Democracy, Parties, and Party Systems:
A Conceptual Framework for USAID Assistance Programs

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Executive Summary

The centrality of political parties to democracy justifies USAID's $60 million annual budget in support of political parties and party system development around the world. What distinguishes developed parties or party systems from ones that are weaker or less effective? How can USAID improve the chances that its expenditures will help strengthen parties and party systems in developing democracies? This document provides analysts and program managers with a theoretical guide to these questions about political party development and party assistance.

Party assistance programs face multiple challenges. First, USAID's goal is a stronger democracy, not electoral victories for particular parties; parties, by contrast, are motivated to pursue votes and power, not to build democracy per se.

A second challenge concerns the social and institutional forces driving party and party system development. Context, including the level of democracy, the socio-political situation, and the constitutional and legal framework, shapes the strategies parties follow in pursuit of electoral victory. To minimize the risk of working against powerful forces, successful aid programs must take account of context.

A third challenge stems from the inevitable developmental tradeoffs in which party systems, and the parties that comprise them, are enmeshed. Program priorities are complicated by competing virtues: governability versus inclusiveness, accountability versus representation, and so on.

USAID programs work at three different levels. Some programs work directly with parties to alter the norms governing political behavior and parties' capacities to compete and govern effectively. Other party assistance programs focus on reform of electoral institutions or party laws. Assistance programs, finally, work with nonpartisan actors such as civil society, the media, and voters.

While party assistance programs are intended to advance democratic development, this goal is too broad to suggest program activities. We therefore focus on four characteristics of developed democracies in which parties and party systems play central roles:
- High levels of Accountability, Representation, and Participation
- Governability and Good Governance
- Stable and Peaceful Contestation
- Fair and Honest Elections

As means to these ends, parties need high levels of:
- Organizational and Technical Capacity

While these broad development characteristics are uncontroversial, they do not yield unambiguous programming objectives for USAID missions. We therefore break these broad development characteristics into component parts, consider conflicts among the development goals, and discuss many of the programs designed to address them.

The broad list of programs for advancing organizational and technical capacity includes topics such as strategic planning, fundraising, and campaign

organization. To address accountability, representation, and participation, we focus on multiple themes, including policy-based campaigning, representation of women and minority groups, internal party democracy, and voting participation. USAID and its implementing partners have developed dozens of programs addressing these concerns, including leadership training programs, support for conferences on electoral laws, and promotion of women's representation in the legislatures.

Parties foster governability and good governance by including the opposition in decisions, by operating openly, by aiding in government oversight, and by cooperating with one another in developing and implementing sound public policy. Programming therefore focuses on supporting coalition formation and access to information about government actions. Stable and peaceful patterns of competition imply that parties campaign aggressively but responsibly. They also imply balancing turnover in government with a limited level of electoral volatility. Encouraging parties to sign codes of conduct is a central activity designed to support these types of patterns. Finally, to promote the rule of law and fair and honest elections, programs focus on creating a level playing field, improving transparency, and helping parties to recruit and train poll watchers.

As we noted above, development priorities and the design of effective programs are influenced by the political context. The level of democracy determines the feasibility of party building and the likelihood of program acceptance, but institutional variables matter as well. Whether a system is presidential or parliamentary determines the shape of executive-legislative relations, the level of party discipline, and other aspects of the party system. Organization of a country on a federal rather than a unitary basis affects where and how parties insert themselves into the political process. Party and electoral laws, a frequent theme of reform discussions, directly affect the number of parties, the power of leaders over rank and file, the ease with which new parties form, and coalition dynamics. This category also includes electoral quotas for increasing representation of women and minority groups. Finally, programming cannot ignore the informal rules and practices defining the ways in which parties work within those (often wide) bounds.

In sum, democracies require functioning political parties, but defining a course of action to aid party and party system development confronts many challenges. Our theoretical approach to party assistance programs focuses on the role of parties and party systems with respect to different components of a developed democracy. It also suggests that USAID and its implementing partners weigh competing development objectives and carefully consider the many factors affecting democratic development. In so doing, they will be able to make purposeful decisions about how programs focused on election-minded political parties affect democratic development. A companion document, the "Political Party Assessment Tool," aids the program design process by guiding an analysis of development needs in real cases. An additional companion document, "Evaluation Approaches for Political Party Assistance: Methodologies and Tools," offers an approach for evaluating the effects of actual programs.

1. Introduction

The idea that political parties are central to democracy justifies USAID's $60 million annual budget supporting political parties and party systems in about 50 countries. What distinguishes developed parties or party systems from ones that are weaker or less effective? How can USAID improve the chances that its expenditures will help build and strengthen parties and party systems in developing democracies? This document seeks to provide analysts and program managers with a theoretical guide to these questions about political party development and party assistance. We consider the multiple dimensions of party development, explain the conflicting tensions among and within dimensions, and discuss the ways in which institutional and socio-political contexts affect development. Taking the tensions and contextual factors into account, we also consider how USAID programs and activities can pursue different aspects of development. Overall, this document justifies the need for assistance to parties and encourages USAID and other donors to consider more carefully the full range of characteristics of developed parties, the interactions among the goals of party assistance, and the multitude of factors influencing the shape of party development. We seek, then, to offer both guidance and caution about assistance programs.

In an effort to build a conceptual framework, this paper considers a series of issues on which to evaluate parties and party systems. Central to our framework is the idea that parties are multi-faceted and that their roles vary across different social and institutional frameworks. At times the attributes of a strong party or effective party system conflict with one another, and parties that are too strong can negatively affect the system. In short, improvements for parties and party systems are context-contingent: working to build "better" parties may mean different things in different settings.   The goal for a development agency, then, is to identify areas where countries need improvements and to ascertain the "right" balance of competing democratic dimensions, taking into account the need for reform, the opportunities that exist, and the factors limiting the potential for USAID or other donors to achieve desired outcomes.

USAID's party assistance program intends to build democracy, not win elections for particular parties. By contrast, parties are motivated to pursue votes and power, not to build democracy per se. As a result, programs will garner more acceptance and thus have a higher chance of success if they further the parties' intrinsic interests. Popular programs that support parties' interests, however, have the potential of losing sight of the larger development goals. Our discussion, therefore, emphasizes the links between party-building programs and development goals, but also discusses the conflict between party and development interests.

A second concern is with the forces (beyond aid programming) that drive party and party system development. Institutional and other contextual variables (such as electoral systems) shape the strategies parties follow in pursuit of electoral victories. Successful aid programs, therefore, must take account of context or they risk working against powerful forces.

These two concerns partially explain the gap between theoretical development goals and realistic expectations for development programs. We believe that USAID and other development agencies should focus on the former, while not losing sight of the latter. By starting from the desirable characteristics of development and the factors shaping parties' interests, agencies can prevent the parties' competitive goals from subsuming the basis of development assistance.

In developing this document, we reviewed the academic literature, USAID publications, and documents from party assistance agencies from other parts of the world.[1] We also had extensive discussions with officials from USAID and from the two organizations that implement most USAID party assistance programs, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI).[2] Finally, we visited countries in four different parts of the world to learn first-hand about the USAID party assistance programs.

Readers may wonder why we have created yet another concept paper. Primarily we were motivated by the need to incorporate theoretical insights into a more nuanced description of party and party system development, and link that a discussion of USAID programming. Our discussion therefore draws on academic and policy research to focus on the complexities of party and party system development and the trade-offs among development goals. It also details many of the programs that USAID and its implementing partners have used to address different development concerns. We go beyond the description, however, to emphasize that program design must account for parties' goals (winning elections), the contextual environment, and development tradeoffs.

This conceptual framework has one other specific purpose: to feed into the "tools" we have designed for country assessments and program evaluations. First, the, "Political Party Assessment Tool" uses the conceptual framework to guide research teams in the gathering of evidence about parties, the party system, and the political system more generally in order to help set priorities and assist in program design. The second document, "Evaluation Approaches for Political Party Assistance: Methodologies and Tools" draws from the framework to help researchers in searching for evidence to evaluate the effects of existing party development programs in a given country.

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[1] Particularly relevant were two USAID documents, *USAID Political Party Development Assistance* and *Conducting a DG Assessment: A Framework for Strategy.* (DG refers to Democracy and Governance.)

[2] Since 1995 IRI and NDI, along with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), have worked together under a cooperative agreement entitled Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS). As such, they are the principal partners with USAID's office of Democracy and Governance for implementing party assistance programs.

The document is structured as follows. After justifying investment in party and party-system development in Section 2, the third section provides definitions of key concepts – parties, party systems, and areas of donor support. The fourth section, the heart of the document, examines the characteristics of developed parties and party systems. That section also considers how programming can help parties move towards these ideals. The fifth section investigates contextual factors affecting how parties and party systems operate. We focus on socio-political factors, such as regionalism and ethnic heterogeneity, as well as political institutions, including party rules, electoral laws, and constitutional provisions. We explain that the incentives inherent in these contextual variables create incentives for political actions but do not determine them. Institutions frame decisions but leave parties much latitude in planning their strategies. The sixth section concludes by summarizing the main themes.

2. Why Invest in Political Parties?

Analysts have long agreed that democracy is "unthinkable" without parties, because they "indispensable" for establishing democratic norms and rules (Lipset 2000; Schattschneider 1942). At their best, parties organize and mobilize society, they channel information between citizens and government, they recruit new leaders, and they broker policy compromises. Parties can be simple instruments of ambitious leaders, but in institutionalized systems they are independent political organizations linking citizens with their government (Mainwaring 1998). As such, they are critical for structuring the accountability of government (Maravall 1999; Strom 2000).

Parties, however, do not have a monopoly on meeting these societal needs.[3] Independent or populist leaders can hold the reins of power, and they do not need well-structured parties to mobilize the public. Social and business organizations, lobbies, unions, and other interest groups can recruit new leaders, and these groups -- plus the media and the internet -- channel information. They also develop programs and organize society. Legislatures have issue-based caucuses, and competing groups participate in both domestic and international conferences to broker deals. Arguably, women, minorities, labor groups, and other interests are more successful in affecting change in some of these forums than they are when working through political parties. Finally, "party substitutes" such as regional and

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[3] This contrasts with the report on political party assistance by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)Catón, M. (2007). Effective Party Assistance: Stronger Parties for Better Democracy. Stockholm, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Catón, M. (2007). *Effective Party Assistance: Stronger Parties for Better Democracy*. Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance., in which the author does argue that *only* parties can play certain crucial roles.

local electoral machines, political bosses and politicized business, can mobilize and organize segments of society (Hale 2005). Why, then, are parties crucial to democracy?

One answer lies in the ways parties provide democratic routinization, institutionalization and a method of aggregating interests that fosters representation and stability (Mainwaring 1998; Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Powell 1982; Sorauf and Beck 1988). Aldrich adds:

> "To be truly democratic it is necessary for any nation's leadership to be harnessed to public desires and aspirations, at least in some very general sense….The political party as a collective enterprise, organizing competition for the full range of offices, provides the only means for holding elected officials responsible for what they do collectively" (1995: 3).

Interest groups or social movements may be able to mobilize and demand specific governmental changes, but, as NDI's *Guide to Political Parties Development* notes, parties play a "unique role in aggregating a broad range of public priorities and balancing competing interest…and are the main avenues for public political participation (p.3)." Unlike groups organized to agitate for *particular* interests, parties encourage leaders and followers to engage *multiple* issues. Parties can foster a broader dialogue across society and encourage groups to consider societal interests beyond their own particularistic demands.

Second, parties provide a coherent way of linking citizens, the legislature, and the executive. Leaders rising through alternative careers, unlike leaders rising through party ranks, often come to power without legislative support. Further, individuals rising to power outside established political parties lack the ties to society that parties provide. Voters following an independent politician may well identify with that politician, but without a large organization (i.e., a party) such politicians cannot build meaningful system to channel information to and from voters.

Finally, parties reduce electoral volatility and limit the rise of political outsiders. Because parties are concerned with maintaining voter support, they help to improve accountability and reduce social instability. Modest electoral volatility suggests that voters are responding to party platforms or the actions of governing parties. Excessive volatility, however, implies regime or societal instability. Where voters lack ties to political parties, the chances for populist candidates increase. Politicians lacking ties to longstanding parties (outsiders, independents, or populists) can mobilize voters, but voters have a hard time holding such politicians accountable. Voters can deny populist leaders election victories, and sometimes voters can remove unpopular leaders through protests, but parties facilitate accountability without constitutional crises. In a parliamentary system, for example, the parliament can simply remove an unpopular leader through a vote of no-confidence. Voters may still disapprove of the party's replacement choice, but the party will face the voters at the ensuing election. Since parties seek long-term

survival, they will be forced to respond to voter demands. Hence, where there are no parties, accountability suffers.

Leaders portraying themselves as political outsiders are especially prone to challenge the existing political order. Latin America is rife with examples: Fujimori in Peru closed Congress and ruled by decree; Hugo Chavez in Venezuela has heightened societal tensions and challenged democratic constraints; and Evo Morales in Bolivia continues to be a lightning rod for attacks by traditional power-holding groups. These leaders usually gain power because of pent-up frustration with existing leadership (or political parties), but that frustration too often leads to attacks on the democratic system.

There is, however, a yawning gap between the idealized view of parties as contributors to a vibrant democracy and the reality of how parties actually work in emerging democracies. In new (and often old) democracies, parties are beset by a number of pathologies. Parties may be held in low regard by citizens and are often seen as the least respected and trusted part of the political system (Carothers 2006: 4). Citizens may view parties as corrupt, self-interested organizations with little interest in representing the wishes and demands of the electorate. They seem to stand for nothing except the advancement of the careers of their leaders. And parties routinely engage in behaviors contrary to an open, competitive political system – preferring top-down organizational structures to more open, transparent ones, relying on divisive, negative campaign tactics rather than engaging in dialogues about society's problems, and imposing mechanisms limiting scrutiny of their actions by the public.

The central importance of parties to a functioning democracy is a compelling justification for investing in party aid, but building parties remains a difficult task. In contrast to health or economic development projects where goals are clear and where those treated get direct benefits from aid programs, party-building programs have murky goals and the subjects of the treatment have different goals than do the aid providers--winning office rather than building democracy.

3. Party Systems & Parties: Definitions and Implications for Development Assistance

Party systems, and the parties that comprise them, come in many forms. None of these forms is ideal—but at the same time, each form has some merits. In this section we describe the many forms that parties and party systems take in order to raise two issues pertinent to development programming. Regarding systems, we emphasize that:

Development implies tradeoffs among competing virtues, thus complicating decisions about program priorities.

For parties, programming must consider the idea that:

Party goals (winning elections) do not equal development goals (improving democracy).

3.1 Party Systems

The number of parties and their relative characteristics (such as size and ideology), plus the patterns of interactions among them, defines a *party system*. Party systems around the world differ greatly on these characteristics, and these differences clearly impact the form and quality of democracy. There is no ideal party system, however, so development programmers need to consider the positive and negative aspects of different system types.

