

Power to the People

Australia's support in strengthening political governance in developing countries



Power to the People

Australia's support in strengthening political governance in developing countries

A report prepared for
the Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance
March 2009

Review Team

Hon Michael Beahan

Hon Neil Andrew AO

Vicki Bourne

Peter Callan

The Review Team wishes to thank all those who contributed to the review, particularly the Secretariat (see below) as well as other AusAID staff in Canberra and AusAID and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials in Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea. A full list of organisations and individuals consulted is set out in Attachment E. Responsibility for the content of the report rests with the Review Team.

Secretariat support was provided by staff in the Governance and Anti-Corruption Section, AusAID: Simon Choo, Mary Flanagan, Phil Hollins, James McCombe and Simone Miller.

Cover image: AusAID.

© Commonwealth of Australia 2010

This work is copyright. You may download, display, print and reproduce this material in unaltered form only (retaining this notice) for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organisation. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, all other rights are reserved. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to Commonwealth Copyright Administration, Attorney General's Department, Robert Garran Offices, National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600 or posted at <http://www.ag.gov.au/cca>

Published by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Canberra.

This document is online at www.ausaid.gov.au/publications

For more information please contact:

AusAID

GPO Box 887
Canberra ACT 2601

Phone (02) 6206 4000
Facsimile (02) 6206 4695

Internet www.ausaid.gov.au



Acronyms & Abbreviations

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ACE	Administration and Costs for Elections (Electoral Knowledge Network)
ACPAC	Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committees
ACPACS	Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANU	Australian National University
ANZSOG	Australia and New Zealand School of Government
APDP	Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership
APNAC	African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption
APPDP	Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program
APRN	African Poverty Reduction Network
APU	African Parliamentary Union
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AVI	Australian Volunteers International
BDF	Bali Democracy Forum
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CAPSTRANS	Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (University of Wollongong)
CDI	Centre for Democratic Institutions
CDS	Community Development Scheme (Papua New Guinea)
CG	Consultative Group
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CLGF	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
COG	Commonwealth Observer Group
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CRDAP	Cambodia Radio Development Assistance Project
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
EC	European Commission
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights



EISA	Electoral Institute of Southern Africa
EPD	European Partnership for Democracy
ESSP	Electoral System Strengthening Program
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (United Kingdom)
FES	<i>Friedrich Ebert Stiftung</i>
GEPG	Gender Equality in Political Governance Programme
GOPAC	Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption
GOVNET	Network on Governance (OECD-DAC)
IEGL	Institute for Ethics, Governance and Law
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
International IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPD	Institute for Peace and Democracy (Bali)
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IRI	International Republican Institute
KAS	<i>Konrad Adenauer Stiftung</i>
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MP	Member of Parliament
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NDS	Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODG	Office for Democratic Governance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PACs	Public Accounts Committees
PACE	Pacific Executive Program
PIANZEA	Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators
PISGP	Pacific Islands Scholarships for Governance Program
PLP	Pacific Leadership Program
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSGARC	Public Sector Governance and Accountability Research Centre
PSMPC	Public Service Merit Protection Commission
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
RNK	<i>Radio National Kampuchea</i> (Cambodia)



SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SPKN	<i>Strongim Pipol Kirapem Nesen</i>
UN	United Nations
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WBI	World Bank Institute
WFD	Westminster Foundation for Democracy



Contents

Executive summary	vii
Summary of recommendations	x
Suggested guiding principles to inform an AusAID Strategic Framework for Political Governance aid	xiii
AusAID Management response to Political Governance Review Report	xv
Summary	xv
Guiding principles	xvi
Responding to the recommendations	xvi
Centre for Democratic Institutions	xvi
Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program	xvii
Australian aid policy	xviii
Parliamentary strengthening	xix
Political party strengthening	xx
Electoral support	xxi
Coordination	xxi
1. Introduction	1
Terms of Reference	1
Methodology	2
2. Background	3
Context	3
Overview of AusAID approaches	4
Classification of components	5
Parliamentary support	5
Political party support	7
Electoral support	8
Accountability processes and institutions	10
Civil society	10
Voice and media	10
Fragile states	11
Anti-corruption	12
Gender equality	12
Leadership and elites	14
Funding Mechanisms	14
Thematic funds	14
3. Organisations and networks	16
Bilateral donors	16
Multilateral and intergovernmental organisations	16
Networks	19
Political party and parliamentary foundations	20
Organisations, centres and institutes based in Australia	22



