



# AN INCLUSIVE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT TRAINING CURRICULUM

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## ANNEX HANDOUTS

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# **MODULE THREE**

## **DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**





# LESSON 3.1

## INTRODUCTION TO DEMOCRACY

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### 1. The Concept

Democracy's simple definition is the rule by the people; however, its modern definition is a form of government, where a constitution guarantees basic personal rights, fair and free elections, and an independent court of law.

Democracy is a model and ideology continuously developing according to social needs, democracy is applied by various mechanisms and methods according to social conditions and needs. These mechanisms enable the rule of the people within a framework of freedom, they also include political plurality, law sovereignty, and human rights maintenance. There is not a single absolute or role model for democracy application. Democracy develops as mechanisms, values, and culture according to varying conditions in different societies.

In a modern democracy, a country needs to fulfill some basic requirements, which need not only to be written in its constitution but also must be kept up in everyday life by politicians and authorities, such as:

- Guarantee of basic human rights to every individual person.
- Separation of powers between the institutions of the state: the government (Executive Power), the parliament (Legislative Power) and the courts of law (Judicative Power).
- Freedom of opinion, speech, press and mass media.
- Religious liberty.
- General and equal right to vote.
- Good Governance.

**“Rule of the people by the people for the people”** is democracy's objective more than it being its definition. Approaching this objective is possible through the democratic decision-making methodology, due to the rules governing public decision making, making authority practices compliant to more society controls, and obliging authorities to observe its interests.

Currently, a regime is deemed democratic when it complies with principles from which efficient institutions are established. These principles should prevent an individual or minority full rule and ensure minimum conditions of the rule of people which is the majority rule. Public decisions should be made by the majority of people as well. The regime gradually seeks this decision-making approach through broad effective political participation involvement, democracy culture dissemination, and stability of constitutional institutions to support society's force development, increase society's capability to control government authority, and ensure that government decisions comply with the public interest.

Democracy, thus, is a system that makes binding community decisions with the effective participation of society members. Accordingly, a democratic community could be a state, association, party, syndicate, etc.

The conditions governing public decision making are the common and minimum factor in any regime to become democratic. This does not deny democracy from being a set of basic rights, a series of institutions and practices, and a regime securing targeted results.

## 2. Importance of democracy

Democracy is equally important for the state and its citizens. It can bring an important contribution in making citizens feel that it is good to live in a state, where they can express themselves freely, feel secure, and participate in shaping their future according to their choices. In this context, it is becoming more and more important that countries cooperate and make efforts to develop democratic models that are suitable for them. This helps them to avoid wars and chaos. If countries leave their citizens in doubt and ignorance regarding rights and freedoms that are entitled to, the citizens might go for violence means to attain these rights (revolutions, riots, etc.). Democracy is an important element that enables people to live freely and autonomously. It is an institutional guarantee that the policies that the government creates will fit in with the interests of people. As a matter of fact, it is said that democracy is a central determinant of the quality of life.

Democracy requires the permanent participation of the citizens contrary to autocratic state forms that require the subordination of submitted people. Research outcomes have shown that young people in particular do not feel concerned about politics. It is supposed to be due to, among others, the fact that young people below the age of 18 often have no right to speak/take the floor; consequently, they are not of any interest to politicians, given that they do not represent any vote at the elections. When one has no right to speak, there is obviously a decrease in the motivation to get committed at all.

## 3. Political and Social Democracy

### 3.1 Political Democracy

A democratic regime requires certain bases and institutions. The first basis is related to elections as the rule of selecting institution members. The institutions ensure that democratic government decisions and policies are controlled by officials elected through periodical, free, and integrated poll in which any qualified citizen can run for elections and practically participate in elections and voting.

Secondly, institutions protect public freedoms as follows: right of expression and constructive criticism without fear from penalties, right to access to information, protection of alternative information sources, and freedom of independent association including right to establish parties and interest groups.

In the modern age, the concept of democracy is related to the idea of **elections**. The Right of the whole nation to elect and formulates the real meaning of the term. Elections are the core of political democracy as electing means selecting. When an individual elects, this means that there are various alternatives to choose from. However, can all society members select?

### 3.2 Social Democracy

**Actually, elections are not the only democratic concept; it is one of the forms of democracy.** Democracy primarily means political freedom to enable citizens from doing their election duty. To choose, individuals should be free, know what and why they want and have the capacity to effectuate their will.

Here will is related to freedom. Freedom changes to slavery and abuse if there are disparities in enjoying it. Society's freedom will only mean tyranny and abuse if citizens live under conditions controlled by inequality. Hungry people cannot choose because they can only aspire for bread. Illiterate ignorant people cannot choose since even if they are able to "want", they do not know exactly what and why they want and are unable to effectuate their will.

Thus, in addition to democratic organizational and cultural aspects, some social- and economic- related characteristics cannot be ignored. Democracy implies equality in rights, duties, standards of living, courts, education, and in everything or what is known as "**Social Democracy**".



## 4. Deliberative and Participatory Democracy<sup>1</sup>

A democracy relies on dialogue and deliberation to help mitigate conflict and promote consideration of alternative ideas and perspectives. Appropriately-managed deliberation can lay the groundwork for peaceful deliberation across party, ethnic, and religious divides by creating a safe space for open discussion and more inclusive political agenda-setting. In this regard, it is a critical means of increasing pluralism and a shared sense of community.

**Deliberative democracy** is when political decisions are made as a result of fair and reasonable discussion among citizens. According to political theorists, “deliberative democracy strengthens citizen voices in governance by including people of all races, classes, ages, and geographies in deliberations that directly affect public decisions.”

The concept of a **participatory democracy** gained popularity in the 1960s as activist movements demanded greater participation in government decision making. A central tenet to participatory democracy is that it must increase the *capacities* of citizens to participate, which that in itself requires reform of democratic institutions to make participation more meaningful.

### Why representativeness and deliberation?<sup>2</sup>

- **Better policy outcomes because deliberation results in considered public judgements rather than public opinions.** These processes create the spaces for learning, deliberation, and the development of informed recommendations, which are of greater use to policy and decision makers.
- **Greater legitimacy to make hard choices.** These processes help policy makers to better understand policy priorities, the values and reasons behind them, to identify where consensus is and is not feasible, and to overcome political deadlock.
- **Enhance public trust in government and democratic institutions by giving citizens an effective role in public decision making.** People are more likely to trust a decision that has been influenced by ordinary people than one made solely by the government or behind closed doors. Trust also works two ways. For governments to engender trust among the public, they must in turn trust the public to be more directly involved in decision making.
- **Signal civic respect and empower citizens.** Engaging citizens in active deliberation can also strengthen their sense of political efficacy (the belief that one can understand and influence political affairs) by not treating them as objects of legislation and administration (see Knobloch et al., 2019).

1 Adapted from: OECD, Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave, 2020. Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kA5v0ettSuPxLlx-s6DUG1HL9D6f7rx7/view>

2 Adapted from: OECD, Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave, 2020. Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kA5v0ettSuPxLlx-s6DUG1HL9D6f7rx7/view>

- **Make governance more inclusive by opening the door to a much more diverse group of people.** With their use of random selection and stratified sampling, they bring in typically excluded categories like youth, the disadvantaged, women, or other minorities into public policy and decision making.
- **Strengthen integrity and prevent corruption by ensuring that groups and individuals with money and power cannot have undue influence on a public decision.** Key principles of deliberative good practice are that the process is transparent, visible, and provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to present to the participants. Participants' identities are often protected until after the process is over to protect them from being targeted by interest groups.<sup>3</sup>

### Key Differences between Deliberative and Participatory Democracy<sup>3</sup>

	Number of participants	Type of participation	Participant selection method
<b>Deliberative Democracy</b>	Relatively small (but representative) groups of people, as it is difficult to have deep deliberation among large numbers.	Deliberation, which requires that participants are well-informed about a topic and consider different perspectives in order to arrive at a public judgement (not opinion) about “what can we strongly agree on?”	Typically, a civic lottery, which combines random selection to assemble a public body that is representative of the public; able to consider perspectives, and not vulnerable to being overrun by representatives of powerful interest groups.
<b>Participatory Democracy</b>	Large numbers of people, ideally everyone affected by a particular decision. The aim is to achieve breadth.	More participation, in all aspects of politics, from all citizens who choose to be involved; an embrace and encouragement of a diversity of opportunities for political engagement.	Self-selected participation in order to enable as many people as possible to share the experience.

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from: OECD, Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave, 2020. Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kA5v0ettSuPxLlx-s6DUG1HL9D6f7rx7/view>

## 5. Democratization

The approach to democracy has taken various forms in different countries by adding effective constitutional limitations to control power. A lot of successful democratic experiences such as India and Japan are outside Europe which is the source of democratic experiences.

This shows that democracy can adapt to the traditions and values of the societies in which it is practiced. Democracy is a ruling methodology capable of adapting to different societies taking special conditions into consideration. There is not a single form of democracy application, yet, there are minimum conditions and guarantees for democratization.

As a practical and realistic approach, democracy respects and takes society various beliefs and values into consideration. This approach adapts various state institutions without violating democracy principles or hindering constitutional institutions.

Equality and freedom, changing and holding ruler power accountable, and the right of individuals to choose their ruler are not practically contradictory to the values and beliefs of any society.

Democracy in practice is proportional and gradual. But since “what cannot be acquired in its totality should not be discarded entirely”, democracy advocates have to work on democratization which starts when the society controls violence sources, peacefully manages disagreements, and guarantees minimum effective political participation by all people without exceptions. In practice, democracy moves forward to advancement and develops to reflect stability and democracy culture spread and influence on the public behavior.

## 6. Gender, Women, and Democracy

### 6.1 Why Women in Politics?

The positive impact of women’s empowerment is undeniable. Kofi Annan noted: “study after study has taught us, there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity or to reduce child and maternal mortality. No other policy is as sure to improve nutrition and promote health, including the prevention of HIV/AIDS. No other policy is as powerful in increasing the chances of education for the next generation.”<sup>4</sup>

.....  
4 Moccia, P. (ed) et. al. (2007) *The State of the World’s Children – 2007*. UNICEF. [<http://www.unicef.org/sowc07/docs/sowc07.pdf>].

→ [Deliver for Good Policy Brief on Women's Leadership](#). (NDI contributed).

“

The world can't wait another 107 years to achieve political parity for women.

More women are required in politics now.

Democracy can only deliver with women's equal and active participation.

And when democracy delivers we all win through more sustainable growth, better and more responsive decision-making, and more resilient societies.

”

Further, as Madeleine Albright has stated, the world is wasting a precious resource in the dramatic underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, often resulting in the exclusion of women's talents and skills in political life. Male and female legislators must work together in order to solve the myriad of problems in their countries. However, while the SDGs have an underlying commitment to achieve **all** targets with gender equality (not just SDG5 on gender equality), research from *Equal Measures 2030*, shows that there is a 20 point difference in male and female policymakers' perception of gender equality – with men having the more positive view of progress.

→ [Policymaker Report](#). *Equal Measures 2030*, 2017

In order to meet worldwide development goals and build strong, sustainable democracies, women must be encouraged, empowered and supported in becoming strong political and community leaders.

→ [Deliver For Good Policy Brief on Women's Political Participation](#). (NDI contributed).

The full and equitable participation of women in public life is essential to building and sustaining strong, vibrant, peaceful democracies. Accordingly, the meaningful participation of women in national, local and community leadership roles has become an important focus of global development policy.

→ [Democracy Support Strategies: Leading With Women's Political Empowerment](#). Thomas Carothers (NDI commissioned)

## 6.2 Women's Rights are Human Rights

At a basic level, democracy without the participation of half the population is not democracy. Women and men are entitled to equal civil and political rights, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and other international commitments.<sup>5</sup>

- **Article 21 of the UDHR** states that (1) everyone has the right to take part in the government of his or her country, directly or through freely chosen representatives; (2) everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his or her country; and (3) the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government... expressed in periodic and genuine elections that shall be by universal and equal suffrage.

Women's individual rights are also protected under the United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

- **Article 1** defines discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women...on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”
- **Article 7** states that countries should ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right (a) to vote in elections and be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) to participate in the formulation of government policy and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government; and (c) to participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

Lebanon adopted its first National Action Plan (NAP) in 2019 to be implemented between 2019 and 2022. The NAP was developed by a steering committee, led by the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW), which comprised six government ministries, three civil society organizations, and six UN agencies serving as a technical advisory board. The objectives of the NAP reflect the pillars of UNSCR 1325, with a specific focus on increasing women's full participation in decision-making processes in the political, diplomatic, and economic domains as well as in the security and defense sectors.

**National Action Plan: Lebanon, Peace Women.**

.....  
5 United Nations, “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.

### 5.3 Women Serving in Elected Office

Women legislators and councilors prioritize education, health, and other key development investments. When women are empowered as political leaders, countries experience higher standards of living, positive developments can be seen in education, infrastructure and health, and concrete steps are taken to help make democracy deliver. There is emerging evidence that women’s political participation can affect social norms, with positive effects on parents’ – both father’s and mothers’ – aspirations for their daughters.

- [Are women politicians good for economic growth?](#)
- [Women Policy-Makers and Educational Expenditures](#). Chen, 2009.
- [Here’s why having more women in government is good for your health](#) (full article [here](#))
- [Voice and Agency. Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity](#) (Chap 6) World Bank. 2015. References: [Mansuri and Rao](#), 2013. [Chattopadhyay and Duflo](#), 2004.

### 6.4 Women as Peacebuilders

Women are deeply committed to peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and have a unique and powerful perspective to bring to the negotiating table. Women suffer disproportionately during armed conflict and often advocate most strongly for stabilization, reconstruction, and the prevention of further conflict. Research shows that women’s engagement in the transitional processes and post-conflict governments can “increase the legitimacy of nascent institutions, decrease government corruption, broaden the political agenda, promote consultative policymaking and encourage collaboration across ideological lines and social sectors.”<sup>6</sup> Moreover, gender equality and the treatment of women correlates with a country’s overall level of security and stability.

- [What Sex Means for World Peace](#). Valerie Hudson. Foreign Policy, 2012
- [Female Participation and Civil War Relapse](#). Demeritt, Nichols and Kelly. Civil Wars, 2014
- [Women’s Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace](#). Kraus, Kraus and Branfors. Geneva Graduate Institute, 2019

.....  
6 The Institute for Inclusive Security (2009) “Strategies for Policymakers: Bringing Women into Government.” [http://www.huntalternatives.org/download/1648\\_bringing\\_women\\_into\\_government\\_mar\\_09\\_final.pdf](http://www.huntalternatives.org/download/1648_bringing_women_into_government_mar_09_final.pdf)

## 6.5 Violence Against Women in Politics

Any assessment of gender inclusion in politics requires recognizing that women’s and men’s experiences in politics are not only shaped by gender but also intersecting identities such as class, ethnicity, or sexuality. Depending on the context, these identities may be more salient than gender or overlap with gender to compound the discrimination faced by particular groups of women.

- [Black Women Gun Enthusiasts. The effects of propaganda on marginal members of social and issue groups.](#) Institute for the Future, 2019.
- [Trumps Attacks on Congresswomen are Racist and Sexist.](#) Soraya Chemaly.

As women step forward to claim their right to participate in politics, they are met by acts that encompass harassment, psychological abuse (both in person and online), and physical or sexual assault. Any of these types of violence can occur in private, public or “protected public” spaces. This phenomenon of violence against women in politics is a global issue<sup>7</sup>. It is rooted in the environment in which a woman decides to enter politics, and manifests itself as a significant barrier at the individual, institutional, and socio-cultural levels to women’s meaningful political participation. This in turn has serious repercussions for the achievement of inclusive and resilient democratic societies.

- [Stopping Violence Against Women in Politics.](#) NDI. Submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women. August 2018.
- [A hidden reality: Violence against women in politics.](#) Madeleine Albright. CNN. March 2016
- [The Cost of Doing Politics? Analyzing Violence and Harassment against Female Politicians.](#) Mona Lena Krook and Juliana Restrepo Sanjín (2019)
- [No Party to Violence: Analyzing Violence Against Women in Political Parties – Preliminary Findings from Pilots in Cote d’Ivoire, Honduras, Tanzania and Tunisia.](#) NDI.

Online spaces can be particularly important in helping women and other marginalized groups to overcome barriers to political activity. However, the digital world has also become a forum for disinformation, hate speech, abuse, and harassment targeting politically-active women. This online violence against women in politics creates a hostile environment that causes women to self-censor, be silent, or otherwise withdraw from online political discourse. It is one of the most prevalent forms .....

7 Such acts are explicitly prohibited under many legal frameworks and workplace codes of conduct, including, but not limited to: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (“Maputo Protocol”), the First Protocol to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (“Convention of Belem Do Para”).

of violence hindering women's active political engagement but remains largely under-documented and under-researched.

This violence can be perpetrated by individuals, organizations, states, and transnational networks. Often viewed as a 'non-violent' issue, there is clear evidence of what NDI has termed a "gateway effect", where persistent online harassment crosses into the physical realm and ends in assault or worse (as in the case of murdered British MP, Jo Cox). While all of this violence is rooted in unequal gender norms and misogyny, the manipulation of gender norms and biases is also weaponized for the achievement of specific political outcomes.

- [Tweets That Chill: Analyzing Online Violence Against Women in Politics](#). NDI. 2019
- [How do you fix Facebook's moderation problem? Figure out what Facebook is](#). Buni and Chemaly. The Verge, 2017
- [The new authoritarians are waging war on women](#). Peter Beinart. The Atlantic, 2019
- [Private Mossad for Hire: Inside and effort to influence American elections, starting with one small town race](#). Entous and Farrow. The New Yorker, 2019





## LESSON 3.2

# CITIZENSHIP

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### Concept

- Citizenship can be defined as a human being's belonging to certain land, and loyalty to this home as the source of all basic need fulfillment and protection against dangers.
- Citizenship is the relationship with land and country: when humans permanently settle inside a country and hold its nationality or when they do not belong to another country or homeland; when they comply with laws issued in this country; enjoy equally with other citizens a set of laws; and fulfill certain duties towards the country to which they belong.
- Citizenship is rights and responsibilities. It represents an individual's initiative taking and his/her responsibility towards him/herself and towards the group of people that he/she belongs to. These rights and responsibilities do not apply except in a democratic society that ensures equality in life and in opportunity.

### Citizenship-related values

- **Mutual respect:** is to be committed to respect towards citizens and public places. Respect creates a mutual feeling of gratitude among individuals and provides more harmony within society
- **Civil liability:** is to express citizen will to maintain applied rules and bear their responsibilities. This term, in its more comprehensive definition, implies citizen readiness to fulfill society's needs before their personal needs.
- **Solidarity:** feeling of familiarity, openness and responsibility towards other society members; this feeling could be reflected on reality in the form of concrete deeds.

- **Loyalty:** citizenship is the feeling of someone of belonging to a homeland which has its own geographical border, and with others' participation this feeling forms the basis of personal identity and recognition of the consequent rights and duties. Citizenship is organically related to the homeland, its effects depend on the participation of all citizens in fruitful work on national inclusion, and nation advancement and safety. All citizens are nationals of the same homeland, enjoy equal civil, political and social rights, and have equal duties without discrimination each according to his/her capability. Thus, citizenship is the alliance and solidarity of free people having equal decision-making capabilities, roles, and dignity without discrimination. In any country, Citizenship is affected by political maturity, cultural advancement, social beliefs, and major international changes.

## Rights of a Citizen

Most constitutions, to define a citizens' rights, refer to human rights conventions, especially the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights issued. Both Covenants define individual rights. The major Citizenship rights and legal equality are represented in the following rights set: Civil rights such as right to verbal and written freedom of expression, political rights like the right to run for elections and economic, social, cultural and environmental rights such as the right to social, economic, and cultural security.

## Duties of a Citizen

Individual rights cannot be discussed in isolation of the duties and responsibilities that come along with them. People therefore should observe their duties and responsibilities just as they exercise their rights.

Characteristics of good citizens:

- Respect laws and others rights and freedoms;
- Protect their and others rights against abuse by anyone, according to laws and peaceful frameworks;
- Practice the rights to ensure adequate performance of democratization. Rights to vote, freedom of expression, and participation in volunteer associations will not make any difference or greatly influence civil and political life if citizens do not regularly and effectively practice them;
- Respect pluralism through respecting and accepting others opinions, ideas, and beliefs;
- Pay taxes;
- Defend the State and its citizens;
- Develop the State and homeland; and
- Maintain State property.

Citizen duties are the natural, logical, and essential outcomes of the citizenship system. This system is a democratic one where all citizens are equal without discrimination in terms of rights, duties, and services.

## Citizenship in a democratic society

Citizenship and democracy are directly correlated. As organic belonging to the country, citizenship cannot live or become active without a democratic incubator which provides belonging, acknowledgment, and roots. Democracy depends on the acknowledgment of human beings and their basic rights including dignity, freedom, and will. Democracy maintains citizens' right to express their opinions and participate in decision making and obliges citizens to fulfill their duties against the state and society.

There are two basic **pillars** of citizenship: equality of all citizens and participation in the ruling:

### ***Full equality:***

All citizens carrying the nationality of the same country should enjoy equal civil, legal, political, social, and economic rights and duties. Citizenship application is largely related to participation in ruling and equality which create belonging, feeling of justice, and high patriotic spirit at performing national duties such as defending the country, tax payment, etc.

Citizenship guarantees a group of rights which can only be enforced by a strong society maintaining and protecting such rights. This society is defined on the levels of individual–State relationship and individuals–social group's relationship.

### ***Participation in ruling:***

Effective citizen participation in steering society affairs is the most important role a citizen should effectively play through the following:

- **Political awareness**, taking interest in and following up society affairs, reviewing different government decrees and laws, inspecting public opinion trends, and participating in societal discussions on different issues. This is practically applied through providing knowledge to citizens. In democratic societies, reviewing society issues is a top citizen responsibility which ensures citizen effective participation in ruling. Informed citizens armed with knowledge are not easily influenced by what leaders are trying to convince them with, and are more able to differentiate between rumors and facts.

Citizens may review and participate in society affairs management through the following:

- Following up news via different media means
- Attending public meetings in their social communities and express opinions on different issues.
- Asking for certain information from their representatives or government officials through phone calls, emails, or post.
- Visiting the representatives in their offices and ask questions.
- Inviting parliament and local council members to meet a group of voters and answer their questions.
- Discussing issues with other citizens.
- trying to persuade someone to vote a certain way
- wearing a button or putting a sticker on the car
- contributing money to a party or candidate
- campaigning for a candidate
- lobbying for laws that are of special interest
- demonstrating through marches, boycotts, sit-ins, or other forms of protest
- serving as a juror
- running for office
- holding public office
- serving the country through military or other services
- disobeying laws and taking the consequences to demonstrate that a law or policy is unjust

Citizens can also share their opinions through different channels such as:

- Phone calls to and participation in talk shows
- Publishing editorials, messages to the editor in chief of a newspaper, and organizing legitimate media and advertisement campaigns.
- Petition circulation.

The most effective method to convey opinions and viewpoints to the leaders is to join groups expressing their opinions. Forming and joining organizations, associations, and parties in the local society will activate citizen capability to influence their representatives. Undoubtedly, this capability will increase if citizens organize themselves into groups instead of making individual efforts.

## Representative selection

The most significant method allowing citizens to participate in a democratic regime is election of representatives. This step includes voter registration, knowing about various candidate platforms, and voting on Election Day. Participation in elections also includes organizing candidate campaigns and working as independent observers during the elections. In many countries which have recently adopted democracy, as in those known as Eastern Europe countries (Kosovo, Ukraine, and Georgia e.g.), elections kick off democratic society establishment.

It is important, however, not to forget that elections are only one of democratic regime foundations. History is full of real examples of societies holding elections without respecting election spirit or real results. If elections bestow legitimacy upon leaders, citizens according to their role have to ensure that these leaders will never abuse the power once they assume it.

When citizens fail to make leaders fulfill their responsibilities, they are informally allowing the leaders to do what they want. Citizen nonparticipation mostly grants the government unaccountable authorities, which may encourage power abuse and tyranny by the leaders. In this context, one of the major citizen responsibilities is to continually remind the representatives that power initially and finally issues from citizens.

## Advantages of citizen participation

- Ensures leader avoidance of power abuse;
- Largely informs the government of society wishes;
- Involves citizens in ruling; and
- Allows the government to make more informed decisions for people benefit.

## International citizen

Under globalization and the political, economic, cultural, scientific, and technological changes it brought, the world has become our greater homeland or planet village. Thus, world citizenship concept has appeared. National citizenship is valuable, yet world citizenship has special values. On the national level, the values include loyalty, patriotism, faithful service to the homeland, and cooperation, and participation in public affairs.

On the global level, citizenship requires peace, tolerance, other cultures to respect and appreciation, coexistence, and cooperation with all agencies, systems, groups, and individuals in all important fields such as food, security, education, work, and health. The global concept of citizenship does not abolish the national one; if national citizenship is absent, the global one will not be there as both support each other.

## Lebanese Political System and Citizenship

The Lebanese political system is described as confessional in practice, based on the framework of consociationalism.<sup>8</sup> The basis of the system is a form of government that proportionally allocates political power among a country's communities (whether religious or ethnic) equally among Muslims and Christians. In essence, the system has four elements that should be followed:

.....

8 The word was first dubbed by German Political Scientist Arendt Lijphart.

- Proportional allocation of political posts among communities according to their numerical representation in the population
- Coalitions between communities' leaders on common policies that serve all
- Communal autonomy in which each community is free to determine its own standards for social/cultural affairs
- Mutual veto power, so that any decisions deemed detrimental by any community can be voted down.<sup>9</sup>

Lebanon's power-sharing model was required to manage competing visions and secure consensus to manage the Lebanese states.<sup>10</sup> The division of power was formalized in the National Pact of 1943, an unwritten gentlemen's agreement (which has come to hold constitutional value) between the Maronite Christian President Bechara al-Khoury and his Sunni Prime Minister Riyadh al-Solh. Following the end of the Civil War in 1990, the National Pact was formalized into a document called the Taif Agreement. While it officially called to abolish the confessional system, this has yet to materialize and some analysts feel that the agreement actually reinforced the institutionalization of sectarianism.

As a result of this system, citizens do not have equal access to public office and as such, Lebanese people do not have the equal opportunity to pursue certain government posts or to participate in the full range of public deliberation.

A common history and, more importantly, a common perception of it is, along with unity of language and culture, an important element of a national identity. Historical events (whether they represent a source of pride or shame) shape people's sense of belonging and affect their relation to the state. In France, for example, it is the French Revolution, the two World Wars, the German Occupation and the Resistance that have forged French identity.

In Lebanon, however, people did not have such interpreted unifying events simply because they were viewed differently by different groups within society. The various views of history are reinforced as a result of the lack of a unified history textbook series used in the Lebanese education system. Although Legislative Decree 1436 accords the right to the Ministry of Education to evaluate and approve history textbooks used by private schools, which educate around a million students, this procedure has yet to be enforced.

Also, all textbooks omit the Lebanese Civil War because there is disagreement among scholars about facts. Under the Taif Accords of 1989, Lebanon was meant to unite the various curriculums used and deal with all periods of Lebanese history. Since then, two committees have been formed with the goal of developing one national version of history; however no firm results have been produced. These textbooks represent various versions of Lebanese history, and are still permitted by the Lebanese government, resulting in multiple interpretations of lack of common understanding about political history.

9 Lebanon's Confessionalism: Problems and Prospects, by Imad Harb, United States Institute of Peace, March 2007.

10 The Politics of Sectarianism in Postwar Lebanon" by Bassel F. Salloukh et al, 2015 (2; 16).

## Gender and Citizenship in Lebanon

Citizens of any given country, regardless of age, gender, physical disability should be able to enjoy equal rights, provided they fulfill their civil obligations. In Lebanon, however, this is not the case. Women are not subject to the same rights under the law as men. For example, Lebanese women who marry non-Lebanese men are unable to pass on their Lebanese citizenship to their children. Under the United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Part II, Article 3 states: “The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant.” (Lebanon has signed this Covenant but has not ratified it). In this case, therefore, the children do not have the opportunity to benefit from the protections of citizenship. This often results in these youth leaving the country permanently or living within a political system without full representation.

When full citizenship is dependant on natural characteristics such as gender, the principle of equality before the Law is violated and fair political and civil environment is consequently impaired.

### RESOURCES:

The Lebanese Constitution, at [http://servat.unibe.ch/icl/le00t\\_\\_\\_\\_.html](http://servat.unibe.ch/icl/le00t____.html)

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library at <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/>

Lebanese Citizenship, at <http://www.citizenship-lb.org/>

Citizenship Issues in Lebanon: Dimensions and Current Challenges by the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies

<http://www.opendemocracy.net/>

<http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/>

<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cpr.html>



# LESSON 3.3

## RULE OF LAW

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### Rule of Law

Laws are essential features of a democratic society. Rule of Law, therefore, is the concept that laws prevail above any institution or individual. One only needs to ask what would happen if laws did not exist, or if the game being played had no rules. **Laws set limits on the behavior of governments, individuals, and organizations and they do so fairly and equally.** This means that the scope and degree of the law apply to everyone in the same manner.

The following eight elements of law are recognized as necessary to institute the rule of law:

1. Laws must exist and those laws should be obeyed by all, including government officials.
2. Laws must be published.
3. Laws must be prospective in nature so that the effect of the law may only take place after the law has been passed. For example, the court cannot convict a person of a crime committed before a criminal statute prohibiting the conduct was passed.
4. Laws should be written with reasonable clarity to avoid unfair enforcement.
5. Law must avoid contradictions.
6. Law must not command the impossible.
7. Law must stay constant through time to allow the formalization of rules; however, law also must allow for timely revision when the underlying social and political circumstances have changed.
8. Official action should be consistent with the declared rule.

While the practice of linking rules on behavior to a governing structure has been a major component of democratic practice, the Declaration of Delhi, issued by an international gathering of over 185 judges, lawyers and law professors from 53 countries all over the world, set the stage for the process to be formalized and international standards and best practices to be put in place. The Declaration, made in 1959, was the first time the international community came together to agree on such principles and practice.



## Freedom & Equality

A democratic society ensures that all individuals are considered equal and have fundamental rights granted to them by the constitution and embodied in national laws. **Democracy exists when all individuals are able to exercise these rights — freedom of expression and speech, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of religion and conscience, freedom to petition the government to vote.** This applies equally to all members of society, regardless of their gender, religion, political affiliation, etc. Because the rights of all citizens are protected, the majority — once defined through an election — cannot abolish the basic rights of any citizen. However, in most circumstances and countries, not everyone is treated equally. Different people have different levels of citizenship and equality before the law based on their identity and particularly their gender. For example, in Lebanon, personal status laws have inhibited women’s rights. Across all religious groups, women face legal and other obstacles in divorce; limitations on their financial rights; and the risk of losing their children if they remarry or when the so-called maternal custody period (determined by the child’s age) ends. LGBT citizen’s in Lebanon also do not enjoy their rights fully with Article 534 of the penal code being used prosecute consensual same-sex conduct and Article 521 criminalizing transgender citizens.

An individual’s ability to exercise their rights, however, does not depend upon or require the goodwill of the government. A democratic government does not create these rights, instead, it protects these rights. **In a democracy, the government is created by the people and exists to serve the people.** In other words, people are citizens, not subjects. The government is responsible for protecting citizens’ rights, and in turn, the citizens grant the government temporary power to make decisions on their behalf. This point highlights that political authority is located with the people.

Oftentimes, additional measures or laws need to be put in place to ensure equal treatment and protection under the law, especially to protect marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as women, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and ethnic and religious minorities. For example, people with disabilities are often marginalized in society and denied their human rights. Discrimination against persons with disabilities takes various forms, such as the denial of educational opportunities or segregation and isolation because of the imposition of physical and social barriers. Appropriate measures are required to address existing discrimination and to promote opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate on the basis of equality in social life and development.<sup>11</sup> In 2000, Lebanon adopted Law 220 on the Rights of Disabled Persons (Law 220/2000). Lebanon intended to implement these rights — such as the right to health, housing, education, employment and an accessible environment — through systems of special welfare entitlements for persons with disabilities, and quotas, fines or incentives for service providers and employers, however, many of the rights set out in the law have not been achieved.<sup>12</sup>

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11 United Nations, “Overview of International Legal Framework For Disability Legislation.” Available at: <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/disovlf.htm>

12 Article 19, “Lebanon: Disability and Access to Information May 2015.” Available at: <https://www.article19.org/data/files/medialibrary/37983/Disability-and-access-to-information-in-Lebanon,-31-May-2015,-English.pdf>

It is noteworthy here to also explain the difference between freedoms and rights before exploring freedom as a principle asserted in human rights. When we talk about a legal right, this refers to something that cannot be given to you one time and then denied another time. If an individual has a legal right, then some other person has a legal duty to make sure that this right is honored. If it is not, the individual can rely on the law to see if something can be done about the matter. Freedom means that no one will intervene with what you want to do. Unlike the right, no one has the responsibility to enforce and oversee this freedom. The government, however, still has an obligation not to unduly limit individual freedoms.

The power of democratic government is clearly defined by laws and practices that protect individual freedoms. However, the interpretation of “individual freedoms” is often defined by those who hold the seats of power and in most instances those positions are held by men from higher socio-economic backgrounds. So while the idea of individuals being equal under the law is a fundamental tenet of democratic government, in practice it does not always result in individuals being treated equally. According to Hina Jilani, Advocate of the Supreme Court in Pakistan, legal protections are the first step toward guaranteeing the rights and freedoms within constitutions and human rights instruments. Enriching the rights of women and other vulnerable and marginalized groups to challenge the state and private actors that break the law create avenues for women to access the courts to claim redress for any grievance, including discrimination or denial of equality.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Principles of equality and equity***

Justice and equality can only be achieved when people have access to equal opportunities, basic needs, as well as equal treatment, regardless of their color, sex, religion, origin, opinion, or economic or social status. None of these differences indicate that any group or have may claim superiority over others. Equality is brought about by ensuring equal treatment and equal rights for every person. These rights are not only confined to political ones which allow people to change policies of the state. They moreover include rights that ensure individual independence. Full equality plays a significant role in making a fair society.

For example, according to the European Institute for Gender Equality, the concept of gender equality means, “Equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys.” Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, thereby recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.<sup>14</sup>

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13 “Strengthening the Rule of Law to Advance Gender Equality: Q&A with Hina Jilani,” *Women Deliver*, March 10, 2019.

14 Gender equality

*Equity* matters because it is only when all individuals and groups are included and valued that a country can benefit from the richness of different ways of living and understanding the world. An equity approach to democratic government recognizes that distinct groups may need different treatment in order to share the same advantages. Equity initiatives seek to create the conditions for a “level playing field” by addressing these exclusions.

For example, The European Institute for Gender Equality defines gender equity as the, “Provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men.” The concept recognizes that women and men have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalances between the sexes. This may include equal treatment, or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.<sup>15</sup>

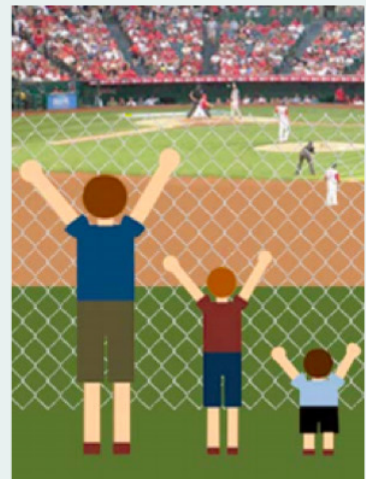
## Equality Versus Equity



In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. **They are being treated equally.**



In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. **They are being treated equitably.**



In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. **The systemic barrier has been removed.**

.....  
15 Gender equity

## Limited Role of the State

Democracy requires that the state not infringe upon the rights of individuals, but it does not require the state to be weak. The State refers to the set of governing institutions that has sovereignty over a definite geographic area and population. It represents the formal structure of society with the authority to make and implement binding, collective decisions. The concept of the state can be distinguished from two related concepts with which it is sometimes confused: the concept of a form of government or regime, such as democracy or dictatorship, and the concept of a political system. The form of government identifies only one aspect of the state, namely, the way in which the highest political offices are filled and their relationship to each other and to society. It does not include other aspects of the state that may be very important in its everyday functioning, which includes maintaining social order, to protect lives and property, to control conflict, and to disperse resources. Thus generally speaking the term “state” refers to the instruments of political power, while the terms regime or form of government refers more to the way in which such instruments can be accessed and employed. However, a government must have a significant degree of power in order to function effectively in pursuit of these objectives.

## Pluralism and Competition

The State, however, is not the only center of legitimate power in a democracy. Power is also dispersed through a complex web of nongovernmental groups and organizations that comprise civil society, including charitable organizations, trade unions, advocacy groups, the media and religious organizations. These groups are necessary to foster pluralism and create competition among ideas and alternatives.

Democracy is essentially a way of organizing competition and participation. This includes the interaction between the state, citizens, and all civil society. The ability of a democracy to organize relationships depends not only on the democratic principles of rights, equality, limited government, and pluralism but also on a system of law and justice. **Rule of law permits participation, promotes cooperation, and protects the fundamental principles of a democratic society.**

## Constitutional Government

In most democracies, a constitution serves as the society’s supreme law, and all citizens — prime ministers to street vendors alike — are subject to its provisions. A constitution generally specifies the rights and responsibilities of citizens and defines the structure and limitations of government. As previously explained, a democratic society is built upon the foundations of individual rights and popular sovereignty and for this reason, government is necessarily limited. **A constitutional government, on the other hand, is organized to prevent any one individual or institution from becoming too powerful and prevailing on all issues.** The government is inclined organizationally and procedurally to make decisions that benefit society, rather than a particular individual.

The separation of powers between different branches of government — legislative, executive and judicial — is essential to enhance the powers of law. This form of limitation is the establishment of checks on the power exercised by each branch. By dividing responsibilities and placing checks on power and influence, a democratic society limits government abuses and helps ensure the rights of individuals. The power of an authoritarian government, on the other hand, is generally not limited or checked in any way. Because power is centralized and unlimited, the government is able to make repressive decisions that violate the rights of individuals and minority groups. Unlike authoritarian governments, the power of democratic government is limited by regular elections. In other words, the government is held accountable because citizens are given the opportunity to elect officials.

## Lawmaking

A constitutional government is responsible for making representative decisions that positively affect the society. Laws define both lawful and unlawful behavior and hold individuals and entities responsible for actions taken in violation of the law, including certain penalties for breaking laws. **The decision making process, which includes competition, deliberation, and compromise, is one of the primary strengths of a democratic society.** Through this process, legal rules, regulations and procedures become public and explicit, rather than arbitrary, secret and subject to manipulation.

The lawmaking bodies in a democracy generally take the form of legislatures or parliaments. Legislatures are found in presidential systems or governments where the executive and legislative functions are separated between two branches.

A legislature's functions depend on the political system in which they are found. Regardless of whatever the conceptual anchor of its many "functions" and "roles" the main activities can be grouped into three broad categories:

- policy-making activities which included introducing and creating law,
- representational activities, and
- system maintenance activities.<sup>16</sup>

The constraints under which legislatures operate are obviously reflected in the scope of their activities, which should not be linked to their influence. A legislature is unable to be an active institution if the presence of a strong executive branch overpowers it. On the other hand, independence to the legislative branch increases its activeness within the overall political system.