The existing typologies suggest a wide range of dimensions along which party systems vary.[4] We focus on five: the number of parties; the extent to which ideological differences are salient to party competition (and the spread between parties in ideologically oriented party systems); the extent to which social identities such as ethnicity, class, and religion are relevant; the degree to which parties are institutionalized; and the nature of coalition dynamics. As we explain, each has contradicting implications for programming.

Number of Parties: One of the key differences between party systems relates to the number of parties competing. In *single-party systems*, like those of China or Vietnam, there is only one legal party. In *dominant-party systems*, like South Africa or Tanzania, there is one major party and several minor parties. In *two-party systems*, like the U.S or Ghana, two main parties routinely compete for and win elected office. Finally, in *multiparty systems*, like France or Brazil, many parties compete for and attain representation in the national legislatures.

The number of parties highlights the trade-off between inclusive representation and governability (Figure 2). As the number of parties increases, more voters have representatives close to their interests, but difficulties in decision making also increase. At the two extremes are one-party authoritarian states and anarchy. Democracies, ranging from systems with just two parties to those with dozens, lie in-between. The key implication of the figure is that there is no "right" number of parties for a particular (democratic) country, because it is not clear how to weigh the competing values of inclusiveness and efficiency. Constitutional designers and development programmers, then, need to recognize the inevitability of trade-offs.

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[4] One of the best-known comes from Sartori (1976), who defines party systems in terms of the number of parties and the degree of ideological difference between them. By contrast, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) define party systems in terms of the social cleavages that become politicized, differentiating between systems in which parties form around class cleavages and those in which parties form around social cleavages like religion. More recently Carothers (2006) offers a typology emphasizing the degree to which parties are free to compete openly in the political system.

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Anarchy │
         │
         │
         │
         │                              Representative
         │                              Democracy
         │
         │
Inclusiveness
         │
         │
         │
         │                                        Totalitarianism
         │
         └─────────────────────────────────────────────────
                                                 Governability
                                                 (decisiveness)
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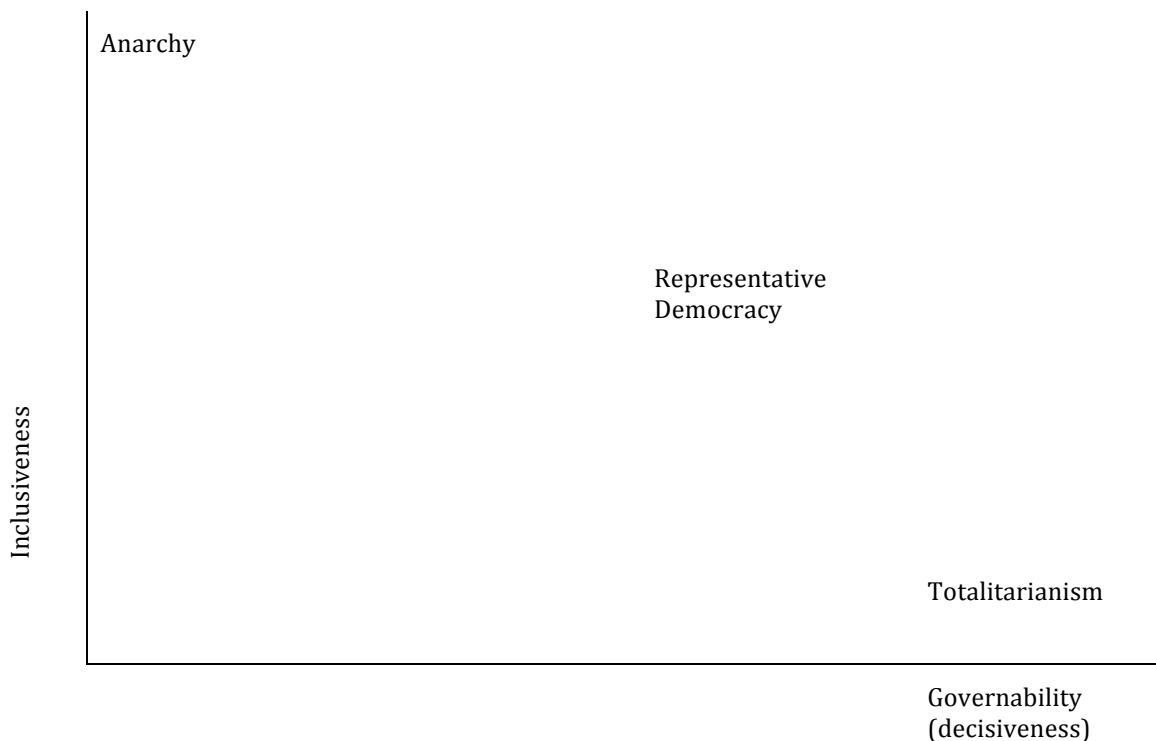
Figure 1 Model of Democracy

Aside from the basic trade-offs, the number of parties affects other aspects of democratic functioning. Theoretically, two-party systems produce more centrist politics, as both parties are motivated to compete for moderate voters. By their nature, parties in a two-party system also incorporate a wider variety of voters into each party. Once again, this is positive if the objective is to enhance efficient governance, but problematic if the aim is to provide voters a wide array of choices. [5]

Systems with a larger number of parties are likely to breed and legitimize fringe parties and lead to more turnover among competitors. Extremists have a greater chance of rising to power by taking advantage of shifts in voter support. Multiparty systems may create hazards for the legislative process, since all decisions require inter-party bargaining and coalition formation.

Salience of Ideology: Party systems also differ in the salience of ideological divisions. In mature democracies, parties differentiate themselves by staking out competing positions on the liberal-conservative continuum.   While the meaning of "liberal" and "conservative" may vary from country to country, and these dimensions may shift

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[5] There are also potential costs to governance in multiparty contexts, based on the transaction costs of forming and maintaining coalitions. (See Persson and Tabbelini, 2003).

over time, in these settings ideological differences between the parties are fundamental to political competition. By contrast, in many emerging democracies ideology plays a less central role. Parties and campaigns frequently focus on "valence" issues – goals uniformly valued by all members of society—without detailing the policy options open for addressing them. For example, candidates may proclaim their abilities to reduce corruption, fight crime, and improve the economy while avoiding discussion of harsher punishments, more prevention programs dealing with crime, or levels of taxation. As a result, voters have limited information on policy approaches and thus choose candidates who make unsubstantiated promises.[6] Rather than parties competing on differing policy positions or ideological orientations, competition can turn more personal, since the politicians compete by assuring voters of their intention and competency to address these concerns.

Salience of Ethnicity and Religion: In many emerging democracies, ethnic and religious cleavages are central to electoral politics. In much of Africa, for example, ethnic favoritism by successive post-independence leaders has led voters to expect that elected leaders will favor some ethnic communities over others. Voters are then inclined to elect representatives who can be trusted to look after their own group's interests. In such settings, voters often look to the ethnic identities of candidates and the broader ethnic profiles of their parties for clues about how prospective leaders will behave in office – which groups they will favor and which they will neglect (Posner 2005). Accordingly, parties compete by establishing the "right" ethnic profiles, incorporating elites from target communities into their ranks in order to project the desired image (Chandra 2004, Ferree 2009). In these settings, parties' ethnic credentials – not ideological positions or policy platforms – are central to party politics.

Class: Especially in Europe, parties have long used class differences to mobilize constituents. Class is particularly relevant for developing countries, where high rates of inequality and poverty generate conflict. Further, class and ethnicity are often highly correlated. In Latin America, for example, indigenous communities are usually at the bottom of the social structure. When social cleavages based on class and ethnicity are mutually reinforcing, political conflict is likely to be more severe.

Degree of institutionalization: In some countries the same set of parties routinely competes for votes over many election rounds; in others, new parties appear and dissolve rapidly, demonstrating little stability over time. Party-system institutionalization means stable patterns of competition and that parties as a group develop roots in society, represent consistent ideological positions, and gain legitimacy (Mainwaring and Scully 1995).

How important is institutionalization? Does party-system institutionalization contribute to or is it simply an indicator of the stability of a

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[6] Of course valence issues engender debates about distributive politics when there are decisions about where the roads will be built and who will build them.

polity? The debate over this topic has clear ramifications for party and democracy-building programs. Will building parties contribute to democracy, or should programs focus on other aspects of democracy with the expectation that party building will follow? As Levitisky (2001) and Randall and Svasand (2002) argue, the institutionalization literature has some inherent contradictions. Parties can develop along some dimensions of institutionalization and not others, party and system institutionalization have different meanings, some parties can institutionalize while the system as a whole faces instability, and institutionalized systems do not always ward off instability. Finally, when institutionalization goes too far, entrenched and stagnant parties can result (Coppedge 1994) .

Coalition Dynamics: Party systems are also defined by whether and how parties work with one another. The coalitions that result are a function of the number of parties, party characteristics, electoral laws and other legal provisions, and the dynamics of the political system. Coalitions can have positive benefits in terms of the representativeness of a government, a government's ability to adopt new legislation, and the long-term stability of regimes. But coalitions are not unambiguously beneficial: in some cases they can block turnover in elections, help parties evade responsibility, or impede the adoption of useful reforms. Differentiating among types of coalitions is therefore critical to the avoidance of blanket prescriptions. We distinguish between three coalition types: electoral coalitions, executive or cabinet coalitions, and policy coalitions.

   Electoral coalitions are agreements under which two or more parties support common candidates (or common *lists* of candidates), presenting a united front to voters. These coalitions exist in all types of democracies and take many forms. Some electoral coalitions endure over multiple electoral cycles (Concertación in Chile; the Social Democrat and Green alliance in Germany), while others last for just one election (the National Rainbow Coalition in Kenya's 2002 election). Electoral coalitions imply aggregation of interests, reduction in the number of separate competitors in elections (and presumably legislative maneuvering), and compromises among parties. As we note while discussing accountability below, collecting small parties into a package can advance democracy by forcing supporters of niche policies to join together for larger societal goals. Parties coordinating their election campaigns develop a longer-term view and are thus more likely to stay in a governing coalition (Carroll 2007).

   In some cases electoral coalitions become permanent – one or more of the participating parties dissolves in favor of another or a new larger party, thus reducing the number of parties for future elections. Emerging democracies are often characterized by large numbers of new parties and shifting electoral coalitions. As leaders of small parties recognize that they cannot go it alone, there is sometimes a gradual reduction in the number of parties.

   The democratic gains from coalition formation reach a limit when the coalitions become so large as to inhibit competition. Critics of Colombia's National Front (1958-1974), for example, argue that the agreement between the two major

parties led to rise of the guerrilla insurgency, since the coalition effectively excluded leftist groups, especially labor, from the electoral process.

Executive/cabinet coalitions are agreements among parties to collaborate on major policy directions and support a particular executive in exchange for some autonomy over particular policy areas.[7] Executive or cabinet coalitions are commonly associated with parliamentary systems, where legislative majorities are necessary to install and maintain the executive, but cabinet coalitions are also common in presidential systems, since executives in these systems also recognize the need for legislative support. Executives forming coalitions expect more success advancing their legislative agendas, but it is not clear whether executive coalitions sustain democracy. Some scholars (e.g. Amorim Neto 2002, 2006; Cheibub, Przeworski, and Saiegh 2004; Lijphart 1999; Negretto 2006; Przeworski et al. 2000) argue that multi-party executive coalitions promote democratic stability. Others (Cheibub et al. 2004) find no such relation. Negretto argues that three factors affect the performance of minority presidents: the policy position of the president's party (centrist or extreme), the president's legal capacity to sustain a veto, and the legislative status of the parties included in the cabinet. Strom's (1990) study of European democracies, for example, shows that minority governments can be as successful as coalition governments, probably because they encourage compromise, as opposed to systems where executives have clear majorities and dominate excluded parties.

Policy coalitions are agreements among parties to work on passing (or blocking) particular pieces of legislation. Such coalitions are the least formal coalition type, but they are important in supporting representation and democratic governance. Parties considering coalition membership must weigh policy gains versus potential electoral costs. By joining a policy coalition, parties achieve at least a part of their policy goals, but they must share credit with other partners. If the executive's party is part of that agreement, then the executive gets most of the credit. Other parties, then, have an incentive to withhold support in spite of the benefits of compromise. Thus it is easier for parties to form negative coalitions, agreeing to oppose changes supported by the executive, than to find common ground.

In sum, party systems are multidimensional, incorporating the number of parties, the salience of ideology, institutionalization, and different aspects of coalition dynamics. These many forms have competing or contradictory virtues, and will thus challenge program designers in their efforts to define development priorities.

3.2 Parties

We borrow from Downs (1957) to define parties as *groups of individuals aligned to advance specific goals, above all to gain and maintain elected office*. Defining parties as institutions created by office-seeking elites has important

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[7] See discussion of presidentialism versus parliamentarism in Section 5.

implications. First, it leads to the recognition that the positive roles played by parties in democratic settings (representation, accountability, oversight, and so forth) are generally by-products of electoral competition, not the primary goals of those seeking to gain elected offices. Indeed, partisan actors often have goals conflicting with the healthy functioning of the democratic process. Parties in all democracies seek to manipulate electoral outcomes, mount divisive campaign appeals, and obstruct opponents' activities. The challenge of party building, therefore, is to encourage parties to serve as institutions that support the functioning of a vibrant democracy despite the fact that the parties' goals and objectives may at times run counter to such ends.

This view of parties implies that office-seeking politicians invest in building and strengthening parties only when they believe that such institutions will help them achieve their electoral goals. This is a critical point of departure for external donors and local-level actors seeking to strengthen party systems. Program managers cannot assume that parties will embrace reforms. Efforts to increase transparency in party fundraising, for example, threaten current leaders who raise funds through backroom deals and illicit transactions. Efforts to encourage the adoption of transparent rules for candidate selection threaten current party leaders benefitting from centralized control over nominations. And of course corrupt officials resist programs aimed at cleaning up the political process. As a result, donors must adopt a holistic approach to party building, working directly with parties when opportunities for reform exist but also working with non-partisan actors (civil society, the media, and voters) when the will for reform among parties is weak or absent.

The definitional focus on politicians' electoral motivations does not preclude the possibility that they have other goals, including desires to influence policy outcomes, advocate on behalf of particular groups, or gain access to the benefits of public office for personal benefit. In a multiparty democracy, however, pursuing such goals requires, first and foremost, electoral victory. Parties are organizational structures created by office-seeking individuals to help them pursue their goals, particularly the goal of winning elections. As such, the success of development programs aimed at building democracy requires that they appeal to politicians as vote seekers.

Especially when the established parties are viewed negatively by the electorate or when existing parties prevent aspiring candidates from advancing through their ranks, office-seeking individuals may choose to pursue office as independents. Working as part of a team, i.e., as parties, has many advantages for office seekers. Joining a party can bring a reserve of votes, as when lower-level candidates benefit from the coattail effects of allying with higher-level leaders. Economies of scale encourage individuals to work together. It may be more efficient to raise funds, conduct campaigns, and mobilize voters as groups rather than as individuals. Democracy benefits from this route, since once established, parties become part of the institutional landscape of a democracy.