4. Centre for Democratic Institutions	25
History and background	25
Role and mandate	27
Work program	27
Review findings on CDI	29
5. Key findings, issues and recommendations for Australian aid policy	34
Defining political governance aid	34
Support for broader aid program objectives	35
Coordination	36
Political economy and country context	38
Increasing the effectiveness of political governance aid	39
Promoting gender equality	42
Parliamentary strengthening	43
Political party strengthening	44
Electoral support	46
Australian coordination	47
Regional and international coordination	49
6. References	51
7. Attachments	52
Attachment A—Terms of Reference	52
Attachment B—Review Team details	55
Attachment C—Summary of organisational responses to questionnaire	56
Attachment D—Copy of questionnaire	69
Attachment E—List of consultations	71
Attachment F—Stocktake of AusAID political governance activities	78
Attachment G—Checklist of organisational approaches	120
Attachment H—Summary of organisations	124
Bilateral donors	124
Multilateral and intergovernmental organisations	127
Networks	130
Political party foundations	135
Research institutes, think-tanks, not-for-profit and private sector organisations	140

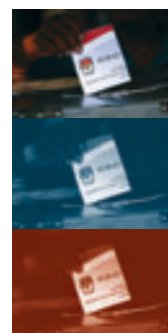


Executive summary

1. Recognition of the importance of political governance for development outcomes has grown in recent years, leading Australia and other members of the international community to focus more clearly on it.
2. Because the quality of political governance significantly affects development outcomes, future aid from Australia for political governance strengthening needs to be carefully identified and delivered.
3. *Australia's political governance aid covers three main areas:* strengthening formal political institutions and processes; building more effective relations between governments and communities (e.g., civil society and media); and developing leadership. There are strong links between these three components, and also with aid targeted at other sectors.
4. *The review focused on aid for strengthening formal political institutions and processes.* This area in turn comprises support to parliaments and parliamentarians; political party support; and electoral support. Again, there are strong links between these elements.
5. The *context* in which Australia delivers aid for political governance strengthening is dynamic, diverse and demanding. Broadly speaking the environments for political governance can be favourable, neutral or unfavourable; and they can change quickly, creating opportunities and throwing up unexpected barriers.
6. The *Australian model* of political governance may not be well understood, or shared or desired, by governments and nations around the Asia-Pacific region. Nor should it be assumed that the weight Australia attaches to strong political governance is shared by partner governments.
7. A major challenge for Australia is what to do when the environment for political governance strengthening is unfavourable in a country where Australia is a leading donor and where there is a compelling case for strengthening.
8. Australia's political governance aid needs to reflect and advance Australia's broader aid goals and policies, for example relating to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), poverty reduction, development effectiveness, gender equality and fragile states.
9. Many organisations, in Australia and overseas, seek to strengthen political governance in developing countries. Much of this work takes a developmental approach and can be classified as Official Development Assistance (ODA). Some of it is more in the nature of political assistance rather than development assistance, but still needs to be taken into account.
10. Organisations and key donors take different approaches to strengthening political institutions and processes. The Review Team believes that AusAID would derive further benefit by engaging with key donors and organisations on political governance aid and makes some specific suggestions about this in Chapter 3.
11. The review considers (in Chapter 4) the role and possible future directions for the Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI). The role of CDI is to support the democratic reform efforts of governments in Indonesia, Timor-Leste (East Timor) and Melanesia, focusing on the role of parliaments and political parties. It does this mainly through short-term, intensive, high-quality training courses.