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16 Michael L. Mezey, *Comparative Legislature* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1979), p. 7.

## Judicial Independence and Due Process

Most democratic governments also include an **independent judicial branch** that is responsible for review to ensure that its laws and actions of government are consistent with the spirit of the constitution. The judiciary is also responsible for applying the law in a fair manner, also known as due process. This process of judicial review is essential because it prevents legislatures and parliaments from making laws that violate individual rights and prevents the executive from enforcing laws in an arbitrary way. Judges have the obligation not only to serve as an independent check on other branches of government, but to conduct themselves in a transparent manner that respects laws and citizen rights in the judicial process.

The nature of the judicial system is critical to the rule of law. **Impartial judges, governed by clear legal rules, committed to enforcing the rules as written, independent from political influence are essential if law is to be a reliable guide to individuals and a constraint on those in power.** The judiciary's independence allows judges to make lawful decisions, even if such decisions contradict the government or powerful parties involved. The process for appointing judges to the courts should not be vulnerable to political shifts or dominant ideologies. Rather, judge selection should be based on the individual's record of sound decision making and respect for national laws. **This independence and perception as a non-political entity give the judiciary its true power. The independence of the judiciary in a democracy serves as a safeguard of people's rights and freedom.**

It is necessary if legal rules are to be meaningful that judges are committed to applying laws written by others faithfully and in a fair manner. It is fair to ask if a judicial nominee has conducted their professional lives in a way that respects the legal framework of a given country. It is not however; proper to ask nominees to predict how they would rule on particular cases. Once appointed, judges should have the same right to 'freedom of speech' as any other citizen, and be protected by the position they hold to speak freely and make decisions based on their conviction of upholding the constitution and its values.

In addition to the judges, the rules governing the operation of the courts, their jurisdiction, and the procedures used, all affect the vitality of the rule of law.

## Citizen Review

Leaders in any democratic government, regardless of the system, may attempt to extend their powers outside the law, may act arbitrarily or unjustly, and may attempt to establish rule by an individual instead of rule of law. A democratic system of government, however, provides many forms of protection against such violations. A primary form of protection is the right of citizens to protest against government action and the right of citizens to vote leaders out of office. Citizens may also challenge government decision making through the courts. This right is also a responsibility that citizens can use to try to influence positive change on a regular basis.

## RELEVANT EXAMPLES

### The South Africa Constitution

The South African Constitution of 1996 is widely regarded as a model constitutional text. Likewise, the process by which it was made has been hailed as a key part of the successful transition from the oppression of apartheid to a democratic society.<sup>17</sup> In all, it took seven years, from 1989 to 1996, to achieve the final constitution. Almost five years passed between the first meeting of Nelson Mandela and Prime Minister P. W. Botha in 1989 and agreement on an interim constitution and the first non-racial election in 1994. Throughout these years of deliberation, outbreaks of violence threatened the process.

In the late 1980s, worsening economic conditions, increasing internal dissent, and a changing international landscape brought the South African apartheid government to the negotiating table. In 1990, the government lifted the ban on the African National Congress (ANC) and released senior movement leaders from prison while others returned from exile. South Africa's subsequent democratic transition unfolded in two phases: initial multiparty negotiations to agree on key constitutional principles (1990–1994), followed by elections and an interim governance process leading to the passage of a new constitution (1994–1998).<sup>18</sup>

During this transitional period, the ANC took important steps to support gender inclusion in the newly formed party. First, it implemented a formal rule: female ANC leaders and activists secured a 30 percent gender quota for party structures and electoral lists. As a result, one-third of ANC representatives in the 1994 parliament were women. Two prominent women leaders, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and Albertina Sisulu, were elected to the ANC's National Executive Committee, and the ANC Women's League was reestablished in South Africa.

The ANC also endorsed progressive provisions in the new constitution, including a commitment to nonsexism, a gender equality clause that supersedes customary law, and the creation of a statutory Commission on Gender Equality. However, the party's senior leadership remained mostly male. Over time, weakening feminist mobilization within the party and persistent patriarchal norms made it difficult to put legislative gains into practice.

In a key phase from 1990 to 1994, agreements on process were negotiated in private and public sessions between former political enemies. These included a 1990 agreement to negotiate about constitutional negotiations; prolonged arguments from 1991 through 1992 about the form the constitution-making process should take; agreement in April 1993 on procedures; and in December 1993 agreement on an interim constitution including principles and procedures binding on the final

17 "Democratic Constitution Making: The South African Experience." *Vivien Hart*, Special Report: Democratic Constitution Making, *United States Institute of Peace*.

18 Saskia Brechenmacher and Caroline Hubbard, "Breaking the Cycle of Gender Exclusion in Political Party Development," Carnegie Endowment for Peace and The National Democratic Institute, March 24, 2020.

constitution-making process. In April 1994, the first non-racial election for parliament was held with a voter turnout of about 86 percent. The following month, the new parliament met for the first time as the Constitutional Assembly.

From 1994 through 1996 the South African process became a national example of constitution making with active and consistent citizen participation and input. For the first time, their elected representatives in the assembly reached out to educate them and invite their views. The educational effort included a media and advertising campaign using newspapers, radio and television, billboards, and the sides of buses; an assembly newspaper with a circulation of 160,000; cartoons; a web site; and public meetings; together these efforts reached an estimated 73 percent of the population. From 1994 through 1996 the Constitutional Assembly received two million submissions, from individuals and many advocacy groups, professional associations, and other interests.

In the final phase from 1994 through 1996, in parallel with the participatory campaign, committees of the assembly drafted a new constitution within the parameters of the 1994 interim constitution; a first working draft was published in November 1995, leaving aside 68 issues for further work; a revised draft was produced in April 1996; and a final text in May 1996. From July through September 1996 the Constitutional Court reviewed the text; the court then returned the text to the assembly for amendments, which were made in October. In November, the court gave its final authorization and in December, President Mandela signed the constitution into law.

The South African process took time. It was phased. It benefited from an interim constitution that allowed the dialogue of transition to continue. Participation was invited at a chosen moment rather than throughout and then creativity and resources were committed to facilitating a serious dialogue. Trust that the outcome would be consistent with the 1994 democratic principles was created by the continuation of the conversation between judicial certification and parliamentary confirmation. Groups including women and tribal authorities found access and made sure that their interests were taken into account. South Africa also had a pre-existing civil society that could be drawn in as a counterweight to the entrenched racial and partisan divisions of politics.

## Rule of Law in Lebanon

Lebanon's constitution was written before extensive provisions for the judiciary became common in the region. While it has been amended, there has been no additional detail regarding the role of the courts. Article 19 calls for the establishment of a Constitutional Council and Article 20 states that 'judicial power is to be exercised by the tribunals of various levels and jurisdictions.' An additional article, Article 80, deals with trying ministers and presidents, and established the High Judiciary Council.

Lebanon's regular court system is based on the Napoleonic code. There is also a separate system of specialized confessional courts with jurisdiction over personal status matters (rules on marriage,



divorce, and inheritance) in their respective communities. The Shari'a courts are divided into Sunni and Shi'a units. There are also courts for the various Christian sects and Druze.

## Judiciary Councils

The Constitutional Council, created by the 1990 constitutional amendments, judges the constitutionality of laws and arbitrates conflicts that arise from presidential and parliamentary elections. It is composed of ten members, half of them selected by the Chamber of Deputies and the other half by the Council of Ministers. The president, the speaker of parliament, the prime minister, and ten members of parliament have the right to consult this council on matters that relate to the constitutionality of laws. The officially recognized heads of religious communities have the right to consult the Council concerning laws relating to personal status, the freedom of belief and religious practice, and the freedom of religious education. Despite its constitutional mandate, the Council has a sporadic record of case review and decision-making. It is not currently active, lacking the number of judges required to consider cases.

The Lebanese civil war disrupted many functions of the state, including the ability to hold regular municipal council elections — prior to the war's beginning the last elections were held in 1963, resulting in many councils being disbanded. Following the end of the civil war, Lebanese citizens and parliamentarians began to express their concern that this crucial level of government was not working throughout the country. Despite this pressure for action, including the drafting of a law to govern the municipal election process by parliament in 1997, the process was stalled and mandates of current municipalities were extended until 1999.

In order to reinvigorate the process, a group of parliamentarians petitioned the Constitutional Council to consider repealing the extension in order to hold elections immediately. In a prompt 12-day review of the case, the Council issued a verdict overturning the extension, noting it was unconstitutional. Specifically, the Council noted that the extension undermined the Taif Accord's emphasis on the increasing role of municipal councils and the democratic principle of regular elections to allow citizens to voice their opinions about their leadership.

The High Judicial Council, headed by the Chief Justice of the Court of Cassation, is in charge of judicial appointments, transfers, and training. However, in practice, the Ministry of Justice performs these functions in order to guarantee adequate representation for all confessional groups. The Ministry of Justice appoints all judges based on their religious affiliation. Its decisions are submitted to the Supreme Judicial Council for approval.

## Court System

Lebanon's court system is divided into two components: regular and special courts. Regular courts follow a three-tiered approach, allowing for initial presentation of grievances, an appeals court, and finally the Court of Cassation in Beirut that serves as the final court of appeal for all lower court cases in the regular court system. This court also adjudicates in the event of judicial disputes between special and regular courts, or between two types of special courts.

Special courts in Lebanon were formed to address cases of unique stature. For example, the Military Court tries cases involving military personnel and civilians in security-related issues (such as espionage, treason, weapons possession, etc.). Defendants on trial in the military tribunal have the same procedural rights as defendants in ordinary courts. The Military Court, which consists of predominantly military officers with no legal training, does not observe international standards of criminal procedure.

The Judicial Court is a permanent tribunal of five senior judges that adjudicates threats to national security. Upon the recommendation of the Minister of Justice, the cabinet decides whether to try a case before this tribunal. Verdicts from this tribunal are irrevocable and may not be appealed. In addition, there are several quasi-judicial or arbitration bodies of labor, real estate, and customs disputes.

The Ministry of Justice appoints all judges to regular and special, taking into account the sectarian affiliation of the prospective judge. A shortage of qualified judges impedes efforts to adjudicate cases backlogged during the years of civil war.

There is no trial by jury in Lebanon. Trials were generally public, but judges had the discretion to order a closed court session. Defendants have the right to be present at trial and the right of timely consultation with an attorney. While defendants do not have the presumption of innocence, they have the right to confront or question witnesses against them, but they must do so through the court panel, which decides whether or not to permit the defendant's question. Defendants and their attorneys have access to government-held evidence relevant to their cases and the right of appeal.

### Legal Hierarchy in Lebanon

1. Constitution
2. Law
3. Decrees presented by government
4. Decrees presented by minister(s)+signature of PM+ signature of president
5. Decisions
6. Circulars/notifications

The Lebanese Constitution states as follows:

*Article 52 [Negotiation of International Treaties]*

The President of the Republic negotiates international treaties in coordination with the Prime Minister. These treaties are not considered ratified except after agreement of the Council of Ministers. They are to be made known to the Chamber whenever the national interest and security of the state permit. However, treaties involving the finances of the state, commercial treaties, and in general treaties that cannot be renounced every year are not considered ratified until they have been approved by the Chamber.

And again in Article 65 of Section 3

*[Section] 3. The Council of Ministers*

*Article 65 [Powers]*

Basic national issues require the approval of two thirds of the members of the Council named in the Decree forming the Cabinet. Basic national issues are considered the following: The amendment of the constitution, the declaration of a state of emergency and its termination, war and peace, general mobilization, **international agreements and treaties**, the annual government budget, comprehensive and long term development projects, the appointment of Grade One government employees and their equivalents, the review of the administrative map, the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, electoral laws, nationality laws, personal status laws, and the dismissal of Ministers.

The Lebanese Constitution states that laws can not contradict ratified international treaties and conventions. For example, laws cannot go against the Declaration of Human Rights. There is greater debate, however, when it comes to the matter of what takes precedence over the other, the constitution or international ratified treaties. For some, the constitution and international treaties are of equal importance since the constitution calls for the respect of these treaties. To some degree, therefore, the constitution cannot go against international treaties by its own definition. Others argue that it isn't clear as to which of the two texts claims more importance.

## Civic Review

Lebanese law provides citizens the right to change their government through periodic elections. The law states that elections for the parliament must be held every four years, and the parliament elects the president every six years. The president and the parliament nominate the prime minister, who, with the president, chooses the cabinet. According to the unwritten National Pact of 1943, the president must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, and the speaker of parliament a Shi'a Muslim.

There are currently no laws in Lebanon regarding public access to government documents. In practice the government does not respond to requests for documents. A number of civic associations have been formed to create mechanisms for oversight, however there has been no clear changes in legislation or attitudes towards citizens' ability to request information from government.

## Discussion Topics:

- What are the characteristics of a free society and how do you think those relate to the situation in Lebanon?
- How is the relationship between the government and people defined in Lebanon?
- What role does law play in Lebanon and how does it affect individual citizens?
- Are all individual citizens affected equally/similar or does the effect of the law depend on their status in society? Their identity?
- What would happen if legal rules, regulations and procedures did not exist?
- How are laws made and applied in Lebanon?
- How do laws get applied differently to different groups? How are different groups differentially impacted by laws (women, minorities etc.)
- What are some avenues for monitoring government which are easily accessible to citizens?
- Why is the independence of the judiciary essential for the democratic system in Lebanon?

## RESOURCES

### Delhi Declaration — International Commission of Jurists

[http://www.icj.org/article.php3?id\\_article=3088&id\\_rubrique=11&lang=en](http://www.icj.org/article.php3?id_article=3088&id_rubrique=11&lang=en)

**Lebanese Transparency Association** [www.transparency-lebanon.org](http://www.transparency-lebanon.org)

**Lebanese Parliamentary Monitor** [www.lpmonitor.org](http://www.lpmonitor.org)

**The Judges in Lebanon: Challenges and Perspectives**, Afif Chamseddine, Joseph Chaoul, Denise Jabbara Khoury, Bechara Matta, Sami Mansour, Chehib Mekalled, Mazar Saghie, et al (authors) , 2000.

<http://www.lcps-lebanon.org/web04/english/publications/books/abstracts.html#perspec>

**Access to Information in the Middle East and North Africa Region** <http://www.arabaccess.org/>

**Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform** <http://www.omsar.gov.lb/>

**Ministry of Justice** <http://www.justice.gov.lb/>

**Constitutional Council** <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.gov.lb/>

**State Council** <http://www.statecouncil.gov.lb/main.htm>



## LESSON 3.4

# NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

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### Good Governance

Good governance, while not explicitly defined, is a term used to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public institutions, and properly allocate public resources in the pursuit of ensuring human rights.

Good governance describes the leadership “in the decision-making process and the process of making decisions that are implemented (or not implemented).” This type of governance is a concept that can apply to international companies, national and local governments, and interactions between various sectors of society.

Thus, the concept of “good governance” often stands out as a model for a comparison between ineffective economies and political bodies with viable economies. In this respect, relief organizations and other authorities in developed countries shape their own definitions of good governance through the creation of criteria specific to their own agendas, resulting in varied meanings of “good governance” across different contexts.

#### Principles of Good Governance — *Source: UNDP Asia*

1. **Participation:** To encourage all citizens to exercise their right to express their opinion in the process of making decisions concerning the public interest, both directly and indirectly.
2. **Rule of Law:** To realize law enforcement which is fair and impartial, without exception, while honoring basic human rights and observing the values prevalent in society.
3. **Transparency:** To build mutual trust between the government and the public through the provision of information with guaranteed easy access to accurate and adequate information.
4. **Equality:** To provide equal opportunities for all members of society to improve their welfare.

5. **Responsiveness:** To increase the sensitivity of government administrators to the aspirations of the public.
6. **Vision:** To develop the region based on a vision and strategy geared towards full citizen participation in all processes of development, so that they acquire a sense of ownership and responsibility for the progress of their regions.
7. **Accountability:** To increase the accountability of decision-makers with regard to all decisions involving the public interest.
8. **Supervision:** To increase the efforts of supervision in the operation of government, as well as the implementation of development through increased involvement by the private sector and general public.
9. **Efficiency and Effectiveness:** To guarantee public service delivery by utilizing all available resources optimally and responsibly.
10. **Professionalism:** To enhance the capacity and moral disposition of government administrators so that they are capable of providing easy, fast, accurate, and affordable services.

## Centralized Governance

The central administration is the authority that undertakes the administrative functions of the state with the purpose of limiting the consolidation of administrative governance in the hands of one authority. In this capacity, the central government runs the state affairs from the capital, or through its representatives in the regions.

The central administration system was used in ancient societies where the needs of the community were limited and the role of the state was to keep the security and order. Given these circumstances, it was relatively easy to rest the power of executive decisions in the hands of the king and his representatives. As time progressed, changes in the political and economic levels amongst different communities made it increasingly difficult to apply central administration in the organizational structure of the modern state. However, most states still use important practices from this system.

*Municipality:* a government department geared towards developing cities and surrounding villages through processes such as implementing plans for citizens, organizing markets, and managing city maintenance. Specific tasks include street lighting and beautification, discharging of rain water, planting of trees and installing signboards on streets, and managing city cleanliness. As a result, countries allocate sizeable budgets for the development and improvement of municipalities.

*Mayor:* responsible for the municipality and exercises authority over the implementation of projects, employment, transportation, and construction of municipally-owned buildings. The mayor can also delegate authority to deputies and/or assistants as needed.

## Features of a Centralized System:

A central administration system has two features that are important when applying this kind of organizational structure:

1. **Focusing the functional management in the hands of central administration:** This feature is achieved when the administrative departments of a state alone are authorized to give the final determination in all matters. Focusing the functional management could be absolute, commonly known as absolute centralization, or it could be relatively flexible, a concept known as non-central administration. In non-central administrative governance, bodies are given the authority to make final decisions autonomous of any minister and/or extension of the central administration, but in a limited capacity. The tool for achieving non-central administration is through the delegation of authority to subordinates, who remain under the supervision of the head of the administrative unit but are free to use discretion when exercising authority. This form of government ensures the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative work while also achieving flexibility within the administrative unit.
2. **Administrative hierarchy:** This means that all public administrations and interests are combined under one administrative system. This system is arranged in the form of a ladder or pyramid, where the head of the administrative authority is listed at the top, and the rest of the administrative positions are ranked from top to bottom in descending order of authority. This leads to a hierarchy linking the administrative system units with each other so that the system is a coherent chain.

Advantages and disadvantages of Centralization:

- **Advantages of a centralized system:** it helps a modern state establish and install the authorities of the government, strengthen its political unity, unify the administrative techniques used in the state, and ease coordination between the administrative body throughout the country.
- **Disadvantages of a centralized system:** slow and inefficient work, administrative bureaucracy, lack of availability of information, the concentration of power.

## Decentralized Governance

There are different perceptions about the concept of decentralization, varying from one country to another. In general, we can define decentralization as the process of devolving economic activities and services from a controlling central area to regions. Administrative decentralization is known as an act by the government in which it transfers the authority and responsibility to institutions that are politically and administratively on a lower level. This transfer gives regions the ability to practice the work of the state in regards to implementing, monitoring, and managing the public investments. The transformation of authority should be accompanied by providing the necessary financial means for decentralized regional development.

### Types of decentralization:

- *Geographical decentralization:* The process of distributing the authority between regions and provinces of the same country entrusted with a local council in which all its members are elected by the citizens of the region. The local council has the authority to set an independent budget and make decisions related to projects and public facilities within the region. Some call this type of administrative decentralization “local administration” or “regional administration.”
- *Functional decentralization:* The distribution of authority on hierarchal levels, as well as between departments in the same organization or ministry. This type of administration is needed when the upper administrations are overwhelmed with tasks to the extent that it might affect the efficiency and effectiveness of work.
- *Political decentralization:* A legal process where government jobs are distributed between the state government and authorities in other cities of the same country. This process results in a type of regime called a “federal union.” A federal union consists of several governments forming one, cohesive union in which each state has its own governing body comprising three authoritative bodies. This pattern of governance exists in: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Mexico, the U.S., the former Soviet Union, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and others.

### Features of decentralization:

DECENTRALIZATION REQUIRES **THREE** IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:

1. The availability of local interests that have legal personality: Besides the public facilities provided by the state (ex. defense and the post office), there are also services provided by the local administration, such as the distribution of electricity and water in a region. The state is responsible for determining which services are national and which services are considered local. In order for a local administrative unit to manage its own affairs, it must have staff, an independent budget, properties, and legal personality.



2. Organizing independent local councils that are elected by voters in the same region.
3. Units of local administrations should not be working under the strict oversight of the central administration.

### Patterns and levels of decentralization:

Decentralization is divided into four patterns depending on the level of transferring the authority and the type of unit that authority is shared with:

1. *Transfer*: The transfer of authority to independent or semi-independent local governments.
2. *Authorization*: The transfer of the responsibility to manage services to government bodies and local government.
3. *Abolition of centralization (non-centralization)*: To give the authority of implementing national programs or agenda to lower administrations.
4. *Abstraction*: The transfer of public services and institutions to private companies and institutions.

Each pattern has its own political, financial, and managerial elements. The greater the given authority, the stronger the decentralization

Some have identified the extent and type of authorities for each aspect of administration and linked them to the level of decentralization as follows:

1. **Locational dimension**: This refers to the formation of geographical units. If this is done under the constitution, then the decentralization is considered to be strong. If this is done under a law, it is considered satisfactory. If the local units are formed by a decision, then decentralization is weak.
2. **Organizational dimension**: This refers to the extent that the local governments are independent in developing their own rules and procedures. If the local governments are fully independent, then decentralization is strong, but if the central government develops the rules, then decentralization is weak.
3. **Institutional dimension**: If local governments have their own legislature and judiciary independent of the central government, then decentralization is strong. If all institutions are available in the local governance except for the judiciary, then decentralization is satisfactory. If the local government is the only administrative authority, then decentralization is considered to be weak.

4. **Appointing officials:** If citizens in a region elect the officials, then decentralization is strong. If the officials are appointed by the approval of the central government, then decentralization is satisfactory. If the central government appoints the officials, then decentralization is weak.
5. **Determination of authorities:** If the authorities of local units are decided under the constitution, then decentralization is strong. If the authorities of local units are decided by law, decentralization is satisfactory. If the authorities of local units are based on a decision, then decentralization is weak.
6. **The imposition and collection of taxes:** If local administrative units are authorized to collect state taxes from different areas within its jurisdiction, then decentralization is strong. If local administrative units are limited in where they can collect taxes even within their jurisdiction, then the level of decentralization is satisfactory. If those administrative units do not have the authority to collect taxes at all, then the level of decentralization is weak.
7. **The authority to spend tax revenue:** If local administrative units enjoy the right to use and spend the revenue from taxes independently and without conditions, the level of decentralization is strong. If spending tax revenue is determined in accordance with the terms set forth by the central authority, the level of decentralization is satisfactory. If the spending of tax revenue requires the approval of the central authority, the level of decentralization is weak.
8. **The representation of local interests at the national level:** This means that the local and regional interests are represented as institutions at the national level, for instance in parliamentary assemblies, the decentralization is strong. If the representation of local interests at the national level is presented through one or more persons, the level of decentralization is satisfactory, and if those two prerequisites are missing, the level of decentralization is weak.

### Advantages and disadvantages of a decentralized system:

The advantages of decentralization:

- Alleviates the burden on departments in the central government.
- Administrative work is less time-consuming and more efficient.
- Fosters better coordination between the state and regions.
- Motivates employees by allowing them to participate in decision-making processes.
- Trains the directors in the regions and provinces by delegating authority, thus opening the way to increasing their experience and learning through work.

### Disadvantages of decentralization:

- Weakens the central authority, which will lead to a weakening of coordination between the central authority and the regions, and among the regions themselves, which are the responsibility of the central administration.

- The local authorities and local administrations will contravene the plans of the central authority, which will be reflected in the weakening of the implementation of the general policies of the state.
- Increasing the financial burden due to the recurrence of some units, such as the legal and administrative units, at the local level.
- The need to tighten control over the activities of the local units.
- The desire for independence, especially if the decentralized region is accompanied by feelings of national, religious, or ethnic hostility.

In Lebanon, decentralization is administrative and not political, therefore, local government applies the laws enforced by the parliament and decisions made at the local level are in line with that of the central government's policies. The union of municipalities and *muhafez* (governor) allow for close coordination between municipalities and the central government.

As a result, this has strengthened local authorities. In addition, the desire for independence is not applicable to Lebanon as no municipality would want to be completely independent from the central government.

Despite the trend of centralization among developing countries, there is still a growing emphasis on the positive aspects of decentralized administration. But moving in this direction without reservations may lead to unintended consequences for the administrative scheme. In summary, decentralization gives more flexibility in decision-making, which increases organizational efficiency in state administrative structures. Generally, there is no authority that is entirely decentralized or centralized. Rather, authorities tend to be a combination of both in varying degrees, which creates a balance of powers. If senior management or a centralized power has no authority (i.e. being absolutely decentralized) it ceases to serve a purpose. Likewise, the lack of empowerment of lower or local administrations and the focus instead on the seniority of management (i.e. being absolutely centralized) not only nullifies the role of the lower or local administration, but it also nullifies the organizational structure of the organization or the state completely.

# National Governance in Lebanon

## National Level Government

### Head of State: President

- The President of the Republic is the chief of state.
- He chairs the higher defence council
- He is the commander in chief of the armed forces which are subject to the authority of the Council of Ministers.
- The President of the Republic presides over the Council of Ministers, whenever he wishes, without participating in the vote.
- The President of the Republic appoints the Head of Government in charge of consulting with the President of the Chamber of Deputies with respect to representative mandatory consultations, the results of which are officially reported to him.
- The president is elected by the parliament for a term of six years, which is not immediately renewable.

### Head of Government: Prime Minister

- The Prime Minister is the Head of Government, and is responsible for executing the public policy made by the Council of Ministers.
- By law, he is Vice President of the Supreme Council of Defense.
- He presents the public policy of the Government to the Chamber of Deputies.
- He countersigns all decrees with the President of the Republic, except the decree nominating him Head of Government, or the decree accepting the Government's resignation, or considering it resigned.

### Council of Ministers

- The council is generally tasked with overseeing daily affairs and preparing bills for the Parliament to vote on.
- The individual line ministers work on their own portfolios, and only need the signature of the President and the Prime Minister for decisions concerning their individual ministry.
- For decisions that affect the entire government, a majority of the ministers are needed. For the government to consent on so-called "basic" issues (constitutional amendments, electoral laws, dissolving parliament, war, and peace, intl. treaties, state of emergency, state budget, long-term development plans, appointing first-cadre state employees, redistricting, nationality laws, personal affairs law, dismissing ministers) a 2/3 majority of the ministers present is needed.
- The following is a list of some the powers of the Council of Ministers:
  - Forming bills for the legislature to vote on.
  - Sets the legislative agenda, and takes the necessary decisions for the implementation of the bills adopted by the Parliament.

- Oversee all civil, military, and security administrations.

## National Legislature

- The national-level legislature in Lebanon is called the Assembly of Representatives.
- The Assembly has 128 seats, with members elected to a four-year term.
- Each religious community has an allotted number of seats in the Parliament. They do not represent only their co-religionists, however; all candidates in a particular constituency, regardless of religious affiliation, must receive a plurality of the total vote, which includes followers of all confessions.
- Its major functions are to elect the President, to approve government, and to approve laws and expenditure.

## Judiciary

- The judicial branch includes the following courts:
  - Ordinary Courts:
    - Court of Cassation
    - Courts of Appeal
    - Courts of First Instance
  - Special Courts:
    - The Constitutional Council (Rules of the constitutionality of laws)
    - Supreme Council (Rules on charges of President and Prime minister)
    - Military Court System (Rules on military-related issues as well as security-related crimes)

# Local Governance in Lebanon

## Subnational Government

1. There are nine governorates in Lebanon: Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Jbeil-Keserwan, North Lebanon, Akkar, South Lebanon, Nabatiye, Beqaa and Baalbek-Hermel. Each governorate is run by a governor, also known as the *muhafez*. Governors are appointed by the Council of Ministers for a four-year term and fall under the purview of the Ministry of Interior.
2. Each governorate is further divided into districts. There are 26 districts in Lebanon. Each district is governed by a district head or a Kaemakam. This position is appointed by the Governor for a four-year term.

3. Each district is made up of municipalities. There are 1,026 municipalities in Lebanon. Each municipality is represented by a mayor, also known as the *mukhtar*. This position is elected for a six-year term.

## Municipalities in Lebanon

The municipalities in Lebanon represent the smallest unit of governance in Lebanon. Within this context, the municipal law issued in 1977, defines municipalities as “a local administration, which practices power given to it by the law. Municipalities have financial and administrative autonomy in this law” (Article 1). Mandates of Municipalities are social and economic, as it is considered administrative units, and can organize the life of its citizens each within its specific “borders”.

A jurisdiction issued from the constitutional council has stressed on that municipal election complies with the Taef’s ideals. The municipal council has two main roles: decision making on one hand and executive powers on the other hand, lead by the president of the municipality and supported by the staff.

However, we cannot understand the powers granted to municipalities, unless we understand its structure.

### A. Organizational Structure of Municipalities

The number of members of the municipality varies between 9 and 24, depending on the registered number of citizens. Members of the municipality are elected by the eligible registered citizens in that area for 6 years. Members of the municipality are not allowed to have any other position in the government to avoid conflict of interest.

While the municipality cannot legislate laws, however, as mentioned earlier, it has decision making power. It also has the responsibility of monitoring the performance of the President of the municipality and the work of the legislative branch within the municipality. The Municipal council discusses, assesses, analyzes, and executes projects which they deem important to their area.

### B. The Powers of Municipalities

As per the law issued in 1977, any job that benefits the public is the responsibility of the municipal council. As follows:

- Fixing the road and collecting wastes
- Public health: such as putting out fires, rescuing, etc..
- Urban Planning: Roads, gardens
- Developing the infrastructure: Lighting of roads, sewage
- Services: Public Transportation, clinics and hospitals, and other social services

- Education: Establishing schools, supporting education, etc.
- Environmental issues: sustaining the environment in a geographical area
- Establishing Cultural centers, theatres, museums

A member of the municipal council is responsible for the following tasks:

- Electing a President and a Vice-president from among the members
- Having a permanent residence within the municipal area; otherwise, he/she will be considered duly notified in the municipality hall
- Submit proposals, projects, and ideas that achieve public interest
- Participate in municipal council sessions through attendance, discussion and voting on resolutions
- Monitor the President's performance through the budget and financial Statement

### Supervisory Authority

Municipalities are subject to centralized supervision since they have limited independence. The authority granted to municipalities by the law (administrative and financial independence) are also lost through financial and administrative supervision, as an argument to promote the public interest, by following the centralized authority.

As for the three representatives of the supervisory committee, they are the “Ka'emakam, Minister of Interior and Municipalities, and the Governor.” The municipal council must present their decisions to these individuals within a timeframe of 8 days after issuance and must get the approval of the committee. The supervisory committee can choose, at any time, for security reasons, to postpone the execution of decisions issued by the municipal council. The only exception is the municipality of Beirut which is only supervised by the minister of Interior only.

The Ka'emakam must approve municipal councils decisions related to:

- Municipal Budget and loans
- Municipal fees as per the municipal law
- Real Estate selling/ buying
- Supporting people with disabilities, NGOs, sports, and cultural activities with a maximum of 10 million liras per year.
- Issuing contracts and services that exceed 30 million Liras and below 80 million, and approving related procurement.
- Conflict resolution
- Accepting or declining donations.

The Governor has the authority to convene the municipal council and attend its meetings, as well as the approval or decline of the decisions taken, as follows:

- Approving deals and contracts related to public works and services that exceed 80 million Liras and the approval of its procurement.
- Selling/ Buying real estate that exceeds 100,000 million Liras
- Rent contracts that exceed 40 million Liras
- Establishing Souks, museums, hospitals, etc...

As for the Minister of Interior, he/she approves the following decisions:

- Naming streets, Public buildings, and statues.
- Establishing Municipal property
- Forming Municipal unions that include several municipalities
- Changing public municipal property to private municipal property
- Procurement for public works and services
- Procurement for selling municipal property.

The ka'emakam and Governor are appointed and serve as major decision-makers.

## Issues that the municipality faces related to budget

As stated in the first part of the municipal law, each municipality should have an autonomous budget and expenses. However, this is not happening. Municipalities collect revenues that form its budget and this is done according to the size of the municipality, taking into consideration the population size. In 1998, the MoIM along with the MoF coordinate together to release the money collected from services such as (phone bills, EDL....) to the municipalities. This led to neglecting some municipalities who are not in the same affiliation with the minister. As for expenses, there are some policies set for that. Municipalities have a ceiling limit to spend on projects, in case the project costs more than permitted, they have to take authorization from higher authorities.

## The need for Reform

Since the municipal law is not applied properly and some municipalities have greater authorities from others. Hence, we are much in need for decentralization. Decentralization aims to distribute resources and responsibilities equally. By this we mean, citizens do not have to go to the capital to get their administrative work at public administration done. Thus, there should be an administrative unit in each *Muhafaza*.



## The importance of decentralization

Below are some reasons why decentralization has become an important topic for discussion:

- Cutting distance between citizens and state, where citizens will feel they are closely linked to their state when they can make decisions and accomplish things in their constituents. Consequently, decentralization can have a positive impact on citizens.
- Promote a sense of responsibility which increases accountability and transparency.
- Enhances transparency in decision making.
- Decentralization encourages people in decision making positions to know more about citizen's concerns' and thus respond to their needs in an efficient way.
- It gives equal opportunities to all citizens across the country.

Serious efforts were made in Lebanon in 2010–2012 by a government commission headed by Ziyad Baroud, former minister of the interior and municipalities in the government of President Fouad Siniora. In 2018, a parliamentary subcommittee continued to review the 2014 decentralization draft bill.

## The effect of the current system on citizen's participation

As we have seen that decentralization encourages citizens to be more effective. And this cannot be achieved within the current system. People can only advocate for their issues through municipalities and since the latest have limited authorities they won't achieve anything. So, citizens have to create pressure from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education if they want to have a school in their constituents and not through the municipality.



## LESSON 3.5

# DEMOCRATIC ACTORS

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The term Democratic Actors can be defined as organizations and institutions such as political parties, syndicates, and civil society organizations that are separate from formal government institutions and play an active role in influencing policy that shapes citizen's lives. This lesson will define the roles of each of the actors while explaining their duties.

Before getting the different roles and structures of these actors it is important to understand the interplay between these actors and power, politics, and participation that shape how these actors influence democratic development. These power relations shape usual practice and the possibilities for, and pathways to, change. They are central to formal political processes but also to people's everyday interactions.

### Power

It may be difficult to talk about power. The subject can make people uncomfortable or even afraid, but if citizens want to make a change in their community, it is important to illuminate the many ways in which powerful interests shape the way we live. We also need to uncover how citizens can work together to develop a different kind of power to make the changes we want to see. It is important to realize that the reason why things are the way they are is often because it is in the best interest of powerful people or groups. There are many ways that they may try to maintain power—control of the government, demonstrations of force, and access to money or wealth are a few obvious ones. But even though it may seem impossible to take action when facing such powerful forces, you can strengthen your own ability to exert influence and open up possibilities for changes that will improve your community. You have to be ready to join forces with others who have similar goals to take action collectively. You also need to develop your own knowledge and confidence, and that of your fellow activists, so that each member of the group feels ready to take on the challenges of change.

It can be helpful to consider three different forms that power can take — visible, hidden and invisible. You may encounter one or all three types of power in politics.

1. **Visible power** refers to contests over interest which are seen in public spaces or formal decision-making bodies. For example, this includes decisions made in legislatures, local government bodies, local assemblies or consultative forums.
  - a. The assumption in understanding this type of power is that access to these decision-making arenas by powerless groups is relatively open. Those with grievances are able to articulate them in the formal decision-making processes and participate fully.
  - b. A second assumption is that by seeing who participates, who wins and who loses in these arenas, you can tell who has power.
  - c. Visible power also assumes that decision-making spaces are neutral and that any players who have issues to raise may engage freely. It also assumes that actors are conscious and aware of their grievances and have the resources, organization and agency to make their voice heard. However, there are many ways in which certain actors are kept from the decision-making table and certain issues are kept off of the agenda. These are referred to as hidden power and invisible power.
  
2. **Hidden power** is used by actors to maintain their power by creating barriers to participation and excluding the public arena. Examples of this type of power include decisions made by elites or political leaders behind ‘closed doors’, without public consultation.
  - a. Through hidden forms of power, alternative choices are limited, less powerful people and their concerns are excluded, and the rules of the game are set to be biased against certain people and issues. While it may be less visible, hidden power still assumes that people are aware of and are able to articulate their grievances.
  - b. Strategies which address this form of power focus on strengthening people’s voices and capacities to speak out, mobilizing and organizing to overcome the barriers to participation, using research and media to challenge how issues are framed. Often when we talk about hidden power, we talk about how people affected negatively by power may challenge it, to make their voices more visible. For example, changing the rules about who is allowed to speak in a public meeting can bring new voices or issues to the table.
  
3. **Invisible power** goes a step further than hidden power and is about how dominant ideologies and values affect people’s awareness of their rights and interests. This refers to contexts where people may be unaware of their rights or ability to speak out, and may come to see dominant forms of visible and hidden power as natural, which therefore go unchallenged or unquestioned.
  - a. Poor people, for instance, may accept their circumstance as the status quo even in the face of inequalities around them, internalizing dominant explanations that tell them poverty is ‘their fault’ rather than a systemic problem.

- b. Strategies for challenging invisible power involve approaches like awareness raising, adult education, participatory research to validate peoples' own knowledge, uses of the media and popular communication methods to challenge dominant stereotypes and discourses, changes in approaches to schooling and socialization, as well as many others.

## Political Parties

Political parties are organizations that bring together groups of people with common beliefs about the way society should be structured, the role that government plays, and the way that government and citizens should relate to each other. These parties compete for governmental power or influence over the decision-making process in order to implement that ideology.

Through their choices of candidates and policies, they provide citizens with options for governance. They can strengthen national political institutions when they present these choices at elections and seek to mobilize citizens behind their vision of the national interest. **Parties can exist outside a democracy while a democracy can't exist without parties.**

Political parties provide organized channels for citizen participation in decisionmaking and enable peaceful competition for political power. They also select candidates for political office and often decide which issues make it onto policy agendas. As a result, they can play an important role in ensuring the political inclusion of women and other marginalized groups. Gender equality in political parties also has crucial implications for democratic legitimacy and resilience.<sup>19</sup>

Yet parties around the world have historically been patriarchal and exclusionary organizations. Women face both formal and informal barriers to political participation, including opaque processes for nominating candidates and parties with hypermasculine cultures. Women are often relegated to supporting roles and contend with direct resistance to their participation and leadership. Some parties have made formal commitments to gender equality, but most fall short of living out such commitments or achieving a high degree of inclusion.<sup>20</sup>

The norm change necessary for increasing inclusiveness is often slow within political parties. Those that hold the reigns of power are reluctant to make way for new entrants into the political process and to relinquish the set of norms that has helped them maintain control. Changing the behaviors and attitudes considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable in political parties requires unearthing previously held norms in order to affirm and retain those that work and change or expand those that do not. In order to address the norms that are exclusionary and brace the space open for women, as well as other marginalized groups, action must be taken at the individual, institutional and societal levels.<sup>21</sup>

19 Saskia Brechenmacher and Caroline Hubbard, "Breaking the Cycle of Gender Exclusion in Political Party Development," Carnegie Endowment for Peace and The National Democratic Institute, March 24, 2020.