Development programs must confront one final definitional issue: parties operate along three axes. As organizations, parties recruit candidates, compete in elections, and mobilize society to win political office and implement policy programs. Next, parties manage government: developing policy proposals, writing legislation, and overseeing government operations. Finally, parties are part of citizen identities. The term "parties in the electorate" refers to the strength of, reasons for, and implications of citizens' partisan identification.

While we occasionally refer to the second two of these axes, party development programs generally focus on the organizational dimension, leaving the others to civil society and legislative strengthening programs. But as the example of the interrelation between independent candidacies and party identification shows, development is a function of each axis, and thus programming should take each into account.

Programming needs will be defined by the parties' organizational forms. Among the defining characteristics are the following:

- Institutionalization
- Populism
- Clientelism
- Programmatic orientation
- Ties to particular social classes or ethnic groups
- Nationalization
- Level of internal democracy
- Willingness to form coalitions with other parties
- Age

As distinguished from its system-level cousin, party **institutionalization** captures the degree to which individual parties develop roots in society and build solid, perhaps bureaucratized, organizational frameworks (Gunther and Diamond 2003; Mainwaring and Scully 1995). This type of party therefore develops structures that can withstand leadership changes. They are able to secure relatively consistent electoral support based on representation of supporters' interests.

Theoretical characteristics of institutionalized parties justify building party structures. Institutionalized parties facilitate voters' attempts to evaluate candidates and policy performances. When parties fail to mediate between candidates and voters, candidates are more likely to rely on their individual personalities and patrimonial links with voters. More institutionalized parties promote greater political stability, because they develop mechanisms for citizens and civil society organizations to discuss and resolve conflicts through legitimate channels rather than taking disputes to the streets. Institutionalized parties accept the rules of the political game, thus reducing potential concerns about dramatic changes. Finally, institutionalization supports governability. Executives winning office with the support of institutionalized parties will have more reliable legislative support.

While these benefits justify pursuing party institutionalization, high levels of institutionalization are no guarantee against democratic breakdown or failures to achieve particular democratic goals. Moreover, some countries (including Venezuela prior to Chavez, Mexico prior to its democratization, and China) have highly structured parties but fail to provide quality representation to their citizens.

What do we mean when we call parties "**populist**"?   Typically such parties are anti-status quo and nationalist. Their leadership, whether drawn from the middle sectors or the elite, is usually personalistic and/or charismatic in nature. Mobilization is top-down rather than bottom-up. The social bases of populist parties vary: In the US, 19th Century populist parties had an agrarian character, while in Latin America populist parties were based on the urban working class. Populist parties share a Manichean worldview, an "us versus them," "good versus evil" stance. Critics charge that populists are irresponsible economic stewards who generate boom and bust economic cycles because they favor short-run distribution and budgetary deficits. The classic populist leader is Juan Peron in 1950s Argentina. But others from the same region have also been labeled populist-- including Álvaro Uribe in Colombia, Alberto Fujimori in Peru, Carlos Menem in Argentina, and Evo Morales in Bolivia-- and have supported more successful economic policies. Populist parties typically lack clear organizational structures, and rules for choosing candidates tend to be informal. As a result, these parties are usually not long-lived, thus challenging stability and accountability.

Beyond institutionalization and populism are several themes defining particular types of representation. **Clientelism**, first, is defined by an unequal relationship of power between leaders (patrons) and followers (clients). In exchange for votes, parties or politicians practicing clientelism provide particularistic benefits, such as T-shirts or food to broad constituencies or payoffs to local leaders. As a result, clientelistic parties downplay public goods (health care, education, and environmental protection).   Such parties, then, stand in contrast to parties focusing either on particular policies (such as the Green parties) or those running on their expertise at managing security, the economy, or other broad societal goals. As Kitschelt (2009) and others (Hawkins and Morgenstern 2009; Rosas 2005) show, in many developing countries few parties develop clear "programmatic structuration." When they do not, the quality of accountability suffers. This, then, justifies USAID's emphasis on encouraging parties to organize and campaign around policies rather than personalities.

Inclusiveness defines the breadth of a party's support. On the one hand, mass-based and catch-all parties draw support from and are organized solely around elites. In today's democratic societies, suffrage is generally universal, so parties competing cannot ignore broad constituencies. Especially in poorer countries, appeals to the wealthy result in very few votes. Parties, therefore, have electoral incentives to develop platforms that attract voters across class divisions. They also have an incentive to **nationalize,** to build support encompassing multiple

regions.[8] When parties build national support coalitions, they have incentives to pursue policies that cut across regional interests (American Political Science Association 1950; Caramani 2004; Jones and Mainwaring 2003)). On the other hand, some parties do focus on lower or working classes or perhaps ethnic groups or regionally concentrated constituencies. As we explain in a later section, these groups maintain close ties to the people they are representing, but accountability suffers if leaders are chosen for their personal (or what we later term "ascriptive") characteristics rather than their policy proposals.

Internal democracy is a dimension distinguishing parties that concentrate power in the leadership from those that share power among activists. USAID programs put a high value on internal democracy for its intrinsic values. It can, however, work against party unity. It also can slow decision-making processes and perhaps lead to popular but unwise choices. Allowing party members to help choose candidates, for example, might lead good orators to be chosen as candidates over those with technocratic expertise.

The dimension "**willingness to form coalitions with other parties**" is an indicator of parties' orientation towards democracy. USAID policy (described below) prohibits working with parties that have not renounced violence and openly proclaimed their support for basic democratic principles. But within this group there remains a wide range in terms of the willingness of parties to compromise and participate in the policy process. When such inflexible parties are in the minority, they become pariahs, simply working to block legislation. In the majority, they can impose policies that generate strong societal backlashes.

The final dimension on which parties differ is **age**. Young parties must form an organizational structure, and they must resolve a wide range of questions, from how they recruit supporters and financiers to the relationship between leaders and followers within the party. Older parties face challenges of entrenched elites working against changes to traditional power structures and how to reach new voters or accommodate new issues into their platforms.

Gunther and Diamond (2003) combine many of these concerns into a typology placing parties along two broad continuums: the formal organization of the party and their temporal emergence. On the first dimension, they distinguish between parties that are organizationally "thick" and "thin." Some parties have few—if any—formally organized bases of support and rely instead on particularistic networks. Traditional "populist" parties fit at the "thin" end of this scale. Other parties develop mass support by relying on either pre-existing or newly created mass-based institutions.[9] Combining this organizational structure with the party's age, and taking into account the parties' programmatic commitments and the

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[8] Nationalization can also refer to the importance of national-level policies or issues in determining voters' choices.

[9] Their typology also includes the degree of a party's "programmatic commitments" and whether the party is "tolerant and pluralistic or proto-hegemonic."

strategic-behavioral positions, results in a typology with five major types of political parties (each with several subtypes):

> *1) elite-based*: traditional, local, notable, or clientelistic
> *2) mass-based*: Leninist or class-mass (socialism), plural-nationalist or ultranationalist (nationalism), and denominational or fundamentalist (religious)
> *3) ethnicity-based*: ethnic or congress[10]
> *4) electoralist parties:* personalistic, catch-all, or programmatic
> *5) movement parties:* left-libertarian or post-industrial/extreme-right

Each party type suggests a particular set of challenges for development programs. The purpose of the categorization is to help analysts isolate and perhaps prioritize different concerns.

3.3 USAID Policy and Areas of Donor Support

Party and party-system support is a process of *fostering conditions that encourage partisan actors to adopt behaviors conducive to democracy.* USAID's method of fostering this development is set out in their "Political Party Assistance Policy." It first specifies the agency's goal as supporting programs that build "representative, multiparty systems." A second aspect of the policy—that "programs do not seek to determine election outcomes" –implies that aid is distributed in a non-partisan manner. When combined with a third mandate—"USAID programs must make a good faith effort to assist all democratic parties with equitable levels of assistance"—the policy implies that USAID's main implementing partners, NDI and IRI, must work with all (democratic) parties.[11]

In line with these policies, USAID programs work at three different levels, as Figure 3 illustrates. Programs work directly with parties to alter the norms that govern political behavior and parties' capacities to compete and govern effectively. These programs address both parties in government and parties as organizations. They include themes such as developing platforms and messages, conducting campaigns, drafting legislation, using polling information, implementing transparent decision-making processes, and improving candidates' skills. Parties and candidates should welcome many of these programs, as they have clear electoral benefits. A theme that we noted above, however, is that some of the programs will run counter to politicians' interests, thus hampering reform attempts. Another emphasis of that discussion is that building party structures can lose sight of

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[10] Gunther and Diamond (2003) define a congress party as "a coalition, alliance or federation of ethnic parties or political machines, although it may take the form of a single, unified party structure" (p. 184).

[11] The policy continues: "Where there are too many democratic political parties to assist all effectively, USAID will assist all significant democratic parties. The relevant U.S. Government Mission will determine which parties are significant."

broader development goals.[12]. Development programs that focus on the parties and partisan actors, therefore, must be designed to improve democracy, not just further electoral aspirations.
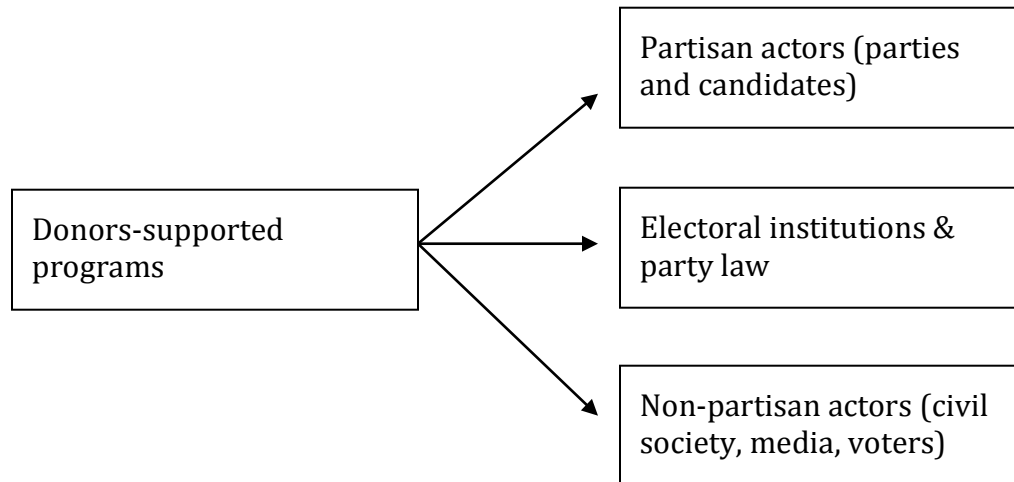
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                                              ┌─────────────────────────┐
                                              │ Partisan actors (parties │
                                              │ and candidates)          │
                                              └─────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────┐                   ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Donors-supported         │ ───────────────► │ Electoral institutions & │
│ programs                 │                   │ party law                │
└─────────────────────────┘                   └─────────────────────────┘

                                              ┌─────────────────────────┐
                                              │ Non-partisan actors (civil│
                                              │ society, media, voters)  │
                                              └─────────────────────────┘
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Figure 2: Areas of Engagement for Party System Reforms

In addition to working directly with parties themselves, there are party assistance programs focused on reform of electoral institutions, party laws, and other aspects of the legal context that influence partisan actors. Concerns here include rules governing campaign finance, quotas for female legislators, rules for party formation and demise, and methods of vote counting and aggregation. In most cases, USAID and its partners avoid direct promotion of a particular type of reform, preferring to back reform efforts of the parties or local groups by providing expertise or facilitating discussions about electoral systems, party laws, or other institutions.[13] Another way to support these reforms is by publishing information about the effects of different laws or rules. One example here would be NDI's series of reports that cover topics such as internal democracy, party finance, and party communication

In order to build "demand" for high-quality parties, USAID and its partners sometimes work with non-partisan actors such as civil society, the media, and voters (the party in the electorate). Such efforts seek to alter the environment in which electoral competition takes place and to create incentives for partisan actors to adopt beneficial practices, by increasing pressure on the parties to provide better representation. For example, to encourage parties to fulfill campaign pledges, aid projects could help civil society groups record and catalogue campaign promises. They might also support civic groups that work with parties to promote better

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[12] See Carothers (2006, Ch. 4) for further discussion.
[13] NDI's comparative research supports this effort.

representation or other pro-democracy reforms. Programs that support civic education programs sensitizing voters to the dangers of ethnic mobilization could also fit under the rubric of party programming. Encouraging voters to base their election decisions on incumbents' performance (i.e., to vote retrospectively) would offer another opportunity for party programs to work with voters and citizen non-governmental organizations. Because voters in emerging democracies (and elsewhere) find it difficult to judge whether incumbents have done a good job, a useful intervention would help civil society groups compile "report cards" that offer succinct, objective information to voters.

4. Development Characteristics and Programming

Party assistance programs are intended to advance democratic development. But this goal is too broad to suggest program activities. We therefore focus on four characteristics of a developed democracy in which parties and party systems play central roles. An arch-typical developed democracy has:

- ➢ High levels of Accountability, Representation, and Participation
- ➢ Governability and Good Governance
- ➢ Stable and Peaceful Contestation
- ➢ Rule of Law and Fair and Honest Elections

As means to these ends, parties in such democracies need high levels of:

- ➢ Organizational and Technical Capacity.

While these broad development characteristics are uncontroversial, they do not yield unambiguous programming objectives for USAID missions. Developing those objectives requires consideration, first, of how aid to parties advances democracy. It then requires the breaking of the broad development characteristics into component parts that can be targets of aid. The process also requires consideration of conflicts among the development goals and decisions about which democratic qualities to prioritize. USAID has some normative goals, such as improving the number of women participating in politics and increasing parties' internal democracy, but program goals sometimes conflict. Which is more important: Supporting representation or governability? Promoting policies that support a particular region—or policies that prioritize national interests? Assuring that groups have designated parties to represent them—or that parties are accountable for their policy proposals and achievements? In short, outlining the broad development characteristics to is just a first step towards conceptualizing the role of party assistance programs in promoting democratic development.

With these concerns in mind, we proceed to a discussion of the four democratic qualities, unpacking each issue to consider development goals and conflicts and programming objectives and implications.[14] We cannot completely

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[14] To the extent possible, we follow USAID standards and distinguish between development or democratic "characteristics" and programming "objectives" that

resolve these conflicts, nor can we offer unambiguous advice about which development objectives should take precedence. The discussion, however, should push implementers to consider carefully the tradeoffs that program choices imply. We begin by discussing the intermediary goal, party organization and technical capacity, as it underlies advancement towards the four democratic characteristics.

4.1 Party Organization and Technical Capacity

A developed political system relies on organized and technically capable political parties. In addition to running electoral campaigns, such parties can organize outreach campaigns, represent and mobilize voters, analyze and implement policy, raise funds, oversee the bureaucracy, and maintain consistent contact with voters, even when elections are not forthcoming. Developed parties are bureaucratic in the sense that they have complex and routinized structures that perpetuate themselves regardless of the leader. To an important degree party institutionalization may be a valid end in itself, but programs that focus on parties' organizational and technical capacity should not lose sight of how they contribute to democratic development.