12. The Review Team received consistently positive feedback on the relevance and quality of CDI's work, but saw some scope to improve its effectiveness further, for example through greater use of in-country and in-region training and the use of local expertise.
13. CDI is a very small organisation which has never felt secure about its future. The Review Team believes it would benefit from greater funding and organisational certainty.
14. The Review Team found CDI's geographic focus on countries in Australia's immediate region to be sound, and that there is still considerable unmet demand for its services in these countries. But it also noted and supported the decision to give CDI responsibility for partnering the Bali Democracy Forum's Institute for Peace and Democracy. The Review Team concluded that work beyond CDI's current geographic scope should be considered on a case-by-case basis.
15. The Review Team confirmed the value of a tight focus by CDI on strengthening parliaments and political parties and encouraged it to look at needs at the sub-national as well as national level. It felt that communication between CDI and AusAID could be improved.
16. The Review Team also considered the findings of the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) audit of *The Administration of Grants under the Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program* (February 2009) and supported the ANAO's call for stricter accountability for the funds provided by the Australian Government to the political parties for international work.
17. On the broader future directions for Australia's political governance aid (Chapter 5), the report calls for AusAID to develop a strategic policy framework; it confirms the developmental approach taken by AusAID; and it outlines 10 guiding principles, with supporting arguments for each, which could be used to inform AusAID's strategic policy framework for political governance aid.
18. Specific issues and recommendations on the provision of Australian aid for parliamentary strengthening, political party strengthening, and electoral support are also covered in Chapter 5.
19. Finally, the Review Team attaches importance to better information sharing and coordination, both among Australian institutions and internationally, and makes some recommendations on this.



Summary of recommendations

Centre for Democratic Institutions

Recommendation 1

The Review Team recommends that CDI give close consideration to:

- (a) convening, where appropriate, courses in-country, regionally or in locations other than Canberra
- (b) providing more direct in-country support, in response to partner country demand
- (c) using local expertise.

Recommendation 2

The Review Team recommends that CDI be given greater funding and organisational certainty by way of funding commitments for five-year terms and longer lead-in time for decisions on continued funding based on appropriate evaluation.

Recommendation 3

The Review Team recommends that CDI retain its geographic focus on Indonesia, Timor-Leste and Melanesia, noting that CDI's work remains particularly useful to fragile states in the Pacific. Further work beyond CDI's current geographic scope should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Recommendation 4

The Review Team recommends that CDI continue to focus on strengthening parliaments and political parties.

Recommendation 5

The Review Team recommends that CDI give increasing attention to the sub-national level within its geographic and sectoral focus.

Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program

Recommendation 6

The Review Team recommends that future Australian Government contributions to Australian political parties for international work be contingent on stricter accountability for funds provided, along the lines suggested in the Auditor General's February 2009 report on the Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program. The Review Team further recommends that such funding be provided to all parties enjoying party status in the Parliament on a pro rata basis.

Australian aid policy

Recommendation 7

The Review Team recommends that AusAID, as a priority, develop a strategic policy framework for political governance based on the guiding principles contained in this report, to provide clear, practical guidance to enhance its political governance support.



Recommendation 8

The Review Team recommends that AusAID's role and responsibilities in democracy promotion be clarified and that its democracy assistance be clearly linked to development outcomes and meet ODA criteria.

Recommendation 9

The Review Team recommends that political economy analysis be prioritised to inform political governance programming and broader country and regional strategies.

Recommendation 10

The Review Team recommends that the providers of political governance support should consider the needs of sub-national institutions and elected representatives in the Asia-Pacific region.

Recommendation 11

The Review Team recommends that AusAID continue its leading work on leadership, elites and coalitions given their importance in achieving effective development outcomes

Parliamentary strengthening

Recommendation 12

The Review Team recommends that:

- (a) AusAID formalise liaison on political governance support with the Federal Parliament, particularly the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and establish regular meetings for dialogue and information exchange
- (b) political governance support, particularly parliamentary strengthening programs, should place more emphasis on the use of effective mentoring and longer term exchanges
- (c) AusAID approach Australian Volunteers International with a view to its taking responsibility, in consultation with other bodies such as CDI and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, for the selection of appropriate and experienced volunteer practitioners to participate in political governance activities as one of its service disciplines
- (d) AusAID participate in and support relevant networks including the Donor Coordination Network on Parliamentary Strengthening.