20 Ibid.

21 NDI, "Win With Women Global Action Plan: Status of Women in Political Parties"

In addition, in most countries, it is political parties that provide the “training ground” for young or new politicians, as well as parties that recruit, select, and support candidates for elections. As such, parties can be especially important avenues for groups, like women, who have historically been excluded from the political process. As a key gateway to policy creation and political office, parties can foster women’s ability to enter and participate equally in political life. At the same time, however, political parties can also be “protected” public spaces. Despite their democratic political purposes, interactions between members often take place behind closed doors. The dynamics of party competition — together with ties of loyalty and a sense of common cause and identity — create pressures, not to disclose any behaviors that might cast the party in an unfavorable light. This resulting environment can’t allow and enable violence against women within party ranks, while obscuring such behaviors from public view — and, in many cases, permitting perpetrators to act with impunity. This violence is not restricted to physical harm. It encompasses a spectrum of acts committed in person and, increasingly, online, that are designed to control, limit, or prevent women’s full and equal political participation.<sup>22</sup>

Political parties also have a key role to play in making political processes more inclusive of young people. As a key political entrypoint, political parties influence the extent to which young people are active in politics, but their failure to successfully engage young people can lead to distrust, disengagement and marginalization. To address this, political parties could adopt measures to improve youth participation, including codes of conduct that prescribe peaceful youth engagement; mentoring and leadership programs to counter exclusionary practices and foster youth networks; subsidies to facilitate access by youth to political finance; and candidate and party quotas to build robust youth representation. Strong party youth wings can also provide a voice and connections for young people entering the political and electoral cycle.

However, Young people do not see political parties as addressing priorities or issues of concern. Youth want to be consulted and heard. They believe young people should engage in decision-making both within government and within parties. Additionally, traditional political party communications are ineffective at reaching young people. Not only are political parties failing to engage young people, but they also fail to communicate with young people in a way or in a language that resonates with them. Most youth also want political parties to use new technologies to communicate. Traditional political party communications are ineffective at reaching young people. Not only are political parties failing to engage young people, but they also fail to communicate with young people in a way or in a language that resonates with them.

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22 NDI, “No Party to Violence: Analyzing Violence Against Women in Political Parties: Compendium Report of Country Pilots in Côte d’Ivoire, Honduras, Tanzania, and Tunisia,” 2018.

# Party Systems

## Single Party System

A single-party state, one-party system, or single-party system is a type of party system government in which a single political party forms the government and no other parties are permitted to run candidates for election. In single-party systems, one political party is legally allowed to hold effective power. Communist states such as China are some of the examples; others can be found in Fascist states such as Nazi Germany was between 1933 and 1945. The single-party system is thus usually equated with dictatorships and tyranny. Sometimes a single-party state is used to describe a dominant-party system where unfair laws or practices prevent the opposition from legally getting power. Some single-party states only outlaw opposition parties, while allowing subordinate allied parties to exist as part of a permanent coalition such as a popular front.

## Two-Party System

A two-party system is a form of party system where two major political parties dominate voting in nearly all elections, at every level. As a result, all, or nearly all, elected offices end up being held by candidates endorsed by one of the two major parties. Coalition governments occur only rarely in two-party systems, though each party may internally look like a coalition. One right-wing coalition party and one left-wing coalition party is the most common ideological breakdown in such a system but in two-party states, political parties traditionally catch all parties which are ideologically broad and inclusive.

Under a two-party system, one of the two parties typically holds a majority in the legislature (or a legislative house in a bicameral system), and is referred to as the majority party. The other party is referred to as the minority party.

## Multi-Party System

A multi-party system is a system in which three or more political parties have the capacity to gain control of government separately or in a coalition. Canada, India, the Republic of Ireland, and the United Kingdom are examples where there are two strong parties with a third party that is electorally successful.

More commonly, in cases where there are three or more parties, no one party is likely to gain power alone, and parties work with each other to form coalition governments. The major drawback of any coalition government is that it is potentially vulnerable to rapid changes and tends to lack stability.

It is important to differentiate between the logic of a one-party system and that of a two-party system. In the first case, the single party (which is obviously the party in power) serves the purpose of domination and represents a tool of control in the hands of the ruling elite. As mentioned earlier, no

other parties are allowed to exist and compete for power. The two-party system, on the other hand, is often the result of historical, social, and political evolution. Also, it is often reinforced by the electoral system applied in the country. A simple plurality system (in which a single winner is chosen in a given constituency by having more votes than any other individual representative) favors a two-party system (in comparison to a proportional system, for example). In a two-party system, other parties are allowed to compete but simply have very little chance to get to power. A good example is Britain where only the Labour Party and Conservative Party seriously compete for power, even though the country has more than 10 registered political parties.

## Role of Political Parties

In democracies, political parties play a key role in elections by helping to structure candidate choices and abiding by the outcome of these contests; parties help to ensure that elections are true expressions of the popular will. **Parties also perform critical functions between elections that serve to promote genuine multi-party systems, support the development of effective sustainable political institutions and contribute to healthy and vibrant democracies.** When out of power, many democratic parties provide constructive and critical opposition by presenting themselves as the alternative government voters may wish to choose — thus pressuring the incumbents to be more responsive to the public's interests. These expressions of conflicting views can actually help to create a better understanding of the issues and to identify solutions. Outside election periods, democratic parties also offer citizens opportunities to participate in political life and encourage active links between citizens and those who represent them.

In the end we can develop the three main tasks that compose the functions of parties

1. **Parties provide a means to compete peacefully for political power.** Elections are a nonviolent method by which citizens may select public leaders, express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their leaders, and support particular public policies. In pluralistic democracies, political parties are the principal participants in and often the managers of election systems. The overriding objective of democratic political parties is to gain votes, and parties are organizations that work to place their representatives into the offices of government through a process of nomination and election.

Many parties practice internal democracy in the selection of their leaders at all levels by holding internal elections for party positions, or nomination meetings for candidates for office. In the United States, parties hold primary elections to choose candidates that the party will put forward to contest elections. In countries that have proportional representation, the party usually has by-laws governing the selection of the party's list of candidates for election.

Also during internal party elections or nomination meetings, members debate party positions and decide on platforms and manifestos and offer programs of a public policy intended to represent the interests of particular constituencies and attract their support. In many countries, the party

label on the ballot provides voters with a simple guide to affiliations and beliefs of candidates. Parties mobilize the electorate to participate in the elections. By presenting alternative candidates and positions, parties provide an effective means for voters to approve or disapprove of the past actions of the government in a peaceful manner.

2. **Parties mediate between citizens and government by developing and promoting policy options.** Parties serve as a mechanism through which citizens can organize attempts to influence the policy-making process. Parties promote the constructive involvement of civil society organizations and individuals in the governance of a country. Parties organize opinion by presenting voters with simple and understandable choices. By presenting programs, they allow the electorate an opportunity, sometimes limited in practice, to express its preferences on issues. By uniting voters a common banner, they provide an opportunity for effective collective action.

Well-organized parties hold policy meetings and conferences at the local, regional, and national levels to formulate policies on issues of importance. Parties serve as an institution that can educate and mobilize the public on certain issues and often parties come up with creative solutions to difficult societal problems. Parties can act as a channel for individual citizens to affect policy. A citizen can join a party at the local level and lobby for certain policy positions within a party.

3. **Parties promote coordination within government.** Political parties can be viewed as solutions to collective dilemmas faced by individual legislators. This function is considered to be one of the most important functions that political parties perform. In fact, representative government has long been associated with party government, which involves the following conditions:
  - a. Government decisions are often made by elected party officials or by those under their control — in the sense that members of the cabinet are almost always party members and representatives of their parties.
  - b. Government policy is frequently decided within political parties — as parties contest elections on the basis of more or less specific programs and platforms.
  - c. Parties usually act cohesively to enact and implement government policy — as parties work to facilitate joint voting in legislatures. Two members of the same party are much more likely to vote together than two members of different parties. The degree of cohesiveness, of course, varies a great deal. American parties are less cohesive than most, while European parties in parliamentary systems tend to be highly cohesive. Party cohesion is facilitated by tight party discipline.
  - d. Public officials are often recruited through political parties.



- e. Public officials can be held accountable through political parties — This can be done by members of the same party who wish to monitor party discipline as well as by members of opposing parties who are looking to expose the wrongs of their opponents.

## Internal Structures and organizations of political parties

A variety of classifications have been used for political parties. The most important of these are the following:

### 1. Cadre and mass parties

- a. The distinguishing feature of cadre parties is their reliance on a politically active elite that is capable of offering ideological leadership to the masses. Although strict political criteria are down for party membership, careerism and simple convenience are often powerful motives for joining such parties.
- b. A mass party, on the other hand, places a heavy emphasis on broadening membership and constructing a wide electoral base. The key feature of such parties is that they place heavier stress on recruitment and organization than on ideology and political conviction.

### 2. Representative and integrative parties

- a. Representative parties see their primary function as being the securing of votes in elections. They attempt to reflect rather than shape public opinion.
- b. Parties of integration, in contrast, adopt proactive, rather than reactive, political strategies; they wish to mobilize, educate, and inspire the masses, rather than merely respond to their concerns.

### 3. Constitutional and revolutionary parties.

- a. Constitutional parties acknowledge the rights and entitlements of other parties and thus operate within a framework of rules and constraints. In particular, they acknowledge that there is a division between the party and the state, between the party in power (the government of the day) and state institutions (the bureaucracy, judiciary, police, and so on) that enjoy formal independence and political neutrality.
- b. Revolutionary parties, on the other hand, are anti-system or anti-constitutional parties, either of the left or of the right. Such parties aim to seize power and overthrow the existing constitutional structure using tactics that range from outright insurrection and popular revolution to the quasi-legalism practiced by the Nazis and the Fascists.

#### 4. Left-wing and right-wing parties.

- a. Left: progressive, socialist, and communist parties characterized by a commitment to change, in the form of either social reform or wholesale economic transformation.
- b. Right: Conservatives generally uphold the existing social order and are, in the sense, a force of continuity.

## Syndicates and Unions

A syndicate is a consortium gathering persons operating in the same industry or business in the same sector of activity, aimed at ensuring the defense of their professional interests and their working conditions. The difference between a syndicate and a trade union is that a **syndicate** is an association of persons officially authorized to undertake a duty or negotiate business (e.g. a comic strip syndicate) while a **trade union or labor union** is an organization of workers formed for the purpose of advancing its members' interests in respect to wages, benefits, and working conditions.

The first Lebanese union was formed in 1914 and the first labor code was introduced in 1946. The labor movement in Lebanon became increasingly popular and mobilized in the 1950s and 1960s with workers demanding the amendments of Article 50 of the 1946 labor code which gives the employer the right to dismiss workers for any reason and with short notice. In 1958, the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers (GCLW) was founded and included a few confederations.<sup>23</sup> By 1970, the GCLW had all nine federations under, making it the official representative of workers from both the private and public sphere. In the early 1970s, Lebanon witnessed a wave of strikes from workers, teachers, and students as a result of the increasingly acute social crisis. The wave of collective action was brought to a halt by the outbreak of the civil war in 1975.<sup>24</sup>

After the war, the lack of coordination and communication between the different socio-economic actors was common and illustrated by the powerlessness of the Economic and Social Council provided by the Taif Accords which stipulates, "The establishment of an economic and social council that guarantees the participation of representatives of the various sectors in the development of the economic and social policy of the country through the provision of guidance and recommendations." The law that established the Council was enacted only in 1995, however, the Council has never been able to achieve its intended objectives due to the absence of political will, financial, and human resources.<sup>25</sup>

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23 The Consultation and Research Institute, "Characteristics and Structure of the Union Movement in Lebanon," September 2016. International Labour Organization / Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung 2016.

24 Marylin Chahine, "Workers Unite: The rise, fall, and future of Lebanon's labour movement," Beirut Today, June 22, 2020.

25 The Consultation and Research Institute, "Characteristics and Structure of the Union Movement in Lebanon,"

After the war, there was a shift in the socioeconomic and political space. The emergence of neoliberal economic policies and heightened sectarianism threatened the labor unions and rendered them weak as they became monopolized by sectarian and political actors. By the late 1990s, the ruling political elite essentially transformed the GCLW into an extension of its interests and sidelined it in the fight against the exploitative conditions of the workforce. In addition, the post-war government led by Rafik Hariri sought to neutralize the labor movement and stood in opposition to the GCLW between 1993 and 1997.

During this time, the confessional political elite created a multitude of fake unions and the sectarian take over of the unions solidified the neutralization of the labor movement, allowing the ruling elite to control workers and weaken their efforts. The GCLW was not the only labor organization co-opted by the political elite. Between 2011 and 2015, the Union Coordination Committee (UCC) that represents public sector employees was also taken over because it posed a threat as it was able to organize large numbers of workers. The head of the UCC was toppled in the 2015 elections of the secondary teachers' league, which was the backbone of the organization. Like many elections in the labor movement, this election was viewed as the manipulation of sectarian identities and political affiliation of teachers where all political parties gave strict instructions to teachers' representatives to vote for their candidates.<sup>26</sup>

The October 2019 protest movement led to a major paradigm shift that has allowed for changes in the the political sphere where the labor movement can reorganize and reclaim its independence from traditional sectarian clientelism. Workers built on the momentum of the uprising and took the opportunity to attempt to revive the labor movement by forming unions and syndicates, such as Alternative Journalists Syndicate, Lebanese Association of Professionals and Association of Independent University Professors.<sup>27</sup> In addition, a major win for the protest movement was the election of Melhem Khalaf in November 2019 to head the Beirut Bar Association. His victory is significant because it is the first time the association will be run by a candidate without any political affiliations.

## Civil Society

Civil Society refers to all groups outside the government such as community groups, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, labor unions, Indigenous Peoples' organizations, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations. Civil society expresses the interests of social groups and raises awareness of key issues in order to influence policy and decision-making. In recent decades, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been successful in shaping global policy through advocacy campaigns and mobilization of people and resources.

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26 Lea Bou Khater, "Understanding State Incorporation of the Workers' Movement in Early Post-War Lebanon and its Backlash on Civil Society," Civil Society Knowledge Centre.

27 Chahine, "Workers Unite: The rise, fall, and future of Lebanon's labour movement."

Civil society organizations (CSOs) have proliferated during the past quarter-century, as have the issues they address. Whether national or transnational, the way CSOs do business has been profoundly affected by globalization. CSOs increasingly employ extensive networks to pursue their activities and to try to influence policies on a broad range of issues.

Name	Characteristics
<b>Nonprofit or Not-for-profit Organization</b>	The organization’s goal is not to make a profit for the benefit of organizers but can earn money to achieve the organization’s mission.
<b>Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) and Voluntary Sector</b>	Acknowledges the importance of volunteers and voluntary action.
<b>Independent Sector or the Third Sector</b>	Distinguishes organizations from the business or government sectors.
<b>Philanthropic Sector or Charitable Organization</b>	Addresses the charitable nature of these organizations.
<b>Social Sector</b>	Underscores how the activities of this class of organizations enhance the social fabric of a country.
<b>Community-Based Organization (CBO)</b>	Stresses the participation of and benefit for local citizens.
<b>Civil Society Organization (CSO)</b>	An increasingly popular name that focuses on the desired outcome of these groups—the creation of civil society.

## Civil society shaping public policies

The increasing global trend toward democratization has opened up the political space for CSOs to play a more active role in influencing policy. The promise of democracy becomes a reality when people’s voices are heard by policymakers and when groups (especially marginalized sectors of society) begin to participate in the marketplace of competing interests. According to a World Bank report (2002), “CSOs have become significant players in global development finance, and are increasingly influencing the shape of global and national public policy... The growing focus among policymakers and citizens on the need for good governance and greater transparency has also opened doors for CSOs as players in the development business. Parliamentarians, media, and other opinion leaders increasingly rely on CSOs for information and policy advice.”

This involvement of CSOs in policy issues will increase the likelihood that the CSOs understand the policies fully as well as ensure that policies are appropriate to the needs of the people, feasible and implementable on the ground. They can use grassroots experiences and innovations as the basis for improved policies and strengthening local capacities and structures for ongoing public participation.

Also, the grassroots groups and support organizations help give voice to those who have been historically marginalized and provide them with a crucial vehicle for exercising their rights and holding the government accountable. As such, they play a vital role in strengthening democracy and the skills of citizenship essential to healthy societies. Increasingly groups are concerned about gaining the necessary leverage and power, often through coalition-building, to expand these democratic opportunities and to ensure the success of their development and policy efforts.

Historically, civil society groups have also been a stronghold of the women’s movement. Women’s rights activists around the world have been building both women’s movements and participating in other progressive, non-violent social movements, serving as a critical force for social transformation. For women, social movements have been a key channel for political engagement. Often broad-based and decentralized, such movements tend to have lower barriers to participation than formal political groupings, including armed organizations or political parties. Women have spearheaded movements focused on gender inequities, such as the women’s suffrage movement in the United States, and they have participated in movements focused on other social and political goals. Although these movements often reflect and reproduce gendered social hierarchies, they can also create spaces in which traditional gender roles can be challenged.<sup>28</sup>

Given existing inequalities, however, women are presented with specific challenges and opportunities in engaging in nonviolent struggles.<sup>29</sup> In addition, women’s participation in social movements does not always guarantee that movements will take on the struggle for women’s rights or adopt gender-inclusive and gender-sensitive politics and practice.

## Inclusion and Civil Society Actors

### Role of Youth

There are 3.5 billion people under the age of 30 living in the world today, comprising the largest young population in history. Youth represent a critical opportunity for global development and progress. Young people can contribute unique aspirations, energy, and ideas to develop more stable, democratic and prosperous societies. If young people are not recognized as trusted agents of change and do not .....

28 Saskia Brechenmacher and Caroline Hubbard, “Breaking the Cycle of Gender Exclusion in Political Party Development,” Carnegie Endowment for Peace and The National Democratic Institute, March 24, 2020.

29 Marie A. Principe, “Women in Nonviolent Movements,” United States Institute for Peace, Special Report 399 January 2017.

receive proper support, there is a risk that they will become disaffected and apathetic, which would harm potential gains from other development investments. Therefore, in order for youth to fulfill their potential and jumpstart global development, governments and political leaders need to engage young women and men purposefully and meaningfully as partners so they can invest their creativity, ideas and aspirations into building more prosperous futures for themselves, their societies and their nations.

Despite young people's ambitions, they often struggle against barriers, including sociocultural norms and institutional practices, that prevent them from influencing mainstream politics and decision making. Entrenched political elites are often reluctant to share power with youth, whom they may see as inexperienced, apathetic, unable to lead or a threat to their own power. Young women are commonly perceived as further incapable of political participation due to discriminatory gender norms. Although some political leaders visibly include young women and men, by offering them limited representation within political organizations and institutions, these spaces usually fail to provide youth with sufficient meaning or influence. As a result of these barriers, young people have few avenues or opportunities to learn about civic and political life, engage in political discourse or access circles of power. Youth are therefore discouraged from building important knowledge, skills and confidence for political activism and leadership, which hinders their willingness and ability to take political action to shape their societies. This lack of support causes many young women and men to become frustrated with formal political institutions, which they view as unrepresentative and unresponsive.

Dissatisfied with vertical political structures that seem out of reach and out of touch, young activists are persevering and finding new ways to express their views and improve their communities. Instead of actively participating in formal politics, such as elections, joining political parties or supporting government-sponsored initiatives, youth are turning to individualized forms of activism, such as consumer activism, protest art, volunteering or sporadic support for transnational campaigns on global issues, to more directly impact issues they care about. As a result of globalization, the rise of technology and mass media, many youth are connecting through online platforms, both locally and internationally, to discuss challenges they face and plan direct actions to address them. This has resulted in the rise of diverse local, national and international youth-led networks and movements that are loosely organized but closely tied to common interests. These changes are resulting in new forums for exchange, inspiration, activism and positive disruption. But they are also contributing to a growing rift between youth and formal political institutions. Today's youth need real opportunities to participate in political decision making to help drive innovation and find practical solutions to a growing and complex array of human development challenges.

## Role of Persons with Disabilities

More than 80 percent of the world's people with disabilities live in developing and post-conflict countries, where they often encounter pervasive discrimination and human rights violations. The voices of people with disabilities are frequently overlooked in political decision making, and various types of barriers limit their access to many aspects of public life. In 2006, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which grants citizens with disabilities equal treatment under the law, including the ability to fully participate in political life on an equal basis with all other citizens. The CRPD is an entry point that helps DPOs hold governments accountable on issues important to them, advocate for governments to commit to its provisions, and start conversations with decision makers about specific barriers to participation they face in their countries.

People with disabilities have the right to participate in mainstream political activities: for example, during the electoral process, people with disabilities can play the same roles as their fellow citizens, including voting, running for office, advocating for policies, serving as poll workers or election monitors and campaigning for a candidate. Additionally, Disable Person's Organization's usually have a long history of organizing and can join coalitions where a variety of CSOs come together around a shared community interest, such as healthcare, education or corruption. This participation helps them access new political relationships and spaces, thereby raising the visibility of people with disabilities and challenging discriminatory attitudes. It also helps ensure broader political initiatives take disability priorities into account and can encourage all partners to be more thoughtful in their own efforts at inclusion.

## CSOs in Lebanon

The multi-community structure, and the resulting consensual political system as well as the existence of Liberal regulations concerning associations and the painful experience of wars between 1975 to 1990, have produced a Lebanese civil society that cuts across all regions, communities and strata of the population. By virtue of the law of 1909, the associations in Lebanon are governed by a system of acknowledgement of receipt (*Ilm w khabar*) whereas in all the other Arab countries associations need a license (*Tarkhis*), and this is difficult to obtain.

Civil society is all the volunteer civil organizations that are not linked with a governmental apparatus, that is to say: associations, parties, unions, clubs, alumni associations, leagues, communities, etc. They have three functions: protection of interests, mediation, and pressure.

The attribute 'civil' implies the promotion by organizations of civil or civic values, whereby:

- All the members join freely
- They encourage a democratic system of internal administration based on rights, duties and performance
- The members participate in activities of general interest for peace, development, volunteering, and democracy.
- The organizations control or regulate the state's administration through meetings, projects and programs, and through various ways of expression and pressure.

The development of community structures and institutions occurred at different points of times. This disparity is evident from one region to the other and among the different institutions within every community. Organizations in the Lebanese civil society have ensured social cohesion in a country that had to face a sophisticated war system and strong external influence; they have also helped keep freedom spaces when militias and de facto powers ruled.





# LESSON 3.6

## ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL LAW

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### Definitions and Principles

Elections are a process where people make important decisions and where the government respects those decisions. In a free and fair election, the people can choose which politician and the political party they trust to speak on their behalf and to deliver what the people want if the party becomes the ruling government. Article 21 of the Declaration of Human Rights states<sup>30</sup>:

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
2. Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

**For an election to be democratic, represent the true wishes of the people, and be viewed as legitimate, certain conditions must be met which include:**

- A real choice of and competition among political parties and candidates;
- For parties and candidates to have the freedom to campaign in the election and communicate their ideas and platforms;
- The existence of rules that govern the election that is known and respected by all participants and available to everyone. Moreover, the presence of an individual or institution that administers the rules, which are supervised by a judicial body to ensure that complaints are handled fairly. Rules

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<sup>30</sup> UN, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

should include strong legal procedures to protect against corruption violence that may occur when people register to vote, attend a political meeting, or cast their vote;

- Lastly, for citizens to know of their choices of **who** to vote for, **how** to vote, and most importantly **why** it is important.

Therefore, the **guiding principles** of elections are the following:

- **Representation:** When citizens cast their vote for a candidate, they are giving that person the right to represent their interests in government. This right is not given without responsibilities. The right is given under the assumption that the individual in government will act responsibly and will to the best of his/her abilities truly represent the constituent's interest.
- **Transparency:** It is important that the mechanisms of the electoral system be as transparent as possible and known to both voters and political parties and candidates well in advance in order to avoid confusion and distrust in the results they produce at elections.
- **Inclusiveness:** The electoral system will have a greater chance of being accepted as fair and legitimate if it is considered to work in an inclusive manner. This means not only that the electoral law allows as many as possible citizens to vote (including inclusive *suffrage*, making sure that the system is easily understandable, and assuring access for all to the polling station), but also that the mechanisms of the electoral system do not overtly discriminate against any one group in society, minority or otherwise.

**Here is how gender equality is understood within these factors:**<sup>31</sup>

**Inclusivity.** A democratic election must first be inclusive—that is, all citizens, regardless of their gender, must be able to exercise their full and equal right to participate as voters and candidates, as well as election officials and administrators. The principle of inclusiveness stems from international norms and legal frameworks, which spell out specific civic and political rights, including requirements for universal and equal suffrage.<sup>32</sup> While restrictions on the right to vote or run for elected office may exist (for example, setting a minimum age requirement), observers must assess whether all citizens have a genuine opportunity to exercise their rights to participate. This assessment can include:

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31 Caroline Hubbard and Claire DeSoi, "Votes Without Violence Toolkit: A Citizen Observer's Guide to Addressing Violence Against Women in Elections," NDI.

32 Including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the SADC Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections; see Promoting Legal Frameworks for Democratic Elections for more information.

- Whether women and men are equally able to exercise their right to vote, stand for elected office or participate in election administration
- Whether there are institutional, legal or socio-cultural barriers that prevent women from meeting participation requirements, or which place an undue burden or restriction on their participation as voters, candidates or election officials
- Whether there are positive measures in place to overcome those or other barriers blocking women's ability to participate on an equal footing with men

**Transparency.** Likewise, transparency is an essential component of a democratic election, and is also based on internationally-recognized human rights. All steps of an election must be open for scrutiny and verification, showing citizens that it is being conducted honestly, that it accurately reflects their choices, and that any hidden barriers to women's or men's participation are brought to light and addressed. This includes whether information about the election and election processes is freely available to all citizens, both women and men » Whether all citizens are able to access or distribute information about their rights within an electoral process, and whether this information is made available in forms that are accessible for women » Whether women and men are equally able to access the knowledge they need to make informed choices about their participation as voters, candidates or election officials » Whether there is freedom of the press to engage in and encourage public debate, without contributing to violence toward or marginalization of women

**Accountability** is critical in democratic elections: governments must be accountable to their constituents, and elections are a key mechanism for creating this accountability. Elections themselves must also be accountable, and reflect the will and equal participation of women and men. Violations of citizens' electoral rights must be identified and addressed in a timely manner, both in the short and long term, and perpetrators must be held accountable for their acts. This becomes particularly important when incidents of VAW-E occur: often, violence against one woman or group of women can have a far wider effect, discouraging other women from being active in politics or elections. Other considerations for ensuring the accountability of an election include:

- Whether women voters' preferences are respected
  - Whether women and men are assured of the secrecy of their ballot and are free from pressure or manipulation during voting, or as candidates during campaigns
  - Whether mechanisms and other accountability measures are in place to ensure the integrity of election processes
  - Whether violations of women's electoral rights are investigated and prosecuted in a timely manner
  - Whether there are differences in the number of cases prosecuted and concluded for men and women during and after elections
- Taken together, these fundamental principles must be met for all people for an election to be democratic.

All citizens must be able to compete and participate fully and equally, and any assessment of an election’s credibility must take into account the ways in which barriers to or interruptions in these principles create different circumstances for women and men. The laws, policies and activities that occur throughout the election cycle must be examined for gaps that might leave women vulnerable to violence, and therefore restrict their ability to exercise their full civic and political rights—affecting the overall democratic nature of the election.

**Key questions to consider when analyzing the legal framework for elections with a gender perspective include:**

- Does the constitution guarantee equality between men and women? Are there specific guarantees related to women’s participation in public life and elections?
- Does the constitution expressly forbid discrimination on the basis of sex? Are there any provisions that might limit the full and equal participation of women?
- To what international and regional human rights treaties and agreements has the country acceded? Which of these have obligations related to women’s participation? Is the legal framework in line with these commitments?
- What is the relationship between the constitution and the human rights standards agreed to by the country? Does the constitution incorporate these standards, or is there a reference that international human rights standards take precedence over domestic legislation?
- Does the country have any specific gender equality or anti-discrimination legislation?
- How does it relate to elections?
- How do election-related laws and regulations impact the participation of women? Do any of them contain provisions that are likely to disadvantage or disenfranchise women?

**Here is youth inclusion is how understood within these factors:<sup>33</sup>**

While youth people participate in the political process in multiple ways, their representation in formal political processes is limited, especially in elections. There is an increased understanding and recognition that young people’s active participation inessential to make elections more representative. Electoral stakeholders, such as political parties, citizen monitoring groups, and election management bodies (EMBs) have a critical role to play in empowering youth to participate in formal political processes.

From an election administration standpoint, EMB’s could do the following to ensure youth engagement and inclusion throughout the electoral process:

- keep reliable data on youth participation, including through youth-led data collection

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33 The ACE Project: The Electoral Knowledge Network, “Youth and Elections.”

- make registration processes as convenient and appealing as possible for all youth, especially for first-time voters
- explore options to counter youth-specific obstacles to voting (and identifying obstacles to voting/participation as a first step to countering obstacles) and by fostering safe and inclusive spaces for youth
- seek to work with youth to maintain electoral integrity through monitoring the electoral process

In addition, EMBs could employ young people across all levels. This would improve EMBs' knowledge about the needs of young voters; create more diverse EMBs in regard to age; leverage young people's flexibility, creativity and willingness to learn; and allow young people to have ownership of the political process. Another way of fostering youth inclusion, participation, and representation in electoral processes is for EMBs to support youth-focused and youth-led organizations, and to partner with CSOs and other electoral stakeholders that empower youth.

Constitutional and legal frameworks remain some of the strongest tools to develop and mandate youth inclusion, participation, and representation in electoral policies and practices. Legal and voluntary quotas for youth participation are one option and the eligibility ages at which youth can vote and run for political office all influence youth engagement in the electoral cycle in another. Legislative frameworks to scrutinize and manage political finances can support a level playing field for young people, particularly youth from marginalized groups and young women, who might otherwise be disadvantaged in settings that favor wealthy, mature, male candidates and political elites.

Political parties have a key role to play in making elections more inclusive of young people. As a key electoral entrypoint, political parties influence the extent to which young people are active in politics, but their failure to successfully engage young people can lead to distrust, disengagement and marginalization. To address this, political parties could adopt measures to improve youth participation, including codes of conduct that prescribe peaceful youth engagement; mentoring and leadership programs to counter exclusionary practices and foster youth networks; subsidies to facilitate access by youth to political finance; and candidate and party quotas to build robust youth representation. Strong party youth wings can also provide a voice and connections for young people entering the political and electoral cycle.

## The Election Process

An election is one of the most important political events to take place in peacetime. The process involves a large number of people with official responsibilities in supervising the campaign process and Election Day voting, and many more people working voluntarily for candidates and political parties.

## *The Elements of an Election*

1. **Political Parties and Candidates:** most candidates who share the same ideas on how to serve the people and are loyal to a particular leader will belong to one political party. There can be several political parties contesting the election. Some parties will now have candidates in every part of the country. While some candidates will not belong to any party but they still want to be elected to serve the people. These are called **Independent Candidates**.
2. **The Issues:** Candidates and political parties will have their own views on what is important, what they promise to do, and why voters should elect them. These views are called **party/candidates policies or platforms**.
3. **The Voting Process:** information about the election rules, regulations, and processes are necessary to assist people in participating in the process. Information includes defining how voters can register; the length of the campaign; who will count the votes; how much money parties can spend on their campaigns; and rules on advertising and media coverage. The election process is usually monitored by the media as well as an electoral commission that is an independent institution.

## *Election Laws*

In order to avoid mistakes or corruption, an election must follow clear rules and procedures. The laws of the country must support and enforce these rules fairly. A free and fair election requires the state to pass laws that guarantee:

- Each and every citizen has the right to participate as a voter and as a candidate no matter what his or her class, caste, gender, or religion.
- Elections take place at regular intervals so that people can review or change their choice of the governing party.
- The voting procedure gives everyone the right to a vote that is secret and will be accurately counted.
- The operation of the election is controlled by an election management commission that is independent of politicians and the government. Members of the commission should be trustworthy members of the community. Anyone should be able to complain to the commission about election irregularities. The commission should act quickly and fairly and everyone should respect its decisions.

*The Election Commission*<sup>34</sup>

The election commission faces an enormous task:

1. To allow the parties and candidates to communicate their policies to the voters without unfair advantage or breaking any laws.
2. The commission creates rules or a code of conduct on how to campaign, and how to keep the campaign peaceful. The rules for campaign practices can be very extensive, including how long to campaign where the candidates can put up their signs and flags; what money they can spend; what advertising is permitted; prohibitions against paying or threatening voters; and rules against soldiers and policemen campaigning for any party while they are on duty. All of these rules should be made available to the media and the public.
3. The commission must appoint and train election officials to register voters, to make safe places for voting, and to protect and count ballots honestly. The commission must also raise awareness among the people about the election, the names of all the political candidates, and how to vote. Everything the commission does must be impartial and not favor any party or candidate.
4. The media should examine the elections commission, considering if it is fully equipped to do its job and if it will be respected as honest. Because the media is a major source of information for voters, the election commission also may make rules involving media reporting of the election to ensure the elections are free and fair. The commission may make rules concerning advertising by the parties. The election commission rules should be enforced by the courts if necessary. There should be the same election reporting rules for both the state-owned media and the private media.

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34 The ACE Project: The Electoral Knowledge Network, "Electoral Management."

# Election Administration in Lebanon<sup>35</sup>

## 2018 Parliamentary Election

According to the law, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MOIM) is the primary body responsible for administering elections, in coordination with other officials at the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Information, Education and Finance. The MOIM prepares the voter list (through an annual passive registration process conducted in February), produces national ID cards, trains poll workers, produces and distributes election materials, organizes polling stations, and coordinates security on election day. Nouhad Machnouk, a member of Prime Minister Hariri’s Future Movement bloc, sitting Member of Parliament (MP) and a candidate, also served as Minister of Interior and Municipalities, and was tasked with administering the elections. The mayors and district commissioners who were responsible for managing polling stations were experienced, and some 90 percent of the 1,880 polling centers (containing 6,793 polling stations)<sup>3</sup> that the MOIM set up were located in the same places as in previous elections. A minimum of two officials were assigned to administer each polling station, for a total of 14,000 people.<sup>4</sup> The recruitment and training processes were, as they have been in the past, highly decentralized, with governors and district commissioners managing them according to local requirements.

The SCE is a regulatory body that falls under the authority of the MOIM. The Minister has the right to supervise the work of the SCE and chair all meetings, but cannot vote. The eleven-member Commission is primarily responsible for development of media and campaign finance regulations, as well as oversight of candidate registration and campaign compliance. However, the SCE was understaffed and under-resourced for this broad mandate: its budget was limited and release of funding from the MOIM was severely delayed, with the budget only being approved in early April and the actual transfer occurring later in the month. As a result, its involvement in election administration was relatively limited, and it provided little guidance to candidates or media about their role. The SCE identified and documented a number of violations, particularly on the part of the media. However, an unclear legal framework, insufficiently detailed provisions, as well as lack of power and resources to investigate complaints, made monitoring candidates and list compliance with campaign and expenditure regulations extremely difficult.

The 2018 reforms to the election law (more below) added opportunities for greater control by the SCE which had the potential to increase transparency of campaign finances. The SCE had access to candidate bank accounts and had the authority to review monthly financial reports submitted by campaigns prior to the elections and to audit final reports within one month of election day. However, the SCE lacked the resources to conduct audits of candidate financial reports and verify expenses through field monitoring, as well as the power to enforce penalties of violations directly. In some cases, guidance specifying what candidates could or could not do was delayed or only clarified weeks after candidates launched their campaigns.

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<sup>35</sup> NDI, “Lebanon 2018 Parliamentary Elections Final Report.”



Voters were only allowed to cast preferential votes for candidates in their sub-district (indicated by white boxes), and preferential votes cast for candidates from other sub-districts (indicated by black boxes) were not counted. The tabulation and results management system was done digitally, with paper copies as a backup. Since the data was only entered once, the process relied on the presence of agents and observers to identify any human errors or deliberate mis-inputs, as well as on the Higher Registration Committees (HRCs) to properly review the reports for accuracy. Although the company providing the counting software was a reputable one with experience in elections, there were concerns related to hardware and connectivity that could have impacted the contestants' and public's confidence in the process.

### *Electoral Systems*

The choice of electoral systems and the design of elections can play a decisive role in election outcomes. The two basic electoral are:

- **The Majoritarian System:** this system is basically a winner-takes-all system, where elections are held in single-member districts and the candidate receiving the most votes, although not necessarily a majority wins the election. This system can vary slightly however, such as in presidential elections in some countries, for example in France, if no candidate receives an absolute majority in the first round of voting, a second round of voting takes place between the candidates receiving the two highest vote shares. This ensures that the winner is always someone with the majority of votes.
- **The Proportional Representation System:** in this system, elections are held in multi-party constituencies and voters either cast one or multiple votes for candidates. There are also multiple variants of proportional representation, including the open and closed party-list system, cumulative voting system, and the single-transfer voting system. The main benefit of this system is the greater access it provides for small or minority parties.
- **The Semi-Proportional System:** this system mixes elements of the above two electoral systems.

Electoral System	Pros	Cons
<b>Majority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Geographical Representation</li> <li>● Accountability and keeping track are easier</li> <li>● Simple and easy to understand</li> <li>● Gives voter clear choices</li> <li>● Motivates a presence for a strong opposition</li> <li>● Encourages that governments receive support in a majority parliament</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alienates and keeps small parties away</li> <li>● Minorities have a less change of becoming representatives</li> <li>● A lot of votes are lost</li> <li>● Usually leads to a lot of supplementary elections</li> <li>● Usually needs redistricting</li> </ul>
<b>Proportional Representation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proportionality of results</li> <li>● Multi-party presence</li> <li>● Minorities get representation</li> <li>● Little lost votes</li> <li>● No need to redistrict</li> <li>● No need for supplementary elections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Little geographical representation</li> <li>● Little accountability</li> <li>● Easier for extremist parties to reach parliament</li> <li>● Political parties get too much power</li> </ul>
<b>Mixed System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Multi-party presence</li> <li>● More accountability and questioning</li> <li>● Little lost votes</li> <li>● Leads to a need for supplementary elections</li> <li>● Can lead to two different levels of elected representatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● More complex than others</li> <li>● Needs redistricting</li> </ul>

The choice of the Electoral System is one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy. The choice of a particular electoral system has a profound effect on the future political life of the country concerned, and electoral systems, once chosen, often remain fairly constant as political interests solidify around and respond to the incentives presented by them.

Any new democracy must choose (or inherit) an electoral system to elect its legislature. Equally, political crisis within an established democracy may lead to momentum for electoral system change, and even without political crisis, campaigners for political reform may attempt to put electoral system change onto the political agenda. Decisions to change or indeed to keep in place, an electoral system are often affected by one of two circumstances:

- either political actors lack basic knowledge and information so that the choices and consequences of different electoral systems are not fully recognized;
- or, conversely, political actors use their knowledge of electoral systems to promote designs which they think will work to their own partisan advantage.