Programming

Among the many activities intended to support parties organizational and technical capacity are those that focus on organizational principles, such as how to plan timelines, create strategic plans or manage relations among a party's regional branches; technical training and professionalization of party officials; and campaign techniques, including developing or improving training systems, strategies for dealing the media, and processes for recruiting candidates and improving campaigns. The themes of conferences and training sessions that fit in this category includes the following:[15]

- Strategic planning
- Fundraising and resource development
- Campaign organization
- Poll-watcher recruitment and training
- Voter registration verification
- Legislative drafting
- Research capacity
- Public speaking
- Message development
- Platform development
- Candidate and leadership skills
- Message development

- Codes of conduct
- Constituency development services
- Local/regional party organization
- Training processes
- Voter outreach initiatives
- Polling use and analysis
- Caucus development (e.g. inclusion of more women)
- Media relations
- Conflict mediation & negotiation
- Improved communication within party (national/regional)

seek to address democratic deficits. We use the word "activities" to imply particular meetings, trainings, conferences, or other forms of support.
[15] This list borrows from Ilirjani, A. (2009).
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This list includes programs in which USAID and its partners work directly with party officials and others where individual candidates receive training. Many programs are targeted towards youth and women. A common strategy is to work with the parties' training committees (or institutes) in the expectation of diffusing lessons beyond the attendees of particular sessions.

In addition to their direct impacts, because these programs can be promoted as helping the parties prepare for elections (and because participants often see participation as a perquisite), the programs help USAID and its partners build rapport and support with the parties. This is clearly important to the successful implementation of further programs.

Implementation of these programs must still overcome several concerns. The most important of these is that the goals of party and democracy building risk being consumed by short-term campaign needs.[16] This is a special risk because parties are most receptive to programming that has a direct bearing on elections.

Most activities in this category do have clear ties to development goals. Helping parties with the intermediary development goal of building transparent fund-raising strategies, for example, can support the rule of law. To take another example, in order to encourage outreach to improve citizen participation, programs might aid the parties to train staff, raise funds, organize regional offices, and develop communication systems for transmitting information to and from the parties' central organizations. Other examples of intermediary programs include improving candidate training or teaching women to be better public speakers or encouraging parties to adopt internally democratic practices. Each of these programs could be tied to accountability, representation, and participation.

A secondary tension for implementation of programs in this area is between the parties' long-term needs and their immediate political or electoral goals. This tension may raise resource constraints concerns, because directing (scarce) funds towards building technical capacity can drain campaign resources.

Beyond specifying how organizational support furthers democracy, programs focused on this intermediary development concern face implementation problems. Information is a problem, since parties will be reticent to share financial records. Teams are likely to find murky legal frameworks, so development agencies must first determine how parties can operate within that system or whether it would be valuable to support reform efforts.

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[16] It is important to note that NDI and IRI argue that their programs are different what campaign consultants provide. Platform or message development, for example, focus on the importance of using issues and the potential of attracting voters due to their concern with issues, rather than development of slogans that would be part of a campaign strategy.

With these theoretical and implementation concerns in mind, we therefore now turn to a conceptual discussion of how parties and party systems contribute to larger democratic goals and to the types of USAID programming that supports development in these areas.

4.2 Accountability, Representation, and Participation

Three concepts—accountability, representation, and participation—define the quality of a democracy. In an effective party system, elected parties or coalitions respond to citizen demands with public goods, and those responsible for economic and other policy outcomes are accountable to their citizens. To meet this goal, effective political parties create coherent programs and transmit their ideas to the voters. In these systems party activities are transparent, and the media or other watchdogs diffuse that information to the citizenry who, in turn, are empowered to act on that information. In sum, the broad goals of accountability, participation, and representation imply that the electorate has the ability to access information, make policy demands, and hold elected official responsible for their reactions to citizen demands. These three concepts also help determine social stability, because violent separatist or revolutionary groups often use a lack of one or more of these concepts to justify their movements.[17]

Accountability, representation, and participation are interlinked. Including more women in a party's leadership structure, for example, affects participation and representation. If parties respond to an ethnic group's demands, the party is showing accountability, but the group's pressure implies participation and perhaps representation as well. As a result, while we make analytical distinctions among the three concepts, our discussion of each concept requires explicit references to the others.

We limit the discussion to areas where the specific objective of aid programs has the intention of changing the relation of parties or party systems to accountability, participation, or representation. To begin, we focus on accountability of:

- parties based on their policy positions,
- party leaders to rank-and-file, and
- parties or individual legislators and the array of choices open to voters.

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[17] While these types of arguments have more validity in some cases than others, groups have justified their struggles against democratic regimes, as well as against incumbent authoritarian and semi-authoritarian governments. See, for example, the discussion of Peru's Sendero Luminoso in the IDEA report "Participation and Inclusion." Meléndez, C. (2004).

Next, we focus on "ascriptive" representation, or the degree to which parties represent the diversity in terms of language, gender, geography, or ethnicity. That discussion raises several questions with implications for programming:

- How do different groups gain an effective voice?
- What is the balance between choosing candidates for their ascriptive qualities and their policy positions? And relatedly, how can a country balance regional or group interests with those of the country as a whole?

For participation, we discuss outreach, voting, and mobilization. The specific programming concerns include:

- How parties can promote contact between citizens and elected officials;
- How to improve voting rates; and
- How parties can encourage citizen engagement (including peaceful mobilization) and public debate about politics.

While this touches civil society programs, it also requires that the parties develop outreach and education programs.

The discussion continues to focus on cautions about conflicts among development goals, conflicts between program objectives and USAID policies, and resistance by parties to development programs that do not further their power or electoral interests.   At the end of the section we re-combine the three themes into summary tables dividing the development characteristics into a set for parties and another for party systems. We then relate these to programming for partisan actors, institutions, and non-partisan actors.

4.2.1 Accountability [18]
Democratic theory relies on accountability of parties at multiple levels. Three aspects of accountability are pertinent to party and party system programs: the types of policies the parties support and whether voters hold parties accountable for policies rather than identities, whether party leaders are accountable to the rank and file, and the array of choices they face when casting their votes.

4.2.1.1 Accountability of Parties for Policy
In a developed democracy, citizens are able to hold leaders to account for their behavior in positions of authority. The role of parties, then, is to propose and implement policies, and allow voters to judge them based on these positions and policy outcomes.

This aspect of accountability makes stringent demands on both voters and parties.   Parties have to learn what citizens desire and transfer those ideas into

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[18] In this section we focus primarily on "vertical" accountability. Democracies also rely on "horizontal" accountability, in which different branches of government or political organizations (including parties) oversee one another.

proposals and policies; citizens have to learn what politicians propose or do. In a developed system, then, parties make their organizational, campaign, and legislative activities transparent. Parties empower voters by providing them with information their activities. For voters, accountability requires the gathering and use of information about policy stances (for parties out of government) or programs and policy results (for parties in government). In academic parlance, voters making electoral choices by linking party positions and socio-economic conditions are voting retrospectively or prospectively (Campbell et al. 1960; Magaloni 2006; Fiorina 1981).

Accountability for policy, however, raises several questions. What if citizens make competing demands?   What if some members of a party receive different signals than other members?

These types of questions suggest that while the concept of a developed democracy clearly requires that parties are held accountable for their policy positions, this democratic quality competes with several others. In our discussion of representation, for example, we discuss how choosing parties based on "ascriptive" characteristics limits policy accountability. At that point we also discuss the tension between serving local and national interests.

Accountability for policy can also have a detrimental effect on internal democracy. For parties to be held accountable for their policy decisions, party members must develop common stances and vote together in legislatures. Party members vote together because they hold the same policy positions or because they are disciplined by leaders wielding carrots and sticks. Ultimately, there must be sufficient unity in legislative voting to put forth comprehensive legislation with a national focus. Too much unity, however, might imply a lack of independence among the legislators. Once again, development implies a balance between virtues.

A final tension involves the democratic quality of stable and peaceful competition. While a prime responsibility of parties to promote policy alternatives, but under some circumstances debates can devolve into rigid ideological disputes. Campaigns dividing the electorate on identity or religion, or igniting passions on nationalistic appeals may have policy content, but they do not serve the interests of peace, unity, or democracy. Yugoslavia, Iraq, Turkey, Georgia, and Rwanda illustrate the harm caused by politicians exploiting potentially divisive issues and generating schisms where only limited conflict previously existed.

This tension suggests that accountability for policy should encompass the ideals of competence and pragmatism in implementing policy and delivering resources to constituents. If politics revolves around solving local-level development concerns, debates can focus on pragmatic solutions and competence in managing public funds, rather than ideological clashes. Which parties, for example, are best at building health clinics and fixing roads? But this type of local focus can be wasteful; the B-1 bomber, which has production subcontracts in almost all 435 US congressional districts, provides a clear example of inefficiency. Shugart and Carey (1992), however, argue that a focus on local-level politics is also important for democratic progress and compromise. In the name of eliminating wasteful

spending and generating a more efficient policy process, Chile modified its constitution in the late 1960s, cutting legislators' ability to fight for pork for their districts. But combined with increased political polarization in Chile, the reduction in local pork opportunities led legislators to move from haggling over jointly beneficial funds to fighting over ideologically charged positions. Chile's longstanding democracy ultimately fell victim to a military coup.

Programming

While the preceding discussion suggests some difficult balancing for program designers, there are several clear program objectives and multiple types of programs available. USAID programs can a) support parties in their efforts to analyze and develop policies, b) generate information to help teach the parties about citizen interests, and c) help parties provide information to citizens.

> **Box 1: Policy Oriented Programs in Colombia and Kyrgyzstan**
>
> In response to a concern with personality politics "IRI is helping political parties differentiate themselves along substantive lines, develop strong policy agendas, and dedicate themselves to responding to national problems. IRI accomplishes this through direct trainings for party members, as well as through support of party think tanks that draft issue-based policy proposals for legislators, candidates and party officials." (IRI Website). In Kyrgyzstan, IRI uses public opinion surveys to encourage parties to design platforms and electoral strategies responsive to broad public opinion. (A Study Of Political Party Assistance in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, USAID, 2007)

To encourage parties to become more policy oriented, extant programs focus on platform development, policy analysis, and the use of policy issues in campaigns (see Box 1). USAID-funded programs have also promoted codes of conduct in which parties vow to run issue-oriented rather campaigns and to avoid personal attacks (see below). In some cases USAID and its partners sponsor debates to highlight the parties' policy positions.

With these types of programs, care must be taken that the heat of campaigns does not overshadow high-minded development goals. Parties that learn to boil messages down into media-friendly sound bites, for example, do not necessarily serve goals of accountability. Platform development may allow parties to articulate their views more clearly, but there will always be tensions between specifying potentially divisive positions and highlighting vague platitudes. For example, parties agree on "valence" issues, such as reducing crime or improving employment, but they disagree on strategies for reaching these goals, such as reducing taxes on the wealthy, nationalizing industries, or providing social services. Further, while USAID's implementing partners, in keeping with the non-partisan mandate of the Party Assistance Policy described earlier, are careful to avoid direct links to parties' campaign messages, even an implied association could politicize the US role in the elections. Note that this is not

a concern for partisan donors, such as European party foundations, that only work with ideologically aligned sister parties.

To build accountability for local-level development concerns, programming can support parties' efforts to build and maintain systems for receiving information about constituent concerns and resolving their problems. In Peru a USAID program helped promote trips by legislators to their districts. Similar programs have also helped legislators open district offices (and explore mechanisms for funding them) where legislators or their staffs can receive constituents. These types of programs should be well received by parties, since voters who see parties listening to them are more likely to support those parties in elections.

The other important tool that USAID and its implementing partners have used to improve party's information about voters' concerns is polling. Polls, the partners argue, help teach parties and voters that they share common interests beyond language, ethnicity, or regional homeland. As such, polls help encourage parties to respond to voter demands. The polls also have side benefit. Since the parties are highly interested in election predictions, offering poll results helps donor agencies build rapport with parties. The development key, then, is to leverage that rapport to encourage the parties to use the polls in ways that enhance accountability.

While the information they generate does have the potential for enhancing accountability, polls also raise concerns. First, information is frequently very general. Parties presumably know that urban voters care about crime and jobs and rural voters want more access to education and potable water. To raise the level of policy debate, polls must specify voters' preferences in terms of policy strategies, not just policy goals. In other words, polls need to specify how voters prefer to deal with problems, not just that they are concerned. Do the voters favor privatization and cuts to social programs, or the opposite approach? Second, polling is expensive. Budgets for programs are usually tight, so spending heavily on polls has high opportunity costs. Third, because parties will be most interested in horse-race predictions, they may pay too little attention to the information relevant to accountability.

How can programs enhance the information available to voters? In this area programs can target the legislature, civil society groups, or the voters themselves. At the party level, programs can support publication of reports about parties' policy positions and decisions about personnel. Parties can also be encouraged to systematize information about their constituency service programs or other support they provide to citizen or social groups. Development of websites and other electronic means for disseminating information also fits under this rubric.

Programs can also work with parties and legislatures to promote provision of information about their work in the parliament. Few legislatures use or publish extensive roll-call voting records, a straightforward piece of information that voters and watchdog groups use to determine party decisions. Of course, by themselves such records are incomplete and may even mislead, since they do not illuminate the

inter-party bargains generating final floor votes. Still, roll calls do provide information to voters and force parties to defend their policy positions. In recognition of these goals, USAID (not necessarily through their party development programs) has supported the purchase of electronic roll-call systems in legislatures, and it has also supported diffusion of legislative activities through mailings, recording of legislative proceedings, and websites publishing information about bills. Similarly, programs can support party efforts to publish information about policy positions. Finally, programs contribute to accountability by aiding voters, i.e., those who do the accounting. Voter education projects can help explain the roles and responsibilities of representatives. They can also teach voters about sources of information, so that they can make more informed decisions and perhaps learn about mechanisms for influencing their representatives.

4.2.1.2 Internal Democracy and Accountability of party leaders to rank-and-file

To what degree are leaders responsive to the rank-and-file? What role do party members have in choosing candidates for public office or party leadership positions? These questions bear on the parties' internal democracy.

While a democratic virtue, internal party democracy may raise resistance from leaders and can yield negative effects. The manner in which parties choose candidates highlights these issues. Power over candidate choice is a source of leaders' power, so the democratic goal is likely to run counter to leaders' own interests. Candidate selection methods also raise a tension between the parties' interests in choosing candidates that serve their campaigning and technical interests and those who are most appealing to voters (Ashiagbor 2008). In part this is because party activists and others likely to participate in party congresses or primaries are more radical than party leaders or the general public, (Iversen 1994).