Political party strengthening

Recommendation 13

The Review Team recommends that Australian support for political party strengthening should foster political parties on the basis of political philosophy and policy differentiation and in accordance with specific principles (identified in Chapter 5).



Electoral support

Recommendation 14

The Review Team recommends that AusAID's electoral assistance continue to focus on long-term electoral cycle issues, drawing on the expertise of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and working closely with in-country electoral management bodies to strengthen their capacity and sustainability.

Coordination

Recommendation 15

The Review Team recommends that a mechanism be established in Australia to improve information sharing and coordination of Australia's support for political governance. The Review Team further recommends that AusAID consider two main options for doing this: using CDI (noting that this may require changing CDI's status); or setting up a small, representative advisory group or council.

Recommendation 16

The Review Team recommends that AusAID engage, on a targeted basis, with key donors such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Canada and New Zealand on their political and/or democratic governance programs and approaches.

Recommendation 17

The Review Team recommends that AusAID use its existing relationship with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to improve the coordination and delivery of respective political governance programs to maximise their effectiveness.

Recommendation 18

The Review Team recommends that existing and emerging donor, parliamentary strengthening and democracy support networks and databases be used to promote coordination and information sharing on a regional and international basis.



Suggested guiding principles to inform an AusAID Strategic Framework for Political Governance aid

Guiding Principle 1

Australia's international development assistance for political governance should support the broader objectives and policies applying to Australia's international aid. These include helping countries achieve the MDGs, reducing poverty, advancing the Paris Declaration development effectiveness principles and the Accra Agenda for Action, and promoting gender equality.

Guiding Principle 2

As an enabling and cross-cutting factor (and process), political governance support should be considered and threaded into AusAID's program, sectoral, thematic and institutional engagement strategies; and clear, practical guidance should be provided to facilitate this.

Guiding Principle 3

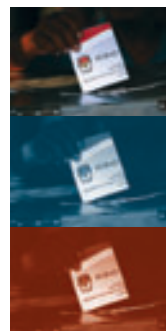
Support for political governance should be coordinated within Australia, in-country, regionally and internationally. In particular, Australian providers of political governance support should:

- explore the approaches of partner governments, other donors and relevant national and international organisations
- share information with them, use existing resources (e.g. in training and research) and engage in policy and program discussions
- participate constructively in relevant consortia and networks
- look for insights, lessons, complementarities and synergies
- recognise and draw on respective comparative advantages and avoid duplication and overlap
- work with partner governments, key donors and local and international organisations to build strong frameworks for political governance programs.

Guiding Principle 4

Australia's international development assistance for political governance must be grounded in, and respond to, a sound understanding of the political economy and cultural context of the partner country. Providers of political governance support should:

- tailor support to partner country needs and ensure that this support aligns with AusAID's country strategies
- not assume that Australian models or approaches are the most relevant or can be simply exported or transposed
- work with local organisations, thereby strengthening these organisations and learning about the local context
- draw on best available research and analysis and, if necessary, commission research and/or political economy analysis
- give specific attention in countries emerging from conflict or in states of fragility, to the country's absorptive capacity and to the sequencing of assistance.



Guiding Principle 5

Providers of political governance support should recognise, and seek to generate, broader development benefits from their work such as improving the delivery of public services. They should also be aware of synergies between different dimensions of political governance, for example between political party, parliamentary, electoral process, civil society and media strengthening.

Guiding Principle 6

Providers of political governance support should adopt a flexible approach which:

- considers direct as well as indirect instruments
- determines the mix best suited to the context and to Australia's objectives
- is capable of adjusting to changing circumstances.

Guiding Principle 7

Providers of political governance support should take a long-term view and be realistic about what their support can achieve. They should:

- acknowledge that desired changes are unlikely to be achieved quickly and that gains will be incremental
- support the political cycle, and not just specific events
- work to achieve long-term sustainability.

Guiding Principle 8

Providers of political governance support should:

- seek continuously to improve the quality and impact of their work
- monitor and evaluate their work, seek feedback and adjust it to changing circumstances.

