



Australian Aid

APPROACHES TO BUILDING DEMAND FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE

SUMMARY DECEMBER 2007

BUILDING DEMAND FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE IS A PRIORITY FOR AUSTRALIA'S AID PROGRAM. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO HELP CITIZENS PARTICIPATE IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES AND TO PROMOTE THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF GOVERNMENT AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

Good governance allows citizens and communities to share the benefits of economic growth, stability and development. Good governance also helps make development assistance more effective, by promoting transparency, accountability and responsiveness to the community.

Encouraging an active and representative civil society, an independent media, and working directly with communities helps strengthen local demand and incentives for good governance practices. This approach expands Australia's long tradition of promoting community participation in development.

IMPLEMENTING THE APPROACH

Strategies to build demand for better governance are developed after careful analysis of the local context. Approaches vary from country to country and issue to issue, such as women's safety, the environment, access to basic services and peace building. This work requires long-term engagement with a broad range of stakeholders.

AusAID is working with partner governments to strengthen the ability of government institutions to deliver services. Integral to these efforts is support for partnerships with local communities and non-government organisations.



AusAID is building its investment in initiatives that promote direct community outreach and awareness, electoral and civic education, and media strengthening. These activities and new approaches are being monitored and evaluated to generate new findings about effective development assistance.

CURRENT INITIATIVES

In 2007-2009 AusAID is supporting a range of activities to increase the participation of citizens in decisions that affect their lives. The initiatives address priorities identified in partner countries or through partner organisations.

Countries where this work is being supported over the next two years are Cambodia, East Timor, Philippines, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The work is based on close dialogue with these country partners and stakeholders.

Major activities include:

PHILIPPINES	<p>Increased participation of youth, women and the media in community and peace building in Mindanao, and monitoring the effectiveness of these efforts.</p> <p>Increased community involvement in government accountability for education service delivery.</p>
CAMBODIA	<p>Increasing community access to information and debates on good governance through support for media content and access in partnership with the World Bank.</p>
INDONESIA	<p>Developing a strategic approach to election education and monitoring with government, faith-based organisations and civil society.</p> <p>Increased community, civil society and local government partnerships promoting effective and accountable local development.</p> <p>Effective national and provincial capacity for independent research and analysis of government policy and local development challenges.</p>
EAST TIMOR	<p>Increased civic education through post-election community education, stronger media, and participation in peace building with local government and civil society.</p> <p>Increased community involvement in government accountability for water and sanitation service delivery, assessing the transparency and quality of local services.</p>
PNG	<p>Increased ability for communities to call for local and national government accountability through analysis and work with the media, churches and researchers on drivers of change and reform.</p>
VANUATU	<p>Increased community access to information about government performance and development challenges through media and church networks.</p>
SOLOMON ISLANDS	<p>Increased ability to hold governments and others to account through support for church-community networks and partnerships.</p>
GLOBAL/REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS	<p>Establishing new partnerships with the Australian Electoral Commission and the ABC on electoral education and monitoring and media effectiveness.</p>
RESEARCH	<p>New research investments increasing scholarship on local incentives for ethical leadership in the Pacific and effective civic engagement in the Asia-Pacific.</p>

PHOTOS: An AusAID-funded education project in Mindanao in the southern Philippines is an example of the way AusAID is working to build better governance. It aims to improve the quality of basic education and to increase access for disadvantaged and remote children, from indigenous and Muslim communities. Local government authorities, parents and the broader community have been empowered to act as partners of the school leading to improvements in student results and a decrease in school drop out rates.