Internal party democracy also affects unity among a party's legislators and loyalty to the leadership (Ashiagbor 2008). As we defined previously, accountability for policy requires that a party's legislators vote together in the legislature. If leaders choose candidates, they can select loyal members and demand discipline in return for the nomination. Systems giving voters a role in choosing candidates, however, may generate candidates not necessarily tied to one another or to the party leadership, perhaps producing tension among a party's candidates. In an open-list system (where voters choose among candidates on party lists), for example, candidates' common interest in the party's vote total may be outweighed by their concern with their ranking among their co-partisans. This increases accountability of individual legislators (see next sub-section), but the campaign competition can yield conflicts among legislators that carry over into the legislative arena.

Some compromise positions balance these inherent tradeoffs. Parties can allow constituents or activists a role in candidate or leadership choice but leave policy decisions to the leadership. Methods of candidate choice can give some role to both members and leaders. "Open" primaries allow all constituents to vote among a party's possible candidates, while "closed" primaries or conventions restrict that vote to party members. Even in open primary systems, however, party leaders may

maintain a central role by restricting who can appear on a primary ballot. An alternative means for the party to choose leaders or candidates is to empower particular groups with the choice. In Mexico, for example, the PRI allows different societal "sectors" to name some legislative candidates. In Chile the two major coalitions allocate that role to the member parties, giving each a quota for the number of candidates and then forcing the parties to bargain over the districts in which they can field their candidates.

Programming

While statutes can mandate primaries or particular forms of candidate choice, parties are generally without legal guidelines in devising their organizational system. As a result, development programs must work with the parties directly, or perhaps through multiparty conferences, to help augment internal party democracy (see Box 2).

> **Box 2: Leadership Skills and Internal Democracy**
>
> NDI's Political Leadership Program supports emerging political leaders in multiple countries. In national and regional academies, it offers trainings about strategic and project planning, leadership skills, party internal democracy, transparency and outreach to new sectors. A recent NDI report notes that Colombian participants helped organize a reform to ensure that the youth would hold 30 percent of seats in their party's leadership, and that women would have at least 20 percent (Political Leadership Program, Latin America 2009).

Multi-partisan conferences that discuss the virtues of internal democracy could also discuss different mechanisms to facilitate dialogue, debate issues, and choose candidates. There is also need for programs to work with individual parties to discuss their particular situations. This will involve a close look at the party's decision-making structure. For example, in Indonesia parties used a point system for evaluating candidates, based on experience, skills, loyalty, etc. The USAID partners worked with parties to evaluate whether the systems had a discriminatory effect on women and youth.

4.2.1.3 Accountability and the array of voter choices

Our third type of accountability is primarily system-level: does the legal framework enable voters to choose among parties and/or among a given party's candidates? Different frameworks again raise conflicts over competing virtues.

The first concern is with the number of parties. At the low end (where there is a dominant party) voters have little choice, but they can identify a single party as responsible for government actions. At the high end, voters have a large array of choices, but so many groups are involved in policy decisions that decisions are hard to reach and no party can credibly take responsibility. In short, a high number of parties may have negative effects on accountability and decisiveness.

Regardless of the number of parties, the second concern is whether voters can choose among a party's candidates and thus hold individuals rather than full parties accountable for their actions or policy positions. As we describe in Section 5, under the "closed list" variant of proportional representation electoral systems, voters choose among unalterable lists of candidates for each party. Legislative seats are determined by the percent of the vote that each party receives, but list-makers (i.e. party leaders) rather than voters determine the identities of those future legislators.

As we further describe in Section 5, electoral systems that give voters choice within parties do have imperfections. First, giving voters this power favors politicians good at attracting voters, not necessarily those technically competent.

Second, open-list systems generate internal party conflict, since candidates must compete against co-partisans. Such candidates have an incentive to emphasize personalities and non-policy issues in their campaigns, since they cannot distinguish themselves from their co-partisans on policy positions.

Programming

Promoting systems in which voters have an effective voice in choosing among parties and among a party's candidates requires programs on parties and the institutions that govern them. We discussed the party-level aspect of these issues as part of our discussion on internal party democracy. Here we focus on programs that support institutional reform.

National statutes can mandate or regulate different aspects of primaries or candidate choice systems. Conferences about the virtue of such systems, or support for parties and the electoral authority in implementing primaries, can therefore support development programs. Whether primaries are party-directed or legally mandated, programs can also work to support the process rather than undermine it (perhaps by controlling or limiting participants).

Programs can also support conferences about electoral laws (see Box 3). Such conferences might discuss the merits of open-list systems and perturbations

> **Box 3: Electoral Law Debate and Reform**
>
> NDI has supported conferences about electoral law reform in Serbia, spurred by that country's goal of joining the EU. As the NDI report ("Serbia Debates Electoral Reform as Precursor to EU Membership," May 2011) notes, the current system only allows parties, not voters, to name candidates. NDI therefore held a national conference to increase the public's awareness and interest. The conference discussed "obstacles to reform, alternative electoral models, political party financing and corruption, and fair representation of women and minorities."
>
> In support of South Sudan's new government, IRI has held conferences to educate parties on difference electoral processes. It also works to train candidates to campaign in this new setting. (http://www.iri.org/countries-and-programs/africa/south-sudan)

such as the single transferable vote, the alternative vote, and two-level electoral systems that allow party leadership to fill proportional representation lists while allowing voters a role in choosing candidates for the single-member district posts.[19]

As noted, USAID and its implementing parties do not generally promote particular types of electoral reforms. For example, instead of directly promoting an increase in threshold requirements to deal with an excessive number of parties, the program objective may be to facilitate discussions about how electoral laws affect accountability and representation. The participants could then decide to pursue new laws, but USAID or its partners' role would be to provide expertise and analysis rather than lobby for specific changes.

4.2.2 Representation

Without representation there is no democracy. But what is representation and how do parties or the party system affect its quality? It first means that voters have an effective voice in the legislature, which is a function of the number of parties. When there are many parties small groups can have their own say, but they must compete for recognition with many others. If there are few parties, groups must join with others to gain a voice in the legislature, but their combined voice will carry more weight. Representation also means that parties allow groups or individuals to influence their parties' internal decisions. Finally, representation implies that parties give voice to different groups and perspectives. Augmenting representation based on "ascriptive" characteristics such as class, geography, ethnicity, or gender, however, may deter representation based on policy proposals and outcomes. Since we discussed the first two issues as aspects of accountability, our concern here focuses on this latter type of representation and the potential conflict it creates.

Electing more women or minorities to parliament is important from the ascriptive perspective, but having a voice is insufficient. Those elected also need to promote good policies and have sufficient muscle to influence the policy process. Good representation in the legislature, for example, requires that women and minorities do not run into glass ceilings or are shunted to less-powerful committees. A potential downside of increased representation based on ascriptive characteristics is, as underscored earlier, that an increased number of voices may negatively affect governability. This, however, should not be a concern for increased representation of women, because several studies (e.g. Taylor-Robinson and Heath 2004) show that women and men hold similar policy views.

There can also be a tension between ascriptive representation and accountability of parties for their policy positions. If voters choose candidates or

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[19] Germany, New Zealand, Mexico, Bolivia, and many other countries employ these systems. They differ in the details and vary in how candidates are chosen. Mexican parties, for example, have experimented with both centralized candidate choice or primaries.

parties for their ethnic, linguistic, religious, or other identifying characteristics, by definition they are not holding representatives accountable for policy outcomes or stances. Improved representation, then, implies that different sectors of society participate in the process, but compete based on policy perspectives.

A related tension is embedded in the question of whether representatives attend to parochial or national policy needs. When parties develop broad constituencies attentive to macro-economic or social changes, they may undermine an important the goal of assuring that regional or ethnic groups have parties dedicated to their interests. The regional-national conflict is evident in countries as diverse as Iraq and Bolivia, which have had to decide how to distribute the benefits of mineral resources—should they stay in the region where they are located, or be shared with the other regions? Pushed further, how can the regional and other parties balance constituents' demands for autonomy or independence with national interests? Caramani (2000) argues that as parties "nationalized"[20] they helped to build democracy in Western Europe, because nationalization combines multiple groups and reduces societal divisions based on regional or ethnic lines. Contrasting examples, where regional or ethnic parties reflect or exaggerate tensions, are numerous and encompass developed (Canada) and underdeveloped countries (Nigeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Bolivia).

Of course better representation of regional interests does not inevitably lead to an intractable political process. Birnir (2007) argues that ethnic parties can be flexible coalition partners influenced by policy issues. Heller (2002) shows that by lending important support to otherwise minority governments, regional parties in Spain won important concessions on decentralization. In so doing, they facilitated governance and moved policy in their desired directions.

Programming

Representation of women, geographic constituencies, and minorities can be furthered through laws and/or party-level developments. Electoral and party laws can bring immediate boosts to the election success of these groups in national or provincial legislatures. As we discuss in Section 5, electoral laws can improve opportunities for minorities to win seats by lowering the thresholds for representation, changing the number of people elected per district (the district magnitude), or creating quotas for particular groups. Quotas have become a common method for improving the lot of female candidates, and they have had dramatic impacts in many countries.[21]

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[20] Nationalization is defined by the geographic reach of parties. In contrast to regional party, a nationalized party would gain significant support in all regions of a country.

[21] Some quota laws lack enforcement mechanisms or allow parties to evade the intent by requiring that parties put women on the list without also stipulating that the women are put into winnable positions on party lists (Baldez, 2007).

USAID and its partners have been at the forefront of promoting quotas for female legislators through direct discussions with parties and legislators and through supporting local NGOs. Support could be construed as imposition of foreign values, but given the worldwide movements advocating improved opportunities for women, there are ample host-country partners and human rights justifications for these programs (see Box 4).

While quota laws generally operate at the system level to promote increased numbers of women (and in some cases minority groups) in *legislatures*, some countries have experimented with laws that seek to change (ascriptive) representation within the *parties*. A recent Indonesian law, for example, requires that governing boards of political parties include a minimum of 30% women. In most cases, however, changing internal party organization will require the parties themselves to adapt. Women and minorities might be discriminated against through screening rules. For example, candidate selection rules that privilege long or particular types of experience will eliminate many women and other underrepresented groups. In these cases, programs could work with the parties to develop new rules. A caution is that traditional leaders will detect a clear subtext about reducing their control over candidate nominations.

> **Box 4: Quotas ad Women's Participation**
>
> In Macedonia, IRI has supported women's participation since 2002. With the support of several local NGOs, the country passed a quota law in 2006, resulting in increased representation of women in both the national legislature and municipal councils. As part of their support, USAID sponsored a female member of the Macedonian parliament who traveled to Uganda and gave a plenary address about the system at a conference coordinated by IRI. (USAID "Macedonia's Electoral Quota System is a Model for Gender Participation.")
>
> In Armenia, after a USAID sponsored conference hosted by NDI, the prime Minister called for an increased number of women in the executive branch and the parliament passed a new electoral law that guarantees women 20 percent of the legislative seats. (USAID Impact Blog; "Armenian Women Set Priorities for Increasing Participation.")

Improving ascriptive representation with the parties may entail helping new entrants to the political world to develop the skills necessary to rise through party and governmental organizations. Towards this goal, USAID sponsored programs have targeted women, youth, and minorities with educational workshops, training modules, and their own training resources (e.g. training CDs). An IRI training for women in Morocco, for example, was subtitled: "How to get on a Party Ticket and What to Expect in Your Campaign—An Overview of Basic Grassroots Campaigning." A program in Indonesia taught women campaign and public speaking techniques.

These programs may also discuss get-out-the-vote campaigns and strategies, polling techniques, message, voter roster and platform development, and media strategies. While NDI and IRI provide these services directly, they also implement "training of trainer" programs. Due to their instrumental nature, these programs may focus more on winning elections than on building democracy, but they have the potential to bring new groups into the campaign as activists or candidates. Such programs build institutional capacity and extend the reach of the lessons. While they can run into resistance (from men against women's advancement or leaders threatened by trained followers), the potential electoral benefits of more able candidates and organizations should entice leaders.

Beyond training, programs can support the advancement of women and other groups by fostering civil society organizations or multi-party legislative caucuses. Women's groups, for example, can press for legal changes and lobby the parties to become more inclusive. As such they also help develop political skills and female leadership. In the legislature, caucuses that focus on women or minority groups would help these groups press their common interests.

Building representation in a manner that balances group and national interest suggests a different set of programs. It first requires support of dialogue among different groups. Conferences that allow groups to share their concerns and perhaps highlight common interests, therefore, can promote representation. At the system level, programs might facilitate discussions about decentralization and federalism. Such discussions could help parties decide how to divide resources, responsibilities, and rights. Another issue important to many groups is when and whether local laws and customs take precedence over national legislation.

4.2.3 Participation

In an ideal democratic system, parties encourage active citizens participation through voting and debating public policy. They also mobilize the public to encourage peaceful pursuit of policy goals. A particular focus for development is how to promote the active participation of women, youth, and minorities in party organizations and activities. This last issue was a focus of our discussion about representation, and thus we focus here on voting and mobilization.

Central to participation is voting, which parties promote through outreach and education campaigns. These campaigns, however, should not be restricted to election periods. Developed parties operate at all times, seeking contact with voters and building relations with citizen groups. This might entail offering to aid to citizens in their dealings with the government (constituency service), holding policy forums, and encouraging residents to voice their concerns in private or public meetings. This requires, in part, that parties maintain a year-round presence outside of the capital city. Developing regional offices, therefore, fosters the participatory aspect of party development. While these offices should feed the parties appetite for votes, they may also raise wariness of leaders concerned with decentralization. Regional offices give new leaders an opportunity to gain exposure

and experience, and these new leaders can use the regional office as a platform to push their own agendas.

Many countries employ compulsory voting laws to assure high levels of voting, but a strong democracy would generate interest in voting regardless of such laws. Further, enforcement of these laws is not always effective. For example, voting participation is high in Bolivia because it is mandatory, but in rural areas many fewer women are registered than men. Such differences are likely the result of the types of sanctions involved; Bolivians who do not vote lose banking privileges, but this is unimportant to many of the country's rural women.

Citizen participation in democratic politics goes beyond voting or joining rallies. Parties can encourage both voting and other types of participation by fostering public debates, soliciting input into candidate choice, and hosting policy fora. Parties also foster informal discussions by providing voters with information about policies and partisan stances.

Participation in politics helps build trust in the system and helps fend off regime opponents. Building trust requires frequent and positive contact between the citizenry and government. Social capital does not grow for example, when citizens only vote or participate in rallies in response to material incentives or other clientelistic pressures. Where bureaucrats solicit bribes, social capital also suffers.

A final aspect of participation is the degree of citizen mobilization in relation to political events. Protests can be peaceful or threatening. Demonstrators can demand policy or personnel changes, or they support incumbent politicians. When demonstrations become anti-system mobilizations, however, democracy and social peace are threatened. Parties and civil groups walk a fine line: at what point does mobilization in pursuit of valid demands threaten stable governance?

