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators." Washington, DC: American Evaluation Association, 2004. Accessed February 10, 2014. http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=51.

Beetham, David. "Democracy: Key Principles, Institutions and Problems." In *Democracy: Its Principles and Achievements*, edited by Inter-Parliamentary Union, 21-30. Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1998. Accessed April 10, 2014. http://ipu.org/PDF/publications/DEMOCRACY_PR_E.pdf.

British Geological Survey. *Stakeholder Consultation*. London: Department for International Development, 2003.

Bryman, Alan et al. *Social Research Methods*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Chapter 6 "On Ethics and Politics."

Burnell, Peter. *Building Better Democracies: Why Political Parties Matter*. London: Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2004.

Carothers, Thomas. *Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006. "Cause-and-Effect Analysis." USAID. Accessed February 10, 2014. https://www.usaidassist.org/resources/cause-and-effect-analysis

Chaplowe, Scott G. *Monitoring and Evaluation Planning: Guidelines and Tools.* Baltimore: Catholic Relief Services; Washington, DC: American Red Cross 2008. http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/countries/acsm/ME_Planning_CRS.pdf

"Confidence: The Political Parties." *World Values Survey*, (2004-2008): accessed February 10, 2014. Online. http://www.wvsevsdb.com/wvs/WVSAnalizeQuestion.jsp

Council of Europe. Parliamentary Assembly. *Code of good practice for political parties*. Resolution 1546. Strasbourg, 2007.

Crawford, Gordon. "Evaluating Democracy and Governance Assistance." *ESCOR Research Report*, No. 7894, December 2001.

"Force Field Analysis: Analyzing the Pressures For and Against Change." Mind Tools. Accessed February 10, 2014. http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_06.htm

"Force Field Analysis." NDI: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team. Accessed February 10, 2014.

Garbutt, Anne and Oliver Bakewell. *The Use and Abuse of the Logical Framework Approach*. Stockholm: SIDA, 2005.

Hovland, Ingie. *Successful Communication: A Toolkit for Researchers and Civil Society Organizations*. London: Overseas Development Institute, 2005.

Inter-Parliamentary Union. "Universal declaration on democracy." In *Democracy: Its Principles and Achievements*, edited by Inter-Parliamentary Union, III-VIII. Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1998. Accessed April 10, 2014. http://ipu.org/PDF/publications/DEMOCRACY_PR_E.pdf

International Center for Research on Women; Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere. *ISOFI Toolkit: Tools for learning and action on gender and sexuality*. Washington, DC: ICRW, CARE, 2007.

Ipp, Oren. *Study on Results Frameworks: Political Party Assistance*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy, 2013.

Kumar, Krishna. *Evaluating Democracy Assistance*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012.

"Lonely at the top: Is the mass political party on its way out? And does it matter?" *The Economist*, August 4, 2012. http://www.economist.com/node/21559901

Meisburger, Tim. *An Alternative Approach to Party Assistance in Developing Democracies*. The Asia Foundation, Occasional Paper No. 7 (September 2011).

Mendizabal, Enrique. "The Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix (AIIM)." London: Overseas Development Institute, 2010.

Morgenstern, Scott, Steve Finkel, Andrew Green, and Jeremy Horowitz. *Evaluation Approaches for Political Party Assistance: Methodologies and Tools*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2011.

The National Research Council. *Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences, 2008.

NDI. *A Guide to Political Party Development*. Washington, DC: NDI, 2008.

NDI. *Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties*. Washington, DC: NDI, 2008.

"Obtaining Informed Consent." Wilder Research. Accessed February 10, 2014. http://www.evaluatod.org/resources/evaluation-guides/InformedConsent_8-09.pdf

Oliver, Paul. *The Student's Guide to Research Ethics*. 2nd ed. Maidenhead: The Open University Press, 2010.