## Accessible and Meaningful Elections<sup>36</sup>

Elections are important, but they may mean little to people if it is difficult to vote or if at the end of the day their perception that their vote makes no difference to the way the country is governed. The *ease of voting* is determined by factors such as how complex the ballot paper is, how easy it is for the voter to get to a polling place, (disability access) how up-to-date the electoral register is, and how confident the voter is that his or her ballot will be secret.

Electoral participation—at least as a free choice—is also thought to increase when the outcome of elections, either at a national level or in the voter’s particular district, is likely to make a significant difference to the future direction of government. If you know that your preferred candidate has no chance of winning a seat in your particular district, what is the incentive to vote? In some electoral systems, the *wasted votes* (i.e. valid votes for losing candidates, as distinct from spoiled or invalid ballot papers, which are excluded from the count) can amount to a substantial proportion of the total national vote.

Lastly, the actual power of the body being elected helps determine whether its election has any meaning. Meaningless elections in authoritarian systems which offer no genuine choice, where legislatures have little real influence on the formation of governments or on government policy, are far less important than elections to legislatures which actually have the power to determine central elements in people’s everyday lives.

## Facilitating Stable and Efficient Government

The prospects for a stable and efficient government are not determined by the electoral system alone, but the results a system produces can contribute to stability in a number of important respects.

The key questions are

- whether voters perceive the system to be fair,
- whether government can efficiently enact legislation and govern, and
- whether the system avoids discriminating against particular parties or interest groups.

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 36 The ACE Project: The Electoral Knowledge Network, “Electoral Integrity.”

## International Standards<sup>37</sup>

The design of electoral systems today takes place in the context of a number of international covenants, treaties and other kinds of legal instruments affecting political issues.

While there is no single complete set of universally agreed international standards for elections, there is consensus that such standards include:

- the principles of free, fair and periodic elections that guarantee universal adult suffrage,
- the secrecy of the ballot and freedom from coercion, and
- a commitment to the principle of one person, one vote.

Moreover, while there is no legal stipulation that a particular kind of electoral system is preferable to another, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of issues that are affected by electoral systems, such as the **fair representation of all citizens**, the **equality of women and men**, the **rights of minorities**, **special considerations for the disabled**, and so on.

These are formalized in international legal instruments such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and in the various conventions and commitments concerning democratic elections made by regional organizations such as the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Organization of American States (OAS), Council of Europe (COE) and the Commonwealth.

## Election-Related Violence

Electoral violence subverts basic standards for democratic elections. Violence against candidates, activists, journalists, voters, elections and officials, and observers can reduce voters' choices and suppress the vote. Violence can be used to intimidate individuals and communities to vote against their will for a candidate. Assassinations for candidates can even change electoral outcomes. Armed groups seeking to overthrow a government often resort to violence during elections. In other cases, violence can break out when large numbers of people protested official election results. The effects of violence or the threat of violence can undermine the legitimacy of electoral results and broader political processes.

Electoral violence can be distinguished from other types of political violence by its goal -- to influence electoral conduct of voters, contestants, officials or other actors and/or to affect the electoral outcome. It can take place during any part of the electoral cycle. Electoral violence involves the use of force with the intent to cause harm or the threat to use force to harm persons or property involved in the electoral process. Electoral violence can be widespread before or on election days. More common, however, are

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37 The ACE Project: The Electoral Knowledge Network, "Legal Instruments: International Treaties."

less widespread forms of violence, designed to: prevent voters from participating; coerce participation of change voters choices; eliminate candidates; disrupt the process of negate votes in certain locations; or seek retribution for political support or votes cast.

There are several ways in which elections can potentially trigger violence, including there there are:

- High degrees of uncertainty about the outcome of the election due to intense competition, combined with a lack of public confidence in the process and/or a lack of transparency;
- population groups and/or electoral contestants expecting to be systematically excluded from gaining power; and/or
- features of the electoral system that produce high stakes, “winner–take–all outcomes.”

Acts of electoral violence are often the result of a combination of such underlying causes, particularly where there are not sufficient mechanisms to build public confidence in the electoral process. Developing confidence enhancing mechanisms, such as systemic election monitoring by nonpartisan citizen organizations, can reduce tensions and help sort out the proper course of action.<sup>38</sup>

## The Lebanese Context

### International and Regional Standards

Lebanon has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) on November 3 1972, which sets out the basic international standards for running genuinely democratic elections; article 25 includes the right “to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections.”

### Electoral Trends in Lebanon

Since Independence in 1943 with the drafting of Lebanon’s first electoral law until present day, there has been consistent reconsideration ahead of any planned election. This has resulted in a situation where the country has experienced all sorts of electoral districts, sizes and gerrymandering. Between 1943, the year of independence and 1972, the last election that took place prior to the outbreak of war, Lebanon had nine parliamentary elections. Throughout, the number of deputies greatly changed; always by a multiple of 11 in order to preserve the fixed six to five ratio.

This has shaped the country’s electoral culture with four main trends that are interesting to highlight.

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<sup>38</sup> NDI, “Monitoring and Mitigating Electoral Violence through Nonpartisan Citizen Observation,” NDI Guidance Document for the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM), 2015.

**Trend 1 -- Post-Independence:** The 1943 and 1947 parliamentary elections came at a time when the political fabric of society was divided between 2 blocs that contested the elections in a manner that could be described as bipartisan rivalry. These traditional blocs, the 'Constitutional Bloc' and the 'National Bloc', also enjoyed a broad base of support across all religious communities.

**Trend 2 -- Presidential Influence:** Bi-partisan rivalry between political blocs turned increasingly confessional with the 1951, 1953 and 1957 elections as products of local, confessional and local alliances. The 1951 elections marked the last elections where a significant group continued to attract a multi-confessional base, which was the Socialist Nationalist Front, a unique coalition of Druze, Christian Armenian parties among others let the first "White Revolution"<sup>39</sup> bringing about the downfall of President Bechara Khoury's regime and gave rise to the opposition's candidate as President, Camille Chamoun. "During the presidency of Camille Chamoun, the engineering of electoral constituencies was practiced in the two successive electoral rounds of 1953 and 1957. The small constituency was employed, where the difference in seats among constituencies was from one to two in the 1953 law, and from one to six in the 1957 law."<sup>40</sup> These divisions led to a heightened level of political tension. These internal divisions, coupled with the external regional environment led to an outbreak of violence across the country. The 1960 and 1964 elections gave rise to the emergence of a military figure to the Presidency under Fouad Chehab. The 1960 electoral law was based, in great part, on the previous ones; but the whole country was now redivided into 24 electoral districts. Together they elect to the Chamber 99 deputies. According to this law, who gets a simple plurality of votes from all communities is elected.

**Trend 3 -- Electoral "Stability":** By the time the 1968 and 1972 elections, it was the 1960 electoral law that was seen as most stable and adopted, however, this was after the country had undergone a series of changes to the electoral law. However, despite irregularities, vote buying and fraud, overall elections in the prewar political process were able to produce change. They also enhanced the performance of the political system and contributed to its development.<sup>41</sup> Elections resulted in comparatively high elite circulation and party representation. By 1972, the last election held prior to the outbreak of war, elections fared better on all counts. Lebanese elections became more contested and incumbents were constantly threatened and regularly unseated by challengers. The average turnover rate of deputies between 1943 and 1972 was as high as 40 percent.<sup>42</sup> The competitive nature of the elections and the relatively high turnover rate, indicate a legislature that was more representative than believed to be.

**Trend 4 -- Post-War Elections:** Elections in the post war years were marked by consistent changes in the electoral law. This instability of the electoral law reflects the instability of the system as whole. This practice has created an atmosphere of uncertainty for deputies, candidates and voters alike. The electoral law in the post-war period became an instrument for the government to influence the outcome .....

39 *Democracy in Lebanon: Anatomy of a Crisis*, by Ghassan Tuani in *The Beirut Review*.

40 <http://www.lcps-lebanon.org/resc/democ/bk93ch1/ch1pt1b.html>

41 See Michael Hudson, "The Electoral Process and Political Development in Lebanon," *Middle East Journal* 20 (Spring 1966) 173-186. Iliya Harik, *Mann Yahkum Lubnan* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, 1972).

42 Samir Khalaf, *Lebanon's Predicament* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), p. 210.

of elections. All three electoral laws since 1990 have been uneven with regard to both the number of seats in constituencies and the number of voters. Electoral districts were gerrymandered to match the political interests of various communities. Moreover, the making and unmaking of alliances before Election Day was an effective instrument to influence the outcome of elections as the electoral law itself. Irregularities were marked in all three elections. They were the worst in 1992 with incidents that included the breaking and stealing of ballot boxes, the disappearance of voter registration lists, and vote tabulations that were not signed by government officials.<sup>43</sup> The gerrymandering in the electoral law, the making and breaking of alliances and the large amount of money spent on campaigns or in “buying” votes on elections day, were viewed as the norm in post war elections which impacted the results of these elections. Lebanon, at the time did not have a law that regulates the amount of money that could be spent in elections. This form of pressure in campaigns has a great affect on the outcome of elections.

## A Small Step in the Right Direction: Current Electoral Framework in Lebanon<sup>44</sup>

Decree-law no. 44, dated June 17, 2017, provided a significantly reformed framework for parliamentary elections in Lebanon. For the first time in Lebanese history, the country employed proportional representation (while maintaining confessional quotas specific to each of the 15 electoral districts), a preferential vote for candidates on open lists, out-of-country voting, and pre-printed ballots. These reforms resulted in significant changes to the campaigning, voting, and tabulation processes. The law maintained the existing number of seats at 128, but reduced the number of districts from 26 to 15. Seats were apportioned by sect accordingly: 27 Shia, 27 Sunni, 34 Maronite, 14 Greek Orthodox, 8 Druze, 8 Greek Catholic, 5 Armenian Orthodox, 2 Alawite, 2 Christian Minorities, and 1 Protestant.

Voting age in Lebanon is 21, and the minimum candidacy age is 25. Voters are automatically registered in their family’s historic residence of record. Upon registering a marriage, a woman’s residency is automatically changed to that of her husband’s family. While the new law introduced the possibility for voting via biometric card in mega centers<sup>45</sup> (thus removing the need to return to one’s historic residence), cost and time needed to establish these procedures in advance of elections were deemed unrealistic and were set aside for the 2018 polls.

Under the new election law, voters may select a single list running in their major district, and then cast a “preferential vote” for one individual candidate running on that list in the sub-district (if applicable). An electoral district could have up to four sub-districts, or *caza*, within its boundaries. While countries

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<sup>43</sup> *Annahar*, September 2, 1992.

<sup>44</sup> NDI, Lebanon 2018 Parliamentary Elections Final Report.

<sup>45</sup> Mega centers — specifically referenced in the law — would have been organized in large urban areas with ballots for all 15 districts, allowing voters to cast their votes near their homes, rather than having to return to their families’ historic villages where they were registered. Despite being referenced in the law, the MOIM did not implement this aspect, citing lack of timing/resources.

like Indonesia and Brazil have multi-member district (MMD) proportional representation (PR) and Nepal's proportional list accommodates ethnic and religious minorities, Lebanon incorporates all of those elements. In order to win a seat, lists have to meet the "electoral quotient," which is the number of eligible voters in the district divided by the number of seats assigned. Each list that meets or exceeds that quotient in the number of votes received is guaranteed a proportionate number of seats. Individual seats are then assigned based on the proportion of the preferential vote each candidate on the winning lists has taken, and according to which sect they belong to.

The newly drawn districts are more representative of the population voting in each of them than they ever have been. The districts used in elections held under Syrian occupation — in 1992, 1996, and 2000 — were drawn by Syrian authorities explicitly to marginalize their opponents in Lebanon. Lebanese authorities used these same district boundaries in the 2005 elections that were held just after Syrian forces withdrew from the country, to avoid entering into the complex negotiations that would have been required to redraw them. The 2009 parliamentary elections were conducted using district lines that reflected the agreement made by the major parties at the 2008 Doha Conference, which essentially allowed each party to control districts in order to prevent the sectarian clashes that had been plaguing the country. The new law opened the door for new challengers to compete against established political parties, and for election coalitions to be formed at the district rather than the national level.

However, critics of the new law suggest that boundaries have been gerrymandered to ensure the election of certain individuals, and analysis suggests that, in opposition to the "one voter, one vote" principle, the new law creates large disparities in voting power between districts. Seat allocation does not always correlate equally with the number of registered voters in the district. For example, voters are drastically overrepresented in Beirut 1, the Mount Lebanon districts (Jbeil/Keserouan, Metn, Baabda, Chouf/Aley), Bekaa 1 (Zahle) and 2 (West Bekaa/Rashaya), North Lebanon 3 (Bsharri/ Zgharta/Batroun/Koura), and South Lebanon 1 (Saida/Jezzine), while voters are drastically underrepresented in Beirut 2 (Ras Beirut/ Mina El Hosn/Ain El Mreisseh/Mazraa/Mseitbeh/Zkak El Blat/ Bashoura/Marfaa), South Lebanon 2 (Zahrani/Tyre) and 3 (Nabatieh/Marjayoun/Bint Jbeil/Hasbaya), and North Lebanon 1 (Akkar).

The new electoral law is viewed by most political parties and electoral reform advocacy groups as a compromise that enabled these elections to take place after multiple postponements, but a problematic solution that contains errors, loopholes, and provisions that could not be fully implemented for these elections. It has reduced the number of votes needed to win a seat, which has the potential to increase the inclusiveness and competitiveness of the electoral process, and created space for newcomers both inside political parties and on lists composed of independent candidates. However, the size of constituencies remains unequal, creating significant differences across districts in the number of votes needed to secure a seat, and violating key election principles and international standards and commitments.



## Legal Framework for Candidate Registration

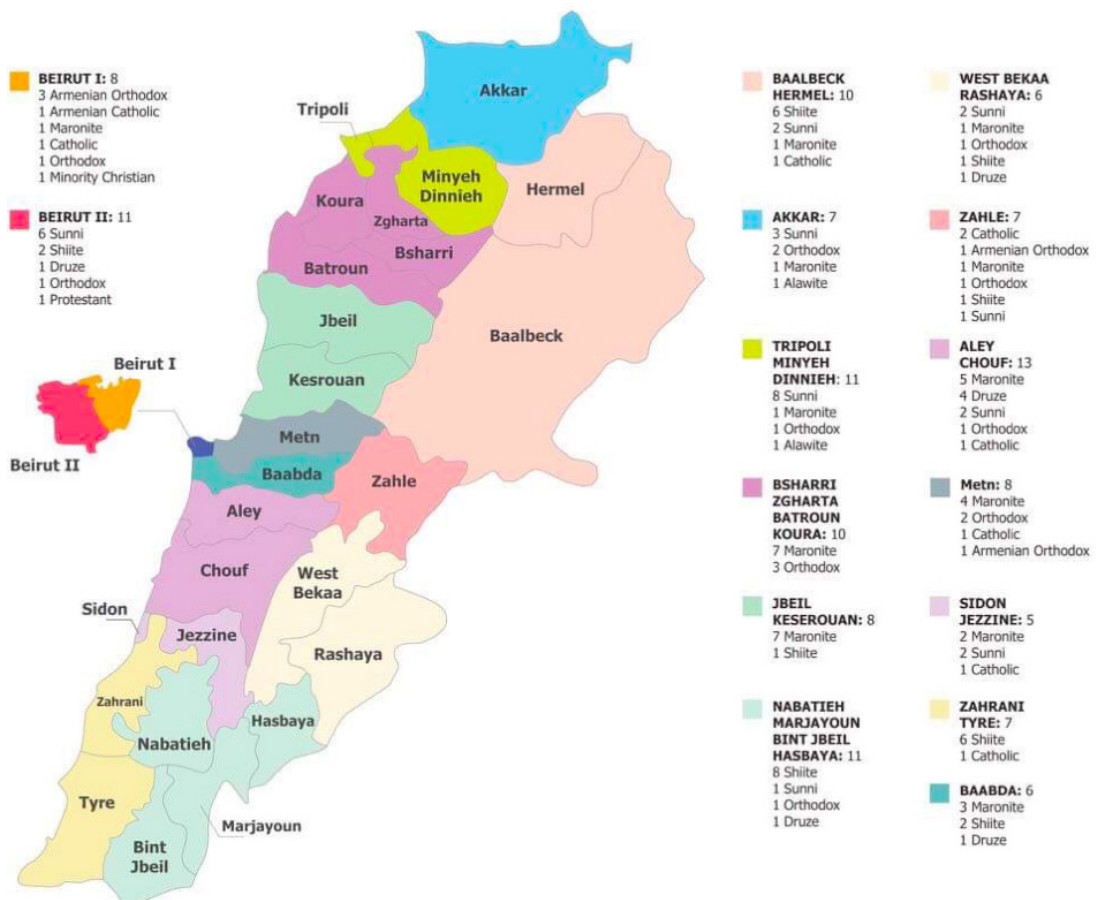
Candidates first submit their applications individually to the SCE, and then negotiate positions on lists for campaigning purposes. The number of candidates on a list cannot exceed the number of eligible seats in the given electoral district, and each list must have a minimum of 40 percent of eligible seats to be registered. In addition to established political parties, one newly formed political party and numerous independent lists put forward their candidacies for the 2018 elections.

## Legal Framework of Election Campaign and Campaign Finance

The new electoral law increased the campaign spending ceiling significantly. In addition to LL150 million (\$100,000) that each candidate could spend, lists were allowed to spend up to LL150 million for each of their candidates as well as LL5,000 (\$3.30) for each registered voter in the major constituency in which they were running. The new law increased the candidate nomination fee from LL 2 million to LL 8 million. The Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA), which monitored campaign spending during the election, estimated that registered candidates and lists could spend up to \$672 million cumulatively, within the parameters of the law.

## The Electoral Districts

The 2009 legislative elections will be based on a majoritarian system that adopts the electoral districting of the 1960 electoral law. The only changes will occur in Beirut that will be divided into three separate districts. The following are the electoral maps for both Lebanon and Beirut:





# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ELECTIONS OBSERVING GENDER AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

## Goal of Observing Violence against Women in Elections (VAW-E)

Election observers can have a powerful impact by making VAW-E visible. In the short term, this allows for mitigation of violence and makes people aware that this type of violence is happening. In the long term, it enables identification of long term solutions. Both approaches increase electoral integrity and the prospects for democratic elections. Violence against women should be considered in the design of an observation's methodology, terms of reference, and the forms or checklists observers use. It should also be part of an observer mission's reports and recommendations.

## Violence against Women in Politics (VAW-P)

Over the last few decades, women around the world have made historic gains in politics and political life—as activists, civic leaders, voters, political party members, candidates, elected representatives and appointed officials—bringing with it a host of positive effects for women, democracy and society. Yet even as more women step forward, they are too often met by discrimination, harassment, psychological abuse—increasingly projected online—and physical or sexual assault. While all violence against women is unacceptable, violence against politically active women has two additional effects: it discourages women from being or becoming politically active, and it undermines the integrity of democratic practices. It is *not* the “cost of doing politics.” Rather, it *costs* politics the benefits of the sustainable and responsive democratic governance that an inclusive political space can create.

While political violence can be experienced by both men and women, the specific issue of **violence against women in politics** has three distinct characteristics:

- It targets women *because* of their gender
- In its very *form* it can be gendered, as exemplified by sexist threats and sexual violence
- It discourages *women in particular* from being or becoming politically active.

## Violence against Women in Elections (VAW-E)

Violence against women is a targeted and destructive tool used in various ways throughout the electoral cycle to dissuade women from participating as *candidates, voters, election officials, observers, poll-watchers or activists*. This has critical implications for the integrity of the electoral process, because when women are prevented from participating fully and equally in elections, whether by voting, campaigning or otherwise exercising their political and civic rights, democratic processes are nullified.

The definition of **VAW-E** combines the UN's definition of violence against women and the definition of electoral violence:

**Violence against Women:** The UN defines violence against women as *any act* of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.

**Electoral Violence:** Electoral conflict and violence is defined as the use or threat of force to harm persons or property involved in the electoral process, with the intention of influencing the conduct of electoral stakeholders and/or to affect the electoral process. Electoral violence can manifest through psychological abuse, threats, physical assault, blackmail, destruction of property or assassination.

From these roots, **VAW-E** can be defined as

- *any act of gender-based election violence that is directed primarily at women, and that is a result of their aspirations to seek political office, their link to political activities (for example, working as election officials or attending campaign rallies) or simply their commitment to vote,*
- *as well as any use or threat of force to harm persons or property with the intention of influencing the electoral process that has a disproportionate or different impact on women because of their marginalized and vulnerable status in society.*

It is also important to recognize that while both women and men can experience electoral violence, this general violence can have a disproportionately higher impact on women because they occupy a subordinate status in society and are more vulnerable to attacks. This increased vulnerability is linked to the structural barriers based on gender that impact women's participation. For example, although both men and women were victims during Cote d'Ivoire's 2010/11 post-election violence, research by the Organisation des Femmes Actives de Cote d'Ivoire (OFACI) revealed that women were often the

first victims of party reprisals. Because they were home caring for children, they were more likely to be present during attacks and made for easier targets than men; they also had more difficulty escaping quickly because they had children under their care.

## General Electoral Violence versus VAW-E

- Men and women may both be victims of electoral violence such as murder, harassment and coercion. However, traditional definitions do not capture the additional acts and threats that target women candidates, activists, voters and election workers *because they are women*.
- Social and traditional norms about gender shape *how* and *why* women are targeted by electoral violence, as well as what types of acts are pursued to curtail or influence their participation.
- Unlike men, women experience familial or social intimidation in private spaces, such as the home, or violence and intimidation from members and leaders of their own political party. The goal of such violence may be aimed directly at upholding traditional female roles, effectively shutting women out of politics or controlling their participation.

## Factors that contribute to VAW-E<sup>46</sup>

Factors that contribute to VAW-E vary between regions and countries, but can include:

- Opposition to women's leadership
- Women's economic dependency, illiteracy, limited family support, lack of education or access to education, lack of access to information or their burden of responsibilities at home
- Discriminatory social and cultural attitudes, a society's culture of violence or impunity (particularly political violence) or the absence of supportive administrative and judicial structures, including inadequate rule of law and governance institutions.

### What to Look for: Types of Violence Committed against Women in Elections

VAW-E can occur in a variety of ways and be perpetrated by many different types of actors. Examples range from verbal harassment to intimidation and coercion to more physical forms of violence such as sexual harassment, rape, abuse and murder. For the purposes of recording and assessing violence, it can be categorized into five main categories: *physical, sexual, psychological, threats and coercion, and economic*.

<sup>46</sup> Causes/factors drawn from South Asia Partnership International's *Combating Violence against Women in Politics: Revisiting Policies, Politics and Participation Proceeding Report*, 2008.

The table below highlights the ways in which violence can occur in both public and private life, at all levels of society, to impact women’s ability to participate in elections as candidates, voters, election officials, observers, poll-watchers or activists.<sup>47</sup>

Types of Violence	Tends to Occur	Victims	Perpetrators	Aims
<b>Physical:</b> Murder, assault, kidnapping	Grassroots level or in the home; at the societal and political levels	Women leaders and activists; women voters, candidates or election officials	Opposition or own parties, extremist organizations, family or community members, security forces	Win inter- or intra-party conflicts, maintain the status quo of women’s subordinate role in society
<b>Sexual:</b> Rape or sexual assault, sexual harassment or exploitation	Publicly or privately, in situations of political unrest and high-stakes elections; or within the home or a woman’s own political party	Women activists, voters, candidates or party members, election officials	Security forces, warring forces, competing male politicians, husbands or family members	To deter or control women’s political participation as candidates or administrators; to force women to vote for someone else’s preferred candidate

<sup>47</sup> This chart is adapted from South Asia Partnership International, 2009, ‘Thematic Report on Violence against Women in Politics 2009’, To the United Nations Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), SAP International, with Collaboration from Lawyers Collective Women’s Rights Initiative, <http://www.vawip.org/thematic-report-violence-against-women-politics-2009-0>

<p><b>Psychological:</b> Slander and defamation, character attacks, harassment (including by the media), gendered insults, hate speech, equating women's political participation with immoral practices, incitement to commit violence</p>	<p>In the national or local media or social media; at the community level; within the home or a woman's own political party; as a tool during nomination or campaign processes</p>	<p>Women candidates or activists, voters, election officials</p>	<p>Opposition parties or members of women's own parties, male leaders, family or community members, media outlets</p>	<p>To deter women from being elected, to stop women from active participation in election process, to maintain and increase male-dominated power</p>
<p><b>Threats and Coercion:</b> Threats, false accusations, intimidation, false assessment of the environment, blackmail, pressure or coercion</p>	<p>Police stations; councils; within political parties or committees; within the home, office or community</p>	<p>Women candidates, party leaders or members, women voters, activists, election officials</p>	<p>Leaders or members of opposition parties or own parties, police, colleagues, family or community members</p>	<p>To prevent or control women contesting elections, taking office, voting or participating in election administration, stop women's expression of their own political opinions or priorities</p>
<p><b>Economic:</b> Economic control, denial or delay in providing financial resources that are otherwise available, property damage</p>	<p>Publicly or privately; within political parties during nomination or campaign processes; in the home</p>	<p>Women candidates or party members, voters, activists, election officials</p>	<p>Leaders or members of own parties, election administrators, family or community members</p>	<p>To block or restrict women's access to resources available to men and so prevent their expression of their own political viewpoints or priorities.</p>

## Election Observation and VAW-E

Citizen election observation groups can play a critical role in recording, mitigating and assessing the impact of VAW-E on electoral processes in their countries. Some of the key steps and best practices these groups must consider are listed below.

### Pre-Election Period:<sup>48</sup>

- Citizen groups undertaking election observation should identify and reach out to a network of stakeholders before they begin their observation:
  - Some of these stakeholders should be in a position to provide information on the context of women's political participation and violence against women, which will help the observation group in the design of its priorities and methodology.
  - Other stakeholders should be specifically targeted for their ability to address VAW-E if it is observed. These might include local authorities or community leaders, and security forces such as the police, political parties or electoral management bodies.
- Women's civil society organizations focused on gender-based violence and/or women's rights organizations should be consulted to help identify key stakeholders already engaged in this issue that can help with data collection, training or mitigation.
- It may be necessary to train security forces, poll workers or election officials, or groups focused on victims' services or other social service providers to understand and respond to security challenges or situations confronting women during the electoral cycle as a part of a group's mitigation strategy.
- If a citizen observer group is unable to collect information on VAW-E as part of its efforts, it should identify key partners who are monitoring VAW-E and who can share information so the observer group can include it in its statements.

### Election Period:

- When warning signs of VAW-E are identified, either on election day or during the pre-election period, observers will need to decide who the most appropriate actor for resolving it is. For instance, if observers view a party member harassing a woman from the same party, they may choose to engage party leadership and the election commission to address the issue, rather than turning to the police. Any mechanisms for response or relaying information should be identified

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<sup>48</sup> These best practices are based in part on recommendations included in *Bardall, Gabrielle. 2011. Breaking the Mold: Understanding Gender and Electoral Violence. Washington, DC: IFES. [http://www.ifes.org/~media/Files/Publications/White%20PaperReport/2011/Gender\\_and\\_Electoral\\_Violence\\_2011.pdf](http://www.ifes.org/~media/Files/Publications/White%20PaperReport/2011/Gender_and_Electoral_Violence_2011.pdf)*

well before election day so observers are well-trained and the necessary systems are in place beforehand.

- Observers stationed in polling stations or communities on election day or during the pre-election period should receive thorough advance training from the citizen observation group on how to recognize the most likely types of violence. This training should include the kinds of victims and perpetrators as well as the type(s) of violence, and should provide illustrative information to help observers recognize violence that they might not otherwise identify as such. Illustrative information can include an overview of gender-based violence to orient observers in the larger political and social context.
- Early warning systems, information technology and social media platforms, such as anonymous hotlines, SMS-based citizen reporting mechanisms and other crowdsourcing efforts, can be used to collect reports from affected women and to gain further insight into such violence (i.e., by mapping the reports to generate hot-spot maps). One advantage of these mechanisms is that they can be more anonymous than other methods of reporting—important because women are less likely than men to report violence, often out of fear of reprisals.

### Post-Election Period:

- When possible, public statements and reports should include information assessing the participation of women in the election process and making recommendations to improve it. This should include assessing the prevalence and impact of VAW-E, and how to address it. Citizen observation groups should use data they collected to assess perpetrators, targets and type(s) of violence, and present this analysis as part of their statements and reports. Data collected by other groups on VAW-E can also be useful for internal analysis and to inform these reports, but that information should remain separate from the observer group's own data.
- Data collected on VAW-E during an election can be a powerful tool for advocacy to address and prevent violence women in future election cycles and between elections by changing laws or the internal policies and protocols of political parties, election management bodies or other groups, such as security forces. Citizen observation groups interested in pursuing such advocacy should build on the relationships established during their monitoring and mitigation efforts to gain allies and push effectively for change.



## Further readings:

Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE): Mainstreaming Human Rights in Electoral Reform.

**ACE** Electoral Knowledge Network <http://www.aceproject.org>

*A Guide to the proposed Draft Law*, Civil Campaign for Electoral reform, February 2007

*Lebanon's New Election Law: What Changed, What Stayed the Same*, International foundation for Electoral Systems, October 2008

*Democracy in Lebanon: Anatomy of a Crisis*, by Ghassan Tuani in The Beirut Review.

<http://www.lcps-lebanon.org/resc/democ/bk93ch1/ch1pt1b.html>

Michael Hudson, "The Electoral Process and Political Development in Lebanon," *Middle East journal* 20 (Spring 1966) 173–186.

*Mann Yahkum Lubnan*, Iliya Harik (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, 1972).

*Lebanon's Predicament*, Samir Khalaf, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).

*Annahar*, September 2, 1992.

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

*La Géographie Electorale au Liban: Histoires Des Cazas et Decoupage Des Circonscriptions*, Antoine Messarra, (Librairie Orientale 2004).



## LESSON 3.7

# ROLE OF THE MEDIA

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No democracy can thrive unless citizens have the information they need to make free and informed choices about those who seek their authority to govern. **Just as important as having informed voters who elect their officials, is the need for citizens to be aware of their needs and how to translate these needs into platforms which parties and governments must respond to.** Media — newspapers, television, radio, billboards, internet, etc. — play a critical role in providing information and a space for political dialogue in a democratic state.

In states with long traditions of democracy and a free press, a number of safeguards have evolved to protect freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and citizens' rights to information, all of which make it easier for citizens to be well informed if they choose to be. Likewise in established democracies, professional journalists often have developed self-imposed rules of conduct that protect against bias.

### Role of Media in a Democracy

While media takes many different forms and has a range of audiences, there are some clear roles these outlets can play to support democratic development.

- A **forum for discussion** of important social, economic and political questions facing a society;
- A **source of information on which citizens can base the decisions they make** about these questions and issues;
- A **mediator between citizens and their elected representatives** by giving a voice to both to express concerns, actions, and positions on issues of common concern;
- A **tool to create awareness** among a diverse and geographically dispersed society.

### Media Responsibility in a Democracy

Institutions as well as laws determine the way that the media operates in a democracy. Such institutions include courts, regulators, and the executive branch of government. Freedom of expression and press

laws are the most common forms of legislation that determine the rights and responsibilities of media outlets. Such legislation often includes standards for licensing of media outlets, what sort of outlets are permitted, and whether or not there is a right to appeal when licenses are denied. Press laws also usually contain information about access to production and distribution, and what sort of controls the government may place on the content of information media disseminates.

Freedom of Information laws are a set of rules on access to information or records held by government bodies. In general, **such laws define a legal process by which government information is required to be available to the public, including citizens and media.** In many countries, there are constitutional guarantees for the right of access to information, but usually, these are unused if specific legislation to support them does not exist.

## A free media in a democracy has the responsibility to:

- **Keep the society informed:** media should report on events and happenings in all parts of the society — political, economic, and social. Distribution of such information is the first step in helping citizens be aware of current events in order to hold the government accountable and protect against abuse of power — a critical component of the rule of law. This information service also acts as the foundation for more informed policy-making, as citizens and politicians have access to a wider range of opinions and platforms.
- **Report verifiable unbiased facts:** journalists, editors, publishers, and other key personnel who strive to create independent media work to foster investigative reporting, substantive coverage of public affairs, and critical, high-quality journalism.
- **Keep editorial comments separate from reported news:** journalists have a critical role to collect information that is accurate and report it in a similarly truthful manner, limiting bias as much as possible. In this way, journalists are public servants of a sort, building credibility based on thoroughness and honesty. Journalist codes of ethics are common in syndicates or other media associations to ensure a set of standards for reporting.

## Media Monitoring

A 2001 study of 97 countries by the World Bank shows that throughout the world, media monopolies dominate. The study says: “In our sample of 97 countries, only four percent of media enterprises are widely held. Less than two percent have other ownership structures (apart from family or state control), and a mere two percent are employee-owned. On average, family-controlled newspapers account for 57 percent of our sample, and families control 34 percent of television stations. State ownership is vast. On average the state controls approximately 29 percent of newspapers and 60 percent of television

stations. The state owns a huge share — 72 percent — of radio stations. The media industry is therefore owned overwhelmingly by parties most likely to extract private benefits of control.”<sup>49</sup>

Since it is unlikely that all news will be unbiased, it is important for citizens to consider the biases or assumptions of the writer or particular news source as a whole. Citizens must consider the context of the information and try to consult more than one source of information to get a balanced perspective.

When gauging openness of a political system towards media freedom and responsibility, the following four principal issues should be considered:

- How the government acts to ensure the news media’s right to gather and impart information or ideas;
- How the government and the news media act to provide access to political parties, elected officials and non-governmental groups so that they may effectively and directly communicate with the public;
- How the government and the media act to ensure accurate and fair coverage of various political parties and ideologies in news and information reporting; and,
- How the government and media act to educate citizens about how and why to participate in the democratic process.

## Journalist Rights and Protections

Journalists are individuals who serve as focal points for investigating events in society and report to a mass audience. These representatives’ work is governed by laws related to access to information, freedom of speech, and expression in a society. These rights to collect and disseminate information can prove hazardous for journalists, particularly when they report on topics sensitive to the state or other power brokers in society.

The downfall of four presidents in Latin America —Fernando Collor de Mello of Brazil in 1992, Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela in 1993, Abdala Bucaram of Ecuador in 1997, and Alberto Fujimori in 2000 —was due in large measure to investigative reporting on their involvement in corrupt deals. Such reporting has made the press a credible — and prestigious — institution in several of Latin America’s new democracies. Because it has functioned effectively and independently, the media enjoy the public’s support and trust.<sup>50</sup>

49 Djankov, Simeon, McLiesh, Caralee, Nenova, Tatiana, Shleiferi, Andrei. “*Who Owns the Media?*” World Bank and Harvard University. June, 2001

50 Coronel, Sheila S. “*The Role of the Media in Deepening Democracy.*” United Nations. Page 10.

This success has come at a great cost. A total of 49 journalists were killed in 2019 (a 44% drop on last year's figure), according to Reporters without Borders annual worldwide round-up of deadly violence and abusive treatment against journalists. Journalism remains a dangerous profession but the number of journalists killed this year is at its lowest in 16 years. However, a worrying trend is an increase in the number of arbitrarily detained journalists. Worldwide, a total of 389 journalists are currently in prison in connection with their work, 12% more than last year. Nearly half of these journalists are being held by three countries: China, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Having intensified its crackdown on the Uyghur minority, China alone holds a third of the worldwide total of arbitrarily detained journalists.<sup>51</sup>

## Misinformation vs. Disinformation vs. Mal-information<sup>52</sup>

Information is a source of power and democratic systems have the potential to distribute that power. In this respect, information is liberating when citizens can openly impart, receive and compare it as they exercise the fundamental freedoms of speech, assembly and association. Democracy also relies on the active engagement of citizens in public life. This includes participation in political processes, such as regular, competitive elections that decide the composition of the government. Participation, in turn, depends on faith in institutions that work in the public interest. This relationship represents a social contract between citizens and the state that, in part, relies on the flow of accurate information that allows citizens to understand what the government is doing and to make choices about different courses of action that hold the government accountable.

The integrity of information is vital to a healthy democracy. When information is false or inaccurate, it can negatively impact citizens' discussions of issues and their political decisions, leading to a breakdown in civil discourse and inhibiting compromise. The ability of citizens to discuss ideas about politics and public affairs in an informed, respectful manner is integral to sustaining long-term democratic health and also includes dialogue and deliberations that happen within government and amongst politicians. Likewise, the work of the government needs to be understood by citizens and information needs to be made available so that citizens are able to hold government actors accountable for decisions.

Democracy is threatened when false and misleading information is propagated and purposefully used to weaken public trust, increase polarization, exclude certain voices, and limit the ability of citizens to act individually or collectively. Disinformation can be particularly acute during elections in which there are significant, preexisting divides over priorities and policies. During these periods, disinformation can sway voter preferences, disrupt the normal functioning of the election process and foster public frustration and disaffection. However, not every attempt at disinformation is linked to a specific event such as an election. Disinformation can also be used to alter the broader information space in which people discuss issues, form beliefs, and make political decisions.

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<sup>51</sup> Reporters without Borders, "2020 World Press Freedom Index."

<sup>52</sup> Excerpt adapted from: NDI, "Supporting Information Integrity and Civil Political Discourse," 2018.

Disinformation is sometimes deployed to promote a larger narrative over time or to degrade civic discourse by promoting division or cynicism.

Authoritarian actors often take various steps to influence the flow of information. These may include cutting off access to independent sources of information and public debate; controlling media outlets and the content of the information being provided; or deliberately spreading disinformation that is false to mislead the public. These actors find great value in any action that degrades public trust and disrupts the political participation of their democratic counterparts.

Technology has fundamentally altered the production and consumption of information in a number of ways. As the internet is becoming more widely accessible, faster and less expensive, billions of people are able to share information with one another more easily than they could before. This technological shift includes the growth of social media, which has made the consumption of information shared through online networks public rather than private, and controlled by several large companies. The speed at which information is shared has also grown, as the number of mobile devices has increased and the news cycle has accelerated. With information being exchanged more rapidly and in real-time between peers, the accuracy of shared information, in some cases, is less likely to be contested. In other cases, the flood of information being shared is overwhelming and it becomes more challenging to decipher what is accurate and what is false. The lack of contestation is especially true with digital environments becoming more personalized through algorithms that match content with user tastes and preferences. These factors, which have characterized the digital revolution, have enhanced public vulnerability to manipulation by inaccurate information.

### *Explanation of Common Terms*

**Fake news** is a term that has been used interchangeably with disinformation or other types of disorder within the information ecosystem and has become a broad term used to describe news that is inaccurate or fabricated. However, the term “fake news” does not accurately describe the complexity of disinformation, misinformation and mal-information, and is often used by authoritarians and others to degrade true speech they don’t like, conflating it with false narratives.

**Disinformation** is false information deliberately created to cause harm to a person, social group,

organization or country. Disinformation is not always composed of outright lies. It can also be facts that have been separated from the original context, facts that are distorted by prejudicial or discriminatory rhetoric, or facts that are blended with false information.

### *Example*

California-based cybersecurity company FireEye uncovered a years-long disinformation campaign targeting Latin America, the Middle East, the United Kingdom and the United States. The company found over 600 social media accounts based in Iran aiming to spread disinformation across the globe. FireEye shared this information with Facebook in 2018, leading to the removal of 652 fake accounts and pages for “coordinated inauthentic behavior.”