Guiding Principle 9

Recognising that long-term institutional and personal relationships lie at the heart of successful support and institutional capacity building, providers of political governance support should:

- employ best practice advising, training, twinning and mentoring
- when advising and mentoring, draw on carefully selected, experienced and trained practitioners (e.g. current and former Members of Parliament (MPs) and parliamentary staff) from Australia or the region
- deliver training in-country or in-region, unless there are compelling reasons to deliver it in Australia
- when engaged in twinning arrangements, build long-term commitment and consistent engagement
- minimise formal delegation visits
- use local practitioners wherever possible.

Guiding Principle 10

Providers of political governance support should:

- promote gender equality and the voices of disadvantaged groups
- provide for greater participation by women in decision making at all levels, which is both important in its own right and an essential part of overcoming gender inequalities in all other aspects of development
- recognise that disadvantaged groups often have the most difficulty in having their voices heard.



AusAID Management response to Political Governance Review Report

- August 2009-

A. Summary

The Political Governance Review was commissioned in response to a request from the Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance, Mr Bob McMullan MP, to identify means to enhance support for strengthening political governance in developing countries.

The resulting report, *Power to the People: Australia's support in strengthening political governance in developing countries*, focuses on the political institutions and processes of the state, namely parliaments, parliamentarians, political parties, and electoral systems and processes. It notes the strong links between these elements but also recognises the importance to political governance of other elements such as civil society, the media and leadership.

AusAID welcomes the report. The Agency largely agrees with the set of guiding principles and accepts the majority of the recommendations. Each recommendation is addressed in Section C.

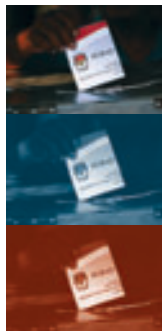
One of the report's key recommendations is that AusAID develop a strategic policy framework for political governance. AusAID accepts this recommendation and will use the agreed guiding principles as a basis for such a framework, which will inform future political governance engagement and programming.

The report notes the diverse contexts within which Australia delivers aid and observes that the Australian model of political governance may not be one uniformly accepted by countries in the Asia-Pacific region. AusAID agrees strongly with this and is committed to close situational analysis to inform country program and sectoral strategies.

AusAID agrees that improved coordination and information-sharing, both nationally and internationally, is an important issue. AusAID will take the lead in improving national coordination and will establish a political governance working group to facilitate this. AusAID will provide Secretariat assistance to the working group.

AusAID largely agrees with the recommendations regarding CDI with some reservations as noted in Section C. AusAID notes the important role played by CDI and agrees with continuation of support. AusAID notes that improved coordination and communication with AusAID Posts is critical for the successful and effective planning and delivery of CDI work in the region. It also notes that a challenge for CDI is to demonstrate the impact and sustainability of short-term training, given the turnover rates of politicians and political staff.

Gender equality is an overarching principle of Australia's aid program. AusAID notes the absence of specific report recommendations relating to increasing the representation of women in parliament and advancing the participation, inclusion and influence of women in political processes. AusAID will continue to advance gender equality and strengthen political governance programs that empower women and youth leadership, participation, representation and influence, address violence against women, and support responsiveness to the needs of women, youth and children.



B. Guiding principles

AusAID agrees with the majority of the guiding principles, which, for the most part, reflect current practice and thinking within AusAID, and are consistent with the aid program's objective 'to assist developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development in line with Australia's national interest.'

AusAID will use the guiding principles as a basis for a political governance framework. Revision of the wording and order of the principles, to better align them with Agency style and statements (without changing substance), will also be undertaken.

The political governance framework will also reflect links with civil society and leadership, governments and communities, as well as disability inclusion and human rights.

While acknowledging the difficulty in assessing performance impact in this area, AusAID will use its existing performance assessment systems to monitor, evaluate and continuously improve the quality and impact of its political governance assistance.

C. Responding to the recommendations

Centre for Democratic Institutions

Recommendation 1

The Review Team recommends that CDI give close consideration to:

- (a) convening, where appropriate, courses in-country, regionally or in locations other than Canberra
- (b) providing more direct in-country support, in response to partner country demand
- (c) using local expertise.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

CDI has already started to undertake more of its work in-country, in line with this recommendation.