Programming

The objective of programs and activities supporting citizen participation is to improve the permanence and quality of the links between parties, societal groups, and the electorate. One method for promoting these links is to aid parties in setting up regional offices and organizing them for the purpose of building constituent ties not only in the country's center, but also in peripheral areas. Regional offices also support accountability and representation, because through them parties can channel citizen demands to the government and information about party activities and resources to the public. Regional offices should also help parties reach out to different citizen groups and develop deeper roots in society, which fosters more consistent support and reduces electoral volatility (issues we discuss as part of Stable and Peaceful Contestation). Given the proscription on direct aid to parties, most assistance for the regional offices comes in the form of trainings and conferences focused on organization, fundraising, and communication between the national and local party offices. Developing systems to provide constituency services would offer another programming opportunity, and other trainings could help parties to cultivate ties with unions, business confederations, neighborhood groups and other societal organizations.

To increase voter participation, there are programming options at multiple levels. Working directly with voters may be more the purview of civil society programs, but parties can play a role in fomenting participation in rallies and voting by generating interest in politics. USAID and its partners can help organize get-out-the-vote campaigns and can promote voter education, perhaps by helping the parties to produce and disseminate information about politics and campaigns. Note that the parties have electoral incentives to attract new voters. A different emphasis in programming, then, could be to use this incentive to encourage the parties to appeal to the poor. If the parties do this through programmatic appeals, then the program could foster improved accountability, representation, and participation.

A different way to improve voting turnout is to consider legal reforms. Conferences, therefore, could discuss the merits of compulsory voting laws or ancillary laws such as those that affect voter registration and turnout.

4.2.4 Summary: Accountability, Representation, Participation

Because accountability, representation, and participation are so closely related, we conjoin them here. Table 1 lists many of the numerous development characteristics for each category, dividing them into two parts: those focusing on parties themselves and those focusing on party systems. The table also notes a few cautions dealing with conflicts among development goals.

Table 1: Development Characteristics: Accountability, Representation, and Participation

Characteristics of Developed Parties
Accountability
• Platforms are based on policy positions and policy effectiveness
o *CAUTION: Hardened policy or ideological conflicts can lead to difficulty in forming compromises and coalitions*
• Members cohere around ideology and policy positions but tolerate dissent. Positions, therefore, are not dictated by a leader.
• Information is disseminated to constituents about policy positions and activities
• Parties employ open decision-making processes
• Voters are mobilized to press demands without systemic destabilization
o *CAUTION: Agitated voters can heighten societal tensions*
• Parties respond to local-level and national-level citizen concerns
• Parties develop transparent methods for selection of qualified candidates
o *CAUTION: Internal democracy can favor "popular" candidates over those with technical skills*
• Leaders are held accountable to membership via use of transparent selection methods
Representation
• Parties link national and regional constituencies
• Parties include historically excluded populations in internal party decisions
Participation

• Voters identify with parties and demand party services
• Parties seek citizen input and respond to their concerns
• Parties inform and empower citizens to participate in the political process
• Women, youth, and traditionally underrepresented groups are chosen as candidates and as party leaders
• Parties maintain offices around the country that operate even in non-electoral periods
Characteristics of a Developed Party System

Accountability
- Voters identify with parties and demand services and responses to policy concerns
- Government activities are transparent
- Voters face diverse choices among parties
  - *CAUTION: Could foster extremist parties*
- Voters evaluate parties based on policy performance
  - *CAUTION: Policies or ideology can divide rather than unite societies; Competence and pragmatism are also of value*
- Electoral system allows voters to hold leaders accountable
- Voters support democracy and trust the democratic processes
- Voters are knowledgeable about party positions

Representation
- Number of parties balances representation and governability
  - *CAUTION: Too many parties harms governability*
- Electoral system allows voters choice among candidates within parties
  - *CAUTION: Can create internal-party competition, thus leading to dis-unity and impetus for party splits*
- High participation rates of women and underrepresented groups in legislature
- Parties represent diversity of interests (ascriptive representation)
  - *CAUTION: Ascriptive representation can conflict with accountability for policy*

Participation
- Voting rates are high
- Voters contact parties for services
- Citizens enter into informal political debates
- Citizens mobilize in support of policy interests
  - *CAUTION: Mobilization can threaten political stability*

Table 2 offers examples of programming in this area as discussed in this section. We divide programs into three parts: those focusing on partisan actors (parties, activists, and candidates), those focusing on institutions (such as the legislature) and institutional reform, and those aiming at NGOs and other non-partisan actors. Unlike Table 1, we do not divide the programs into those for accountability, representation, and participation, because so many of these programs support each democratic characteristic.

Table 2: Programs for Accountability, Representation, and Participation

Programming Aimed at Partisan Actors

Conferences and training to build or encourage:
- campaigns focusing on policy issues and strategies
- development of legislative agendas
- concern for responding to local-level issues communication with voters
- development of media/communication strategies
- participation of members in party decision making
- better organization of party congresses or other events
- candidate training for women, youth, and underrepresented groups
- membership outreach among women and disadvantaged groups
- recruitment of women and disadvantaged groups to party leadership positions
- public speaking abilities of candidates
- outreach to interest groups and civil society
- use of candidate choice procedures allowing new and diverse politicians to rise in the parties
- organization of party branch offices and communication within and among them
- development of systems for constituency service
- construction of policy-based platforms
- public debates among parties
- public fora to provide parties with information about voter concerns
- polling to provide parties with information about public concerns
- party codes of conduct emphasizing campaigning based on policy debates
- more effective get-out-the-vote campaigns
- peaceful mobilization of voters
- dialogue among representatives of different regions

Programming Aimed at Institutions and Institutional Reform

- Conferences and fora to discuss electoral systems, party finance laws, primaries, mandatory voting, executive-legislative relations and other aspects of institutional structure
- Conferences and support for NGOs pursuing use of gender and other quota systems that encourage increased participation of women and other underrepresented groups in the political process
- Support for recording legislative roll-call votes (e.g. electronic tabulation systems) and publishing results
- Support for publishing information about legislative actions
- Promotion of legislative caucuses for women or minorities
- Support for conferences or discussions about federalism and decentralization

Programming Aimed at Non-Partisan Actors

- Education to enhance voter information about party and government activities
- Publication of information for citizens and societal groups about parties and the political process
- Support of NGOs focused on female, youth, or minority issues
- Promotion of NGO-sponsored inter-party debates to highlight policy stances

4.3 Governability and Good Governance

Parties foster governability and good governance by including the opposition in decisions, operating openly, aiding in government oversight, and cooperating with one another in their efforts to develop and implement sound public policy. We discuss the issue of transparency elsewhere; here we focus on coalition politics and parties' oversight role.

While democracy presumes majority rule, minority rights assure that the politically weak do not see the need to turn towards other methods for advancing their political goals.   Building democracy, then, requires an inclusive political environment, compromises among political parties, and an oversight system.   These goals, however, contradict the competitive nature of democratic politics, and they also dilute the clarity of responsibility for policy decisions.   Further, while compromise should yield policy advances favorable to all supportive members, political costs can render deals inopportune. Programs aimed at strengthening democratic parties confront a dilemma: parties face incentives to compete for political advantage, but democratic comity and progress require compromise and power sharing.

Minority parties and the political opposition can participate in governance at least at three levels: the executive, the legislature, and local- or regional-level governments. Each level is heavily influenced by the constitutional structure (presidentialism/ parliamentarism, federalism) and by patterns of competition (number of parties), but the willingness of parties to compromise is perhaps more important than the structure.[22]

At the level of the federal or regional levels, opposition parties may participate in governance by joining the executive cabinet.[23] In both parliamentary and presidential systems, cabinet membership generally implies a willingness to lend general—though not uncontested—support to the executive. Parliamentary systems formalize this process, because the legislature selects the prime minister. In presidential systems the relation is often less formal, but presidents offering cabinet posts to members of the opposition clearly do so to buy support. The difference is what happens if that relationship fails. In a parliamentary system the government (but not democracy itself) usually falls, while in a presidential system

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[22] That willingness, too, can be a function of institutional arrangements. Lijphart (1977) argues that power-sharing systems encourage parties to work together, because they have a stake in the system. Horowitz (1985) contends, by contrast, that systems reifying cleavages can polarize politics and thus reduce potential cooperation.

[23] While this discussion generally focuses on national-level governments, it also applies to the regional level.

the executive continues in power and legislators do not face new elections until the end of their constitutionally determined terms.[24]

While cabinet coalitions imply inclusiveness and thus democratic stability, electoral politics can hinder their formation. Cabinet composition creates a difficult tradeoff for executives and for opposition parties considering whether to accept an executive's offer of a cabinet post. The executive prefers more support, but buying more support may be costly in terms of policy. Additional coalition members may also dilute the perceptions or reality of power. Opposition parties, meanwhile, expect policy gains from cabinet participation, but voters are more likely to credit the president or prime minister for the changes. Minority parties, then, may prefer to forego short-run policy gains in favor of longer-run electoral advantages.[25]

Some of these problems may be exacerbated in presidential systems, since the timing of executive and legislative elections is not always concurrent. Parties participating in a presidential cabinet must weigh their electoral prospects based on running with or against the sitting president. If the president is unpopular, parties face strong pressures to leave the cabinet before legislative elections.

Opposition parties influence policy not only through using their voting weight in the legislature and its committees, but also by controlling legislative procedures. Procedurally, legislatures empower opposition parties by giving them influence over agendas and voting procedures in committees. While the details of these procedures fall into the province of legislative strengthening rather than party development programs, they can directly affect the influence and participation of legislative minorities (which is a concern for party programs). Regardless of these rules, parties must decide whether to compromise and support legislative decisions or play for political advantage by taking an opposition posture. Especially if they are not part of the executive's cabinet, parties can offer qualified support to the executive on individual pieces of legislation. In an ideal democracy, in sum, the opposition has influence and uses it in a constructive manner.

Although ad-hoc policy coalitions facilitate opposition participation and policy advancement, more permanent majorities are necessary to assure efficient governance. If democratic (or policy) gains are to result from partisan compromise, parties must work together on large "framework" legislation (such as the budget) and make tradeoffs on other "omnibus" bills.[26] A legal provision that can reduce

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[24] If the government falls in a parliamentary system, the prime minister may dissolve the legislature and call for new elections, or the legislature can pick a new prime minister from among its current membership.

[25] Strom (1990) put this tradeoff in terms of partisan goals. Parties must make tradeoffs between the advantages of policy, office, and votes.

[26] "Germaneness" rules, however, often preclude logrolling. In these situations legislators can then try to cajole their colleagues with promises about future votes, but these deals are hard to enforce—thus reducing the viability of compromise.

legislative compromise is the line-item veto. Unlike the U.S. system, some presidential constitutions give presidents the authority to break bills apart and approve only the parts of a bill they find favorable. This authority is justified as a bar to profligate spending, but it also reduces incentives for inter-partisan bargains. If legislative parties believe the president will simply excise their favorite program, they have little reason to bargain and compromise.

The issue of oversight also fits under the realm of good governance or opposition participation. While oversight systems may again fall into the purview of legislative strengthening programs (and our discussion about accountability), they have clear importance for party-building activities as well.

To be effective, parties need access to information about the government's activities and the independence and capacity to analyze and publicize that information. Some systems empower the legislature to require the executive branch to provide needed information, but in other systems the legislature has difficulty in compelling government ministers to respond to requests. Legislatures and parties also frequently lack investigative capacity that would help them uncover accounting flaws or outright corruption.

> **Box 5: Good Governance in Guinea, Coalitions in Belarus**
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> In an attempt to improve the responsiveness and the efficiency of local governments in Guinea, a USAID program encouraged parties to "operate in a more transparent and accountable manner, holding open meetings and publicly posting budgets, fee schedules and minutes of meetings ("Report of the Faisons Ensemble Evaluation" 5/2011)
>
> In Belarus, IRI aided in forming a broad coalition – comprised of 10 parties and scores of NGOs – and has offered training on the fundamentals of political strategy, party organization, outreach and communications. As such, they have worked against the authoritarian ruler. ("IRI Eurasia Director Urges EU Support for Belarusian Opposition," Conference on European Union and Democracy Assistance 3/30/07)

Programming

At the party level, programming in the area of coalition building can focus on encouraging parties to use their influence in a constructive manner, seeking common ground with other parties. Building parties' technical and policy expertise can foster this goal, since sound policies will breed better compromises. These competencies can also foster good governance by helping parties analyze and monitor executive-dominated policies and the bureaucratic performance. Assistance programs can also help train party and legislative staff to help them critically evaluate budgets, economic policies, defense strategies, international relations, environmental issues, social welfare programs, education, and the many other crucial policy areas that face developing societies. Programs, in sum, can foster good governance by helping to develop the parties' skills, and by encouraging parties to use those skills in concert with other political actors in the pursuit of policy advances (see Box 5).

To help build the willingness of parties and the executive branch to join in coalitions, programs can work at the system level to discuss reforms affecting power sharing. Reforms that increase the legislature's power vis-à-vis the executive, as noted, give the executive an incentive to seek legislative partners. Because power sharing is also a function of the number of parties, conferences considering the effects of electoral laws can also help to foster governability.

4.3.1 Summary: Governability and Good Governance

Tables 3 and 4, which summarize this section, suggest two primary development goals at the party level: capacitation, such that parties can analyze and develop complicated legislation, and a willingness to compromise for policy gains. At the system level, the goals pertain to coalition building and strengthening the legislature's oversight capabilities. Of course governability also includes other topics, such as the number of parties, party responses to constituent demands, fostering peaceful mobilization of voters, and adhering to campaign codes of conduct. These issues, however, are also pertinent to other categories; in these cases the first three landed in our section about "Accountability, Representation, and Participation," and we discuss the latter under "Stable and Peaceful Patterns of Competition." Note too that these and other aspects of democratic development are pertinent to both national and regional governments.

Table 3: Development Characteristics: Governability and Good Governance

Characteristics of Developed Parties
• Parties develop capacity to analyze bills and develop legislation
• Parties negotiate compromises to advance policy goals
• Parties in the opposition play constructive roles in policy decisions
• Parties in government include opposition in decisionmaking
Characteristics of Developed Party Systems
• Coalitions form in the legislature to pursue policy objectives; includes proposals of legislation and engaging the executive in substantive policy debates   o *CAUTION: requires an institutionally powerful legislature, but strong legislatures can generate conflict with the executive and stalemate*
• Legislature forms multiparty coalitions and other structures to oversee executive (or other party) actions
• Legislature has mechanisms for bill analysis
• Legislature has processes for resolving inter-party disputes
• Multiparty cabinets are stable and facilitate policy compromise
• Opposition allowed access to information about governmental decisions and actions

Programs in this area are aimed at partisan actors and institutional reform (Table 4). For partisan actors, conferences and trainings can support legislators' analytical skills and encourage them to form coalitions for policy and in the cabinet.

At the institutional level, conferences can discuss the potential benefits of reforms encouraging coalition building.