**Misinformation** is false information, but created without the intent of causing harm.

### *Example*

Following a bombing attack in Manchester, England in 2017, a local newspaper erroneously tweeted information about a gunman outside a local hospital. This information was later discovered to be false and the newspaper retracted their previous tweet.

The role of intent in the dissemination of false information is key to understanding the difference between misinformation and disinformation. Disinformation is typically part of a deliberate effort to deceive, influence or manipulate, while misinformation may not be intended to deceive. Even with this distinction, the intentions behind the creation and sharing of information may not always be clear.

**Malinformation** refers to factual information that is deliberately used to inflict harm on a person, organization or country.

### *Example*

During the 2016 U.S. presidential primary process, emails from the Democratic National Committee (DNC) were selectively leaked to the public to demonstrate the DNC’s alleged bias during the campaign.

**Propaganda** refers to campaigns that disseminate information designed to manipulate audiences by generating specific attitudes or provoking specific actions.

### *Example*

North Korea is well-known for propaganda campaigns to indoctrinate its population. Nearly all forms of media including music, art, and film are centered on national pride. Limited access to the internet and censorship of social media contribute to the agenda-setting by the North Korean government.

## Common Types of Mis- and Disinformation

There are many forms of mis- and disinformation. Claire Wardle of First Draft News separated the types of mis- and disinformation into seven distinct categories to explain the spectrum of problematic content found online and in the media.

Misinformation		
Type	Description	Example
Satire	No intention to cause harm, but has the potential to fool	A humorous television show or social commentary
False Connection	When headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content	"Clickbait" an online news article with shocking or controversial titles
Content Misleading	Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual	A photo that leads audiences to believe a specific person was in a certain location
Disinformation		
Type	Description	Example
False Context	When genuine content is shared with false contextual information	Factual information and genuine photos are mispaired
Imposter Content	When genuine sources are impersonated	False information that is incorrectly attributed with a major, credible news source
Fabricated Content	Content that is 100% false and is designed to deceive or do harm	Photoshopped images or fabricated information presented as facts
Manipulated Content	When genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive	Genuine photo paired with fabricated text



## Gendered Disinformation

While disinformation can vary based on the context or region where it occurs, it is increasingly clear that it often explicitly manipulates socio-cultural norms, social cleavages and/or ideological divisions to create desired political outcomes. A critical aspect of effectively countering it and its impact on democratic processes must be to understand:

- **Which** demographics are perceived as open to manipulation through disinformation and **why**
- **How** particular groups are differentially targeted
- **Manner** in which social ideologies (*sexism, racism, heterosexism, classism....*) are leveraged to successfully create desired political outcomes

Gender norms, gender identities and gender relations are extremely resistant to change and shape every aspect of a country's landscape – from how labor and power are divided to characteristics of the ideal political leader. Importantly, gender norms not only have the ability to manipulate the political intentions & participation of what is the single largest demographic grouping in a country-- women -- but those of men as well. Gender norms are therefore extremely effective when manipulated towards the achievement of a particular political or social outcome.

Online gendered disinformation campaigns have the potential to manipulate entrenched gender norms to do one or all of three things:

1. **Disinformation to scare women.** Cause some portion of half of the population – women activists, voters, party members, candidates, elected officials and members of government – to withdraw from politics or participate in ways directed by fear.
  - This could mean the ability to manipulate (or stop) the political participation of at least 50% of the eligible voting population—closing electoral margins or even overturning them
  - **Online violence** targeting politically active women, including fake sexualized images/videos/stories—are often used to demean and scare women and their families
  - The audience is rarely the woman in question — the aim is to send a chilling message to all women that it is “**unsafe**” to participate, leading to their voluntary or forced withdrawal from voting, activism, leadership etc.
2. **Disinformation to influence popular support.** Shift popular support of both men and women away from visible politically-active women, undermining a significant leadership demographic, and manipulating political outcomes.
  - Disinformation is a core mechanism of harassment campaigns targeting women who are seeking to be or already in political leadership positions

- Often not rooted in a desire to keep women out, these campaigns successfully leverage gender norms regarding ‘proper’ feminine identity or key ‘masculine’ traits of a leader to **manipulate political outcomes**

### 3. Disinformation to Influence Views of Issues, Policies, Political Orders.

- Gendered disinformation can be used to manipulate political outcomes by leveraging gender norms to influence the views of **men and women** on issues, policies, competing viewpoints, etc.
- This type of campaign is visible in the social-media manipulation targeting female politicians, combined with real-life commentary.

## Media Integrity and Countermeasures to Deter Disinformation<sup>53</sup>

Civil society, technology companies, political parties, governments, and citizens have taken numerous measures to counter disinformation. Digital security is critical to preventing information from being manipulated or shared with actors who would use the information to cause harm, and can include strengthening passwords, utilizing virtual private networks (VPNs), and enabling two-factor authentication.

Technology companies have begun taking the following measures against disinformation:

- **Detecting automated bots:** While not all bots are designed for deceitful purposes, understanding the context in which automated accounts are being used to pollute the digital information space is crucial to identifying bots that spread disinformation and taking steps to stop their activities. Detecting automated accounts can help counter the spread of disinformation, especially through social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.
- **Network analysis:** Tracing the patterns of automated accounts is a key means of understanding of how disinformation campaigns operate and how actors coordinate with one another to increase the reach of certain pieces of disinformation.

**Fact-checking** of traditional media outlets and the information that is shared is another potential countermeasure against disinformation. Fact-checking should be part of a multi-pronged approach taken by different actors, such as civil society organizations, political parties, education ministries, legislators, and technology companies. Gauging the accuracy and intent of information can be challenging, as fact-checkers cannot always respond as quickly as disinformation is spread. Fact-checking of traditional media outlets must also be matched by similar efforts from social media outlets to ensure that they do not recirculate false information.

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 53 Excerpt adapted from: NDI, “Supporting Information Integrity and Civil Political Discourse,” 2018, pgs 9–10.

### *Example*

A company in Taiwan developed a fact-checking tool within the LINE messaging platform called CoFacts. This tool compiles a database of popular disinformation messages and relies on collaborative action from fact-checkers and users.

### *Example*

Automated fact-checking tools, such as Chequeabot in Argentina and Full Fact in the United Kingdom, have attempted to counter the problem of recirculating false information by automatically checking claims made in news media against official statistics and verified information.

Another important component of countering disinformation is restoring citizen trust in political institutions, including the media. The growing lack of trust in the ability of institutions to provide accurate and impartial information has provided opportunities and space for actors seeking to promote disinformation. This further impacts the ability of citizens to trust the information they receive. Building trust in institutions requires healthy dialogue between actors, such as political parties and, citizen rights organizations, in order to better understand the nature of how disinformation impacts democracy. This includes establishing guidelines for appropriate behavior in online campaigns, especially where disinformation may play a role in shaping campaign conduct. During election periods, citizen election monitors can, and do, help mitigate the effects of disinformation based on their understanding of the local context and the media environment in which citizens consume information. Citizen election monitors can also help track online content and monitor traditional media outlets as part of their efforts to combat false narratives. Election monitors may need additional assistance to identify and understand the targets and impact of false narratives.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) have been involved in efforts to strengthen the integrity of information through education campaigns and their increasing involvement in improving media literacy among citizens. Media and information literacy campaigns and efforts to improve citizens' critical consumption of media, especially in digital spheres, have become a popular strategy for countering disinformation. Women, young people and older populations are groups targeted more frequently by these campaigns, especially regarding social media, as both populations have increased their digital engagement and use of online services and media platforms. However, young women are disproportionately discouraged by disinformation and are more likely to face barriers to media literacy as compared to male counterparts, which restricts their participation online. Young people, if exposed to disinformation that creates or solidifies pre-existing doubt about the trustworthiness of institutions, may seek alternate sources of information that further undermines their ability to act as informed citizens. Populations with lower rates of information literacy, especially communities that have less access to formal education, may also be vulnerable. Targeted media and information literacy campaigns have the potential to increase certain populations' resilience to digital and traditional disinformation campaigns.

## The Lebanese Context

Lebanon has long been recognized as having one of the most open and diverse media environments in the Middle East. Criticism of state authorities and political figures is a regular feature in most publications and broadcasts, as are discussions of religious, social, and economic issues. However, editorial approaches and critiques of media outlets are often shaped by political affiliation of the particular outlet. In this regard, the Lebanese media, while leading the charge in the region for the quality of production and use of technology, serve as the mouthpieces of political parties or businessmen. These affiliations are often strengthened through politically motivated violence which can put journalists in the cross-hairs of political or sectarian rivalries. This vulnerability seriously limits Lebanese media's ability to act as impartial conduits of information for citizens.

In 2019, Reporters without Borders ranked Lebanon 101 of 180 countries on the Press Freedom Index, dropped one spot since last year.

## Development of the Media Sector

Lebanon was the first Arab country to permit private radio and television and there are now several private television stations and dozens of radio stations operating. The country also features dozens of newspapers and hundreds of periodicals, many of which publish critical comments about the government — meaning competition for readership is quite stiff. All national newspapers are privately owned as are most television and radio stations, including six independent television and satellite stations and nearly three dozen independent radio stations. Access to satellite television has grown substantially over the last decade.<sup>54</sup> Also, the advent of the internet has revolutionized how citizens get their news — dramatically increasing the numbers of sources the average citizen can access — including sites of Lebanese media outlets and many other international news sites.

The majority of Lebanon's news outlets were created during the Lebanese civil war period, and thus reflect the country's pluralism and divisions. These media outlets were developed as a propaganda tool to get messages to constituents during a period of violence, with virtually no state controls on the content or operating regulations. Political interests (internal, regional and international) have a strong influence though, as most media owners are affiliated with either a political party or a religious sect and content clearly reflects these ideologies. Therefore, in today's media environment, virtually all outlets can be linked to one political agenda or another.

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54 <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=251&country=7213&year=2007>

## Regulating the Media

The Lebanese constitution provides for the freedom of expression in Article 13 which is the only linkage to free press in this foundational document. Though certain aspects of the media legislation restrict this right, press laws do not impose a high degree of direct censorship by prohibiting publication or broadcast of specific subject areas. However, informal censorship on the part of journalists and editors is common practice.<sup>55</sup>

### Press Laws

Print media in Lebanon has been governed by a series of press laws, most of which promoted the organization of journalists and publishers. These laws and regulations include:

- Press Law of 1948 — regulating the affairs of print media and organized journalists into one union;
- Press Law of 1952 — organized journalists into two unions (one for publishers and one for editors) and set the stage for the granting of new newspaper licenses; and
- Press Law of 1962 — defined the profession and practice of journalism. Included in this law is the requirement that any newspaper wishing to publish news on political events must first obtain a legislative decree granting a Category 1 license.

In 1994, the Lebanese government enacted the Audio-Visual Media Law, the first attempt to regulate media in the country. For the first time, the law legalized private broadcasting companies and ended the monopoly which TeleLiban had on television programming until that point. The law also gave the government the right to fine journalists and publishers and even detain them for slandering the head of state or inciting sectarian strife. Specifically, it banned live broadcasts of unauthorized political gatherings and certain religious events. The intention of this provision was to hinder the role of media in inciting political or sectarian violence. In practice, restrictions on the operating space of media have been applied, but not in a consistent manner — thereby strengthening the perception of political affiliation of media outlets.

In 2010, the former minister of information launched a series of consultations with journalists, media owners, advocacy groups, and politicians to identify priorities and guidelines for a new comprehensive legal framework but the process came to a standstill when the unity government collapsed in January 2011.<sup>56</sup> A 2013 Ministry of Telecommunication report stated that a new media law, “essential to the development of the sector,” was still awaiting approval by the parliament. The draft included several key amendments to comprise digital television and various broadcast formats. The report, however, did not mention any substantial overhaul to control the many flaws of the current legal framework.

55 “*Media in Lebanon: Reporting on a Nation Divided.*” Report on IPI’s Fact Finding Mission to Lebanon — 8–13 December 2006.

56 Media Landscape, “Lebanon.” Available at: <https://medialandscapes.org/country/lebanon/policies/media-legislation>

## Monitoring the Media

The Audio-Visual Law established a licensing board known as the National Audio-Visual Media Council. Its 10 members are politically selected based on confessional lines, half by Parliament and half by the Cabinet, but they also were recognized for their intellectual, literary, scientific and technical backgrounds and experience. The Council's mission according to the 1994 law was to 1) review license applications submitted by the Minister of Information, 2) verify that the applications meet the requirements of the law, and 3) advise the Cabinet on whether it should approve or reject the application. The Cabinet was then to make the final decision. Actual implementation of the Audio-Visual Media Law took several years, but by 2002, Lebanon had reduced the number of private radio stations broadcasting news to 16, four on AM and 12 on FM, and the number of private television stations licensed to six.<sup>57</sup>

Prohibitions in the Audio-Visual Media Law state that only TV stations with the Category 1 license can broadcast news. But the government made an exception for Hezbollah's Al Manar and the Catholic Church's Tele-Lumiere. Al Manar was allowed to continue to broadcast news after September 18, 1996, if it limited its domestic news coverage to information about the resistance in southern Lebanon. Tele-Lumiere, which does not broadcast news but had no license whatsoever, was allowed to remain on the air in order to balance Al Manar. Thus when former president Elias Hrawi declared that Al Manar was not broadcasting any news whatsoever, his conduct appeared to be a transparent effort to win Christian sympathy. It was only after the late president of Syria, Hafez Al Assad, intervened and argued the decision was detrimental to the resistance that the Lebanese government allowed Al Manar to resume broadcasting.

## Journalist Integrity and Safety

The October 2019 Revolution has lifted the taboo on criticizing previously "untouchable" figures, but attacks on the media have intensified during the demonstrations. The police have used disproportionate force against journalists and have attacked them although they were clearly identifiable as such. Reporters working for pro-government media have been treated with suspicion by demonstrators and some have been roughed up. Others identified by members of their community have been accused of being traitors if their reporting was regarded as unfavorable. Bloggers and online journalists continue to receive subpoenas from the "bureau for combatting cyber-crimes" if something they have posted on social media has elicited a complaint from a member of the public, often a prominent person linked to the government.<sup>58</sup>

Political crises and attempts at power-sharing between major political factions in Lebanon have meant the continued politicization of media outlets and staunch alignment with political or sectarian streams. With many publications, radio, television, and online news sites heavily influenced by political and religious groups, the intensifying political divisions are played out daily in the press with a number of .....

57 Nabil Dajani. *Disoriented Media in a Fragmented Society: The Lebanese Experience*. Beirut: American University Press, 1992, p.45

58 Reporters without Borders, "2019 Lebanon," Available at: <https://rsf.org/en/lebanon>

media outlets promoting specific political agendas. In addition, media outlets can become the direct targets of political conflict and violence, as was the case in May of 2008 when Hezbollah fighters overran the headquarters of Future TV and Al Mustaqbal newspaper, controlled by the Future Movement's Hariri family. As a result of this increased polarization of media outlets, there has been a rise in self-censorship on the part of media representatives, who had previously been outspoken against political and social developments, and are now concerned about personal safety for voicing opposing views.

The courts are also frequently used to prosecute media outlets and journalists who take on any politicians or religious leaders. In recent years, the courts have harassed TV presenters who have allowed guests to criticize officials on the air, and newspapers that have investigated corruption. Journalists can be prosecuted by military or print media courts and can be sentenced to imprisonment although, in practice, the courts usually fine them and reserve prison sentences for those being tried in absentia.<sup>59</sup>

## Resources

**Lebanese Ministry of Information** — <http://www.ministryinfo.gov.lb/>

**Lebanese National News Agency** — <http://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/>

**Internews** ([www.internews.org](http://www.internews.org))

**Arab Media and Society Journal** — <http://arabmediasociety.com/>

**International Journalists Network** — <https://www.ijnet.org/>

**Reporters without Borders** — <https://rsf.org/>

**Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics** — <http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>

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59 Ibid.

## LESSON 3.8

# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN POLITICS (VAW-P)

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*Language used and adapted from “#NotTheCost: Stopping Violence Against Women in Politics,” NDI*

As women have advanced toward equality, they have made historic gains in political life. In the last 20 years, the percentage of women in parliaments globally has nearly doubled, and women are increasingly taking on positions of power as civil society activists, political party leaders, local councilors and mayors, cabinet ministers, prime ministers and presidents. These are significant accomplishments. It is their right to do so – and their full and equal political participation benefits their communities, resulting in real gains for democracy and improved outcomes for their countries.

Yet a growing number of reports from around the world, from activists, politicians, journalists and academics -- indicate that as women step forward to claim their right participate in politics, they are met by acts of psychological abuse and even physical or sexual assault. Historically, violence against women in politics (VAW-P) has been a largely hidden phenomenon, but it is a real and grave concern for all those dedicated to strengthening democracies against the world. Violence against politically active women makes it more difficult to build sustainable, resilient democracies that would benefit from politics built on inclusion and equality. It cuts across all political sectors, and targets women – both in person and online – regardless of their political role, age, background, or station in life.

### What is VAW-P?

Political violence can be experienced by anyone, involved at any level of the political process, from first-time voters to seasoned heads of state. It affects and is directed at people of all genders, around the world. However, the specific issue of violence against *women* in politics has three distinct characteristics:

- It targets women *because of* their gender;
- Its very *form* can be gendered, as exemplified by sexist threats and sexual violence; and
- Its impact is to discourage *women in particular* from being or becoming politically active.



Unlike other forms of political violence, perpetrators of VAW-P may include family and friends, or other members and leaders within women's *own* organizations and parties, and their colleagues in parliament; in addition to those from opposition; community and religious leaders; state security forces and the police.

While acts of violence against women in politics are directed at individual women, they have an intent beyond their specific target: to frighten other women who are already politically active, to deter women who might consider engaging in politics, and to communicate to society that women should not participate in public life in any capacity. Therefore, the motive behind the violence is as important as the intended target.

It is important to recognize that VAW-P extends far beyond bodily harm – generally the most clearly recognizable form of violence. In some cases, attacks on politically active women are in fact couched as specifically “nonviolent” acts, relying on a narrative that reaffirms conservative ideas of women’s “place” in society. Opponents may focus on women’s bodies and their traditional social roles -- primarily as mothers and wives -- to deny or undercut their suitability or competence in the political sphere. But because motive is a defining element, using gendered imagery or stereotypes to attack female opponents can be described as a case of violence against women in politics, as the message communicated through these tropes is that women do not belong in the political realm.

## Definitions of Key Variables of VAW-P

**Victim** A person who is suffering from an act of violence and who is harmed directly by the perpetrator. Specific groups of possible victims will vary by sector and are listed in each section of the tool.

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**Perpetrator** A person who is committing any act of violence against another person or group of people. Specific groups of possible perpetrators will vary by sector and are listed in each section of the tool.

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**Impact** The direct impact of violence varies depending on the type of violence being perpetrated, but the intent of it is to discourage, intimidate or otherwise prevent women from exercising their right to participate fully and equally in the processes and institutions of politics.

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## Categories of Violence

Violence against women in politics can take many forms and can be difficult to identify. There are five major categories of violence, which can be found below.

**Physical violence** such as murder, assault, pushing, dragging. For example, in Honduras in 2016, environmentalist Berta Cáceres was murdered for her activism after receiving more than 30 death threats.

**Sexual violence** such as rape, exploitation, harassment, extortion. A report from the Inter Parliamentary Union found that 44.4 percent of female elected representatives have been threatened in office, including threats of death, rape, beatings, or abductions. Another 65.5 percent said they had received “several times, or often” humiliating remarks of a sexual or sexist nature. Disturbingly, the remarks made in the “great majority” of cases came from male politicians in parliament -- including those in their political party.

**Psychological violence** such as slander, character attacks, media or online harassment, equating women’s leadership with immoral practices, or hate speech. For example, in Zimbabwe, the first lady expelled a vice president and war hero, Joice Mujuru, from her political party by accusing her of engaging in treason, practicing witchcraft, and wearing short skirts.

**Threats and coercions** such as false accusations, intimidation, false assessment of the environment, blackmail, or pressure. For example, in Tunisia in 2014, a female candidate for parliament was threatened by her fiancé with the end of her engagement if she did not give up her candidacy.

**Economic violence** such as economic control, denial or delay in providing financial resources, or property damage. In Pakistan and Libya, election posters with female candidates’ photos were destroyed, while posters with male candidates’ photos were undisturbed. This targeted property damage put increased pressure on the women candidates to raise funds to replace their posters.

Any of these types of violence can occur in private, public, or “protected public” spaces. Often the perpetrators and victims reflect the particular “space” where violence is occurring. In private spaces, for example, it is often a male family member perpetrating such violence against a female member of the family.

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**Public sphere:** This is the most visible kind of violence. It refers to violence that occurs in public life or through a platform open to a public audience. This includes public political activities such as campaign events, protests, debates or speeches/statements; traditional media such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio or online news; social media such as Facebook or Twitter; or other spaces open to the public.

**Protected public spaces:** These spaces are political institutions – such as political parties and associations, and parliaments -- that in a democratic society should be transparent and accountable to the public. However, because of their traditionally elite male power structure and women's lower status within them, such spaces often allow and enable violence against women within their memberships to take place. Perpetrators and victims of such violence are often members of the same institution. For example, female members of political parties will be victims of violence perpetrated against them by leaders or members of their own party.

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## Why is VAW–P Important?

*It is a form of violence against women.* The 1993 United Nations International Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women notes that the ability of women to achieve political equality, among other things, is limited by violence. They define violence against women as a range of gender-based harm that can occur in the private or public space and is “one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.” VAW–P fits easily within this definition, and has played a prominent role in raising awareness and promoting action on the issue of violence against women on the global stage.

*It violates human rights.* Violence against women in politics presents a fundamental challenge to the idea of “equal rights of men and women” as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations’ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

- Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that (1) everyone has the right to take part in the government of his or her country, directly or through freely chosen representatives; (2) everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his or her country; and (3) the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government...expressed in periodic and genuine elections that shall be by universal and equal suffrage.

- Article 7 of CEDAW states that countries should ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right (a) to vote in elections and be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) to participate in the formulation of government policy and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government; and (c) to participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

By preventing women from participating in political life (whether it be directly or through their chosen representatives), VAW-P denies them their full civil and political rights.

*It undermines democracy.* Democracy without the equal and active participation of half the population is impossible -- and violence poses a direct threat to women's ability to participate in politics freely and without fear. A growing body of evidence shows that women's political participation results in real gains for democracy and society, including greater responsiveness to citizen needs, increased cooperation across party and ethnic lines, and more sustainable peace. On the other hand, the exclusion of women undermines every democratic process. The integrity of elections is called into question when women voters are prevented from accessing polling stations whether by family-based coercion, deliberate targeting by political opponents, or terrorist threats. The same is true when women are pressured to resign after they have been legitimately elected or when others make it difficult or impossible for them to do the job for which they were elected. Further, these constitute a violation of the people's right to be represented by the candidate of their choice.

Too many women who experience violence are told that these acts are "just the price of politics." Women are cautioned against speaking out in case they are seen as liabilities rather than assets; they stay silent rather than risk being labeled unreliable colleagues. Such acts would not be tolerated in other contexts, and are explicitly prohibited under many legal frameworks and workplace codes of conduct. And every attack on one woman has a ripple effect on others; after attacks on high-profile women politicians, young women have reported that they are *less likely* to consider political engagement or running for elected office at all.

## VAW-P Online

As political discourse increasingly shifts online, a free, open, and inclusive internet where all citizens can engage in dialogue is critical to modern democracy. Online spaces can be particularly important in helping women and other marginalized groups to overcome barriers to becoming politically-active. However, the digital world has also become a forum for disinformation, hate speech, abuse, and harassment targeting politically-active women. This online VAW-P creates a hostile environment which causes women to self censor, be silent, or otherwise withdraw from online political discourse. It is one of the most prevalent forms of violence hindering women's active political engagement.

Attacks on politically-active women online are particularly harmful because it magnifies the effects of psychological abuse. Women may not even know who their attackers are -- the internet grants anonymity and is borderless. And this violence is sustained; even if a woman seeks justice, it is almost impossible to pull the images or videos, once published, out of the public eye. In a 2019 study conducted by NDI, NDI uncovered that online VAW-P has a “chilling effect” on politically-active women’s social media engagement. Women’s response to online violence included pausing, decreasing, or completely stopping their Twitter activity. Online VAW-P represents a direct barrier to women’s free speech, undermining democracy in all its key elements, and with negative effects on the ambitions of young women and new entrants to politics.

## VAW-P in Political Parties<sup>60</sup>

Political parties are the foundation of democracies. They serve as a primary avenue for citizens to participate in democratic processes and exercise their fundamental rights to shape the decisions and direction of their country. In addition to providing mechanisms for civic engagement, parties are often the doorway to elected office. In most countries, it is political parties that provide the “training ground” for young or new politicians, as well as parties that recruit, select, and support candidates for elections. As such, parties can be especially important avenues for groups, like women, who have historically been excluded from the political process. As a key gateway to policy creation and political office, parties can foster women’s ability to enter and participate equally in political life.

At the same time, however, political parties can also be “protected” public spaces. Despite their democratic political purposes, interactions between members often take place behind closed doors. The dynamics of party competition — together with ties of loyalty and a sense of common cause and identity — create pressures, not to disclose any behaviors that might cast the party in an unfavorable light. This resulting environment can allow and enable violence against women within party ranks, while obscuring such behaviors from public view — and, in many cases, permitting perpetrators to act with impunity. This violence is not restricted to physical harm. It encompasses a spectrum of acts committed in person and, increasingly, online, that are designed to control, limit, or prevent women’s full and equal political participation.

In a 2017–2018 study of women political party members in Côte d’Ivoire, Honduras, Tanzania, and Tunisia, NDI found that the most widespread form of violence experienced by women within their political parties was psychological violence, followed by threats and coercion, economic violence, and sexual violence. Physical violence occurred, but was the least prevalent. The plurality of women reported having experienced violence “sometimes” or “many times.” They faced violence most often when serving in positions of responsibility inside the party, or as party candidates. Most violence occurred at the municipal level, during the nomination or campaign period, or during internal party meetings. Party members and party leaders were the most common perpetrators.

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60 Language in this section adapted from “No Party to Violence: Analyzing Violence Against Women in Political Parties”, NDI.

## Select Quotes from Female Party Members

“I had confidence and passion about leadership yet I was voted out simply because I am a woman -- not because I did not have confidence or capacity to deliver.” *Female party member, focus group in Tanzania*

“I think that violence can happen in any political party. The principal reason is that a man feels threatened by the competence of a woman. If he feels threatened, then he takes a position of defense and we reach violence.” *Female party member, focus group in Tunisia*

“Between us, it’s not always easy. Men fight against women’s candidacies. It’s not the party that gives the order, but men who think that politics is their affair.” *Female party member, focus group in Côte d’Ivoire*

“In political meetings with all the pre-candidates, they said ‘let her speak last’ and they prevented me from taking the microphone.” *Female party member, focus group in Honduras*

“I had an opportunity to travel to attend an important party event which was attended by top leaders. However, my rivals started spreading rumors that I got the chance to participate in the respective event because I have love affairs with a top leader who has been ensuring that I get such opportunities.” *Female party member, focus group in Tanzania*

“I was not fully aware of sexual exploitation practices in party politics. Three party leaders asked me for sex for them to help me win the nomination contest. I refused and I lost. Later on I learned from one of the party leaders, who is also my brother, the winner slept with him to win the nomination contest.” *Female party member, focus group in Tanzania*

“It does not have to be physical violence....this is because he knows that a woman enters politics with fear of her family’s reaction, her father, her brother, her husband, her kids. So, he does this so that her family tells her to stop her involvement.” *Female party member, focus group in Tunisia*

“My house has been attacked several times. My husband left and I was fired from my job. My only hope is the party; otherwise I no longer have anything. I continue to hope.” *female party member, focus group in Côte d’Ivoire*

“If a woman is intelligent, is prepared, is trained, and is also beautiful, it is problematic. During the campaign, I received invitations from men in the party to go out at night because ‘they wanted to get to know me.’ When I told them, ‘Okay, I’ll come with my husband,’ they responded, ‘No, that is not the way to get votes.’” *Female party member, focus group in Honduras*

“I experienced physical violence from my former political party. It was an awful experience. But, for me, the most important thing is why it happened. Physical violence would not happen if it were not condoned by leaders.” *Female party member, focus group in Tunisia*

Most respondents felt that the party leadership is responsible for addressing violence. However, nearly one-third said that they did not report the incident to anyone, they did not recognize the act was a form of violence, because they did not think the incident violated any party rules, or they believed the behavior was part of “normal politics” within the party. Yet women also stated that, if they experienced violence related to their political activism, they would be most willing to ask for support from a party authority; conversely, they were least willing to go to the media to report it. For those who did report the incident, the majority noted that there were no consequences for the perpetrator — although many also responded that they themselves faced no political consequences for doing so either. When asked how these incidents affected their motivation to continue participating in politics, the largest share replied that it discouraged them from expressing their viewpoints in public and led them to discourage other women from participating.

## Violence against Women in Elections (VAW-E)

Violence against women is a targeted and destructive tool used in various ways throughout the electoral cycle to dissuade women from participating as *candidates, voters, election officials, observers, poll-watchers or activists*. This has critical implications for the integrity of the electoral process, because when women are prevented from participating fully and equally in elections, whether by voting, campaigning or otherwise exercising their political and civic rights, democratic processes are nullified.

VAW-E meets the UN’s definition of violence against women in addition to the definition of electoral violence:

**Electoral Violence:** Electoral conflict and violence is defined as the use or threat of force to harm persons or property involved in the electoral process, with the intention of influencing the conduct of electoral stakeholders and/or to affect the electoral process. Electoral violence can manifest through psychological abuse, threats, physical assault, blackmail, destruction of property or assassination.

It is also important to recognize that while both women and men can experience electoral violence, this general violence can have a disproportionately higher impact on women because they occupy a subordinate status in society and are more vulnerable to attacks. This increased vulnerability is linked to the structural barriers based on gender that impact women’s participation. For example, although both men and women were victims during Cote d’Ivoire’s 2010/11 post-election violence, research by the Organisation des Femmes Actives de Cote d’Ivoire (OFACI) revealed that women were often the first victims of party reprisals. Because they were home caring for children, they were more likely to be present during attacks and made for easier targets than men; they also had more difficulty escaping quickly because they had children under their care.

## VAW-P in Lebanon

While some elements of gender justice are enshrined in Lebanon's laws, important gender inequalities remain.

- Lebanese laws largely do not define sexual violence. The Penal Code does not specify “crimes of sexual violence” but deals with a number of crimes within the context of sexual violence.
- Lebanon ratified CEDAW in 1997. Lebanon maintains reservations to Article 9(2) (equal rights with respect to nationality of children), Article 16(1)(c), (d), (f), and (g) (equality in marriage and family relations), and Article 29(1) (administration of the Convention and arbitration in the event of a dispute).
- Article 7 of the 1926 Constitution states that all Lebanese are equal before the law and equally enjoy civil and political rights. However, there is no specific reference to sex or gender equality. The Constitution does not prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or gender.
- The Labour Code does not prohibit workplace sexual harassment. The penal code includes the punishment of some indecent acts to which the description of sexual harassment may apply, including Articles 385, 507, 519, and 532.

### Further reading

“#NotTheCost: Stopping Violence Against Women in Politics, Program Guidance”

<https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/not-the-cost-program-guidance-final.pdf>

“No Party to Violence: Analyzing Violence Against Women in Political Parties”

<https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/2019%20VAW-PP%20Compendium%20Report.pdf>

“Votes Without Violence: A Citizen Observer’s Guide to Addressing Violence Against Women in Elections” <https://www.voteswithoutviolence.org/sites/voteswithoutviolence.demcloud.org/files/Votes-Without-Violence-Toolkit.pdf>

“Votes Without Violence Assessment Framework”

<https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Assessment%20Framework.pdf>

“Violence Against Women in Elections”

[https://www.ifes.org/sites/default/files/2016\\_ifes\\_violence\\_against\\_women\\_in\\_elections.pdf](https://www.ifes.org/sites/default/files/2016_ifes_violence_against_women_in_elections.pdf)

“Violence Against Women in Politics”

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2014/6/violence-against-women-in-politics>

“New Report Shows the Reach of Online Harassment, Digital Abuse, and Cyberstalking.”

<https://datasociety.net/blog/2016/11/21/online-harassment/>



“More Women Turning Off Politics After Julia Gillard Was Badly Treated.”

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/more-women-turning-off-politics-after-julia-gillard-was-badly-treated/news-story/321177664cf100e0316704bad5c5f8a6>

“Sexism, Harassment and Violence Against Women Parliamentarians.”

<http://archive.ipu.org/pdf/publications/issuesbrief-e.pdf>



## LESSON 3.9

# WORKING TOGETHER

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Once we understand how to utilize the principles of democracy, we need to be able to organize in order to work together to create societal change. Whether that is by demanding more inclusive representation by our elected officials or through seeking improved government services, we are all stronger with collective action. Even when individuals or groups have disagreements between each other—especially when we have disagreements between each other—we need to find ways to collaborate to achieve common goals.

### But what is organizing?<sup>61</sup>

According to leading grassroots political organizer, Dr. Marshall Ganz of Harvard University and the Leading Change Network and the New Organizing Institute, “Organizing is leadership that enables people to turn the resources they have into the power they need to make the change they want. Community organizing is all about people, power, and change—it starts with people and relationships, is focused on shifting power, and aims to create lasting change.”

Organizing people to build the power to make change is based **five key leadership practices**:

1. **Articulate a story** of why we are called to lead, a story of the community we hope to mobilize and why we’re united, and a story of why we must act.
  2. **Build intentional relationships** as the foundation of purposeful collective actions.
  3. Create a structure that **distributes power and responsibility** and prioritizes leadership development.
  4. Strategize how your **resources create the power to achieve clear goals**.
  5. Translate strategy into **measurable, motivational, and effective action**.
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<sup>61</sup> Section adapted from: “Organizing: People, Power, Change,” Dr. Marshall Ganz, the Leading Change Network, and the New Organizing Institute.

Organizing is not a linear process. However, grassroots organizers use the first three practices (stories, relationships, structure) to build power within a community, while the last two practices (strategy, action) are about utilizing that power in order to create change.

## People

The first question an organizer asks is “**Who are my people?**” not “**What is my issue?**” Organizing is not about solving a community’s problems or advocating on its behalf. It is about enabling the people with the problem to mobilize their own resources to solve it. An effective organizer puts people, puts the community, at the center of their work.

The job of an organizer is to transform a **community** — a group of people who share common values or interests — into a **constituency** — a community of people who work together to address a common purpose. The difference between community and constituency is the commitment to take action to further common goals. For example, a community could be residents of a town that are against a new dam project, while a constituency would be residents of the town against the dam who have signed a petition to take action to stop the dam from being built.

## Power

Organizing focuses on power: who has it, who doesn’t, and how to build enough of it to shift the power relationship and bring about change. Organizers understand power stems from the interplay between interest and resources. Here, interests are what people need or want (e.g. to protect a river, to stay in public office, to make money), while resources are assets (e.g. people, energy, knowledge, relationships, and money) that can be readily used to, in the case of organizing, achieve the change you need or want.

Understanding the nature of power and that you need to shift power relationships in order to bring about change, is essential for the success of any organizing efforts. From the example above, the constituency against the dam may ask questions aimed at ‘tracking down the power’ — that is, inquiring into the relationship between actors, and particularly the interests and resources of these actors in their struggle.

For instance, they might ask questions like: what are our interests, or, what do we want? Who holds the resources needed to address these interests? What are their interests, or, what do they want? In doing so, the town residents may realize that their local town council is a key actor, that local councillors want to stay in office and need votes to do so, and in turn, the constituency holds the resources of people, relationships, and votes that could shift this power relationship and bring about change.

## Change

Change must be specific, concrete, and significant. Organizing is not about ‘raising awareness’ or speech-making. It is about specifying a clear goal and *mobilizing* your resources to achieve it. If organizing is about enabling others to bring about change, and specifically, securing commitment from a group of people with shared interests to take action to further common goals, then it’s critical to define exactly what those goals are.

Continuing with the dam project from above, the constituency against the dam must create clear, measurable goals. Note the difference between “our goal is to stop the dam” versus “our goal is to put pressure on town council — through door-knocking, events, and local newspaper op-eds aimed at getting town residents to sign our petition — to pass a motion to stop the dam project.”

## Core Elements of Working Together<sup>62</sup>

Once again, organizing is leadership that enables people to turn the resources they have into the power they need to make the change they want. But first, why organize in teams? By working in teams, organizers can meet higher goals by tapping into the diverse range of resources (including skills and knowledge) multiple people bring. And most importantly, by working in teams, we develop relationships with fellow teammates that facilitate and deepen our commitment to taking action.

What do effective teams have in common?

Effective teams usually have three elements in common: shared purpose, interdependent roles, and explicit norms.

- *Shared Purpose.* A team must be clear on what it has been created to do (purpose) and who it will be doing it with (constituency). Its purpose should be clear and easy-to-understand, while it must also be challenging and significant to those on your team. Team members should be able to articulate their shared purpose. For example, a compelling organizing purpose is a response to injustice. The first step in articulating shared purpose is to identify the people you are organizing — your specific constituency, or, the community of people who are standing together to realize a common purpose. Shared purpose should also be measurable: your team needs clear goals in order to measure progress.
  
- *Interdependent Roles.* Each team member must have responsibility, or, their own piece of work that contributes to bigger goals. In an effective team, no one works in a silo. A functioning team will have a diversity of identities, experiences, and opinions to ensure that the most possible is being brought to the table.

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62 Ibid.

- ➔ *Explicit Norms.* Your team should set clear expectations for how to govern itself. How will you manage meetings, regular communication, decisions, and commitments? And, most importantly, how will you correct ground-rule violations so that they remain active and legitimate ground rules? Teams with explicit operating rules are more likely to achieve their goals. Setting norms early on in team formation will guide your team in its early stages as members learn how to work together. Making norms explicit allows your team to have open discussions about how things are going. The team can update and refine norms as they work together to improve working relationships.

When teams form, they also go through five stages of development known as forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Working with team members to develop a sense of shared leadership will be helpful in moving the group through these stages:

1. **Forming** is the process of putting the team structure together. The team looks to a leader for direction.
2. **Storming** is the process of organizing tasks. Leadership, power and structural issues dominate this stage.
3. **Norming** is the process of creating new ways of doing and being together. As the group develops cohesion, leadership changes from 'one' teammate in charge to shared leadership.
4. **Performing** is when teams become fully functional. The team is flexible as individuals adapt to meet the needs of the other team members.
5. **Adjourning** is when momentum starts to slow down, and team members are ready to leave causing significant changes to the team structure, membership and purpose.

## Team Power Dynamics

Being able to recognize group dynamics and power relationships can impact collaboration. You have the agency to hold and participate in meetings that are more inclusive and accessible to all voices. Here are some ways to call attention to and manage power dynamics in a group or during group meetings:

- **Assume power dynamics are always present in meetings.** Design the meeting agenda to include multiple voices and perspectives. Lightly encourage people to step forward to lead and participate, especially if they are from a group that traditionally has less power due to age, sect, ethnicity, gender, or other factors. Encourage people with traditional forms of formal power to do more listening than speaking.