AusAID will be mindful of this recommendation when, in its oversight role, it reviews the CDI annual plan and the delivery of CDI programming.

Recommendation 2

The Review Team recommends that CDI be given greater funding and organisational certainty by way of funding commitments for five-year terms and longer lead-in time for decisions on continued funding based on appropriate evaluation.

AusAID agrees in principle with this recommendation.

Funding amounts and timing need to be agreed to through the Australian Government's budget processes, and they are subject to appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to maximise performance.

It is likely that greater organisational and funding certainty would allow for longer-term planning and increase the potential for CDI's work to complement and be better coordinated with AusAID programs. It will also assist in the retention and attraction of quality staff.

The current CDI funding agreement expires in March 2011. In response to this recommendation, a longer-term funding commitment will be considered for the next funding agreement.



Recommendation 3

The Review Team recommends that CDI retain its geographic focus on Indonesia, Timor-Leste and Melanesia, noting that CDI's work remains particularly useful to fragile states in the Pacific. Further work beyond CDI's current geographic scope should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

CDI has established expertise and networks within its current geographic focus. In the absence of additional funding, significant work outside of these target countries would likely come at the expense of the work already taking place. CDI's work with countries outside its current geographic focus will be necessitated by CDI's engagement with the Bali Democracy Forum and the Bali Institute for Peace and Democracy.

Recommendation 4

The Review Team recommends that CDI continue to focus on strengthening parliaments and political parties.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

CDI has established and demonstrated its expertise and comparative advantage in this field. Further expansion of this could dilute this expertise. There is scope to further target work within these areas, for example, by providing targeted work with registrars of political parties, or support for parliamentary accountability instruments that help address corruption.

Recommendation 5

The Review Team recommends that CDI give increasing attention to the sub-national level within its geographic and sectoral focus.

AusAID agrees in principle with this recommendation.

This recommendation is consistent with the increased sub-national work taking place through AusAID's programming (particularly in PNG and Indonesia). However, increasing sub-national work to balance with much-needed work at the national level, and increased engagement, should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

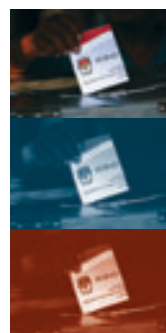
Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program

Recommendation 6

The Review Team recommends that future government contributions to Australian political parties for international work be contingent on stricter accountability for funds provided, along the lines suggested in the Auditor General's February 2009 report on the Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program. The Review Team further recommends that such funding be provided to all parties enjoying party status in the Parliament on a pro rata basis.

AusAID partially agrees with this recommendation.

AusAID has taken over management of the Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program (APPDP) from 1 July 2009. AusAID is reviewing program guidelines and accountability mechanisms, in light of the Auditor-General's report on the program, and in line with ODA and AusAID requirements. It will also seek government consideration of the possibility of providing funding, in future years, to other political parties.



Australian aid policy

Recommendation 7

The Review Team recommends that AusAID, as a priority, develop a strategic policy framework for political governance based on the guiding principles contained in this report, to provide clear, practical guidance to enhance its political governance support.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

In response the Agency will develop a strategic political governance framework which will:

- be informed by the agreed guiding principles from this review report
- include linkages with support for leadership, civil society and the media
- include strengthening of linkages between governments and communities for responsiveness and accountability
- provide clear, practical guidance to enhance its political governance support.

Recommendation 8

The Review Team recommends that AusAID's role and responsibilities in democracy promotion be clarified and that its democracy assistance be clearly linked to development outcomes and meet ODA criteria.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

In response, AusAID will:

- ensure that its political governance support is linked to development outcomes and meets ODA criteria
- clarify roles and responsibilities within the Foreign Affairs portfolio around democracy promotion.

Recommendation 9

The Review Team recommends that political economy analysis be prioritised to inform political governance programming and broader country and regional strategies.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

AusAID notes the importance of understanding country context as a basis to inform effective assistance.