Table 4: Programs for Governability and Good Governance

Programming Aimed at Partisan Actors
• Training for legislators and party staff on budget and bill analysis • Facilitating coalition and/or consensus building for policy and institutional reforms • Facilitating negotiations among parties for cabinet formation and maintenance
Programming Aimed at Institutions and Institutional Reform
• Conferences considering institutional reforms affecting legislative powers and coalitions • Facilitating discussions with the executive branch to improve parties' and legislatures' access to information, thus facilitating oversight • Working with legislature to foster a more constructive opposition • Supporting multiparty parliamentary caucuses • Conferences considering decentralization and building opposition influence in regional governments

4.4 Stable and Peaceful Patterns of Competition

The consortium that joins USAID's implementing partners (CEPPS) defines one of its goals as supporting "vibrant multiparty competition." How much "vibrancy" is healthy for democracy? One answer is that democracy requires that parties run aggressive but responsible campaigns, focusing on policies and ideas, but refraining from personal attacks and challenges to the foundations of democracy. A second piece of vibrant multiparty competition translates into voters' ability to challenge incumbents and "throw out the bums."

Continual and large shifts in partisan support, however, signal systemic instability. High levels of electoral volatility also imply that parties lack societal ties and that populist outsiders are likely to emerge. Short-term politicians, as we noted above, hamper long-term accountability. Mainwaring and Zoco (2007) identify three main problems of high electoral volatility. Systems with high volatility offer weaker programmatic cues to the electorate. When turnover among parties is frequent, citizens cannot learn to identify with the parties or know where they stand, with negative repercussions for democratic representation and accountability. High volatility heightens the uncertainty regarding electoral outcomes. In fact, high levels of electoral volatility imply that parties lack societal ties and that populist outsiders or anti-system politicians are likely to emerge. Volatile party systems modify the strategic calculations of both politicians and voters. When there is great uncertainty for the prospects of a party, voters will have trouble deciding whether to choose their most preferred candidate or pick a "second best" that is likely to win. From the parties' perspective, uncertainty about election support may invite new parties to enter the race.

While too much volatility implies instability, too little is also a concern. Lack of turnover implies an entrenched elite, and rigidity in support in countries such as Venezuela and Colombia during the 1960s and 1970s helps explain the eventual rise of an outsider populist party in the former and guerrilla groups in the latter. More generally, there are inevitable tradeoffs between electoral stability and other characteristics of a developed party, most notably representation. As Pedersen (1979) points out, volatility is related to the number of parties. The probability that a citizen will vote for the same party in two consecutive elections declines as the number of parties increases. As a consequence, an opening of the political system to include new parties is bound to increase electoral volatility. Adoption of a proportional representation electoral system, therefore, may improve representation, but it will also create incentives for voters to support smaller parties, thereby increasing electoral instability. There is also a tradeoff between inclusiveness or participation and electoral volatility (Bartolini 1990). When women and other excluded groups become enfranchised, they bring new preferences and perhaps new parties that necessarily affect the aggregate level of electoral volatility.

Finally, it is important to differentiate among types of volatility. Statistics that simply show changes in electoral support can mislead, because they may fail to indicate how voters are shifting support. The implications are vastly different, for example, if voters move among parties that share a similar ideology rather than among very different types of parties.

In sum, the "right" level of volatility is not the same under all contexts. As Shamir (1984) notes, a successful party system balances short-time electoral shifts with long-term stability. An effective party system, then, should experience some, but not too much change in the voters' support.

Programming
Programs aimed at improving stable and peaceful patterns of competition have two objectives: assuring aggressive but responsible competition and working to balance electoral volatility with democratic stability.

To meet the first objective, supporting inter-party competition that does not foment violence or attacks on the democratic system, USAID and its partners have deployed two types of programs. The first, discussed above in the section on accountability, encourages parties to campaign based on issues rather than identity or clientelistic ties. Here we focus on the second strategy, encouraging parties to adhere to codes of conduct (see Box 6).

> **Box 6: Codes of Conduct**
>
> In support of their democratic transition, NDI aided 36 parties in writing and signing a code of conduct that "encourages parties and their supporters to campaign honestly and respect the outcome of Jan. 31 [2011] presidential and legislative elections. Signatories pledged to refrain from personal attacks in their campaigns and to include women and young partisans on their campaign lists. The program also included provisions for a committee to oversee the code. (http://www.ndi.org/Niger_Code_of_C onduct)

The conflict between vibrant debates and criticisms of competitors that are fundamental to electoral politics can run directly counter to goals of peace and harmony. Codes of conduct, however, are intended to encourage them to avoid the most virulent types of attacks. The Indian code of 2007, for example, requires parties to focus on policies and "refrain from criticism of all aspects of private life...and [avoid] unverified allegations or distortion." In some cases USAID and its partners have brought the parties together to write these codes of conduct, thereby encouraging dialogue and an understanding of the potential consequences of some types of campaign attacks. Legislation may require parties to sign these codes as part of the registration process. The codes and the process of writing them may lead parties to consider the broad implications of their campaign strategies, but such simple documents will have difficulty generating virtuous behavior from parties seeking electoral advantages. What is necessary, in sum, is to support activities generating a culture among the political actors in which their collective interests in support for democracy override their personal interests in gaining power.

The second objective suggests conferences about the impact of different electoral systems on the patterns of electoral competition. As an example, the alternative vote (see Section 5) is intended to favor centrist candidates while still allowing wide competition. Other aspects of the electoral system, such as thresholds for representation or requirements that parties show backing in multiple areas of the country to maintain their registration, can also serve to support a limited number of parties and reduce the probability that new (and thus un-institutionalized) groups will win large percentages of the vote in one year and disappear in the next.

Volatility is also a function of the depth of parties' roots in society. Programming, therefore, might combat the rise of outsider or populist candidacies by helping the parties strengthen ties with NGOs, unions, business groups, trade associations, and social movement leaders.

4.4.1 Summary: Stable and Peaceful Patterns of Competition
Table 5 summarizes these issues. Developed parties run aggressive but responsible campaigns. They also develop roots in society, which may combat the rise of outsider politicians and concomitant electoral volatility. At the system level, the

primary goal is to strike a balance between volatility and vibrant competition. Programs (Table 6) focus on codes of conduct for individual parties and discussions about electoral and party laws affecting the stability of the party system.

Table 5: Development Characteristics: Stable and Peaceful Patterns of Competition

Characteristics of a Developed Party
• Parties run aggressive but responsible campaigns
• Parties develop roots in society   o *CAUTION: Accountability suffers if ties are based on historical figures, regional ties, clientelism, or ascriptive characteristics* rather than parties' track records of policy performance
Characteristics of a Developed Party System
• Vibrant multiparty competition, but with limited electoral volatility   o *CAUTION: With more competitors, volatility will increase; too much volatility creates concerns about stability and it harms the ability of parties to develop roots in society,* t*oo little however implies entrenchment*

Table 6: Programs for Stable and Peaceful Patterns of Competition

Programming Aimed at Partisan Actors
• Facilitating discussions or signing of codes of electoral conduct
Programming Aimed at Institutions and Institutional Reform
• Facilitating discussions of party and electoral laws to consider sources of electoral volatility

4.5 Rule of Law & Fair and Honest Elections

As competitors for positions of political powers, parties compete for the public offices they seek in fair and honest elections. New democracies gain credibility when votes are counted fairly and when losers graciously accept their defeats. Acceptance of electoral losses marks democratic processes, and the peaceful passing of power is perhaps the strongest symbol of an advancing democracy. In the words of Linz and Stepan (1996), a democratic transition has occurred when all players accept that elections are the "only game in town" for the purpose of transfers of power. As the players in these games, parties are central to ensuring the rule of law in general and fair and honest processes in particular. In this subsection we raise three broad issues related to the rule of law and honest elections: the role of parties in building respect for the democratic process during both internal party elections and national electoral processes, the development of and adherence to laws governing campaign and party finance, and limits on inappropriate influences on voters.

In theory, developed parties should support a non-partisan bureaucracy backed by a solid legal framework overseeing the electoral process. The acceptance of elections requires institutions that distribute ballots to remote districts, maintain voter rolls, count votes in a timely and transparent manner, and gain credibility with

the politicians and the public. More developed parties will have technical experts who can enter into debates about how the legal framework affects the working of the electoral authority or the development of reliable voter lists. Creating non-partisan professional electoral authorities invites criticism about costs, and incumbents fear the loss of power. Still, creation of these institutions is a sine qua non for democracy.

Beyond their role in building the legal framework, parties help legitimate electoral processes by helping validate results. Losers are frequently tempted to proclaim fraud, but the credibility of such claims (if frivolous) carry less weight when observers uphold the legitimacy of the electoral process. Parties build system legitimacy by overseeing elections, and they should support efforts to ensure fair and open procedures. Because elections require party presence at each of thousands of polling places, parties need sufficient funds and capacity to recruit, manage, coordinate, and train thousands of poll watchers. Patrolling the electoral process also requires party personnel with specialized technical knowledge, so that they can analyze electoral returns, exit polls, and vote-counting procedures.

Building credible electoral processes is just as important for internal party elections as it is for national elections. In a few cases national laws regulate party primaries, and federal electoral institutes either advise the parties about running their elections or actually organize the elections. Parties are probably even more reticent, however, to allow observers to oversee their internal processes.

Box 7: Campaign Finance
In addition to publishing Money in Politics: A Study of Party Financing Practices in 22 Countries, (2005) to inform interested informs parties and activists about alternative financing schemes, NDI has worked with parties to support reform efforts. As part of their African Political Party Finance Initiative, NDI supported civic groups in 4 African countries to create momentum for reform by raising awareness about party financing practices and their impact on governance and development. (http://www.ndi.org/africa_political_party_finance_initiative)

Fair and honest elections require above-board systems for parties to finance their campaigns and organizational activities.[27] Developed parties, therefore, have reliable, transparent funding sources and provide financial records to officials. Parties that have non-public sources of funding, however, are likely to resist efforts that require them to maintain and open their funding practices. Funders of the parties, too, will often resist such efforts in their efforts to remain anonymous. On the other hand, while public funding schemes help to level the playing field and can reduce a potentially corrosive influence in campaigns, building these systems will invite criticisms. Citizens will

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[27] We continue the discussion about party finance below in the section about institutional context.

disapprove of the high costs, especially given the low popularity of parties and politicians. Some parties will disapprove, since those with secure funding resources will be wary of giving other parties the opportunity to access more funds. If funding is based on previous electoral returns, then larger parties are advantaged and new parties face particularly high entry hurdles.

Creating a level (legal) playing field for financing, transparency, and media access requires a strong legal framework and an investigatory system that helps to ward off abuses of state and illicit resources. Some parties do publish financial records, whether in systems offering public funds or in systems where parties rely most heavily on private sources. But forcing transparency about funding sources may harm parties' ability to raise needed resources. Further, if laws fail to alter illicit practices, they may have the perverse effect of highlighting dysfunction. Pursuing changes to the political finance, finally, challenges those with power. In Peru, for example, the legislature approved a public financing scheme, but the president exercised an opt-out clause, probably because he saw the scheme as giving his opponents new opportunities. These costs and programming challenges, however, do not undermine the potential benefits from implementing a transparent financing system for both parties and campaigns.

Finally, rule of law requires parties to refrain from nefarious means of influencing voters. In 2005, Evo Morales became Bolivia's first indigenous leader since independence 200 years ago (and arguably since the Spanish conquest). Of course the country was not democratic for most of that time period, but it still took the indigenous majority about half of a century to elect one of their own, even though suffrage was formally universal. One reason for this anomaly was the prevalence of patron-client relationships that suppressed potential indigenous leaders. Voters in other countries face even greater pressures, as the military or violent groups issue threats related to electoral outcomes.   Politicians may bribe voters with everything from T-shirts to public works projects. Especially in rural areas, patrons and politicians can often limit information that voters receive and provide explicit voting orders (with consequences for disobedience).

Programming
The above discussion suggests that aid programs focus on parties, voters, and system reform. To improve the quality of elections:

- Programs can build capacity to oversee elections by aiding parties in training and recruiting poll watchers.
- Programs can also work with the parties and the electoral authority to assure that voter lists are updated and reliable.
- To assure above-board internal elections, development teams can assist in the planning of primaries and conventions. They may also work with electoral authorities to oversee these events.

To combat clientelism,

- Programs can support voter education programs. Support of opposition candidates and their efforts to campaign on more legitimate grounds will also help.

Finally, with regards to party financing, programs would have to support legal changes.   In particular, they could

- Assist groups and politicians seeking to build the legal framework that governs political financing the electoral process. Teaching parties about options, perhaps in a comparative framework, helps them develop the expertise to engage in the necessary policy discussions (See Box 7).

4.5.1 Summary: Rule of Law & Fair and Honest Elections

To summarize this section, Table 7 details some of the characteristics of a developed party or party system that pertain to rule of law and fair and honest election. Table 8 details the related programming. These programs suggest working with voters, parties, and electoral authorities to assure legitimate electoral processes. These issues also suggest offering advice or organizing conferences about party finance and other legal issues.

4.6 Summary: Dimensions of Development and Program Goals

In this section we have focused on specific characteristics of development and associated assistance programs. Because development embodies multiple dimensions, many of which conflict with one another, there is no single strategy for aiding development of democracy or parties and party systems. Development analysts, then, will always be challenged to define a tailored strategy that takes careful account of the tradeoffs among goals. This tailoring is further complicated by the socio-political and institutional context, the subject of our next section.

Before entering into that discussion, it is important to note one theme that is generally beyond our purview: how USAID and its partners implement these programs. While we have focused on specific development needs and program activities, the success of the overall formal programs relies on the informal but trusting relationship that USAID and its partners develop with the parties. Assistance teams build trust by providing the partners useful training and information that the parties value. They also gain acceptance by using highly skilled trainers, including ex-politicians. In sum, beyond specifying development goals, successful programs also require that development teams develop trust and rapport with the parties and politicians.

Table 7: Development Characteristics: Rule of Law & Fair and Honest Elections

Characteristics of a Developed Party
• Internal party elections are run fairly; constituents accept outcomes • Parties deploy trained poll watchers to all polling places • Parties participate in national debates about electoral processes • Parties use exit polls to validate election results • Parties raise sufficient funds for campaigns and non-campaign activities through legal and transparent means
Characteristics of a Developed Party System

• Voters accept national electoral outcomes
• Parties help to validate and then accept electoral results.
• Parties support peaceful transitions of power
• Voters (correctly) perceive parties as adhering to rules of the game (limited corruption)
• Parties support an impartial legal framework for elections and political parties
• Sustainable, indigenous capacity to effectively administer elections exists
• Parties support local, regional, and international efforts to monitor electoral processes
• Parties support electoral authorities attempts to:
    o develop comprehensive and impartial voter lists
    o deploy non-partisan electoral observers
    o run transparent electoral process
    o resolve disputes through transparent mechanisms
• Parties support a campaign finance system that provides them and their competitors a legal and transparent way to raise funds

Table 8: Programming to build Rule of Law & Fair and Honest Elections

Programming Aimed at Partisan Actors
• Recruitment and training of poll watchers • Trainings focusing on updating voter lists • Assisting parties in strategies for raising funds • Training about exit polls or quick-count techniques • Support for parties in organizing internal elections
Programming Aimed at Institutions and Institutional Reform
• Conferences and provision of expert advice to consider campaign and party finance
Programming Aimed at Non-Partisan Actors

• Aid for electoral administration in management of
    o voter lists
    o oversight of financial reporting
    o poll-watcher training
• Support of voter education, focused on reducing clientelistic practices

5. Party & Party System Development within a Socio-Political Context

USAID programs do not operate in a vacuum. Their success varies depending on the environmental conditions in which parties operate and planners, therefore, must account for this context when designing programs. This section addresses the contextual framework within which parties operate and development programs navigate. We develop three lines of thought. We argue that the contextual situation has a direct impact on the degree to which party assistance program can expect to have results. Our message is that while the potential payoff for working in closed societies is large, the likelihood of a short-term success is small. As Diamond (2008, p. 130) suggests, a reasonable strategy in such circumstances is to "'keep hope alive.'" The reverse also holds: in more open societies, there are more opportunities to work successfully with parties, but change will be incremental.[28] In short, different contextual situations provide different opportunities for development assistance, and likely outcomes will also vary. The subsequent subsections focus on more specific contextual issues and their impacts on parties, party systems, and programming. The first of these discusses the socio-political context, and the latter considers the formal and informal institutional framework. Together the two subsections help to define the incentives and constraints shaping parties and the party system. By implication, party programs must confront these frameworks, many of which work against the program objectives. Overall, these sections highlight the importance of accounting for context in developing program priorities and crafting the activities in an appropriate manner.