- **Build a culture of collaboration in meetings.** Think of meetings as an opportunity for a team to build relationships, learn leadership, design good processes, and counteract unhealthy uses of power. Design your meetings for relationships, joy, and creativity. Encourage honesty, vulnerability, and calling people “in” instead of calling people “out” by creating openings for people to feel heard and noticed, and to experience a sense of belonging and interconnectedness.
- **Openly discuss power in meetings.** Discuss openly with your team the question, *what would be the benefits to our group if we shared power?* Remind them that power is not a finite pie; rather, it can be infinite, expanded, and shared among people and leaders. However, people/groups with more power or power over others, do need to relinquish some of their power so that others can participate on a more equitable playing field. While power can be shared, power-holders must first acknowledge that this might reduce the amount of power they have as an individual, in order to increase their power as a collective.
- **Remember that power is a social construct.** We can design spaces where individuals and groups experience their own and others’ power differently. Be proactive about ways to amplify the power of people who are typically at the margins of the conversation. Challenge the group to pay at least as much attention to the expertise that comes from lived experience as from formal theories and data. Ensure that people who are affected by the issues you’re working on are at the center of the conversation and have meaningful roles in the work overtime.
- **Use your role intentionally and thoughtfully if you’re the meeting facilitator.** Don’t dominate the discussion. Don’t come up with all the ideas. Stay as impartial as possible, even though you can never truly be completely neutral. If you want to contribute an idea or experience, tell the group you are switching from the facilitator role to express your view as an individual and then step back into your facilitator role. Examine who gets to facilitate meetings and who doesn’t. Meeting facilitators can change the outcome of the meeting just by how they design and run it. Rotating facilitation and supporting people to learn how to facilitate and run meetings distributes power and makes meetings more dynamic.

## Team Decision-making

When collaborating as a team, you will need to be able to communicate effectively and make decisions in a constructive manner. Sometimes there will be moments when a disagreement between group members will arise. It is important to be ready for such a situation so you can address it constructively.

Type of Decision Making	Description	Guidelines for Usage
Participatory Decision Making	Allows everyone in the group to play a part in making decisions and helps to ensure that decisions meet most needs of most people in the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● All group members must agree to reaching consensus view</li><li>● Process must be clear</li><li>● Sufficient time should be allowed</li><li>● Should be an important or substantial decision</li></ul>
Majority Decision Making	Members of the group take a vote and the majority choice becomes the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Useful when decisions need to be made more quickly, but still benefit from group contribution.</li></ul>
Individual Decision Making	One person makes decisions on behalf of the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Useful for routine tasks</li><li>● Useful when used sparingly in emergencies</li></ul>

## Building Inclusive Social Movements

When it comes to making change, you can rarely accomplish your objectives on your own. Think about the issue or problem that is calling you to take action. How does this issue affect other people in your community? How can you encourage them to join your efforts? Why is now the time to push for change? You may find that others are discouraged from previous failures or lack confidence in their own abilities. As a leader, it is up to you to motivate them to participate and stick with it for as long as it takes to achieve your objective.

By working with other people, you wield more power than you would have if you acted alone. One benefit of collective action is the demonstration of popular support it brings to your issue. If organized, groups of people can use their numbers to pressure those in power to support their priority issues. The other perhaps more important benefit is that by working together towards a common goal, citizens develop

ties, sometimes called social capital, with others, which may serve to energize and unify communities, and encourage them to remain active over the long term.

Leadership teams may also provide the best framework for helping people work together. An interdependent leadership team will help to strengthen relationships among the activists. It will also ensure that the work does not suffer from having only one overworked leader or lack of direction as a result of having too many people in charge. In an interdependent leadership team, community members each take on some responsibility, but no one person has the power to dominate the whole group. In this framework, the organizer (that's you!) is charged with identifying others who are committed to similar change goals to play leadership roles on different aspects of the work.

**Social movements** are broad combinations of groups and individuals acting purposefully, collectively and with continuity to promote change. Movements that are focused on creating change emerge in response to situations of unmet social, political, economic, or cultural demands. Movements can be a significant force for challenging inequalities and exclusions in society and in proposing new models and visions for more egalitarian and just social, economic, and political power relations. Being inclusive in the creation and actions of a movement can help build legitimacy and create buy-in, as many feel their concerns are incorporated into the movement's work. The following actions can be taken to build just and inclusive social movements:

- **Recognizing and transforming culture, power dynamics, and hierarchies within movements.** By making visible the way that power is practiced can challenge the hidden power dynamics that make movement participation uncomfortable or unbearable for women, youth, LGBTQ, disabled, and other marginalized persons.
- **Support internal activism for change.** Getting behind initiatives to protect and expand the rights of others within the movement might involve supporting the collective power of a particular group (youth, women, LGBTQ) and individual change-makers, building leadership, or developing platforms and caucuses on equality.
- **Draw the line on impunity for gender-based violence.** Holding movement members to account for unethical conduct around gender relations includes issues such as domestic violence or sexual harassment, as well as challenging movement leadership to take a stand against discrimination or violence within movements.
- **Develop the politics and make the arguments.** Taking a strong position on particular injustices might include making group rights and justice clearly visible in movements' agendas and creating spaces for discussions on what a gender, youth, disabled, LGBTQ, etc., focus will mean in different movement contexts.



- **Build inclusive alliances and common cause.** Finding common cause between other social movement politics involves openness to critique and a desire to listen and to change. Intersectional analysis is a useful tool for movements to help identify how different axes of power intersect.

## Building Gender-Inclusive Social Movements

According to BRIDGE, a specialized gender and development research firm, there are five core challenges or manifestations for social movements in integrating gender perspective:<sup>63</sup>

1. **Dismissing the significance of gender equality.** It is common for many to argue that since women are already active in a movement, women’s issues do not require special attention or consideration, or that targeted actions on women’s rights and gender are not necessary because a movement is already about democracy or inclusion.
2. **Ingrained ideas of gender roles.** Even within progressive movements, traditional gender roles manifest themselves where women are still viewed and expected to take on the care-giver or play an administrative role. The ingrained ideas on gender roles can lead to, and allow impunity for, sexist, discriminatory, and even violent behavior towards women and minority groups.
3. **Ingrained ideas of gender norms.** Ideas about tradition, culture, and religion can be used to marginalize and silence those who speak up about gender power relations in areas such as the family.
4. **Gender is seen as a moveable priority.** Gender priorities are often pushed to the end of a movement agenda or viewed as a “trade-off” when gender equality threatens solidarity with other constituencies or demands.
5. **Maintaining momentum for change.** Even as movements succeed in attracting women members and building women’s leadership, it is often difficult to sustain progress and maintain an intersectional approach to ensure that women’s rights and gender remain a constant area of focus.

.....  
63 Jessica Hord, “Gender and Social Movements,” BRIDGE, 2013.

So, what does a gender-inclusive social movement look like? According to BRIDGE, a gender-just social movement:<sup>64</sup>

- Affirms the importance of tackling gender inequality as an integral component of justice for all, and names this as an explicit priority for action.

Creates a positive environment for internal reflection and action on women's rights and gender justice.

- Provides active and formalized support for women's participation and leadership in all areas of movement practice.
- Consistently tackles gender-based violence and establishes zero tolerance for sexual harassment in movement spaces.
- Assesses gender bias in movement roles and redistributes labor along gender-just lines.
- Enables full participation of both women and men, taking into account care work and reproductive roles.
- Appreciates the gender dimensions of backlash and external opposition faced by activists.
- Takes into account context-specific gender identities, trans and intersex identities, and shifting understandings of gender in social life and activism.

.....  
64 Ibid.



**MODULE FOUR**  
**DEBATE AND DIALOGUE**





## LESSON 4.4

# WHAT IS DEBATE?

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*Adapted from “Welcome to Debate” by Marcin Zaleski, IDEA—International Debate Education Association, 2011.*

### What is Debate?

Debate occurs in different settings: both informal (around a family table during dinner) and formal (in a house of parliament). These different settings and contexts determine the structure of debate as well as its function. Debate around a family table may often serve no other function than pure entertainment and “killing of time” when eating a delicious meal. A debate in parliament normally would take place to present different arguments for or against a given motion, proposal or a resolution, usually preceding a formal vote. Debate around a family table usually has few rules: there is no speaking order and family members interrupt each other, debate itself is interrupted by bringing of new dishes, etc. Debate in a house of parliament is often very formal, with speakers being given time to speak, and the Speaker of the House making sure that there are no interruptions and that speakers do not go over their allocated time.

For the purpose of educational activity, we define debate as a formal method of presenting arguments in support and against a given issue (expressed in a form of a proposition) in which debaters interact with each other by presenting their points of view and responding to the arguments presented by the other side. The main task of debaters in such a debate is to persuade an audience (in competitive debate, judges) that their side has better arguments, for or against a given topic. The term formal indicates that debate is governed by some rules and that debaters must follow these rules throughout the debate. These rules are connected to a given debate format and concern the order of speeches, their length, etc. as well as debaters’ behavior during a debate. Their attitude towards each other but also the way they use arguments, examples, and facts. Informal debate occurs in many places. For example, in families, schools, workplaces. In such contexts, such “debates” are closer in their spirit to discussions. Debate is part of democratic systems where deliberative bodies such as parliaments and legislative assemblies engage in debates. Also, formal debates between candidates for elected offices, such as the leaders’ debates and the presidential election campaign are common in many democracies. The outcome of such debates is decided by vote, either in a house of parliament or through citizens’ vote.

In many countries, the rule-based competitive debate is often encouraged in high schools and universities. Such debate is a contest between two teams with clear rules (a bit like in a game of sport) during which one team supports, while the other team opposes a given proposition. The competitive debate begins with a resolution, a simple statement of a topic that is subjected to critical analysis by both teams. The team supporting the resolution speaks first and is referred to as an *affirmative team* (since it affirms a given resolution). The other team must then oppose the arguments offered by the affirming team and offer arguments against adopting the resolution (it is referred to as a *negative team*). Each team is expected to respond directly to the arguments offered by their opponents. It is the job of a judge (or judges), a neutral third party, to listen carefully to the arguments presented by both sides and decide which set of arguments is most persuasive. Thousands of young people all over the world are engaged in competitive debates and participate in local, national, and international debate competitions and tournaments. There are many different organizations promoting debate both nationally and internationally and many different styles of debate occur under a variety of organizations and formats. Competitive debate develops many skills but the major goal of the study of debate as a method is to develop one's ability to argue on either position (pro and con) with equal ease. Such debate puts a lot of emphasis on preparation, and training. The quality and depth of these debates depend on the knowledge and skills of debaters. Experienced debaters can support or oppose a given topic after a very short preparation time.

In many societies and communities, there is a rich tradition of public debates. These debates can involve public figures (politicians, leaders, etc.), members of the public, as well as students. The main goal of a public debate is to engage members of the public in discussion of an important issue. The purpose of debating in such a context is not so much competition between debaters but raising awareness, education, and *advocacy*. In many communities, public debates occur regularly in a designated space, for example, a debate house or a town hall, and become an important element of the community's life. Public debates can reach out to more audiences if they have a form of radio or TV debates.

## Why debate?

Debate plays an important role in the development and sustaining of democratic and *open societies*. Through debate, citizens can voice as well as hear different opinions on controversial topics and arrive at conclusions as well as solutions to contentious issues. Whether in a national house of parliament or a town hall, the debate provides an opportunity for citizens to present and critically evaluate policies and both support and oppose proposals that may affect their lives and the lives of their countries and communities. Because of this, an educational debate is a valuable tool for students' civic education. It engages students in an activity that they will be able to continue as adults. They can become active debaters, taking part in public debates in their communities; or critical and informed audiences, for example when participating in a parliamentary hearing or debate.

Hopefully, participation in a debate program will have made them realize the importance of open and rational debate and make them interested in various debates taking place in the public forum (house of

parliament and the media). They will also be able to critically analyze the quality of these debates and determine who makes better arguments, or whose proposals and policies are stronger, and have a chance of bringing benefits to communities. Debate offers a lesson in free speech, tolerance, and democracy but it also develops their numerous life skills which they will be able to use in their education, work, and social life. Debate develops:

1. Public speaking and communication skills. Young people involved in debate programs become more confident and persuasive speakers and they lose their fear of speaking in public.
2. Critical thinking and argumentation skills. Debaters practice their critical thinking skills and learn how to develop stronger arguments, critically evaluate arguments presented by others, ask and respond to questions, evaluate evidence.
3. Conflict resolution skills. Debaters learn how to address challenging issues in a civilized manner, respecting divergent opinions.
4. Research skills. Most debates require significant preparation and learning more about a debate topic which requires identifying and using various sources and evaluating various types of information.
5. Organization skills. Since each debate involves many ideas, views, and perspectives, it is important for debaters to stay organized so that audience and judges understand the presented arguments and how they fit into the debate.
6. Listening skills and note-taking skills. When the other team is speaking, debaters must be able to understand what they say so that their team can offer effective responses. They also need to learn how to take notes, jotting down the main arguments of their opponents, and being able to offer a coherent response, based on the notes taken.
7. Team working skills. Most debates involve more than one debater on each side and debaters have to work with a partner (s), coach, and other teammates. They may have research assignments that must be completed and shared with the whole team and they must be able to communicate and cooperate during a debate, suggesting good responses to the other team's arguments, find a good example on the spot, think of a good reply or question.

Public debates -- especially debate organized in communities -- bring people together and help to develop a sense of belonging. They also provide a friendly and open environment for addressing contentious issues and addressing problems that a community may face.

Public debates do not only inform and educate citizens about issues but may also motivate them to get involved in finding solutions and volunteering for the community. In this respect, debates are a true promoter of civic virtues. Whether in the hall, on radio, or television, public debates also increase

interest and provide entertainment. They become an integral part of the life of a given community, society, country.

## Debate Formats

What distinguishes debate from other forms of exchange of ideas—discussion, brainstorming, etc.—is its formal structure. The level of formality varies in a debate. For example, competitive debates tend to be very formal and have a very rigid structure. In a way they are similar to competitive sports—a football match for example is played according to some ground rules: how many players play on each side, how long a match is, etc., a competitive debate has ground rules. These rules are usually referred to as the format of a debate. The purpose of a format for debate is to ensure that both sides get a fair opportunity to be heard.

The format of debate usually includes the following: number of speakers; length and sequence of speeches; special time-slots during a debate to ask a question to debaters from the other team. In many public debate formats, there is a special time reserved for questions and arguments to be presented by the members of the audience. Some debate formats also allow debaters to take limited preparation time before their speeches.

All debate formats, whether competitive or public should take the following into consideration:

1. The debate format should promote the orderly development of arguments. After one side presents their arguments, the other side can respond to them, after which the first team should be able to answer these responses, etc. Debates could also incorporate questioning periods and audience participation. Most debate format would include the mixture of the following elements:
  - a. *Position Construction* or a *Constructive speech*. This is a speech in a debate where the position of each side is presented and explained. During the *Constructive Speech*, a debater would normally introduce and explain the topic, define any controversial terms if needed, and present the main arguments.
  - b. *Refutation* – once the first side’s arguments are presented, the other side needs to react to it in a *critical manner*. That is to provide counter-arguments. During *refutation*—a debater evaluates the reasoning, the support, or the implications of the other speakers’ arguments. Refutation is very important in the debate — without refutation — there is no debate, but two sides presenting their side of the argument, without interaction and *clash*.
  - c. *Rebuttal*. The act of defending a teams’ argument after it has been *refuted* is called “rebuttal.” In a *rebuttal* speech, a debater refers both to the arguments made by his/her partners as well as their refutation presented by opponents. When “rebutting” an argument, a debater usually presents new examples/ evidence, clarifies any unclear points, compares his/her team’s argument with the refutation offered by the other side.

- d. *Questioning.* Questioning is used to clarify information, to uncover flaws, and to lay the groundwork for a team's own arguments. By either allowing a specific time for questioning (often referred to as "cross-examination") or by allowing questions which interrupt an opponent's speech time (often referred to as "points of information" or simply "points"), debaters can add the excitement of direct interaction between speakers.
  - e. *Audience participation.* It is an excellent way to build audience involvement and expand the scope and interaction of the debate is to allow specific time for the audience to ask questions, make short speeches, or both.
  - f. *Preparation time.* Some debate formats allow some time for debaters to collect their thoughts and find information prior to their own individual speeches.
2. The format should include equal and alternating speaking time – a core principle of debate is that each side should have an equal opportunity to make its arguments and that means that the total time given during the debate to each side must be equal. In most debates, the time is measured by judges or designated *time-keepers*.
  3. The format should include variety. In order to retain interest, a debate should include a mix of types of activities: speeches, questions, and audience comments, without anyone activity dominating for an extended period of time. Particularly for debates on television or radio, the need to keep speaking opportunities short and varied is critical to maintaining a lively debate.

## Debate Topics

True believers in debate are likely to tell you that anything can be debated. While this is generally true, since one can find pros and cons to almost any issue, not all issues and topics are worth debating. Some may be trivial or not important, some too difficult and technical and yet some others too obscure and of interest to a very narrow group of people. Whether organizing a debate tournament a public debate, or debate in a classroom, choosing a good debate topic is one of the most important and yet also one of the most difficult tasks for debate organizers.

- **A good debate topic should be interesting.** A lot of times this means that a topic concerns a significant contemporary issue or something that is hotly discussed and debate in a public sphere. Good debate topics can be inspired by newspaper headlines, TV news reports, and editorials.

For example, *nations of the world should increase their support to Eastern Africa*. This statement refers to the recent events in Eastern Africa which made headlines around the world, arousing the interest of readers and viewers not only in the region but also internationally.



- **A good debate topic should be controversial.** This means that it should be *debatable*. Good debate topics provide enough disagreement or pose a problem with many potential solutions and sides. Both sides in a debate should be able to find enough arguments to support their position on a given topic. Some of the best and most popular debate topics concern the issues upon which societies and individuals have been unable to agree. These issues may include ethical or political dilemmas

For example, *State intervention in the economy is justified*. If one asks a group of people what they think of this issue, it is likely that some will oppose state intervention while others will support it. Each group will be able to provide arguments in support of their position. Another possibility is to have both groups position themselves in favor of state intervention, but disagreeing on the level. A good debate topic should be balanced. It should provide enough evidence for the affirmative and negative sides to develop arguments.

The example given above is an example of a balanced debate topic since both sides will be able to find equally strong arguments. The outcome of such a debate would be hard to be determined beforehand.

- **A good debate topic should avoid being too abstract.** It should focus on issues that both debaters and the audience understand and can relate to.

For example, the topic of *military service should be compulsory* is a good topic since there are most people will understand the meaning and the conflict it produces. Every country must determine how to populate its armed forces. Some may choose compulsory military service for all young people, while others may decide to create a professional army. A third option is a mixture of the previous examples.

- **At the same time**, a good debate topic should avoid being too specific and technical. Some issues related to science may generate a good debate for scientists or experts specializing in a given narrow field, but they would be too complicated for most *non-expert* debaters and audiences. There are some issues that can generate very *narrow* debates. This means that the topics are of interest to a very small group of people and they remain *obscure* and often uninteresting to the general population.

For example, a scientific community of physicists can debate on the possibility of time travel, specifics of quantum physics, etc., but such debates are incomprehensible to the general public.

Once the topic area has been selected, debate organizers must *word* the topic in a language that will be conducive to good quality debates. When wording the topic, it is important to ensure that:

1. It is expressed in a declarative sentence.
2. It is expressed in a clear manner, avoiding ambiguous words and phrases.
3. It is worded in a neutral manner.

Sometimes a debate resolution would begin with “Be it resolved” or simply, “Resolved”. For example: “Resolved that protection of the environment is more important than economic development”.

When analyzing the objective for a public debate, organizers may want to ask themselves the following questions: “Why are we having this public debate? What are we trying to get out of this? What do we hope to achieve?” Some of the possible goals for organizing public debates may include:

1. **To inform.** The main objective is to convey information on a specific issue to an audience that is not very knowledgeable on the issue.
2. **To bring attention to an issue.** The aim of the debate may be to get the issue “on the table.” For example, when debaters and organizers conclude that the target audience does not care enough about a certain issue, or is unaware of its importance, their motive would be to raise awareness by facilitating a public debate. This may spur the audience’s interest, prompting them to get involved by making donations, or volunteer.
3. **To persuade.** Debaters try to convince the audience to adopt their position and not that of their opponent. Debaters will want to persuade the audience that their views, proposals, or policies are the most appealing.
4. **To motivate.** Debaters may want to move their audience into action. The debate can aim to provide spiritual uplift or develop a passion for a cause. Getting people to take some action is impossible without moving them. This is most effective with the use of emotional appeals and logical arguments. Whether the ultimate goal of debaters is to rally their audience around a certain cause or political candidate, to sign a petition, or to join a protest, the first thing they need to do is to move that audience.
5. **To entertain.** Although some debates are only organized for the purpose of entertainment, it is important that all debates have some entertainment components. A debate is not going to matter much to an audience unless, on some level, they are being entertained. Even when addressing the most serious of topics, debaters should consider this goal. It is impossible to inform or persuade an audience about an important issue unless the debater is able to maintain the attention of the audience. For example, a debate can be a popular form of intellectual entertainment. There are many debate programs on the radio and TV which have large audiences.
6. **To display skills.** Sometimes the goal of the debate may be to teach about the activity itself. Demonstrating debate skills can help clubs recruit new members. These skills can also be a useful

tool for teachers in the classroom or for community activists working to persuade others. It is important to bear in mind that most debates will share, to a certain extent, more than one of the objectives above, for example, will both inform and persuade.

## Presentation and Delivery

At this stage of preparation for debate, debaters have their debate cases ready; they have also added the final touches to the organization of their speeches and rhetorical devices. The last remaining element of the preparation for debate is practicing delivery. Although content matters most in a formal setting of a debate still, it is important to remember that audiences or judges will not necessarily be able to separate the message from the way it is presented. The

Delivery of a speech is as important as the content. Or, as they say, the package is as important as the gift itself. A large part of communication relates not just to arguments and words, but to the speaker's voice, body, and movement. Even the most brilliant content will be hampered if speakers speak too fast or too slowly; too loudly or quietly, etc.

The elements of good delivery parallel the elements of good conversation. The audience should feel that a speaker is speaking *with* them, not presenting *to* them, so in most settings, it helps to be natural. Being *natural* in debate for most people means not reading a speech. While debaters can quote evidence from notes, reading a speech is one of the “cardinal sins” (not just from the point of view of delivery but also from the point of view of debate rules – since debate is a live event in which debaters react to each other in a spontaneous manner. The only two speakers who could *theoretically* script their speeches are the first two *constructive speakers* even they should be discouraged from it. The main tips concerning good delivery in any public relate primarily to two aspects of delivery: voice and body language.

### Voice

- At most points, debaters should speak about the same rate that they speak in a conversation — increasing speed in order to convey excitement or action, and slowing down in order to emphasize important points.
- Speakers should vary the *pitch* normally, and try to avoid speaking in a monotone, or in a *sing-song* fashion (as if you are reading out loud).
- Debaters should try to keep “vocalized pauses” to a minimum (umm, ahh, eer, etc.). Instead, they should just use a silent pause.
- Speakers should pause at strategic points in their presentation: between important points and before or after dramatic statements.

- How loudly debaters need to speak will depend upon the room the debate takes place in, the distance of the farthest audience member and whether or not they can use a microphone. Speakers should speak so that all can hear without any effort. Dramatically raising or lowering volume can also be used to emphasize key ideas.

## Body language

- A speaker should keep his/her face relaxed and expressive. Showing tension in the face can often be interpreted by the audience as anger (or fear). Smiling has a great effect on the audience (provided it is appropriate to the content).
- Speakers should maintain an appropriate amount of eye contact with their audience. When they are not looking at the notes, then they should be looking at members of the audience, not at the walls, the floor, or out the window. Speakers should try to include as many members of the audience as possible in their *field of vision*.
- Speakers should gesture naturally with their arms and hands, just as they would in a conversation. They should void repetitive or constant gesturing though as it may be a distraction.
- Debaters should avoid *fidgiting*, avoid movements which are distractive (scratching, playing with jewelry, etc.)
- Speakers should move by taking a step or two at a few points during the speech as a way of maintaining interest, dissipating nervous energy, and highlighting key points. A speaker who continually paces though risks distracting the audience. Similarly a speaker who “rocks” from side to side or from toes to heels will make it difficult for audiences to concentrate on their speech (likewise — standing motionless is not a good strategy — unless a speaker stands behind a speaker’s stand).

To sum up, a style that is sincere, conversational, calm and committed is the best speaking style to adopt in a public debate. Some debaters are natural born public speakers and they feel no fear when facing even the biggest audience. Most people however experience a range of negative emotions prior to having to speak in public: ranging from mild discomfort to sheer panic. But even the nervous speakers can achieve success in public debates if they spend some time practicing it and preparing for the public performance. Practice in public speaking means standing up and presenting the speech just as a speaker will when he/she performs the final version.

Here are a few ‘tips’ on how to practice for a debate:

- **Use key-word notes.** This means that you should write one or two words at most for each sentence that you plan to say. Thinking as you speak, use the key words and your own memory and knowledge in order to present your ideas. In order to develop a familiarity with your materials, use the same note-cards during practice that you will be using for the actual presentation.

- **Give your presentation a little differently each time.** Don't commit yourself to a memorized version – you don't want to make the presentation so static that it sounds like you are just reciting words rather than speaking with your audience.
- Once you get to the point of being able to complete your speech, then you should commit yourself to **practice the speech all the way through**, no matter what happens. Saying, “wait, can I start over again?” is a luxury that you will not have during the actual presentation.
- **Know your space.** If it is possible, you should take a close look at the room in which you will be giving your presentation. This way, you will know the resources of the room in answering questions like “how loud will I need to speak?” “Will I have room to move?” or “Where will I plug in my equipment?”
- As you practice, visualize yourself giving the speech in the actual setting with the actual audience. **Positive visualization** can be a powerful technique of refining your presentation and reducing your nervousness.
- **Get feedback from friends and associates if you can.** Practicing alone is also effective, but you will not notice everything about your speech (like repetitive gestures and too many “umms”) and there is no substitute from hearing from a friend or a colleague what is coming across well and what could be improved.
- **Use audiotape or videotape if you can.** It is not always a pleasant experience to listen to oneself on tape or see oneself on video, but there are a tremendous number of lessons to be learned this way.

**Remember that practice is self-persuasion:** you are persuading yourself that you are prepared, and this can be a key means of reducing your anxiety. To make sure that you are decreasing, and not increasing, your anxiety, remember to focus on the positive things you are doing and the constructive things that you can do in order to improve.



## LESSON 4.5

# WHAT IS DIALOGUE?

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*Adapted from “Community Toolbox,” Chapter 3.12 Leading a Community Dialogue on Building a Healthy Community*

Growing a healthy community is a lifelong process -- one that requires constant nurturing and persistence. Everyone has a role to play in building a healthier, more vibrant community. The choices we make at home, work, school, play, and worship determine most what creates personal health and community vitality. To a great extent, it’s about how we spend our time, dollars, and talents. But it’s also about how we create the settings in our communities that help bring positive change.

Healthy communities call for inspired leadership and action from every corner of our communities. Today, there’s often a gulf between the conversations people have around the kitchen table and the conversations we have with our leaders. We see turf battles and fragmentation of efforts with more resources getting spent on the symptoms of deeper problems, and less on what generates health in the first place.

This section is about bringing together the voices and talents of communities. The information is intended to help generate ideas and relationships across lines that divide us. It is for community leaders of all types -- anyone who can start a conversation -- and offers a flexible approach that can be adapted to any group’s objectives.

A dialogue is a community conversation that can take many forms. It can involve five people around a kitchen table, five hundred people in a large civic setting, or anything in between.

A community dialogue can help:

- Expand the base of constituencies and voices (i.e. youth, business, the faith community, grassroots leaders)
- Reach common ground -- integrate the workings of more formal institutions and partnerships with the leadership from neighborhoods and grassroots groups

- Surface common issues and the resources to address them -- help identify barriers to positive change and uncover innovative ideas
- Sustained ongoing community discussion between the many groups and partnerships in a community
- Build the capacity of your group to act on its ideas
- Launch new initiatives and strengthen the impact of existing community improvement partnerships
- Focus corporate and organizational investment towards community benefit -- align communities' policies and resource allocation with what creates health
- Break through community "turf wars" and connect fragmented resources -- build the public consensus and commitment necessary to generate action for better outcomes
- Stimulate action and track progress for accountability
- Generate local media attention
- Help leaders of all sectors to see their roles in building healthy, sustainable communities
- Be a part -- vocal and visible -- of the nationwide healthy communities movement

## What is a “dialogue” and why should your community host one?

Dialogue is a tool that seeks to open up lines of communication. It is also a unique tool that entails not just talking but listening. It is a space that allows for diverse voices to be heard so that common ground can be revealed. It is a space for people from different backgrounds—religious, ethnic, social class, age, and gender—to come together in search of a shared understanding of how to approach their differences and move forward on common ground.

Through a dialogue process, people work to break down pre-existing stereotypes and animosities, with the goal of eventually reaching understanding and acceptance. Dialogues provide communities with a platform to reveal not just what they think, but also why they think that way, how they formulate opinions, and how strongly these opinions are held.

Dialogue requires people to take risks, to put down their guards, and be open to the idea that they may discover something that challenges their identity and collective narrative. People engaged in a dialogue must also be willing to show empathy toward one another, including with those who they perceive as “enemies,” recognize and appreciate differences, and demonstrate a capacity for change. That is why dialogue sessions are often small discussions led by a neutral facilitator who creates an open and safe environment for people to:

- Measure the depth of emotion and feeling around issues.
- Understand why something is most important to people.
- Hear how people discuss issues and the language they employ.
- Gain insight into the reasons people feel and behave the way they do.

With that in mind then, a dialogue process does not just involve people sitting around a table reflecting on the past, discussing their grievances, or analyzing their needs; it is about changing the way people actually talk, think, and communicate with one another in order to build relationships across differences and identify how to move forward.

This type of intervention should seek to bring together diverse voices, and it should not be a conversation among like-minded individuals who share a common narrative and experience. So, when bringing together these different groups of people, you must be aware of the power dynamics between these different groups, especially between women and men and between different groups of women and men. These power dynamics can often prevent meaningful participation, especially from women and young people, if others are perceived as being in control. The input of all participants needs to be seen as an essential part of the dialogue process.

## Case Study: ABAAD “We Believe” Campaign in Lebanon

Dialogues, and specifically exploratory dialogues, can be used to foster relationships with new and perhaps difficult stakeholders concerning a particular issue. In 2012, ABAAD, a resource center for gender equality that aims to achieve gender equality as an essential condition to sustainable social and economic development in the MENA region, implemented the “We Believe” campaign. This campaign sought to work with various religious leaders in Lebanon to combat forms of violence against women, especially physical and verbal violence. Aside from the highly visible national campaign which included messages from prominent religious leaders in Lebanon from various religious sects through billboards and television spots, a core element of the campaign was a series of dialogues with religious leaders and Lebanese civil society. These dialogues were used as an opportunity to both discuss issues of gender equality and violence against women with religious leaders and, as importantly, to use the opportunity to begin to foster positive relationship and communication with this group of highly influential stakeholders.

For more information on the “We Believe” campaign visit: <http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/We-Believe-case-study.pdf>

Since dialogue seeks to convene those with perhaps different perspectives and lived experiences, steps may need to be taken to ensure that this is a space where everyone safe to speak freely.

Creating a safe space begins with setting ground rules or guidelines to keep participants focused on listening to and working with each other. Here are some examples of grounds rules you could apply during your activities:<sup>1</sup>

1 Adapted from: American Civil Liberties Union, “Establishing a Safe Learning Environment.” <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/establishing-a-safe-learning-environment> (accessed April 2018).



1. **Respect Others:** People will hear ideas that may be new or different, and opinions with which they may disagree. During the session, encourage people to try to take in new information without judgment and to keep an open mind. **As the facilitator,** make sure that your words and body language reflect a respectful attitude toward others. Learn by listening to others.
2. **Speak From the “I”:** Ask participants to speak from their own personal experiences and do not judge the thoughts or experiences of others. Avoid “You should” statements and generalizations of any kind.
3. **Ask Questions:** Encourage people to ask questions that come up for them without fear that they are too “silly” or “stupid.” **As the facilitator,** make sure to phrase all questions in respectful and value-neutral ways.
4. **Respect Confidentiality:** Make sure that everything said in the room stays in the room. When sharing personal anecdotes, make sure to avoid using the real names of other people.
5. **Share “Air Time”:** Although participants are encouraged to express ideas and opinions, it is important that they please do not monopolize the group’s time. **As the facilitator,** it is your role to create the space where everyone can speak. No one, however, is obligated to speak. “Passing” is okay.

Setting ground rules and making it clear to participants that this is a safe space is a vital first step when you bring together a group for the first time. While it might seem cosmetic and mechanical, the simple act of letting participants know that during these activities they can feel comfortable expressing their views and emotions, and that there is little tolerance for negative or aggressive behavior, will set the activity on the right course. As you go through this process, consult with participants on the ground rules and guidelines so there is a sense of ownership and appreciation. While your role as the facilitator of these activities is to enforce these ground rules, everyone should feel responsible for upholding and enforcing them.

## Where can a dialogue occur?

- At school
- At kitchen tables
- In the workplace
- At community centers
- In neighborhoods
- In places of worship
- At service club meetings (i.e. Rotary, Lions, Junior League, sororities and fraternities)
- In meetings of existing partnerships
- In board rooms
- In the halls of government

## Who can participate or host the dialogue?

Every citizen has a role to play in building community and creating health. The vitality of our communities and democracy relies upon the active participation of every person. Anyone can participate in a dialogue. Seek diversity! Reach across lines of race, culture, class, and locale to gather participants.

Anyone can convene and host a “healthy community” conversation:

- Neighborhood leaders
- Youth
- Business people
- Public health and medical care professionals
- Faith leaders
- Seniors
- Homemakers
- Educators
- Community organizers

## What makes healthy people and healthy community?

What makes healthy people? Health is more than the absence of disease. It is an optimum state of well-being: mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual. Health is wholeness. It includes a sense of belonging to the community and experiencing control over your life.

Optimal health is a by-product of people realizing their potential and living in a community that works. “Community” can be everything from a neighborhood to a metropolitan region. It can be the workplace or a group of shared interests and faith. In the end, our “community” is where we are and who we are with.

What makes a healthy community? It’s a place that is continually creating and improving its physical and social environments and expanding the community resources that enable people to support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing themselves to their maximum potential.

A healthy community is not a perfect place, but it’s a dynamic state of renewal and improvement. It builds a culture that supports healthy life choices and high quality of life. It aligns its practices, policies, and resource allocation to sustain:

- Engaged citizenry
- Diversity
- Ethical behavior
- Courage
- Responsiveness
- Innovation
- Patience
- Governance

- Quality education systems
- Childhood development
- Vibrant economy
- Support networks
- Livable wages
- Voluntarism
- Adequate and affordable housing
- Accessible transportation
- Openness to change
- Dynamic faith
- Recreation
- Communities
- Culture
- Clean air
- Safe Water
- Continuous improvement
- Strong families
- Safe neighborhoods

## How do you host a dialogue?

There is no one best way to host a dialogue. It depends upon what you want to accomplish. Tailor an approach that works best for your objectives, setting, participants, time, and capacity.

The following six scenarios are examples of some types of dialogues.

### Scenario 1 – Mature partnership or coalition

This group's goal may be to focus on and deepen their current work on health and quality-of-life issues. Or it may be to attract new and more diverse participants. They may want to reflect on and highlight learning or bring media attention to their efforts.

### Scenario 2 – Mobilizing youth

A youth group at school or in a club setting. This group might want to make sense of their community dynamics or address the pressures and support they find in the community. They may want to identify key issues and become active on something important to them and their future.

### Scenario 3 – Faith group

A church, mosque, or synagogue group. Faith leaders may want to engage the congregation in service to the neighborhood on a key issue. They may want to increase membership by taking action in the community.

## Scenario 4 – Your kitchen table

You might just want to invite a few neighbors over to enhance neighborhood cohesion or talk about a few rough issues. It could help build bridges across lines of race and class to work on something collaborative.

## Scenario 5 – Community organization

A membership organization or service club (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, United Way, Lions, Rotary, neighborhood association, civil rights organization). An intact organization or group may want to identify opportunities for stimulating positive change in the community at a regularly scheduled meeting. Maybe it's time to consider what's making leadership difficult on a key issue facing the community.

## Scenario 6 – On campus

At the college or university. Students, faculty, administrators, staff, and community residents get together to listen and learn from each other and discover some possible ways to work together.

Preparation will assist you in making your dialogue count. In the end, it can help your group develop, focus, and act on the issues that are identified. It can take from two to five weeks to prepare for and complete a dialogue. A dialogue can last from one to three hours with anywhere from five to 500 people. It depends upon your scope and capacity. The following steps will help you prepare for your community dialogue. Of course, you should feel free to modify the steps to fit your purpose, group, and circumstances.

## Prepare for your dialogue

- *Build a Dialogue Team to host the event.* A team approach to convening a dialogue will help to build ownership and spread the tasks involved. The team can help you to define goals for the project. Identify a few people that you have worked with before and have credibility with -- and invite them to the dialogue.
- *Determine your own goals for the dialogue.* Your community may have some specific goals for the dialogue itself and the information received from it. The design of the dialogue session should reflect this. Your community might want to deepen existing work in the community or reflect on lessons learned. Your community may also want to start a new group to address community issues. Be creative in your design to ensure an unobtrusive blending with other local activities.

- *Determine the group of participants.* Who would you like to bring together to share ideas and opinions? To minimize the effort required for recruitment, you may find it easiest to partner with an existing group. This will allow you to use their network. You may also wish to bring in new voices to your group. Dialogue groups may be as small as five people or as large as 500 – it’s just a matter of how your dialogue is designed, what you want to accomplish, and how much time you have. Most groups will include from 12 to 30 participants and last an hour and a half.
- *Select and prepare your facilitator.* Good facilitation is critical to a successful dialogue. You should enlist an experienced facilitator or someone who is a good listener and can inspire conversation while remaining neutral. Attributes of a good facilitator can be found on our website. It is important for the facilitator to get comfortable with the Dialogue questions and determine how to best design the conversation.
- *Set a place, date, and time for your dialogue.* Choose a spot that is comfortable and accessible. Dialogues can be conveniently held in someone’s home, a community center, place of worship, library, or private dining room of a local restaurant. Hospitals, schools, and businesses often have conference rooms or cafeterias where groups can meet. Keeping sites convenient to the participants is key. Determine the time period (from 1–3 hours). Be sure to give a minimum of two weeks’ notice of your dialogue meeting. A reminder call 2 days before the event will help to increase attendance.
- *Create an inviting environment.* Seating arrangements are important in a smaller group. To assure strong interaction, place seats in a circle or in a “U” formation. Refreshments (or food for a breakfast or lunch meeting) are a welcome and appropriate sign of appreciation but are not absolutely necessary. Many times, local businesses are willing to donate refreshments for community meetings.

## Invite participants

People are naturally attracted to people who speak from commitment and possibility. Trust yourself! People *want* to talk about what’s possible in their communities. This is not like pulling teeth. Determine how to access your desired participants. Contact friends, co-workers, or specific community groups. Personal contact makes the difference! A telephone call with a follow-up letter or flier with the details is usually very effective. Don’t worry if someone says no.

Remember, if you wish to have a specific number of people in your group, you may need to recruit 1 1/2 to 2 times as many. If you want a large group that involves many community constituencies, it may be wise to advertise the dialogue in newsletters or fliers placed where people gather: in coffee shops, grocery stores, gyms, daycare centers, places of worship, community centers, or libraries.