In response, AusAID will:

- continue to undertake country situational analysis, including relevant political science diagnostics, to develop a more detailed understanding of the culture, history and incentives of the environment in which the aid program is operating in, to inform country and other program strategies
- use relevant existing analysis and undertake joint analysis with other donors where appropriate
- use local and Australian providers for research, analysis and implementation where appropriate
- consult with other areas of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for relevant analysis and advice
- consider political sensitivities and the role of civil society.



Recommendation 10

The Review Team recommends that the providers of political governance support should consider the needs of sub-national institutions and elected representatives in the Asia-Pacific region.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

The Agency is working more closely at the sub-national level in its larger country programs. In response to this recommendation AusAID will:

- continue to work at the sub-national level both with government institutions and civil society
- continue to outpost and co-locate staff in relevant agencies, to strengthen implementation at sub-national levels and to help identify additional entry points and linkages
- provide electoral strengthening support at sub-national levels where appropriate.

Recommendation 11

The Review Team recommends that AusAID continue its leading work on leadership, elites and coalitions given their importance in achieving effective development outcomes.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

In response, since July 2009 a multi-donor Leadership Program has been housed in AusAID, with a focus on the role of leaders in institution and state building, economic growth and development. The program complements and works closely with existing leadership initiatives, including the Pacific Leadership Program, and has a focus on strengthening women's leadership.

Parliamentary strengthening

Recommendation 12

The Review Team recommends that:

- (a) AusAID formalise liaison on political governance support with the Federal Parliament, particularly the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and establish regular meetings for dialogue and information exchange.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

In response to this recommendation AusAID will establish a political governance working group which will include a representative from the Australian Parliament.

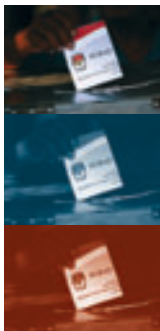
- (b) political governance support, particularly parliamentary strengthening programs, should place more emphasis on the use of effective mentoring and longer term exchanges.

AusAID partially agrees with this recommendation.

The Agency supports mentoring and twinning arrangements but notes the importance of providing support within the context of a broader program based on a needs assessment. AusAID also notes that twinning arrangements should be based on an appropriate scale and support local capacity; and the importance of selecting suitable mentors.

In response to this recommendation AusAID will encourage and explore long-term relationships including twinning and mentoring opportunities for capacity building where appropriate.

- (c) AusAID approach Australian Volunteers International (AVI) with a view to its taking responsibility, in consultation with other bodies such as CDI and the



Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, for the selection of appropriate and experienced volunteer practitioners to participate in political governance activities as one of its service disciplines.

AusAID partially agrees with this recommendation.

AusAID agrees that volunteers supported through the Australian Government Volunteer Program (including but not limited to Australian Volunteers International (AVI)) could provide capacity building assistance in some political governance activities. The Agency notes, however, that political sensitivities of such assignments and the suitability of candidates would need to be carefully assessed, and that volunteers be placed within the context of a broader program of support.

- (d) The Review Team recommends that AusAID participate in and support relevant networks including the Donor Coordination Network on Parliamentary Strengthening.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

The Agency notes the importance of such networks for improved coordination, information exchange and building complementarities.

In response to this recommendation AusAID will continue to participate in relevant networks or ensure that relevant organisations such as CDI are participating.

Political party strengthening

Recommendation 13

The Review Team recommends that Australian support for political party strengthening should foster political parties on the basis of political philosophy and policy differentiation. Support for political party strengthening:

- should be ongoing and not just centred around electoral events
- must be based on a thorough analysis of the political situation in the partner country and assistance plans must factor in local conditions
- should be based on partnerships: party leaders in recipient countries should be the ones to identify the needs of their political parties, not their sister parties or the international community
- should be mainstreamed to democracy assistance as political parties do not operate in a vacuum—party support will have to take different routes in authoritarian, semi-authoritarian, newly democratised and more established democracies and there is a need to understand under what legal conditions, electoral system and parliamentary system these parties operate
- must be based on close cooperation between governmental donor agencies and party-based organisations as well as between various donors and foundations working in the same country
- should make resources available to representative parties, including opposition parties, on an equitable basis—this should include access to training, information and research services, general party operational support, and media and public relations support and security as required
- might also include assistance to agencies engaged in party registration and regulation (e.g., on regulatory reform).