"The Problem Tree." NDI: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team. Accessed February 10, 2014. https://portal.ndi.org/web/monitoring-and-evaluation/step-3

"Reflection, Analysis and Decision-Making (RAD)." NDI: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Team. Accessed February 10, 2014. https://portal.ndi.org/web/monitoring-and-evaluation/reflection-analysis-decision-making-(RAD)

"Stakeholder Analysis." NDI: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Team. Accessed February 10, 2014. https://portal.ndi.org/web/monitoring-and-evaluation/step-2

Wood, Elisabeth J. "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones," *Qualitative Sociology*, 29, (2006): 373-386.
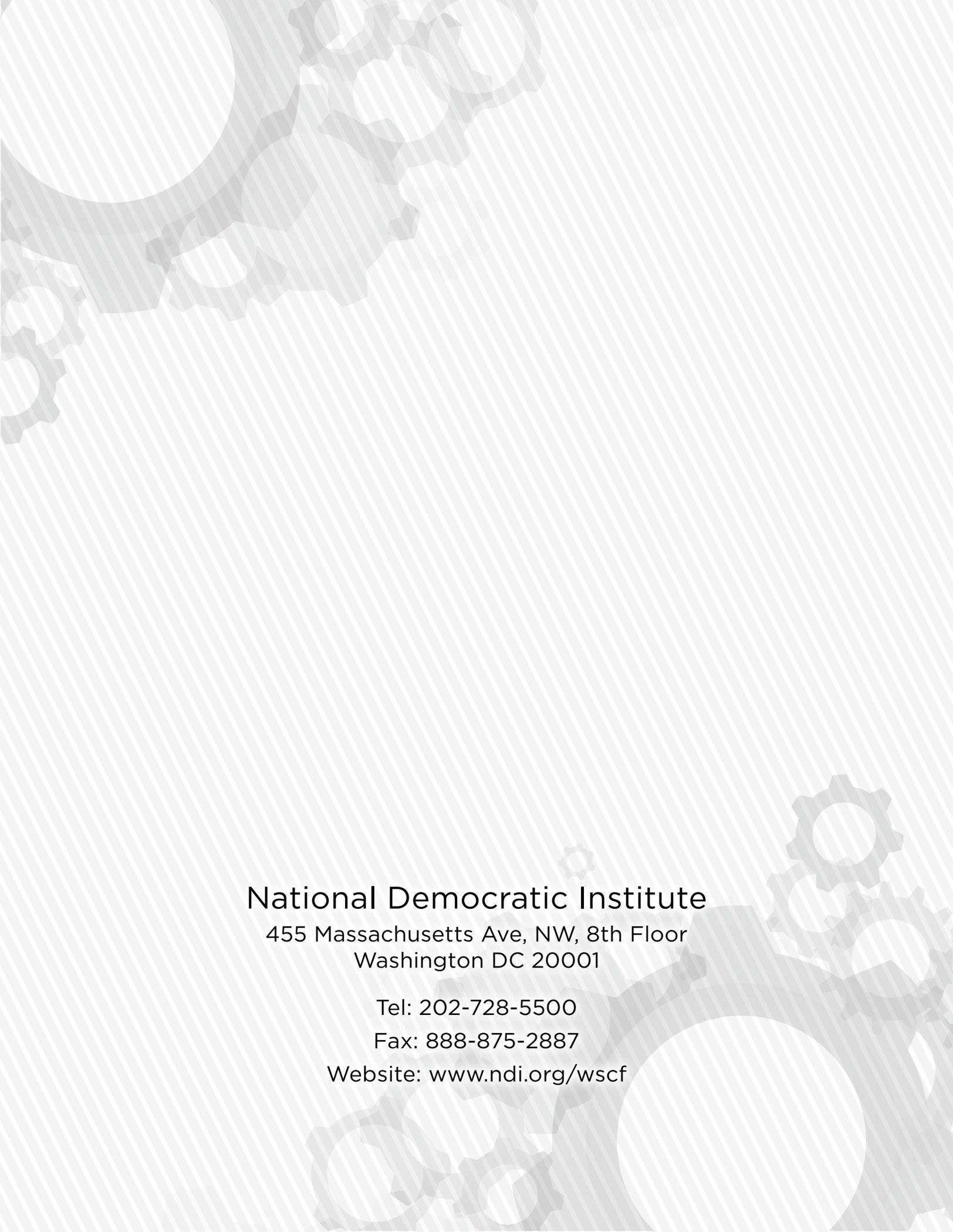
National Democratic Institute

455 Massachusetts Ave, NW, 8th Floor
Washington DC 20001

Tel: 202-728-5500

Fax: 888-875-2887

Website: www.ndi.org/wscf