

Democratic Governance

OVERVIEW

Democracy is more than elections.

What happens between elections - governing - is equally important for a vibrant democracy.

Democratic governance programs are a core component of the International Republican Institute's (IRI) mission to advance democracy worldwide. At IRI, democratic governance is understood as a system in which citizens participate in government planning and decision-making, while those in office respond to citizen needs with accountability and transparency.

Around the world, IRI works alongside political and government actors, citizens and civil society to bring government closer to citizens, transforming government into a responsive, transparent and effective institution. The Institute's experience includes the design, implementation and evaluation of democratic governance initiatives in transitional and consolidating democratic political systems.

Our Approach

Through its programs, IRI addresses both sides of the governance equation:

- Strengthens the ability of government to effectively respond to citizen needs through transparent and accountable governing practices; and
- Promotes citizen demand for democratic governance by strengthening civil society so it can take an active role in policy development while also conducting effective oversight of government.

The Institute works with all levels of government, both the executive and legislative branches, and with civil society actors that address the full range of citizen priorities.

IRI's democratic governance programs help make governments more: accessible, accountable, efficient and effective, equitable and inclusive, responsive and transparent. These principles can be seen throughout the Institute's work worldwide.

ACCESSIBILITY *Tunisia*

To strengthen communication between local government officials and citizens, the deputy mayor, along with representatives of the Sbeitla municipal council and the civil society group *Thakafa wa Tanmia*, hosted Governance Day, which invited local citizens to participate in government planning and decision making. The day provided citizens the opportunity to express their concerns over challenges to security, infrastructure and the environment that hinder economic growth and provided council members the chance to discuss proposals they have to fund and promote economic development.

ACCOUNTABILITY *Indonesia*

In Indonesia, the provincial government of Yogyakarta has improved institutional accountability through an innovative e-governance initiative. Through the online platform, the government provides access to public information such as the annual budget and data on investments for public works. Through the site citizens can also ask questions and submit complaints to government officials. The success of the website has led several other provincial governments to launch their own e-governance initiatives.

EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS *Ukraine*

To make getting government services easier and more efficient for citizens, the city of Cherkasy opened the Public Services Center to process requests for a wide variety of municipal services such as property registration, permits and driver's licenses. The center eliminated the need to visit multiple offices to complete routine transactions and requests for information and has drastically reduced wait time, eliminated many avenues for corruption and increased citizen satisfaction.

EQUITY & INCLUSIVENESS *Iraq*

The Women's Anti-Discrimination Taskforce includes members from government ministries and parliament as well as judges, lawyers, activists and provincial councilors and has gained the support of traditional leaders outside the formal political system, such as religious clerics and tribal leaders. By working together, taskforce members in the Ministry of Women's Affairs have drafted two bills criminalizing discrimination against women and domestic violence and have worked with 15 provincial councils to develop legislative plans that address the major concerns of female constituents.

RESPONSIVENESS *Kenya*

Members of the Mombasa Job Creation and Waste Management working groups – which were created to address priority issues set by the community – came together to identify standardized trash collection points as well as employment opportunities within the trash collection industry. The working groups, made up of citizens and local officials, cleaned up one of the largest dumping sites, an unaesthetic constant health threat to residents. As a result, the community has now turned its attention to other trash dumps in the city.

TRANSPARENCY *Colombia*

The Colombian cities of Cartagena, Cucuta, Soacha and Valledupar are pioneering efforts to increase transparency and fight corruption through their *Salones de la Transparencia*. These offices allow citizens to perform oversight of public resources by providing access to government contracts and budgets as well as local development plans and annual reports. Citizens can also visit the offices to receive civic education material and file complaints related to the local administration and the use of public resources.

IRI has conducted democratic governance programs in:



Afghanistan	Colombia	Guyana	Kenya	Moldova	Romania	Sudan
Albania	Croatia	Honduras	Kyrgyzstan	Mongolia	Russia	Tunisia
Bhutan	El Salvador	Indonesia	Libya	Morocco	Serbia	Ukraine
Bolivia	Georgia	Iraq	Macedonia	Nigeria	Slovakia	Venezuela
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Guatemala	Jordan	Malaysia	Peru	Somaliland	Zimbabwe
			Mexico			South Africa