AusAID partially agrees with this recommendation.

The Agency recognises that this is a politically sensitive area of support and is often best implemented at arm's length through neutral bodies, as is currently the case with support through the work of CDI, or through multilateral and international organisations such as the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

Electoral support

Recommendation 14

The Review Team recommends that AusAID's electoral assistance continue to focus on long-term electoral cycle issues, drawing on the expertise of the AEC and working closely with in-country electoral management bodies to strengthen their capacity and sustainability.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

AusAID agrees that support should be provided based on full electoral cycles.

The Agency already draws on the expertise of the AEC and has a Strategic Partnership Agreement with them. Country programs, working together with the AEC, are best placed to identify suitable expertise for program implementation in this area.

In response to this recommendation AusAID will:

- continue its strategic partnership with the AEC
- continue to work with in-country electoral management bodies to strengthen their capacity and sustainability, often through twinning arrangements
- continue to support relevant electoral networks and programs
- continue to provide electoral assistance based on full electoral cycles
- consider the needs of women, people with disability and other disadvantaged groups in providing electoral support
- continue to provide support to civil society to strengthen electoral processes—including building linkages with electoral assistance and media strengthening approaches, with support provided to electoral commissions and the media to raise public awareness of electoral processes and accurate, fair coverage of elections
- provide electoral support at both national and sub-national levels where appropriate.

Coordination

Recommendation 15

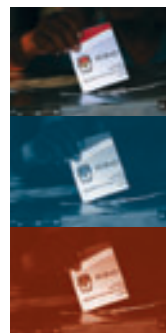
The Review Team recommends that a mechanism be established in Australia to improve information sharing and coordination of Australia's support for political governance. The Review Team further recommends that AusAID consider two main options for doing this: using CDI (noting that this may require changing CDI's status); or setting up a small, representative advisory group or council.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

AusAID endorses the need to improve information sharing and coordination of support.

In response to this recommendation AusAID will:

- improve internal coordination of political governance activity across country, regional and global programs



- work with Posts to improve coordination between and information exchange with partner governments, key donors and local organisations in partner countries, and to feed this information back to a central coordinating point within AusAID
- use existing partnerships with key donors to improve coordination of political governance activity
- establish a political governance working group to act as a forum for knowledge and information sharing, discussion, expertise sharing, networking and collaboration, to avoid duplication of activity and assist with planning. The role, function and membership of this group will be further developed as part of the development of the strategic political governance framework outlined in Recommendation 7
- provide the Secretariat for the political governance working group
- organise an annual political governance dialogue among relevant stakeholders to facilitate information sharing, networking and to better inform planning, encourage collaboration and avoid duplication.

Recommendation 16

The Review Team recommends that AusAID engage, on a targeted basis, with key donors such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Canada and New Zealand on their political and/or democratic governance programs and approaches.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

The Agency supports harmonisation in this area and has ongoing engagement with other donors through formal and informal groups.

AusAID has partnerships in place with some key donors, including the United Kingdom, Germany and the European Union, and will seek to use these and associated dialogues to engage on issues related to political governance.

Recommendation 17

The Review Team recommends that AusAID use its existing relationship with UNDP to improve the coordination and delivery of respective political governance programs to maximise their effectiveness.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

AusAID will use its engagement through the 2008–2015 Partnership Framework between AusAID and UNDP, as well as high-level consultations, to discuss issues around delivery and coordination of political governance activities, to maximise effectiveness.

Recommendation 18

The Review Team recommends that existing and emerging donor, parliamentary strengthening and democracy support networks and databases be used to promote coordination and information sharing on a regional and international basis.

AusAID agrees with this recommendation.

In response to this recommendation AusAID will continue to seek to identify and use such networks and resources, as well as partnerships with key actors, to share information and lessons learned, promote coordination and limit overlap and duplication.

