

## About

Democratic principles and practices – including accountability, transparency and the rule of law – are essential to achieving the UK’s global commitments and building strategic partnerships around the world. They are inherent in UK values, critical for security, growth, migration, climate and development outcomes, and essential to the strong foundations underpinning the Government’s missions and to withstanding the democratic decline and the hard-won gains of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To ensure that FCDO posts are resourced with information, analysis, and advice on supporting politics and democratic governance in their contexts, FCDO launched the UK Politics and Governance Centre of Expertise (PolGov CoE). Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), FCDO’s arms-length body, is the primary partner delivering CoE services alongside FCDO’s Development and Open Societies Directorate (DOSD).

## What we deliver

Recognising the importance of democratic resilience in the face of global challenges, the CoE supports the FCDO network to understand and build stronger, more enduring relationships with partners. It serves as an authoritative source of expertise and insight, drawing on WFD’s accumulated knowledge and evidence and on input from networks of partners and collaborators. The CoE provides information resources, technical support, and policy-relevant analysis to help FCDO posts understand the local political context and advance UK’s strategic priorities in ways that strengthen freedom and democratic resilience. We can also help FCDO posts and their partners to improve their understanding of political settlements, power, influence, the political economy of nations and sectors and the space for UK

agency. While the CoE can provide funded technical input – for example through rapid research initiatives, evidence reviews, and programmatic advice, it also aims to provide a ‘full spectrum’ service, applying its expertise to help Posts understand, leverage and cohere all the tools and levers at FCDO’s disposal, from strategic communications to sanctions to programming. It endeavours to be a ‘one-stop shop’ for posts, integrating advice with other CoEs, and HQ resources like research analysts and policy teams.

The work of the Centre of Expertise is in three primary areas:

1. Thematic policy guidance and tools that support the “doing development democratically” programme needs of FCDO posts.
2. Technical advice, analysis, and programmatic services tailored to needs of individual posts on elections and democracy support.
3. Bespoke evidence and learning derived from the above that supports learning across the FCDO network.

## How we deliver it

FCDO posts request expert support from the CoE through an online form. The FCDO team in the UK determines the appropriate level of response for each request – whether requests would benefit from existing resources or materials; whether they require internal FCDO support and expertise; or whether the request should be directed to WFD to develop a response. Building upon WFD’s existing in-house expertise, continuous learning programmes, and research partnerships, FCDO’s CoE team, WFD’s CoE team, and Posts work together to produce high-quality tailored products and interventions.