## Plan to record your dialogue

Designate a person on the Dialogue Team to take notes and summarize important points. The recorder doesn't need to keep a word-by-word account of the conversation but should summarize the group's views during their interaction. It's just as important to note areas of disagreement as consensus. **Obtaining quotations and stories from participants is essential.** The facilitator should plan to sit down with the recorder immediately after the dialogue to review the notes and prepare a summary.

## Conducting the dialogue

- *Greet participants.* It is important for the facilitator to greet participants as they arrive to develop rapport prior to the dialogue. This will help put guests at ease and encourage them to speak up.
- *Introduction.* The facilitator should introduce herself or himself and thank the participants for attending. A brief introduction, stating the purpose of the dialogue and the importance of asking the community for their opinions should follow. If the group is small, the facilitator may ask each participant to introduce herself or himself.
- *Initiate the dialogue.* You should have a plan or topic in mind for the dialogue event. You should tailor the dialogue to your needs. Each question has been researched to determine its reliability; however, slight adjustments may be needed. If the group is large, the facilitator may wish to project the questions on overhead transparencies for all to see.
- *Engage the media and document the event.* Some groups will want to have local media present to report on the dialogue and its findings. You may also want to take a few photos or video clips of the event.

## Concluding the dialogue and next steps

At the end of the dialogue, the facilitator can remind the group that simply taking the time to share ideas and personal values with fellow citizens is important. The group may consider some possible next steps but should not feel obliged to do something together. The group recorder may verbally summarize the dialogue and should then plan to send the notes to the participants.

For groups that want to do something more, here are a few possible next steps:

- The group may be excited about a particular idea it would like to take action on and agree to meet again to develop some action plans.

- The group may decide to have a more in-depth conversation and involve some missing voices and perspectives from their neighborhood (or to involve their elected representatives and the local newspaper).
- The group may decide to have additional dialogues on other subjects of importance to them.
- The group may share information about existing community efforts that could benefit from volunteers and additional leadership.
- Facilitators may wish to direct interested members to learn about other successful community efforts around the nation.

## How do you make your dialogue count?

To make your findings count, record them, and use them locally. Ensure that the results of your conversations advance local action by getting the results out to participants and relevant organizations within ten days of the dialogue. Follow up with the group on its interests. Ask each participant to share what has been learned and to keep the conversation going. Remember that each of us contributes to community well being simply by participating in civic dialogue.

### Principles of Good Facilitation

Generally, your role as the facilitator is to see that all participants feel they are having a say and are listened to and accepted. But you should not take that task lightly; facilitation is not easy. Encouraging productive participation and guiding those with different personalities and expectations to a common outcome requires practice and preparation.

As an organizer or facilitator of a dialogue it is important to make it known that everyone is free to express their opinions during a dialogue session. This may result however in people expressing thoughts or opinions that justify violence against women or other individuals. Organizers of the dialogue must be prepared for this and discuss strategies for mitigating conflict during the sessions. This will differ depending on the cultural and sub-cultural traditions, customs, actors, etc., and this highlights the need for community based actors and organizations to take leading roles in the process.

Different examples to mitigate conflict could be:

- Beginning dialogue with “soft topics” which will foster agreement, build rapport, and model healthy communication before moving on to more difficult topics;
- Committing to several dialogue sessions to solidify newly forming relationships before moving on to “actions”;
- Developing pre-planned responses for topics or opinions that may arise during the dialogue sessions (these can usually be identified by those knowledgeable of the current terrain of the discourse in the nation/community);

- Having meetings with the different stakeholders and participants of the dialogue sessions prior to them in order to gauge interests, fears, expectations, etc.; and
- Setting mutually agreed upon ground rules with all participants before the session begins.

As you set out to lead and organize peacebuilding interventions here are a set of underlying principles and tactics to follow:

1. **LISTEN** rather than talk. A good facilitator remains neutral, gives space for others to speak, and acknowledges different viewpoints. You also need to be alert to sensitive issues (some of which can be identified through your preparatory work) in order to identify any red flag that could derail a conversation and guide it back to constructive discussion. You should also not take sides in the conversation. You need to be the person who is seen as serving the entire group and encouraging everyone to speak. It is difficult not to have favorites in a group or feel compelled to insert your own opinions, but it is important that a facilitator be treating everyone equally. This will also help build your credibility and respect, especially in a diverse group.
2. **MODEL** the behavior you expect from participants. You are the leader of a group so you should model active listening, respectful and honest speaking, and other ground rules at all times through your words and body language.
3. **ASK** questions that guide discussion rather than stall or bias outcomes. Ask questions to keep the discussion going, to make participants think, not to shut down discussion. You can do this by asking open-ended questions, and also exploring the complexities of the issues. A facilitator asks questions that invite participants to reflect and share with the group, like “what do you think about justice?” rather than closed questions that only require a yes or no answers, like “do you like justice?” A good practice for a facilitator to adopt is to prepare a few questions prior to the activity to support the conversation.
4. **ENCOURAGE** and balance equalize participations. All individuals involved have an equal right to participate so welcome and encourage all input. Ensure all group participants are treated respectfully—do not allow one person to dominate or to disrespect those whose ideas are different from their own, everyone has a legitimate viewpoint even if it is out of step with others. For equal participation, consider keeping a list of people who want to speak, and then creating and sharing with the group an order for people to speak.
5. **REMIND** participants why they attended the activity if the conversation drifts or starts to become unproductive. Also let participants know when the discussion has drifted; usually they will quickly return to the topic at hand. Every now and then, remind participants of the topic under discussion. “Isn’t this what we were discussing?” You can also keep participants on –the topic by asking the open-ended questions you prepared in advance.



6. **KEEP TRACK** of the agenda and, time, and manage the process. Keep the discussion focused and keep your focus on the process. Help groups to collaborate and achieve agreement and results with good process. Even groups that begin far apart can come together in cooperation and agreement with good facilitated discussion aimed at collaboration. Be as self-confident as possible to assure the participants you know how to guide the process. This includes showing that you are in control of the activity and can manage the conversation. Remind the group about time. Facilitated discussions can be very challenging, especially with a strong group of personalities, so use phrases like “I am mindful of the time, might we agree that we will start working on next steps” or “I can see that people are fading, what if we agree to wrap up in the next twenty minutes.” This leaves the group in charge of their own process but you are guiding and reminding them.

A facilitator should encourage the active involvement and interaction of participants by:<sup>2</sup>

- Using group discussions, both large group and small break-out groups
- Asking probing questions
- Having participants share experiences
- Respecting the knowledge and experience of the participants
- Acknowledging and drawing upon differences within the group
- Constructively addressing conflict and discomfort
- Providing relevant examples and additional information
- Summarizing what’s been accomplished at strategic points during the workshop

A facilitator should specifically **AVOID**:

- Criticizing the ideas or values of others.
- Forcing one’s own ideas on the group by using your facilitator role. You should never manipulate the group by using the facilitator’s role to get your own personal agenda on the table.
- Making decisions for other participants without asking for their agreement.
- Saying a lot or getting too involved in discussions. When you are the facilitator, this will distract you and could get the whole group off track.

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2 *Trainer’s Manual on Increasing Opportunities for Women within Politics and Political Parties, Strengthening Women’s Political Leadership in South Asia*, the National Democratic Institute, 2005.



## LESSON 4.6

# PUBLIC SPEAKING

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*Adapted from, NDI “Democracy and the Challenge of Change: A Guide to Increasing Women’s Political Participation.”*

### How to Manage Your Fear and Speak with Confidence

Speaking or giving a talk publicly can be very nerve-wracking. If you find it hard to speak in front of a crowd then doing so may make you panicky, break out in a sweat or just extremely nervous. Everyone who has spoken in front of a group has experienced stage fright at one time or another. The good news is that once you begin your talk and warm to your subject, the stage fright usually goes away. To avoid nervousness and to speak confidently, you must be prepared.

1. Unless it can't be helped, always try to speak on a subject you know well and are comfortable talking about. The better you know the topic and the more information you have on it, the easier it will be for you to talk about it.
2. Prepare your speech well ahead of time. Write out exactly what you are going to say at the beginning and end of your speech and the main points of the body of the speech. The more prepared you are, the more confident you will feel about giving your speech.
3. Try to look at your audience as you talk to them. If you find it hard to look them in the eye, try looking just above their heads or at their foreheads/noses and be sure to move your eyes around the room, so that everyone feels like you are talking to them.
4. Try to stand with good posture because this will make you look confident even if you are not. Relax your shoulders and arms. Balance your weight between both feet, being careful not to rock back and forth.

5. Try to pace yourself and not talk too quickly, and remember to pause at moments when a pause is needed so that you can catch your breath and get your thoughts together. Don't be afraid of being silent for a few moments to remember what you were going to say next; the audience will wait with excitement for your next point.
6. If you are really anxious about speaking publicly, try to build confidence one step at a time. Try speaking in front of smaller groups first and gradually increase the size of your audience.
7. Confidence can be gained through practice. Once you have practiced something and feel safe in the knowledge that you can do it, in this case — when you know what you are talking about — you will feel more confident about doing it. Practice your speech prior to your speaking engagement. Get someone you trust to listen to you and ask them to give you their opinion and any suggestions that may help you. Although it may sound stupid, practicing in front of a mirror is another good way. This helps you to see what you look like as you give your speech. You can get your posture right and see how your hand movements look to the audience.
8. Don't worry too much about it. Just relax and try to enjoy it. The more relaxed you are, the easier you will find it and the better you will appear to your audience.

Before you make a public speech or plan to give any remarks in front of an audience, it is important to think about your appearance as that will be the first impression you make on the audience. Women and youth in particular are subjected to a lot of scrutiny about their appearance (for mostly irrelevant reasons) by both their friends and strangers. Accept this as a reality and prepare yourself, even if it bothers you.

First impressions are made quickly and a negative impression is difficult to overcome. In a split second, people will form opinions about you in terms of your economic and educational background, your social position, your experience, your trustworthiness, your moral character, and your success at your current or previous work. Accept that your audience will form an impression of you based on their assumptions. Ensure that their assumptions give you an advantage.

The key is to develop sensitivity and awareness of the image you present. Wear what you must to have your audience accept you. The way to do this is to find a balance between comfort and creating an image that reflects your style of leadership. People can tell if someone feels uncomfortable or their appearance is unnatural. But the most important thing is to be genuine. If you look like yourself and feel like yourself then you will come off as confident and strong!

## Public Speaking on Virtual Platforms

Many public speaking events today do not happen in public but right in front of your computer. You may be participating in a panel discussion, leading a meeting, or hosting a presentation, and although it might be from the comfort of your home instead of an office or classroom, we still need to find new ways to effectively communicate. Next time you need to make a virtual presentation, here are the tips to consider:

1. **Read the Zoom.** No matter the audience, you have to assume that now, everyone has more distractions competing for their attention. They're probably taking this meeting from the couch, and the more you know about your audience going into the meeting, the more likely you are to keep them there. This isn't the time for a rinse and repeat presentation. Tailor your talk to the audience.
2. **Watch your background.** What can people see behind you? Unmade bed? Not so great. Walk around your office or house and find a pleasant, not too distracting background.
3. **Dress the part.** Even though participants can usually only see you from the shoulders up, wear something that looks great on you from the waist up. In fact, the better you dress from head to toe, the better your posture will be and the better you'll feel, in general. When you feel better, you're a more relaxed and a more confident presenter.
4. **Watch your eyes.** When you're looking at the little black dot (the camera) at the top of your computer screen, your audience will feel like you're looking at them. If you need to look elsewhere — like on your computer or on your actual desk to refer to your materials, that's fine. Just make sure that every so often you look at the camera. As long as you check in with your audience from time to time, they will experience good eye contact from you.
5. **Pre-Event Prep.** If you're presenting with others, arrange a pre-event prep call. Get to know each other beforehand and discuss the flow of who's speaking and when. Since there will always be inevitable lag times or delays in the tech, practice long pauses between points to avoid talking over each other. A more informal chat should feel off-the-cuff, but as antithetical as it sounds, natural might need some rehearsing.

## Tips for Staying on Message

When questions are asked -- no matter how off-topic they are — use transitional phrases to revert back to your key messages. Some of those transitional phrases are:

- The fact of the matter is...
- The bottom line is...

- The real question is...
- That's not the issue. The issue is...
- I can't tell you that. But I CAN tell you...
- The reality is...

## Handling/Fielding Tough Questions

What to avoid:

- Avoid “no comment” statements. It implies you have something to hide.
- If you don't know the answer, say so and promise to find out.
- Don't lie. It will come back to haunt the campaign at a later time.
- Don't ramble. Keep comments short, sweet and on message.
- Don't be combative or pick a fight. Be cool under pressure and be considerate. This best represents the campaign.

## Tips for Making an Effective Speech

### Know Your Topic

- If you can, choose a topic that you enjoy and know well. Your passion for the subject will come through in your delivery.
- The most important rule of public speaking is to become familiar and comfortable with what you are talking about — the subject of your presentation.

### Know Your Audience

- Knowing who you will talk to can help you adjust what you will say. Consider their level of education, their interests, and their knowledge of your topic.

### Know the Program

- Are you the only speaker? What is the order of appearance? Will you be the first or last speaker? Will there be a panel of speakers?
- Verify how long you will speak. It's always a good idea to time a speech so that you know you will fill your allotted time slot.
- Be aware of how much time will be allotted for questions and answers, if any.

## Prepare Your Speech

- Know what you want to achieve as a result of your presentation. Define the core purpose of the speech. Do you want to...Persuade the audience? Educate them? Encourage them to take a specific action?
- You need to know exactly what you want your audience to remember from your speech. In 25 words or less write down what you want the audience to know. Once you know what that is, reduce it to three or four points and elaborate on just those points. Illustrate each point with at least one example that will create a picture in the minds of your audience. Too much information can be just as deadly as not enough while giving a speech.
- Outline the substance of your presentation using quotes, examples, facts, and other interesting information.
- Write the opening or “attention-getting” statement of your speech.
- Write the closing part of your speech. Aim for a strong finish. It should be a stirring statement in which you issue your call to action, make a declaration, refer to your opening comments, and summarize your main goal.
- Don’t write out the rest of your speech in full. Instead, write out the main points. If you write it out in full sentences, you will worry about using exactly the same words that you have on the paper when you are giving your speech. You want to sound confident, not rehearsed.
- In any good presentation, you will tell the audience what you are going to tell them (the opening), tell them (the body of the speech), and tell them what you told them (the closing).

## Practice, but Not TOO Much

- Practice your entire speech before the presentation. Be thoroughly familiar with it, but do not memorize it. If you practice too much, it may show. In other words, it may appear to your audience as if you’re doing this speech for the hundredth time, especially if you are! Practice with another person who can give you helpful comments. Practice in front of a mirror.

## Other Preparations

- Try to visit the venue before the event. Check the room and equipment.
- Decide what you will wear ahead of time. Make sure it’s something you feel comfortable in and something that makes you feel confident. Deciding what you will wear ahead of time will make you less nervous on the day of the speech.

## Relax

- If you are feeling nervous, use some relaxation techniques before you start. If you can find a place to be alone, jump up and down or stomp each foot really hard. This exercise will ground you and release tension. Shake your hands and clench and unclench your fists. This action will keep your

hands from shaking too much. If trembling is really a problem, hold onto the podium while you speak. Stick out your tongue, open your eyes and mouth as wide as you can, then scrunch your face into a tight ball. This will relax the muscles of your entire face. Breathe deeply and make a small humming sound to warm up your voice.

- Drink water (not coffee, tea, milk, or carbonated drinks) and have more close by, dry the palms of your hands with a tissue if they are sweaty, and you're ready.

## Deliver the Speech

- Observe proper protocol: recognize dignitaries at the beginning of your remarks.
- Do not read the speech — you want to be natural, enthusiastic, and excited. Talk to your audience. Write an outline with keywords or phrases on index cards that you can hold in the palm of your hand, and then practice giving the speech. Only look down at your notes every now and then when absolutely needed.
- Be precise; use simple words and short sentences. Avoid acronyms.
- Avoid the overuse of statistics. While important, statistics can be confusing. If there are important statistics, hand them out at the end of your presentation. Stories about real people are always more compelling than numbers.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience. This technique will help to hold their attention and emphasize the main points. Make eye contact with one person at a time and hold it for about five seconds.
- Use hand gestures to explain yourself and your points. Gesturing too much distracts the audience. Not gesturing at all makes you seem stiff and unnatural.
- Stand up straight and standstill. Don't play with your hair.
- Use your nervousness to your advantage. Being nervous is normal. It gives us the adrenalin we need to focus on the immediate task. Try to channel this nervous energy into enthusiasm and excitement. Don't forget that the audience is there, usually, because they care about what you are saying and want to hear you say it. Find those individuals in the audience who are smiling and giving you positive feedback — they will help keep you confident.

## Manage Questions

- Take questions from the entire audience rather than a select few. Listen carefully and treat each question equally. Repeat all positive questions so that the audience can hear them. Do not become drawn into a "one on one" with anyone questioner, or allow one questioner to dominate the audience. Respond as simply and directly as possible.
- Do not be afraid to say "I don't know", and either promise to get back to them with information or invite them to contact you at a later date.



# LESSON 4.8

## CONSTRUCTING AND DEFENDING ARGUMENTS

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*Adapted from “Welcome to Debate” by Marcin Zaleski, IDEA—International Debate Education Association, 2011.*

Whether you’re writing an essay or debating something on social media, knowing how to construct a good argument is a useful skill. But especially in the circumstances that we’re deeply convinced of the rightness of our points, putting them across in a compelling way that will change other people’s minds is a challenge. If you feel that your opinion is obviously right, it’s hard work even to understand why other people might disagree. Some people reach this point and don’t bother to try, instead of concluding that those who disagree with them must be stupid, misled, or just plain immoral. And it’s almost impossible to construct an argument that will persuade someone if you’re starting from the perspective that they’re either dim or evil.

In the opposite set of circumstances — when you only weakly believe your perspective to be right — it can also be tricky to construct a good argument. In the absence of conviction, arguments tend to lack coherence or force.

Let’s take a look at how you can put together an argument, whether, for an essay, debate speech, or social media post, that is forceful, cogent, and — if you’re lucky — might just change someone’s mind.

### 1. **Keep it simple. Keep your argument concise.**

Almost all good essays focus on a single powerful idea, drawing in every point made back to that same idea so that even someone skim-reading will soon pick up the author’s thesis. But when you care passionately about something, it’s easy to let this go. If you can see twenty different reasons why you’re right, it’s tempting to put all of them into your argument, because it feels as if the sheer weight of twenty reasons will be much more persuasive than just focusing on one or two; after all, someone may be able rebut a couple of reasons, but can they rebut all twenty?



Yet from the outside, an argument with endless different reasons is much less persuasive than one with focus and precision on a small number of reasons. The debate in the UK about whether or not to stay in the EU was a great example of this. The Remain campaign had dozens of different reasons. Car manufacturing! Overfishing! Cleaner beaches! Key workers for the NHS! Medical research links! Economic opportunities! The difficulty of overcoming trade barriers! The Northern Irish border! Meanwhile, the Leave campaign boiled their argument down to just one: membership of the EU means relinquishing control. Leaving it means taking back control. And despite most expectations and the advice of most experts, the simple, straightforward message won. Voters struggled to remember the many different messages put out by the Remain campaign, as compelling as each of those reasons might have been; but they remembered the message about taking back control.

## **2. Be fair on your opponent. Don't use underhand tactics.**

One of the most commonly used rhetorical fallacies is the Strawman Fallacy. This involves constructing a version of your opponent's argument that is much weaker than the arguments they might use themselves, in order that you can defeat it more easily.

For instance, in the area of crime and punishment, you might be arguing in favor of harsher prison sentences, while your opponent argues in favor of early release where possible. A Strawman would be to say that your opponent is weak on crime, wanting violent criminals to be let out on to the streets without adequate punishment or deterrence, to commit the same crimes again. In reality, your opponent's idea might exclude violent criminals, and focus on community-based restorative justice that could lead to lower rates of recidivism.

To anyone who knows the topic well, if your argument includes a Strawman, then you will immediately have lost credibility by demonstrating that either you don't really understand the opposing point of view, or that you simply don't care about rebutting it properly. Neither is persuasive. Instead, you should be fair to your opponent and represent their argument honestly, and your readers will take you seriously as a result.

## **3. Avoid other common fallacies. Beware of clutching at your argument.**

It's worth taking the time to read about logical fallacies and making sure that you're not making them, as an argument that the rest of fallacious foundations can be more easily demolished. (This may not apply on social media, but it does in formal debating and in writing essays). Some fallacies are straightforward to understand, such as the appeal to popularity (roughly "everyone agrees with me, so I must be right!"), but others are a little trickier.

Take "begging the question", which is often misunderstood. It gets used to mean "raises the question" (e.g. "this politician has defended terrorists, which raises the question — can we trust her?"), but the fallacy it refers to is a bit more complicated. It's when an argument rests on the assumption that

its conclusions are true. For example, someone might argue that fizzy drinks shouldn't be banned in schools, on the grounds that they're not bad for students' health. How can we know that they're not bad for students' health? Why, if they were, they would be banned in schools!

When put in a condensed form like this example, the flaw in this approach is obvious, but you can imagine how you might fall for it over the course of a whole essay — for instance, paragraphs arguing that teachers would have objected to hyperactive students, parents would have complained, and we can see that none of this has happened because they haven't yet been banned. With more verbosity, a bad argument can be hidden, so check that you're not falling prey to it in your own writing.

#### **4. Make your assumptions clear. Decide what is fact and what is an assumption.**

Every argument rests on assumptions. Some of these assumptions are so obvious that you're not going to be aware that you're making them — for instance, you might make an argument about different economic systems that rests on the assumption that reducing global poverty is a good thing. While very few people would disagree with you on that, in general, if your assumption can be proven false, then the entire basis of your argument is undermined.

A more controversial example might be an argument that rests on the assumption that everyone can trust the police force — for instance, if you're arguing for tougher enforcement of minor offences in order to prevent them from mounting into major ones. But in countries where the police are frequently bribed, or where policing has obvious biases, such enforcement could be counterproductive.

If you're aware of such assumptions underpinning your argument, tackle them head on by making them clear and explaining why they are valid; so you could argue that your law enforcement proposal is valid in the particular circumstances that you're suggesting because the police force there can be relied on, even if it wouldn't work everywhere.

#### **5. Rest your argument on solid foundations. Your argument must be solid to be a success.**

If you think that you're right in your argument, you should also be able to assemble a good amount of evidence that you're right. That means putting the effort in and finding something that genuinely backs up what you're saying; don't fall back on dubious statistics or fake news. Doing the research to ensure that your evidence is solid can be time-consuming, but it's worthwhile, as then you've removed another basis on which your argument could be challenged.

What happens if you can't find any evidence for your argument? The first thing to consider is whether you might be wrong! If you find lots of evidence against your position, and minimal evidence for it, it would be logical to change your mind. But if you're struggling to find evidence either way, it may simply be that the area is under-researched. Prove what you can, including your assumptions, and work from there.

## **6. Use evidence your readers will believe. Use evidence to sway them to your side.**

So far we've focused on how to construct an argument that is solid and hard to challenge; from this point onward, we focus on what it takes to make an argument persuasive. One thing you can do is to choose your evidence with your audience in mind. For instance, if you're writing about current affairs, a left-wing audience will find an article from the Guardian to be more persuasive (as they're more likely to trust its reporting), while a right-wing audience might be more swayed by the Telegraph.

This principle doesn't just hold in terms of politics. It can also be useful in terms of sides in an academic debate, for instance. You can similarly bear in mind the demographics of your likely audience — it may be that an older audience is more skeptical of footnotes that consist solely of web addresses. And it isn't just about statistics and references. The focus of your evidence as a whole can take your probable audience into account; for example, if you were arguing that a particular drug should be banned on health grounds and your main audience was teenagers, you might want to focus more on the immediate health risks, rather than ones that might only appear years or decades later.

## **7. Avoid generalisations, and be specific. Keep your points factual, not general.**

A platitude is a phrase used to the point of meaninglessness — and it may not have had that much meaning to begin with. If you find yourself writing something like “because family life is all-important” to support one of your claims, you've slipped into using platitudes. Platitudes are likely to annoy your readers without helping to persuade them. Because they're meaningless and uncontroversial statements, using them doesn't tell your reader anything new. If you say that working hours need to be restricted because family ought to come first, you haven't really given your reader any new information. Instead, bring the importance of family to life for your reader, and then explain just how long hours are interrupting it.

Similarly, being specific can demonstrate the grasp you have on your subject, and can bring it to life for your reader. Imagine that you were arguing in favor of nationalizing the railways, and one of your points was that the service now was of low quality. Saying “many commuter trains are frequently delayed” is much less impactful than if you have the full facts to hand, e.g. “in Letchworth Garden City, one key commuter hub, half of all peak-time trains to London were delayed by ten minutes or more.”

## **8. Understand the opposing point of view. Make sure you understand the other side's position.**

As we noted in the introduction, you can't construct a compelling argument unless you understand why someone might think you were wrong, and you can come up with reasons other than them being mistaken or stupid. After all, we almost all target the same end goals, whether that's wanting to increase our understanding of the world in academia, or increase people's opportunities to flourish and seek happiness in politics.

Yet we come to divergent conclusions. In his book *The Righteous Mind*, Jonathan Haidt explores the different perspectives of people who are politically right or left-wing. He summarizes the different ideals people might value, namely justice, equality, authority, sanctity and loyalty, and concludes that while most people see that these things have some value, different political persuasions value them to different degrees. For instance, someone who opposes equal marriage might argue that they don't oppose equality — but they do feel that on balance, sanctity is more important. An argument that focuses solely on equality won't sway them, but an argument that addresses sanctity might.

### 9. Make it easy for your opponent to change their mind. Don't vilify them for switching sides.

It's tricky to think of the last time you changed your mind about something really important. Perhaps to preserve our pride, we frequently forget that we ever believed something different. It would be tempting for anyone who genuinely did oppose the war at the time to be quite smug towards anyone who changed their mind, especially those who won't admit it. But if changing your mind comes with additional consequences (e.g. the implication that you were daft *ever* to have believed something, even if you've since come to a different conclusion), then the incentive to do so is reduced. Your argument needs to avoid vilifying people who have only recently come around to your point of view; instead, to be truly persuasive, you should welcome them.

## Persuasion in Debate: Developing Arguments

Debaters must be persuasive in the presentation of their ideas—whether they speak to an audience or to judges. Persuasion strategies used in debates share some similarities with persuasion mechanisms used in other contexts, for example during commercial exchanges at a market or during political negotiations.

While debates recognize the importance of appropriate style and presentation, they put greater emphasis on the content and the use of reason and evidence. The best debaters use persuasive language and present their speeches with confidence; however, judges of debates prioritize content over delivery. Thus, if a speaker presents effective arguments but his/her presentation lacks some elements, he/she is likely to be evaluated higher than a speaker who has great style but does not deliver much on content.

## Constructing an Argument

Debates emphasize the quality of ideas and research. Therefore, argument is one of the most important concepts in debate. First, debaters have to conduct research and gather strong evidence, and then they need to make persuasive points in support of their position in a debate. They will connect evidence with *reason* to support or negate the resolution. In other words, they will develop arguments. When used in common language, the term *argument* refers to an idea, a reason presented in order to persuade others. For example: “Could you present me with a good argument as to why I should buy this car?” means

“Could you give me a good reason why I should buy this car?” The use of the term *argument* is similar in debate. An argument is usually composed of a few sentences or is itself a compound sentence—multiple elements connected logically with each other.

When introducing the argument as a concept, it is possible to define it by describing the relationship between its individual components: an argument is a claim that is supported by evidence. The basic structure of an argument is composed of three elements: *claim, evidence, and support*.

- The *claim* is the position that a debater wants his audience to accept. For example, “advertising of cigarettes should be banned” can be a claim presented by the side that is supporting the resolution, “Resolved that there should be a ban on advertising cigarettes.”
- *Evidence* is the additional information given to the audience in order to support the claim. Ideas that would reasonably follow the word “because...” are offered to provide evidence for the claim. For example, the idea “because smoking is harmful” can be used as evidence to support the claim.
- *Support* refers to the logical relationship or reason that connects the evidence to the claim. The additional supporting information (evidence) needs to be logically related to the conclusion that debaters would like their audience to accept (claim). A connective statement to clarify that relationship should be expressed or should be clearly implied in a complete argument. In the previous example, the reason is that “it is right to ban something that is harmful.” Support is a logical bridge between the evidence and the claim.

The main job of a debater is to present the best arguments he/she can construct, as well as to respond to the arguments presented by the other side. Debaters should learn how to make strong arguments, and they should be aware of possible flaws with the argument types outlined above. Debaters need to think carefully about constructing arguments that stand during a debate. For example, when reasoning by example, debaters need to make sure that the examples they use are representative; when presenting causal reasoning, they need to ensure that a given effect is related to a given cause and that a given sign is in fact indicative of a given phenomenon.

## Making Arguments Appealing to the Audience

Although arguments, reasoning and strong evidence are central to good debates, debaters must not forget about the **power of language** to move and persuade their audiences. A good debate, no matter whether competitive or public will try to achieve a mixture between the content and its presentation. Arguments and the way in which they are presented complete each other — clear, vivid and emotive language, good organization of the speech, support the message.

## Style

Style refers to the way in which language is used in debate. The language of debate is usually **neutral** – it is similar to the style used by news presenters on TV and radio by journalists and publicists of mainstream newspapers and magazines. It should neither be too sophisticated, specialized or formal but it should not be too informal or colloquial either. Debaters should strive for a balance between sounding like experts discussing a given issue among themselves and sounding like friends having a conversation over a shisha pipe.

Debaters may consider using more informal or even poetic language at times in debate – in order to get the audience’s attention, entertain or illustrate a point better. **Persuasion in debate** (and outside of debate) depends on how listeners relate to not only what is said but also to how it is said and who says it. Below are a few examples of effective stylistic devices which can be used in debate in order to enhance understanding of the discussed issues, but also to entertain, touch, surprise and sometimes startle.

1. **Figurative Language.** By the use of figurative language, speakers refer to concepts and issues in an indirect way, describing them through the use of images, associations and comparisons. Figurative language often uses metaphors, symbols, comparisons.

### Examples:

- Metaphor is effective use of imagery: *“wind of change will need to sweep the current policies on environment in order to create a better world for our children”*
- Personification is similar to metaphor but attributing human qualities to abstract concepts: *“we cannot ignore the opportunity that is knocking at our door”*
- Simile uses comparison: *“ignoring climate change is like ignoring a time-bomb on a plane”*

2. **Concreteness and vividness.** Concreteness and vividness are in a way opposite of figurative language. They replace abstract terms and concepts with concrete and vivid imagery.

### Examples:

- Vividness: In his famous speech, right after becoming the Prime Minister of Great Britain during war, Winston Churchill said: *“I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.”*
- Concreteness: in another speech Winston Churchill said: *we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills”*

3. **Repetition.** Repeating certain phrases or syntactic structures can be a very effective tool in debate — emphasizing a given point and also appealing emotionally to the audience.

**Examples:**

- Repetition: In his famous speech at the March on Washington in 1963, Martin Luther King used the phrase *“I have a dream”* no fewer than nine times.
- Parallelism: is a type of repetition — it repeats similar sentence structure: *“We would not expect this proposal to be accepted and we would not like this proposal to be accepted”*
- The rule of three: phrases, clauses, and modifiers are put together in groups of three: Margaret Thatcher said of communism: *“This policy is ideologically, politically, and morally bankrupt.”*

4. **Contrast and comparison** are stylistic devices which allow speakers to better say what something is by saying what it is not.

**Examples:**

- Contrast: John F. Kennedy delivering during his inauguration in 1961: *My fellow citizens of the world ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.”*

Or

- *“It is not a question of whether this solution will work — it is question of whether we would like this solution to work”*

5. **Rhetorical questions.** A rhetorical question is a question that is asked for the effect, with no direct answer expected from the listener.

- Example: **“How much longer do we need to wait for the world to realize the danger”**

6. **Humor.** The primary function of humor, in the context of a public debater, is to establish a relationship between the debater and an audience. Humor can also be used as an offensive weapon in a debate; that is, a debater can use humor to belittle an idea or a plan offered by an opponent. Humor can also be used effectively as a defensive weapon; audiences respond positively to speakers who are self-deprecating, and can show that they “do not take themselves too seriously.”

**Examples:**

- *“If inefficiency had the power to float in the air, our opponents’ proposal would fly like an eagle”*

- *“When I told my grandmother I was a debater, she said: Couldn’t you get yourself a normal job?” well, Ladies and Gentlemen — in my speech today, I will try to persuade you that there is a merit to debating”*

## Speech Organization

The order in which debaters present their arguments as well as the structure and organization of their speech is also an important way to not only enhance the audience’s appreciation of the debate speech but also increase their understanding of the presented arguments. Debaters should remember that structure of a speech is part of the message: it increases the effectiveness of the communication for the audience but is also easier for the speaker to remember the sequence in which the arguments should be presented.

A well-organized speech should have an introduction, the main body (central idea) and a conclusion. The main body of a speech should contain the main points that a debater wants to raise: explanations, reasons, illustrations/examples, etc. Since speeches in debates are rarely longer than 5–6 minutes, if a speaker wants to develop the points well, she/he would rarely have time to introduce three to four main points. Before explaining each point, a speaker may want to provide a little introduction of what points he/she will cover in a speech. This will allow the audience to follow the main ideas better and retain more information after the speech. Speakers should also provide “smooth” transitions between the main points, by for example, using the following phrases: “now that I have discussed... I would like to move on”, “what follows from that point is...”

**The first part and the last part of the speech are particularly important because they are more likely to be remembered by the audience. The introduction is critical because the audience is first meeting a speaker, discovering the topic or learning what the speaker plans to do in the speech. The conclusion is critical because a speaker is pulling the information together, reminding the audience of the most important points, and telling them what he/she would like them to do with the information. For these reasons it is important to pay special attention to the beginning and the ending of your presentation. Below are some useful ‘hints’ for debaters:**

- The first thing you need to do is capture your audience’s attention by focusing on something that is novel, surprising, suspenseful, important, humorous, familiar or profound. Experience shows that audiences that are not pulled-in at the beginning of a speech, are less likely to pay attention during the speech.
- After gaining attention, you should identify a thesis in one clear sentence. This thesis identifies the content or the message that you would like the audience to walk away with after your speech.
- Tell the audience early in the introduction why it is important for them to listen. Provide the ‘payoff,’ that is what they get in exchange for investing their time by listening to your speech. They need to know exactly why they should listen.



- Demonstrate your own credibility. If you have special experience or knowledge on this topic, or have engaged in specific research on this topic, then let the audience know in order to give them a reason to listen to your views.
- Address your motivation. Let the audience know why you wanted to speak about this topic, why you know about it, why you care about it, why you feel that they should know and care about it as well.
- Let the audience know what to expect. Telling the audience what main points you are going to address through your speech by providing a preview allows them to focus their attention.

In your conclusion provide a summary of the main points you have covered in the speech. This calls for a fair amount of repetition, but some say that the secret to public speaking is ‘tell them what you are going to tell them, then tell them, then tell them what you told them.’

Return to your thesis. Remind the audience of the central message that you would like them to walk away with.

- Tell the audience what they should do with your information. How specifically should they change what they know, believe, or do? What would be the ‘action plan’ that your audience should take as a result of your speech?
- End by providing closure, or a sense of ‘coming to an end.’ Closure can be achieved by returning to the facts, stories, or illustrations that were used in the beginning or by similarly ending on a note that is surprising, illustrative, novel, etc. Speakers who need to finish by saying “that is all,” have not provided closure.

## Refuting an Argument

In addition to presenting persuasive and compelling arguments in a debate, debaters must also respond to the arguments made by their opponents. In debate, this process is called *refutation*. By refuting the opponents’ arguments, debaters reduce the impact of their opponents on the audience. Sometimes, debaters state that the argument presented by the other side is either untrue or inaccurate. It is not sufficient to say that an argument is untrue; debaters have to *prove* that an argument is wrong, irrelevant, or insignificant in the context of a given debate. They may choose to refute different aspects of their opponents’ debate cases. For example, a team may refute its opponent’s definition of key terms in the resolution by arguing that the definition presented is too narrow, too broad, not accurate (the opponent misunderstood the word), or unfair (it leaves no room for debate). However, the team will not lose points for not refuting a definition. Most of the time, definitions presented in debates happen to be accurate, and it would be unfair to penalize the opposition for not disputing something that is commonly accepted as true.

Strategies for refuting arguments are as follows:

1. *Denial* is when a team chooses to simply oppose an argument presented by its opponents. When denying an argument, a team contradicts a given claim and provides reasons.

Affirmative: *Smoking affects only people who smoke.*

Negative: *Not true. Second-hand smoke affects non-smokers.*

2. *Minimization* can be used in cases where a team may be confronted by an argument that is logically sound and correct. The team can reduce the impact of such an argument by demonstrating that although the argument stands, it is not a very important argument in a given debate. When minimizing the opponent's argument, a team does not deny the validity of the claim but reduces the argument's significance.

Affirmative: *Banning smoking in restaurants will have a bad effect on business.*

Negative: *Banning smoking may have a bad effect on business, but the effect will be small and only happen at the beginning of the ban.*

3. *Out-weighting* is another method of responding to the opposition's argument. This strategy is used when a team agrees with the opposition but points to other potential—and more important—benefits.

Affirmative: *Banning smoking in restaurants will have a bad effect on business.*

Negative: *Banning smoking may have a bad effect on business, but it will protect the health of people, which is far more important than generating income.*

4. *Turn-around* is one of the most effective ways of refuting an argument in a debate. It is when a team uses the reasoning provided by the opposition to prove its own point.

Affirmative: *Banning smoking in restaurants will make many customers angry, since they will not be able to eat and smoke at the same time.*

Negative: *This is true, but it also may make customers re-think their health habits and lead them to quitting smoking.*


An effective method of refutation is exposing the opponent's fallacies—provided that the opposing team commits fallacies in its argumentation. Debaters may also attack the evidence presented by the opposing team by challenging facts and statistics or by raising questions about the credibility of the authority.

A team may refute the facts by demonstrating one of the following:

- The facts are not true, based on counter-evidence.
- The facts are not universal and constitute isolated instances.
- The examples do not cover a significant or relevant period of time.
- The examples are not typical.
- There are many negative instances, or exceptions, to the examples.
- The facts do not support, or are irrelevant to, the conclusion.

A team may question authority or an expert's opinion by demonstrating that:

- The authority does not have sufficient expertise in the subject.
- The claim being made is not within the area of expertise of a given authority.
- There is an inadequate degree of agreement among other experts in the field.
- The authority in question is significantly biased or prejudiced.
- The area of expertise is not legitimate.
- The authority is not identified or does not exist.



