



**WESTMINSTER
FOUNDATION FOR
DEMOCRACY**

Democracy UK: Global Values in an Uncertain World

Day 2 - Synthesis Report

On 13 September 2017, over 100 delegates with expertise in democracy assistance met for the second day of the Democracy UK – Global Values in an Uncertain World conference.

Celebrating Westminster Foundation for Democracy's 25th anniversary and launching the 2017-2022 strategic framework, the interactive session asked participants to reflect on their practical experience implementing democracy support programmes.

The 'democracy marketplace' invited experts to highlight key challenges, ideas and action points organised around six themes:

- accountability and transparency
- youth participation and leadership
- security and stability
- women's political empowerment
- political parties
- elections

Varied discussions took place at the different stalls which were collated and used to debate ideas that could improve the support currently provided to parliaments, political parties, civil society organisations and electoral institutions around the world.

From promoting a 'universal' notion of democracy, to integrating IT professionals into electoral support, the complete list of challenges, actions and ideas are included below and provide a starting point for increased collaboration between key partners.

If you are interested in partnering with Westminster Foundation for Democracy, contact our business development team:

- For opportunities in Africa and Europe and Central Asia:
Julia.Teixeira@wfd.org
- For opportunities in Asia and the Middle East and North Africa:
Miguel.Castaneda@wfd.org

Accountability and Transparency

James Deane, Director of Policy and Learning at BBC Media Action presented ideas on the role accountability and transparency can play in democracy assistance.

The below challenges, ideas and actions arose from the discussion on this theme:

Challenges

Creating funding opportunities for independent media

Creating incentives for democratic media; there are no perceived penalties to shutting down independent journalism

The playing field needs to be levelled in political party media coverage

Ideas

Address marginalisation of LGBT+ community through the media

Lack of a 'citizen curriculum'

How to break down democracy support silos

Legislative alignment with new media practices

Digital platform development and democratisation

'How to' institutionalise marginalised policy concerns

Accountability system = an ecosystem of linkages and incentives

Actions

WFD needs to promote a 'universal' notion of democracy

A level playing field should be created among political parties

Share what works across different types of programmes

Promote 'citizen curriculum'

Support open government and reputational enhancement

Create greater linkages among CSOs, political parties, media

Democracy assistance needs IT experts

Youth Participation and Leadership

Samson Itodo, Executive Director of Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth & Advancement (YIAGA) in Nigeria explained the importance of encouraging youth participation and leadership in democracy assistance.

The below challenges, ideas and actions arose from the discussion on this theme:

Challenges

High gains/returns for winning political office creates undemocratic incentives to get involved

The high cost of electoral campaigns creates inequalities in terms of youth access

Fake news! Are young people more susceptible?

Need for effective leadership

Ideas

Youth have the advantage of greatest access to opportunity

Not all young people are poor

Five principles:

- Inclusive/inclusion
- Innovation
- Evidence
- Networks
- Sustainability

'Youth' is transient

Democracy building = economic empowerment

Role of new governance structures (decentralisation)

Role of social media is very important

Actions

Promote pragmatic leadership models/approaches

Support the reduction of the cost of politics

Support the design of a leadership development framework

Support legal framework

We need to invest in political mentorship / leadership development

Role of mentorship programmes for youth

Security and Stability

Antonella Valmorbida, Secretary General of the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA) and Chair of the European Partnership for Democracy Board reflected on the influence effective democratic processes have on issues of security and stability at the national and local level.

The below challenges, ideas and actions arose from the discussion on this theme:

Challenges

Undemocratic democratic decisions!

Closing international discursive space

Parallel processes being established

Security and democracy are linked but it's difficult to make a causal connection

Limited knowledge among donors and implementers on need and impact

Ideas

We need to re-frame 'democracy' to not isolate other regions

Trust, accountability and participation are needed to create stability

Security and democracy need to be addressed together; integrated programmes are needed

Actions

WFD needs to emphasise the link between democracy building and security

Women's Political Empowerment

Wafa Bani Mustafa MP, Chair of the Coalition of Women MPs from Arab Countries to Combat Violence against Women highlighted the main obstacles she faced campaigning for increased gender equality as a woman MP in Jordan.

The below challenges, ideas and actions arose from the discussion on this theme:

Challenges

How to overcome the challenges facing lesbian and transgender women, which are often submerged

Political parties' internal structures rarely support women's participation

Rules of party membership need to change

Societal pressures, social norms, perceptions of women's roles, violence and money are all significant barriers to women's participation and leadership

Ideas

Grassroots economic empowerment is needed!

Everyone should be included in the equality journey

Women's caucuses are a valuable vehicle for legislative lobbying

Media has a role in normalising women's presence as leaders

Actions

See World Bank study on the economic benefits of gender inclusive societies

Use toolkit on LGBT+ issues for MPs (Phillipa to send to Anthony)

Engage more with male MPs and other male leaders

Political Parties

Kate Osamor MP, spoke on behalf of all UK political parties working with Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

The below challenges, ideas and actions arose from the discussion on this theme:

Challenges

How to integrate opposition more effectively and shift from winner-takes-it-all approach

Fostering cooperation among parties is a challenge

Addressing LGBT+ policy and equality within parties is a challenge

Cost of politics creates unequal access to parties and within parties to senior positions

Media bias

Building methods and tools that work

Changing/shifting/ill-defined ideological boundaries

Limited resources and, sometimes, tolerance / understanding for this type of work

Lack of capacity in many parties

Small parties don't often receive resources and attention they need to become viable

Ideas

Political party networks are a valuable vehicle for ideological transformation and democracy assistance

Cross-party + thematic support is growing

Political parties are vehicles for social transformation; also provide organisation and structure for diverse views to be institutionalised

Assembling to express ideas and organise is a democratic right

Internal party rules are vital mechanisms of support

Times of growth in party membership create opportunities to try new things

Space needs to be created for healthy opposition and opinion

Actions

Save resources and increase effectiveness through cross-regional and issue-based work

Create spaces that create trust

More knowledge sharing among parties on technical and experiential skills like canvassing and voter targeting

Organise LGBT+ political party networking events

More political party networks; make effective use of the ones that currently exist

Take advantage of increases in political party membership when they happen

Elections

Denis Kadima, Executive Director of the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Elections in Africa (EISA) outlined the main difficulties of electoral support and how ideas to solve these problems overlap with democracy assistance more broadly.

The below challenges, ideas and actions arose from the discussion on this theme:

Challenges

Risk of data mining or poor data protection with the introduction of more IT in election processes

IT can create ease in some areas of elections but creates problems in others; technical consultants don't see ethical side as part of their job

Results management = a closed process

Political parties need to plan better for elections

Building trust in new technologies, when and if appropriate

'Ghost local governorships'

Elections are not synonymous with democracy

Ideas

We need to emphasise local democracy

Judges need support in electoral adjudication

Electoral commissions need support to leverage benefits of new technologies

Voter education and registration needs to consider the impact of new technologies; won't get this right the first time

Actions

Democracy assistance needs to integrate IT experts

Support the consolidation of local challenges to the national level during elections

Support greater transparency in results management

Build in better and more (domestic) citizen observation of elections

Use new technology to overcome key electoral challenges

Pilot programming on overcoming exclusion