# LESSON 4.11

## CONSENSUS BUILDING

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### Eight stages of consensus building with multi-stakeholder groups

1. **Identify the issue** the group wants to reach consensus on. Be as specific as possible when selecting a topic.
2. **Make sure that you have the right people in the room for the discussion.** Do not leave out people who can block or derail the group decision and make sure that the participants can legitimately speak for the groups they represent.
3. **Design a process** which has a clear, realistic timeline that results in a decision being made about the issue. The process should be presented to the people who will be involved for their approval. Allow the participants to suggest any changes to the process so that no legitimate stakeholders feel their interests are being ignored. The process should include ground rules that all participants agree to uphold. Setting ground rules is a great process to start with because it allows the participants to practice negotiating on something easy before they come to the more emotional issues of the real dispute.
4. Each stakeholder is likely to have different hidden concerns about the issue, and will probably explain exactly what they think the core problem is in a different way. So a **thorough problem definition and analysis** needs to happen next, which allows different stakeholders to say exactly how they see the issue and why it is important from their point of view. As a result, a more complete picture of the problem will emerge as more stakeholders share how they see it, and come to understand how all their concerns and interests are linked to each other. After everyone has explained their views of the issue, the facilitator can ask the participants to talk about the concerns or interests that lie under their initial opinions (or positions) about how the problem should be solved. Once all sides understand these hidden interests, the participants can start talking directly about these deeper concerns, rather than the positions they came with, and they can start looking for new ways to address the concerns and new options for dealing with the conflict which were not obvious before they understood it from each other's point of view.

5. Next there needs to be an **identification and evaluation of alternative solutions**. Before the group decides on any one course of action, it is best to explore a variety of options or alternative solutions. This is extremely important in multiparty disputes, because it is unlikely that any single option will satisfy all parties equally. Parties should be encouraged to develop creative options that satisfy their interests and others'. As more options are explored, parties become able to think in terms of trade-offs and to recognize a range of possible solutions.

There are various ways to find alternative solutions. One of the most common is brainstorming, asking a group to think of as many options as possible, without evaluating any of them at first. Brainstorming can be used in a large group; in small work groups; on different issues and on different aspects of the overall problem.

It is important to look for new, mutually advantageous approaches, rather than going over the same win-lose approaches that the participants had before the consensus building process started. After the parties generate a list of alternatives, these alternatives are carefully examined to determine the costs and benefits of each (from each party's point of view), and the barriers to implementation. As with interest-based negotiation, it helps if the participants have the following attitudes: Be prepared to reveal / respond to emotions; be flexible and willing to negotiate (give and take); recognize the relationship is as important as the task; ask genuine questions; offer and agree compromise; give useful examples and evidence to illustrate suggestions; and finally, be open to new solutions.

6. **Decision making.** Eventually, the choice is narrowed down to one approach, which is adapted to meet the needs of all the legitimate stakeholders in the process, and on which all the stakeholders agree. Consensus building is different from majority rule decision making in that everyone involved must agree with the final decision -- there is no vote.
7. **Approval of the agreement.** The negotiators then take the agreement back to their constituencies and try to get it approved. This is one of the most difficult steps, as the constituencies have not been involved in the ongoing process, and often have not developed the level of understanding or trust necessary to see why this is the best possible agreement they can get. Negotiators need to be able to explain exactly why the agreement was drafted as it was, and why it is to the constituencies' benefit to agree to it. At this stage, it is important that stakeholder constituencies understand the trade-offs that were made. If they do not, it is likely that the agreement will be broken sometime down the road. It is also critical that stakeholders gain the support of those responsible for implementing the agreement, often government agencies.
8. The final phase of consensus building is **implementing the agreement**. Consensus building often results in creative and strong agreements, but implementing those agreements is a separate task. If support for the agreement is not built with the stakeholder constituencies and others who are affected by it, the agreement will fall apart. It is also important to monitor the agreement, and

make sure the stakeholders stick to it. If there are serious obstacles that prevent the group from implementing the agreement, the original decision-making group can come back together to solve the new problems.

## Tips for Consensus Building

### If the issue appears too complex:

- Clarify the issue, or ask someone else to do so
- Break issue into logical parts and proceed
- Suggest a short break, or
- Assign an issue to a working group for analysis and recommendations.

### If parties keep re-stating their positions and disagree on facts:

- Note that the discussion should focus on interests.
- Initiate processes to identify interests, or re-state what you believe the interests to be.
- Explore options to satisfy interests.
- Discuss the evidence or facts supporting the interests.

### Move from positions to interests by asking “Why is this position important to you?” or “What is the underlying interest?”

- Clarify the disagreement
- What facts are in question?
- Call on members or an expert to help clarify.
- Defer discussion and assign tasks to resolve factual disagreement.

### If no solutions are emerging:

- Discuss the components, elements, and criteria for a solution.
- Brainstorm suggestions.
- Generate options or suggest a solution.
- Suggest a short break, or
- Assign the issues to a working group for work and recommendations.

### If consensus is not developing:

- Identify where consensus has been reached on components of the issue.
- Agree to as much as possible — principles / priorities / policies.

- Agree to operate within the scope of what has been agreed upon.
- Assign outstanding issues to a working group for further work and recommendations and

### **Build on small wins**

- Replicate the process
- Celebrate successes

## **Five Rules for Productive and Effective Discussions**

### **1. Keep in mind the purpose of the discussion at all times**

- Everyone should agree and understand the purpose of the discussion at the beginning
- Ensure that you have the right people in the room to make necessary decisions.
- Ensure the points made in the discussion are relevant and to the point.
- Do not allow the discussion to be sidetracked by other agendas, for example personal conflicts and political battles.
- Remind discussion participants of the purpose of the discussion if it is helpful and necessary.

### **2. Enquire and advocate equally**

- Ask questions and explore a variety of points of view.
- Help discussion participants remain curious about the issue being discussed.
- Continually challenge discussion participants to search for new information, insights, and perspectives.

### **3. Build shared meaning**

- If you think discussion participants are not understanding each other during the discussion, intervene to help them understand each other better.
- When there is an important technical word, make sure it is defined clearly.
- Intervene to clarify what is meant if important words are not used clearly.
- Speak in clear and simple language that you know others will understand.
- Active listening is a great tool for discussion sessions. Check that others have understood what you mean and ask them to say what they think you meant.

### **4. Use feelings as a source of information**

- Pay attention to how you are feeling and be ready to say how you feel (I feel hopeful or I feel frustrated). When you feel something strongly, ask yourself why.

- Stay aware of others emotions — are discussion participants visibly or verbally frustrated or upset? If so, it may make sense to halt the discussion and see if those feelings or emotions can be addressed productively.
- Be open, but also, try not to act on participants' feelings without understanding them first. (e.g. if you feel angry, don't shout).

## 5. Identify and explore strong disagreements

- If people disagree strongly, explore why they are disagreeing, because an exploration of the conflict will lead to a fuller understanding of the issue for everyone. Remember, the “right” view is not likely to be one of the disagreeing party's views, but a third view which is based on better understanding.
- When others disagree with you, explore why with real curiosity.
- Help other people explore their disagreements.
- Don't avoid issues that are likely to raise conflict, and don't back down without exploring first.





**MODULE FIVE**  
**ADVOCAY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**





# LESSON 5.1

## CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF A PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

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*Adapted from Advocacy & Communications Solutions, LLC, “Critical Components of a Public Awareness Campaign”*

When you decide to take on a key issue, creating public awareness and action is often critical to your success. But what exactly is a “public awareness campaign,” and how do you create one? This quick guide will help you understand the process of planning and developing a robust public awareness campaign, using our recommended set of components.

Keep in mind that your plan must be tailored toward the specific needs of your organization, community, and budget. Your plan might require additional or fewer components.

First, some key definitions. Many advocacy and communications terms are used loosely and with varied meanings, so it helps if your campaign team is using commonly understood definitions. Here are key definitions to help eliminate confusion during the planning process and beyond:

- **Public Awareness Campaign.** A comprehensive effort that includes multiple components (messaging, grassroots outreach, media relations, government affairs, budget, etc.) to help reach a specific goal. A public awareness campaign is not just billboards, television commercials, social media or fundraising.
- **Messaging.** A series of words and phrases that are most persuasive to key audiences, based on specific research. Messaging is not utilizing words or phrases that sound good or that we think have been persuasive in the past.
- **Public Education.** Utilizing messaging to help proactively engage key audiences in your issue and asking them to respond to a specific call to action to help achieve your goal. Public education is not simply talking to people, placing ads, or having a static Facebook page.

- **Public Relations.** A variety of activities that help an organization and its stakeholders adapt, learn, and understand more about one another. Public relations is not the exclusive use of messaging or paid media to reach a goal.

## Create Your Public Awareness Campaign Toolbox

### Plan Grassroots Organizing/Outreach

Grassroots organizing is the proactive gathering of support at the local level for your issue or goal. The result is a formal or informal network of supporters whom you can ask to act on behalf of your issue or goal (e.g., write letters, make calls and ask others to do the same). When thinking about who you are doing to reach out to identify supporters, you need to proactively ensure that this outreach is also inclusive of marginalized groups who may be more difficult to reach, for example mothers versus fathers or young women in rural communities.

This network is usually unpaid, and motivated by a desire for change. Gathering the support of community leaders, known as “grasstops,” is usually included in this outreach, although their role can differ from grassroots supporters (see below). For example, a campaign about K–12 education might include:

#### Grassroots

- Parents
- Parent organizations
- Teachers

#### Grasstops

- Ministry of Health
- Business leaders
- Funders
- Policymakers

### Leverage Community Leaders or “Grasstops”

Community leaders or “grasstops” individuals can carry your campaign message to a specific set of audiences that other supporters cannot reach. Grasstops should be engaged on a regular and ongoing basis to help leverage other leaders, their own members/supporters, in-kind and cash resources, and caché.

### Develop Allies of Influence

Within your target audience(s), you must proactively engage individuals and groups to ensure they are active on behalf of your campaign. The process of developing allies of influence sits within your grassroots outreach plan but requires a more specific level of detail about why, how, and when to engage each ally of influence and maintain their support over time. Having strong, well-developed allies of influence is critical to grassroots success and your overall campaign effort.

### Engage with Government

Effective government affairs work begins with relationship development with local, state and federal public officials. Start by educating public officials about your issue, and then work to integrate those public officials within some component of the broader campaign, effort or goal.

### **Create a Media Relations Strategy**

Coordinated media strategies with multiple media outlets will help push forward messaging throughout every campaign component. The three most common examples of media strategies are:

- Social (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc)
- Earned (articles placed in news outlets at no cost)
- Paid (ads and information you pay for)

Specific media strategies should always fit the goals, target audiences, and resources available to your campaign. Media should support the other components, not vice versa.

### **Develop a Comprehensive Implementation Plan**

Create a detailed document that describes the goals and tactical activities attached to each component of your public awareness campaign. This document will help you understand and track the status and success of each tactical activity. Even the best campaign plan can lose momentum and organization without a detailed implementation plan.

### **Leverage Complementary Programs**

Not every program at your organization will be linked to your public awareness campaign. Those programs can, however, help buttress the overall effort. For example, a program or research division can help inform talking point development or provide strategic direction for a particular target audience.

### **Tie Into International, National, Statewide, and Regional Efforts**

Study the broader landscape to determine how you can leverage and/or learn from others to help forward or inform your own campaign goals. Organizations, community leaders or consultants that are steeped in such information can help you navigate this issue and strengthen your efforts.

### **Pay Attention to Fundraising & Budgeting**

Developing a specific fundraising budget is critical for your campaign and deserves its own attention and strategy. Without proper short- and long-term fundraising and budgeting strategies, your public awareness campaign will have a difficult time securing supporters and is likely to struggle to reach its goal.

### **Create Collateral Materials**

You must develop materials specifically for the goals and tactics of your campaign. General materials about your organization will not suffice, nor will they reflect the strategy and messaging demands of your campaign. Some examples include:

- Talking Points
- Fact Sheets
- Strategy specific brochures

- Training materials
- Issue briefs

Remember, not every public awareness campaign includes every component. Choose what's right for you and create a campaign that gets results!



## LESSON 5.2

# INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY

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Advocacy is an act which can open new spaces for participation in the political and development process. Although there are many different ways to conceptualize advocacy, Citizen Lebanon will focus on advocacy campaigns directed at changing the policies, positions or programs of any type of institution (a union of municipalities, a municipality, a council of elders, a given ministry, the parliament, etc).

Advocacy is not limited to decisions that are made through open, organized and formal systems of governance. Wherever change needs to occur, advocacy has a role to play. Whether you want more funding for a family planning clinic, new programs to address child malnutrition, laws to make primary schooling accessible or increased attention to a health program within your organization, advocacy can help you accomplish your goals.

### Definitions of Advocacy

- Advocacy is an action directed at changing the policies, positions or programs of any type of institution.
- Advocacy is pleading for, defending or recommending an idea before other people.
- Advocacy is speaking up, drawing a community's attention to an important issue, and directing decision makers toward a solution.
- Advocacy is working with other people and organizations to make a difference.
- Advocacy is putting a problem on the agenda, providing a solution to that problem and building support for acting on both the problem and solution.
- Advocacy can aim to change an organization internally or to alter an entire system.
- Advocacy can involve many specific, short-term activities to reach a long-term vision of change.
- Advocacy consists of different strategies aimed at influencing decision-making at the organizational, local, provincial, national and international levels.
- Advocacy strategies can include lobbying, social marketing, information, education and communication (IEC), community organizing, or many other tactics.
- Advocacy is the process of people participating in decision-making processes which affect their lives.

**Effective advocacy may succeed in influencing policy decision-making and implementation, by:**

- Educating leaders, policy makers, or those who carry out policies;
- Reforming existing policies, laws and budgets, developing new programs;
- Creating more democratic, open and accountable decision-making structures and procedures

### **Definition of an Advocacy Campaign**

A campaign is a connected series of operations designed to bring about a particular result. Also a campaign is a program with elements of education or advocacy that is planned to have maximum effect toward a specific goal within a defined time frame.

There are many possible definitions for a campaign and the activity of campaigning. Some of the more useful definitions are as follows:

- Campaigning is *speaking up, drawing a community's attention* to an important issue, and directing decision-makers towards a solution.
- Campaigning involves *putting a problem on the agenda, providing a solution to that problem and building support for action* to solve the problem.
- Campaigns can involve many specific, short-term activities to reach a long-term vision of change.
- A campaign is a *series of actions directed at changing the policies, positions or programs* of any type of institution.
- Campaigning involves working with other people and organizations to make a difference.
- Campaigning consists of *differing strategies aimed at change* at the local, provincial, national and/or international levels

### **Different types of Campaigns**

- Mobilizing and involving people — for example, anti-corruption campaigns.
- Pressurizing decision makers — for example, marches to municipal councils.
- Informing and educating the public — for example, voter education campaigns
- Changing behavior and attitudes — for example, anti-domestic violence campaigns.
- Persuading people to support something — for example, election campaigns.

A campaign should be big enough to make a difference, but manageable enough to get short-term results. It should build the base for future campaigns and actions.

## Purpose of Advocacy Campaigns

The purpose of advocacy campaigns is to increase the knowledge and understanding of definitions, concepts and strategies in policy-making so that a desired change can occur. Most importantly, advocacy campaigns intend to persuade as they are focused on a specific change of policy, attitude, or behavior. This can be done through:

- Social mobilization– *grassroots movements*
- Garnering public attention– *press coverage*
- Working with special interest groups– *women, environment, artists*
- Working on technical issues– *policy analysts, academics, environmental experts*
- Behind the scenes– *lobbying high level partners*

## The Foundations of Policy Advocacy

*Section taken from “Policy Development and Policy Advocacy” by Shannon O’Connell, National Democratic Institute.*

Policy advocacy is a form of advocacy, but it’s a little different from the most familiar forms of advocacy. Generally speaking, there are three types of advocacy. (Different wording may be used in different countries or settings, but the goals and outcomes are essentially the same.)

**Case Advocacy** → Case advocacy (often called casework) attempts to solve one person’s, one family’s, or one community’s problem at a time. For example, if Abu Maher’s family does not have potable water in their home, we work with the local authorities to address this problem for his family and his home.

**Issue Advocacy** → Issue advocacy is about raising awareness around a broader problem or issue. For example, if a local community does not have access to potable water or if domestic violence is not being taken seriously by the local police, we launch a publicity and activism campaign about these problems to draw attention to them and, ideally, create change as a result.

**Policy Advocacy** → Policy advocacy is solution-based. Instead of solving a problem for one person at a time, or simply raising awareness about a problem, in policy advocacy we analyze the causes of a problem and develop policy-based solutions to address these in a manner that creates sustainable and enduring change. Formal policy mechanisms, such as laws or government regulations, are a key part of policy advocacy as this type of work often seeks to alter the way that official institutions address or spend money on the issue.

Policy advocacy refers to organized initiatives that seek to change official policy or legislation, or the manner in which these regulations are applied. Policy advocacy efforts typically try to establish new policies, improve existing policies or challenge the development of policies that create a difficulty or an injustice for specific groups in society, particularly more vulnerable or disadvantaged groups.



To be engaged in policy advocacy, organizations and individuals need to know not only how to identify problems, but how to isolate causes, analyze evidence, work with research, develop sound, viable policy options and understand how to cost these (i.e., measure what it would cost to implement the policy).

Because it involves altering legislative mechanisms, policy advocacy often seeks to influence policy at the decision-making level, such as public officials, civil servants, elected officials and legislators. But to be truly effective, policy advocacy must also involve citizen participation, so that local communities have the opportunity to actively participate in making the policy change happen.

A society that is undergoing a major social, political or economic transition is like a four-wheeled wagon. In order for stability to be achieved, progress has to be made in four key areas. Otherwise, the wagon — like the society — cannot move forward. These four areas are outlined in the figure below.

## Political Consensus

Efforts must be made to achieve some form of agreement on how the society will be governed and what the standards and qualifications for governance will be. For example, do all parties aspiring to govern have to commit to solely peaceful and democratic means? Do all groups competing in elections have to be registered political parties? Can anyone stand for office, no matter his or her background and possible role in conflict? How will decisions be made and implemented? Who will do this?

## Agreed Law and Order

Law and order emerges when rules of behaviour within a society are agreed, when these rules are largely enforced and respected, and when the bodies responsible for enforcing these rules are respected.

## Economic Development

Economic development refers to investments that support a society's economic growth and bring jobs and income to its population. These can include: the construction of roads, bridges and other infrastructure projects; expanding access to the internet and increasing internet speeds; improving sewerage and access to clean water and sanitation; upgrading structures for delivering reliable electricity and other power sources; building schools and other community facilities, etc.

## Social Progress

Social progress has to do with the capacity of a society to meet the basic human needs of its citizens. This can include health care, housing, education, play and leisure facilities, the expression of cultural traditions, healthy community life, opportunities for young people, equality of opportunities for all citizens, including women and other traditionally-disadvantaged groups, etc.

**Policy is what puts air in the tires of the wagon.** Policy is the fuel that gives the wagon momentum to move forward. Without policy, these four key areas remain vague, without agreement, and without progress, like a busted wagon that can't move.

## Policy Doesn't Belong Just to Politicians

Political parties, political leaders and elected officials play an important role in policy development and implementation. As mechanisms for organizing ideas and building consensus, political organizations should be a key player in initiating both the proposals and the public debates that can lead to sound policy outcomes for a society.

However, in many societies, and particularly those in transition, this isn't always possible. Political parties newer to governing may not yet have acquired the capacity to develop policy proposals, or they might be hesitant to invite broader public consultation on their ideas.

Additionally, many countries undergoing transition enter into a form of power-sharing in the early stages. Power-sharing can be an ideal way to bring violent conflict, political instability or power disputes to an end, but it does not always engender an environment that supports the development of robust policy ideas. Too often, power-sharing is about distributing resources in a way that keeps the parties in a dispute satisfied long enough to make some form of progress — a very relevant notion in modern day Lebanon given the sectarian distribution of political and social power.

In this arrangement, the needs of the biggest or loudest party can take precedent over what is best for the society as a whole. It is difficult for better policy outcomes to become a priority in this atmosphere.

Therefore, it is vital that civil society, community leaders, and individual citizens play an active role in advancing policy proposals through advocacy as, without their engagement, vigorous policy proposals are unlikely to be part of the debate.

In times of transition, the involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs), community leaders and individual citizens in policy development and advocacy is particularly important:

- Civil society organizations often have a high degree of technical and specific issue expertise. This can even exceed that of legislators and other decision-makers and means that their input into policy proposals is vital.
- Civil society organizations and community leaders frequently have more direct interaction with citizens than elected officials. Therefore, they may have a better sense of the needs and problems of local communities, and what might actually work in practice.
- In every society, citizen intervention plays a vital role in ensuring a healthy political, economic and social life, but this is even more important in countries undergoing a major transition. The more citizens are involved in developing transition plans and policies, the more likely they are to work.

## LESSON 5.3

# MAIN ELEMENTS OF AN ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

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*Adapted from Beautiful Rising. <https://beautifulrising.org/tool/smart-objectives>*

While specific advocacy techniques and strategies vary, the following elements form the basic building blocks for effective advocacy. Like building blocks, it is not necessary to use every single element to create an advocacy strategy.

Problems can be extremely complex. In order for an advocacy effort to succeed, the goal must be narrowed down to an advocacy objective based on answers to questions such as:

- Can the issue bring diverse groups together into a powerful coalition?
- Is the objective achievable?
- Will the objective really address the problem?

Elaborating a campaign objective might appear to be a simple task, however, it is quite common in the activist world to find poorly formulated objectives that are impossible to reach. This kind of error can have a major negative impact on the success of a campaign.

The SMART tool is a way to plan short- and medium-term objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound, and that increase the likelihood of a campaign's success. It's a tool that helps people involved in a campaign or action maintain their focus and align their expectations.

**Specific** – An objective must be simple and well-defined, communicating what you wish to happen and avoiding dubious interpretations. This can best be achieved by using strong action verbs, such as: expose, develop, build, plan, execute, perform. Some questions that can make your objective more specific are:

- What exactly are we hoping to achieve?
- Why is this important?
- What are the benefits to reaching this goal?
- How evident is the result?

**Measurable** – When an objective is measurable, we can monitor our actions as we progress. The possibility of measuring allows comparisons. If you can't measure, you won't be able to manage your actions and evaluate your results. Some of the questions that can help with this are:

- How will we know that the change has happened?
- How will we know if the change occurred equitably across different populations?
- What are the indicators of success?
- What benefits are created, what targets are hit, what values are increased or decreased, what places/people/objects/fauna/flora are protected, what territories/rights are guaranteed?
- Can these measurements be obtained?

**Achievable** – In social change efforts, objectives can be bold and challenging, but they should never be impossible to achieve — and if the SMART logic is employed correctly, they won't be. If the objective requires resources that your group simply doesn't have, then everyone will be frustrated. Consider the following questions:

- Has anyone ever done this successfully?
- Is this possible in the deadline we have set?
- Are all the restrictions evident? (e.g. logistic, legal, cultural, unconscious or conscious biases, such as racism or sexism)

**Realistic** – Can often be mistaken for Achievable. The basic difference is that in many cases while the objective can be achieved, it is not particularly realistic for the people involved due to some form of conflict. In certain cases, an internal change in the pattern of collective organization will be necessary to turn the objective into a realistic one. You should consider these factors:

- Is your group willing to fight for this objective?
- Is this objective aligned with your group's mission and vision?
- Are any ethical principles jeopardized by this objective?
- Are there enough resources available?

**Time-bound** – A time limit means setting a deadline to reach the objective. This criteria can slightly overlap with Specific. Time-bound provides the necessary impetus to keep people motivated to make things happen, and the start and end periods must be achievable and realistic. This time period must not be so short that the objective is impossible to reach, nor so long that the group disintegrates over time. Deadlines create the necessary urgency and stimulate action. Try using questions such as:

- Is there a window of opportunity within which we need to act? (e.g. before the next election, board meeting, etc.)
- When will this objective be reached?

## Using Data and Research for Advocacy

Data and research are essential for making informed decisions when choosing a problem to work on, identifying solutions to the problem, and setting realistic goals. In addition, good data itself can be the most persuasive argument. Given the data, can you realistically reach the goal? What data can be used to best support your arguments?

### *Research with a Human Face: Developing Powerful Stories*

How do you make that research speak powerfully to people, especially when the advocacy campaign tackles local issues that are easier for everyone to relate to?

An effective advocacy campaign needs to be backed by facts and figures, but presented with a human face. *Memorable, powerful stories bring the statistics alive and make them meaningful to the audience.* What will happen to people if the advocacy objective is achieved? What has happened already because the wrong policy was in place?

*These stories are not fiction.* They are real examples of how policy choices impact people.

Stories or anecdotes often make it easier to explain complex policy positions to decision makers and the public. They also help people to understand their stake in an issue. Powerful stories can also bring media attention to your objectives.

There are two key ways to develop powerful stories. First, using a grassroots network of individuals who care about your advocacy goal or objective, and second, working in coalition with a wide range of groups. Both of these strategies provide many more opportunities for you to ask for stories that relate to your issue and to specifically solicit timely stories.

## Identifying Advocacy Audiences

Once the issue and goals are selected, advocacy efforts must be directed to the people with decision-making power and, ideally, to the people who influence the decision makers such as staff, advisors, influential elders, the media and the public.

- Targeting the right audience is critical to effective advocacy. Even the most compelling argument will fail if it is not presented to the right audiences. First, identify those with the power to act on your advocacy and campaign objective—the primary targets. Then, identify those who influence the key decision makers and have the power to shape public opinion—the secondary targets.
- The *primary audience* will usually be key policy makers, elected officials and senior government officials with the authority to take specific action on the advocacy objective. The *secondary*

*targets* are individuals and groups that exert influence on the primary target audiences, or over other secondary target audiences. Reaching these “influentials” with your message may be as important in achieving the advocacy objective as reaching the primary decision maker.

- The media, for example, is a secondary target audience that can influence the opinions of both primary and secondary target audiences. Members of a primary or secondary audience can include: government officials, business leaders, companies, the media, opinion leaders, non-profit groups or non-governmental organizations, academics and university communities, political parties, labor organizations, opposition leaders, and members of the public. In some cases, it may include the governments representing other countries or international bodies with some jurisdiction over or expertise on the issue.

## Developing and Delivering Advocacy Messages

Different audiences respond to different messages. For example, a politician may become motivated when she knows how many people in her district care about the problem. A Minister of Health or Education may take action when he is presented with detailed data on the prevalence of the problem. What message will get the selected audience to act on your behalf?

Successful advocacy campaigns often depend on a successful message that resonates with multiple target audiences, including the media. This is a critical element of an effective advocacy plan. What are the most important points supporting the advocacy objective? Develop a message that reflects those points, and is simple and easy to remember. The *three critical elements of any advocacy and campaign message* are:

- First, there should be a *limited number of points* communicated. The best advocacy plans develop one key message, but in any event, a good plan should never exceed two or three points.
- Second, *test the message*. Will your audience understand the point you’re trying to make? Is it too technical? Too broad or too narrow? Too clever?
- Third, *ask for action*. The audience needs to know concisely the policy issue and the solution sought. Tell them what action to take, as concretely as possible.



# LESSON 5.6

## SHADOW REPORTING TIPS

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### 10 Steps to Writing a Shadow Report

*Adapted from, The Advocates for Human Rights, 2014*

- 1. Identify your expertise.**
  - What issues do you work on?
  - What are the outcomes you advocate for?
  - Who can help do the work on this project? What can they do?
    - Bring them on board as soon as you can.
- 2. Identify allies.**
  - What other organizations or experts might be interested in collaborating on the report (Steps 5–8) or “signing on” to your report once you’re done (Step 9)?<sup>1</sup>
  - Try to find allies in relevant networks or research institutions for up-to-date information. The organizations/allies to include in this network should include affected populations, especially ensuring the inclusion of marginalized groups who are often left out of the conversation.
  - A single shadow report supported by a large alliance, or a collection of shadow reports submitted by a broader network, is more powerful than scattered submissions.
- 3. Identify relevant rights.**
  - Is the country scheduled for review by a human rights treaty body or for Universal Periodic Review? If so, which treaty or treaties are relevant?
  - What is the connection between the work you do and the rights in the treaty under review?
  - Which articles of the treaty are most relevant?
    - Optional: Has a treaty body said anything to clarify these rights in General Comments?

#### 4. Review the process to date.

- What has happened so far in the review process about these rights?
  - Read the outcome of the last review.
  - Read government's latest report.
  - Read the Committee's list of issues and the government's response, if any.
  - Optional:
    - Read reports that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have submitted during the review process.
    - Read the documents from the last review by other human rights mechanisms.
  - Optional: Are there national, state, or local laws on the issue? What have courts said?

#### 5. Clarify your role.

- How can you shed more light on these rights and related issues? You might have:
  - on-the-ground information from the work you do
  - first-hand accounts about rights being denied, including voices of:
    - victims whose rights have been violated
    - advocates who work with victims
    - witnesses to rights violations
  - reports your organization has written
  - other specialized knowledge
  - other information you think the treaty monitoring body should know about why your work is important or how rights can be better protected and promoted.

#### 6. Set goals.

- What are your goals for the upcoming review? Think about what you want the committee members or delegates to say on your behalf, about the issues you care about, in these contexts:
  - Experts ask the government's delegation questions.
  - Experts make recommendations to the government under review about how it should better protect and promote human rights, and how it should monitor and assess human rights conditions.

#### 7. Make and implement a work plan

- How can you use your information (Step 5) to help achieve your goals (Step 6)?
  - Gather the information.
  - Keep track of the sources of information.
  - Think about how you can ensure that the information you gather is credible, relevant, and up-to-date.
  - Include steps to use the report as an organizing opportunity in your community after you submit it (Step 10), such as planning a local hearing.
- Optional: Develop a communications plan for raising awareness about your issues and the opportunity offered by the UN review.



- Optional: Document additional information. Consider:
    - interviews
    - observations
    - media monitoring
    - submitting written questions to authorities and gathering responses.
- 8. Write the report.**
- Set up a report-writing team to take the information from Steps 3, 4, and 7 and draft a brief report. Incorporate your questions and recommendations (Step 6), revising them in light of what you learned in Step. Do not use “abusive” language.
- 9. Finalize and submit report.**
- Submit your final report to the Committee by the deadline.
    - If you have to submit hard copies, leave time for the international mail to arrive.
  - Optional: Before you finalize your report:
    - Ask key stakeholders or other people to review and comment on the draft report.
    - Ask any allies (Step 2) to “sign on” to your report.
- 10. Advocate for your issue**
- You can use your report in the context of the upcoming review, and also as a valuable tool for promoting social justice in the longer term.<sup>7</sup> There are many ways to get the word out:
    - Engage in education and outreach within your organization, to the public, and to the media.
    - Develop and implement additional strategies to use your report to promote justice for your community over the longer term.
    - Optional: Implement a communications plan (Step 7).
    - Optional: Engage in additional advocacy:
      - advocacy with the experts doing the review.
      - follow-up outreach when the in-person review happens and final documents from the review are released.
      - lobbying the government (federal, state, local) to implement any relevant recommendations.
      - Monitoring implementation for the next review.

## Case Study: CEDAW Shadow Reports

NDI encourages women’s organizations to treat shadow reporting as a major tool both to hold governments accountable in ensuring women’s political participation and in protecting their human rights. The approach involves developing and submitting reports — often called “shadow” reports -- to expose discrepancies between a country’s obligation under a treaty or agreement and actual legal practices. It encourages coalition building, teaches monitoring and evaluation of government activities, presents a united program of action to promote women’s political priorities, and holds the government accountable for its actions.

### What is a Shadow Report?

The Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) requires each state that has ratified the convention submit a report to the CEDAW Committee detailing the steps the state took to implement the rights CEDAW defines.

A shadow report is a formal review of that state report prepared by a coalition of civil society organizations for review by the CEDAW Committee. Once submitted, the shadow report becomes as much a part of the official record as the report the state submitted. The evidence and assessment presented in the shadow report is given as much consideration as the information presented by the state.

In short, a carefully documented shadow report is a powerful tool. It offers civil society an official platform to review information the state presented, assess its accuracy, and provide the CEDAW Committee with additional information it needs to address specific gaps in state policies and specific barriers to women’s full equality in public and private life.

It spurs the creation of a powerful coalition of interested parties —elected officials, agency staff, lawyers, academics, civil society organizations, and human rights advocates — that can assist in drafting the report and ensuring women’s equality. It also builds the shadow coalition’s relationship with national and international stakeholders.

### How does a Shadow Report help enact CEDAW?

While there are other conventions that address political, civil, social, cultural and economic rights, CEDAW is the only international convention that addresses women’s legal *and* cultural rights and establishes “an agenda for action by countries to guarantee employment of those rights.” Because a convention is governed by international law, CEDAW is legally enforceable. Yet unlike national law which holds individuals accountable, international law holds states accountable and relies on public pressure to enforce state compliance. A well-documented shadow report, presented to the CEDAW Committee

and entered into the official record, can exert the pressure necessary to force the state to change its discriminatory practices.

## How do I Identify Priorities, Gather Evidence, and Document Conduct?

First, read the report the state submitted to the CEDAW Committee. The Committee posts the state report on its website within days after receiving it.

Then, convene a planning meeting with as many women's and like-minded organizations as possible to identify discriminatory issues affecting women across the state. After a thorough review of the state's report and the barriers women face, determine which issues pose the greatest threat to women's equality across the state. Make this priority list the focus of the shadow report.

After identifying priorities, reread CEDAW and study the Concluding Observations posted on the CEDAW website. The committee prepared these observations to guide the reporting process. These observations "recommend" a specific approach to each CEDAW article. They also explain the background of each article, the importance it plays in women's lives, and pose a series of article-specific topics for review. In short, the Concluding Observations tell both the state and shadow report committees what laws and issues the report should discuss and how to link those issues to a specific article.

## How Do I Structure a Shadow Report?

The CEDAW Committee set specific guidelines on length, organization and transmission that must be followed when preparing and submitting a shadow report.

- Shadow reports must not exceed specific page limitations -- sixty pages for a response to a State's Initial Report and forty pages for the response to a Periodic Report. This applies only to the report itself, not to documentation include in an appendix.
- Only one shadow report per country should be submitted, unless the authors can demonstrate a clear pressing need for an additional report (for example, the specific needs of a marginalized group in one well- defined geographic region whose situation is different from those whose needs the primary report addresses or where the groups involved in drafting the report had significant disagreements.)
- Articles should be addressed in the order in which they appear in CEDAW.
- Information presented in the report must be "credible, accurate, and reliable" and clearly documented.
- Although CEDAW is organized in three parts, a shadow report should only address the first two parts, Articles 1-16. Most attention should be paid to the substantive articles listed in Part II, Articles 6-16.

## How Do I Write the Report?

As the drafting process begins, it is easy to get overwhelmed by the wide variety of rights CEDAW addresses and the volume of material the shadow coalition collected for the report. To help keep the research and reporting focused, the International Women’s Rights Action Center–Asia Pacific (IWRAC–AP) recommends that the drafting committee begin each section by asking this basic question: “How has the government integrated the strategies, objectives, and activities recommended in the Beijing Platform for Action under each relevant CEDAW article?”

For example, Part I, defines discrimination (Article 1), describes the state’s obligation to provide the legal and policy infrastructure necessary “to embody the principle of equality of men and women”(Article 2), and requires the state to “take all appropriate measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women” that reinforce gender stereotypes (Article 5).

In accessing state action in this arena, the shadow report should briefly document and discuss:

- Whether or not the state has incorporated Article I into its constitution;
- Whether or not the state has ratified the Optional Protocol to CEDAW ;
- What reservations the state has to CEDAW, what action it has taken to address them, and the timeframe it set for that action; and
- How the state has embraced or not embraced the basic legal tenets of the Beijing Plan for Action.

The majority of the report should concentrate on Part II, Articles 6–16, where women’s equal right to legal, political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights is discussed in detail. As the following sample shows, the General Recommendations provide very thorough guidance on interpreting each article and assessing the state’s compliance with it.

## ARTICLE 7:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

- (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;
- (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
- (c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

## GENERAL OBSERVATION 23 (Excerpts):

The right to vote and to be elected (article 7, para. (a))

18. .... These rights must be enjoyed both de jure and de facto.

19. The examination of the reports of States parties demonstrates that, while almost all have adopted constitutional or other legal provisions that grant to both women and men the equal right to vote in all elections and public referendums, in many nations women continue to experience difficulties in exercising this right.

20. Factors which impede these rights include the following:

- (a) Women frequently have less access than men to information about candidates and about party political platforms and voting procedures, information which Governments and political parties have failed to provide. Other important factors that inhibit women's full and equal exercise of their right to vote include their illiteracy, their lack of knowledge and understanding of political systems or about the impact that political initiatives and policies will have upon their lives. Failure to understand the rights, responsibilities and opportunities for change conferred by franchise also means that women are not always registered to vote;
- (b) Women's double burden of work, as well as financial constraints, will limit women's time or opportunity to follow electoral campaigns and to have the full freedom to exercise their vote;
- (c) In many nations, traditions and social and cultural stereotypes discourage women from exercising their right to vote. Many men influence or control the votes of women by persuasion or direct action, including voting on their behalf. Any such practices should be prevented;
- (d) Other factors that in some countries inhibit women's involvement in the public or political lives of their communities include restrictions on their freedom of movement or right to participate, prevailing negative attitudes towards women's political participation, or a lack of confidence in and support for female candidates by the electorate....

Once priorities are established and the corresponding General Observations are reviewed, the committee should train members of the coalition to retrieve the information it needs to make its case. Researchers should be trained to cast a wide net. National laws, court decisions, newspaper reports, university studies, organizational newsletters, and focus group responses should receive careful study. The CEDAW website also should be examined for any relevant information: especially the state report and the

CEDAW Committee’s response to it (the Concluding Observation of the CEDAW Committee), Summary Records of the CEDAW Committee meeting, reports issues by relevant UN Special Rapporteurs, and the state’s Universal Periodic Review. Remember that the report is only as effective as it is credible — each piece of evidence must be both accurate and carefully documented.

## How Do I Submit the Shadow Report?

The CEDAW Committee gives civil society coalitions two opportunities to make their concerns known during the Committee’s investigation of state performance. As the following chart illustrates, the CEDAW Committee offers several opportunities for the shadow coalition to respond to state arguments. Two of the most critical opportunities occur during the CEDAW pre-session and a revised, completed report submitted during the CEDAW session.

The pre-session is a five-day meeting usually held a year before the full CEDAW Committees’ scheduled hearing on your state. Participation in the pre-session is crucial because it determines the direction, time and issues for dialogue between the CEDAW Committee and your government during the CEDAW Session. As IWRAP-AP notes, it is also “the last chance to get the government to submit written information on certain issues that the government may have overlooked or may be trying to avoid in its report.” Any information the shadow committee can submit will help the CEDAW Committee decide how to question the state.

Once the state revises its report to address the concerns the pre-committee presented, the shadow committee should assess the state’s revised report and submit its updated shadow report for consideration during the CEDAW Committee’s formal session with the state.

This full CEDAW Committee session not only offers the shadow coalition a final opportunity to submit documentation to be included in the formal assessment, but also the opportunity to brief CEDAW committee members individually and as a group. While the CEDAW Committee prefers to be briefed in person, it realizes the difficulties this presents and has authorized IWRAC-AP to act as a stand-in for a coalition that cannot afford to send representatives. IWRAC-AP requires, however, that the shadow coalition representative be available by telephone or email during IWRAC-AP’s presentation to the Committee.

The CEDAW Committee has strict guidelines for submitting the shadow report. These guidelines as well as other important logistical and strategic information are included in the Information Note OHCHR prepared for NGOs who want to participate in CEDAW activities. This note is available on the OHCHR website:

([http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/NGO\\_Participation.final.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/NGO_Participation.final.pdf) ) and will be of enormous help in making the shadow report as accessible and influential as possible.