5.1 Party Aid and Democratic Context

In this section, we begin with one specific and fundamental way that context matters: it conditions expectations about the results of party development programs. In places where the need for party aid is greatest, the likelihood of successful programming is likely to be lowest. When authoritarian leaders run closed societies, for example, expectations for altering the party landscape must be low. Similarly, ending long-standing ethnic conflicts may be a program objective, but the odds of short-term success cannot be high. By contrast, in open societies that have already made significant progress toward a consolidated democracy, it is easier to implement party-building programs, but the effects of these programs will be modest, because the country has already taken important decisions about the path of the democracy.

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[28] Diamond (p. 131), agreeing with Carothers (1999), states this conclusion in different terms, explaining that, "assistance appears to have the most visible positive effects where there are already modestly favorable conditions."

Low levels of democratic development, high societal fragmentation, or high levels of on-going violence hamper successful aid programs. At the same time, societies with these problems are precisely the ones in greatest need of external support. The small probability of success, multiplied by the tremendous potential gains, may justify expending USAID resources in these settings. The probability for successful programming in more democratic and peaceful situations is higher, but the impact of USAID's program may be more at an incremental level. This analysis should lead policy makers to a discussion of spending priorities among countries with DG programs.

Table 9 formalizes these ideas. It begins by distinguishing between open and closed political systems.[29] Within open systems there may be few or many political parties, and if there is violent conflict, it may or may not parallel partisan divisions. Among the closed systems with limited party competition, stability and the level of repression are problems. These contextual issues first influence the core programs. It makes little sense to emphasize accountability and internal party democracy where violence is the first priority of political discussions. In closed societies, programs must emphasize political "space" before turning to the many other goals of party development. Context also influences the likelihood that existing parties will be open to party-building programs. The final two columns suggest that the most troubled societies have the most to gain from development programs, but there might be a negative correlation between the potential gains and the parties' openness to the programs.

5.2 Socio-political context

The levels of democracy, ethnic fragmentation, and other characteristics that define a society yield different types of parties and party systems, and they imply different development needs or emphases. In some cases of limited democracy governments severely restrict party activities. In others the governments formally allow parties to operate, but fraud, voter intimidation, or unfair control of the media and finances generate an unbalanced playing field. In either case, the low level of democracy implies that the foremost development concern will be the opening of the political process. Similarly, in countries with on-going conflict, recently concluded violence, or concerns that the military will exercise undue influence on the democracy, party development will necessarily focus on reducing tensions and sustaining democracy.

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[29] See Carothers (2006) for a related organizational system.

Table 9: System Characterization and Program Objectives

Political Characteri-zation	Party System & Social Conflict	Program Objectives / Opportunities	Party Openness to Programs	Potential Payoff
Open	Multiple weak parties; no violent conflict	Improve parties on all development axes	+++	Marginal improvement; deepening democracy
	Entrenched but un-responsive (1 or 2 dominant Parties); no violent conflict	Space for new parties; Improve parties on all development axes	++	Marginal change: opening democratic practices
	Violent conflict along partisan lines	Reduce conflict	+	Large change; Peace
	Non-partisan violent conflict (parties vs guerrillas)	Focus on representation and inter-party cooperation in face of conflict	++	Large change; Reduced conflict
Closed	Limited party competition; Stable Society; Limited Repression	Open space for competition	+	Large change; Democratization
	Unstable (open conflict) & repressive	Limit repression; open space for opposition	+	Large change; Improved human rights & democratization

Parties and democracy sometimes, but not always, develop in parallel. Parties face some similar challenges regardless of how long they have been in existence, but parties in new democracies face different problems than parties in longstanding democracies. In addition to concerns about institutional rules, ties with voters, outreach, and organizational structures, parties in new democracies face the great challenge of finding experienced leaders who are untainted by participation in the earlier authoritarian regime. At least some of these parties will be devoid of leaders with knowledge of electoral politics or democratic governing.

Ethnic, regional, or other societal divisions drive party organization and the structure of competition. Parties operating in ethnically divided societies will divide over different issues than parties emerging from post-communist governments.[30] For example, in ethnically divided societies parties will likely rely on identity politics. As we explained earlier, this hinders accountability for policy and potentially threatens democratic sustainability. Language and cultural differences also challenge and shape party development, since they create communication barriers for parties seeking national constituencies.

Country size, geographic barriers and transportation, and media access all create additional communications concerns for parties. Large countries, especially those with challenging (or expensive) connections between areas, create particular difficulties for parties trying to build a national constituency. The result, as in Russia, may be a system of regional parties.[31]

Social development also affects party development. Literacy, for example, is positively tied to citizen awareness of politics and voting. Citizens with lower education levels, further, are more likely to maintain different links with their elected representatives than those with higher education levels. Clientelism, a pernicious form of representation, is fed by information, education, and economic resource differentials that allow patrons to control clients. Democracy and parties can develop in countries challenged by illiteracy and poverty, but higher levels of education and stronger economic performance promote democracy's cause.

In sum, across the globe parties and party systems confront and are shaped by different socio-economic situations, country sizes, conflicts, and other macro-contextual factors. These different country attributes, then, define different development needs and should therefore influence the shape and type of development assistance programs.

5.3 The Institutional Context

Constitutions and legal frameworks present the next level of contextual variables. These factors present a different challenge to development programmers, because unlike the socio-political variables, they are changeable and thus potential targets of assistance. In the language of social science, constitutions and laws are "endogenous," since they both shape party development but are also shaped by partisan actors. In this section we explore how different aspects of the institutional context affect political behavior to facilitate programming that works within the frameworks and/or works for reform.

Because they seek to win elections, politicians react to the constitutions, electoral systems, and party rules that regulate the electoral process and thereby

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[30] How parties seek support, however, is also a function of the electoral system, as we discuss below.

[31] Note that Indonesia has worked against this problem by forcing parties to gain support in many regions (except Aceh) to maintain their registry.

the pathways to power. Of course, different politicians develop different strategies in their efforts to win political office, but (assuming they play within the democratic game) each develops their political profile and campaigns within the constraints of legal, party, and informal rules.

Four levels of institutions—constitutions, laws, party rules, and informal constructs, shape party and party system development. Constitutions define the executive system and whether the country divides political power among federal units. Electoral systems and party laws govern party and campaign finance. Parties' internal rules are less restrictive, since they are more easily changed, and we thus discuss them along with informal institutions. These processes affect candidate choice and the concentration of power within parties.

5.3.1 Constitutions and Electoral Systems

Parties in all systems face some similar competitive challenges, but the institutional, social, and political contexts necessitate different emphases in their form, goals, and operations. Moreover, these different contextual situations create different incentives for politicians, and programs will be ineffective if they work against politicians' interests.

5.3.2 Presidentialism versus Parliamentarism

The distinction between the two main types of executive systems, parliamentarism and presidentialism, drives multiple aspects of parties and party systems. In parliamentary systems, legislators are formally tied to the executive; in presidential systems, the branches are independent. Parliamentary systems also require that the legislative majority give at least tacit support to the executive; otherwise the government falls and new elections ensue. Government stability in parliamentary systems thus typically requires coalitions.

While the two systems are starkly different, theoretical and empirical debates rage about the impacts of this basic constitutional arrangement. The most critical issue for these debates is whether one system supports democracy better than the other. Critics of presidentialism (Linz 1990; Stepan and Skach 1993; Valenzuela 1989) claim that parliamentarism supports democracy by clarifying responsibility and improving decisiveness of government. Cheibub et al. (2004) empirically evaluate the durability of the two executive types in the post-WWII period and find that parliamentary systems are more successful. The results, while significant, are context-sensitive and not overwhelming or undisputed. Disputes continue about the regional influence of presidentialism (more common in Latin America) and the importance of other factors (such as multipartism) (see, e.g., Mainwaring 1993).

Shugart and Carey (1992) argue that the "dual legitimacy" inherent in presidentialism fosters power sharing and checks and balances, traits that also support the maintenance of democracy. Instead of decrying the lack of clarity of responsibility, Jacobson (1990) and Mainwaring and Shugart (1997) argue that the system gives voters the opportunity to hold legislators accountable for some

policies (such as local issues) and executives accountable for others (such as national defense or the general state of the economy). Mainwaring and Shugart's empirical analysis also yields different findings than the Cheibub et al. study. This analysis, extending to the early 1900s, shows no significant relation between the executive system and democratic stability.

While differences between the two types of executive systems are stark, institutional reform efforts might also consider the distinguishing details of each type. Presidential systems, for example, differ in how they allocate power to the branches of government, and several studies show that presidents with excessive powers threaten democracy (Cheibub 2002; Cheibub, Przeworski, and Saiegh 2004; Norris 2008; Payne, G., and Díaz 2002; Shugart and Carey 1992). This result suggests that inclusion of the minority is the central factor in sustaining democracy. Minority governments do this by giving the parties in the legislature the power to veto presidential initiatives. But where presidents can impose their policies without input from or compromise with opposition parties, democratic stability is endangered. The many presidential governments that endow their executive with decree powers, line-item vetoes, and excessive control of the budget in the name of government decisiveness, therefore, risk democratic instability.

Institutional differences among parliamentary systems are also important. The "constructive vote of no-confidence" presumably supports government stability by forcing legislatures to settle on new leaders before voting sitting prime ministers out of office. Schleiter and Morgan-Jones (2009) argue that the hybrid systems combining directly elected presidents with a prime-minister, systems particularly common in Eastern Europe, put severe limits on cabinet dissolution and the calling of new elections. They also argue that these rule changes have implications for democratic survival.

Beyond implications for democratic survival, the executive system affects each of the concepts of democracy discussed above. Based on comparisons between Western Europe and the Americas, parliamentarism seems to foster party discipline (to keep governments from losing confidence votes) and thus accountability. Critics of this view, however, argue that the electoral system and other factors are at least as central to party discipline and accountability as is the executive system. Here analysts point out that some Latin American parties are highly disciplined (such as those in Venezuela, even before Chavez, or Argentina) and parties in some in countries with parliamentary systems are not always disciplined (such as India, Japan, and Italy).

Related to this debate is the impact of the executive type on party nationalization, which influences parties' interests in promoting provincial over national policies. Nationalization has two aspects, the spread of a party's support across a country and the degree to which that support is influenced by local rather than national issues. One study suggests that second of these is highly related to the executive system, with parliamentarism leading to much higher scores (Morgenstern, Swindle, and Castagnola 2009).   This is supported by studies that show how parliamentarism reduces the tendency of legislators to seek

independence from their leadership (or a "personal vote") (Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina 1987).

The impact of the executive system on coalition dynamics is similarly murky. If Western Europe were the only model, then parliamentarism would seem to support coalition governments (though minority governments are also common). As we noted earlier, electoral, policy, and cabinet-level coalitions are also common in some presidential systems. The 25-member cabinet under Brazil's president Lula da Silva (2003-2010), for example, had members from nine different parties. Chile's electoral alliances marry several parties under two main banners, and recent Uruguayan presidents have offered cabinet posts to long-standing rivals. These cabinets do not always breed legislative discipline in support of the president's policies, but they can help presidents overcome some legislative roadblocks.

The choice of executive system has many other potential effects. For parties, perhaps the most important is the fostering of independent candidacies at the expense of institutionalized parties. Parliamentary proponents argue that since prime ministers must win their offices after winning both a legislative seat and then a vote from among their peer legislators, parliamentarism is less likely than presidentialism to produce "populist" or independent leaders. Considered from the reverse perspective, leaders aspiring to the prime minister's office have extra incentives to build a loyal party with broad support, because without that party and legislative support the leader cannot gain the executive office. By contrast, presidentialism allows outsiders to ignore the legislature or even campaign against it to gain executive office. Of course parliamentarism is not a foolproof protection against extremists, as Hitler's rise shows.

5.3.3 Unitary and Federal Systems

Constitutions also affect parties and party systems by specifying the degree of autonomy of federal regions. When states or provinces are relatively autonomous, regional parties are more likely to form and thrive than where the federal government dominates the regions.[32] The party system in Canada, for example, would look quite different if Quebec were less autonomous, and the multiple small parties that represent different regions in Argentina would likely disappear if governors were less relevant to that political system. Whether a country is organized on a federal or unitary basis, then, determines where and how parties insert themselves into the political process. As such, it also determines where and how development programs can have an effect.

A central part of the discussion of federalism regards "consociationalism." Supporters of consociational mechanisms support regional autonomy for divided societies, but these mechanisms should produce regionally rather than nationally

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[32] Of course, the direction of causality is a concern here. Strong regionalism can lead to a federal constitution.

oriented parties.[33] Lijphart (1977) and his critics continue to debate which type of representation—regional or national—is best for democracy. Lijphart argues that regional autonomy gives different groups a stake in the system, thus reducing their interest in fighting against it. Horowitz (1985), however, argues that such systems reify regional identities, leading to heightened tensions for the country and perhaps leading to separatist politics.

Federalism can lead party organization in two directions: fractionalization or decentralization. In cases such as India or Canada, federalism has bred multiple regional parties. In other countries parties develop national constituencies, albeit around a decentralized structure (Chhibber and Kollman 2004). This distinction may be unimportant to democratic stability if consociational theories hold, but decentralized party structures (with national constituencies) should be more propitious for building stable democracy if the critics of consociationalism are correct.

5.3.4 Electoral Systems and Party Laws

Party and electoral laws are frequent themes of reform discussions, owing to their direct impact on the political process. Frequently these laws are also easier to change than are constitutionally defined aspects of federalism or the executive system. While other factors are also important, electoral systems impact many dimensions of parties and party systems, including the number of parties, the power of leaders over rank and file, the ease with which new parties form, and coalition dynamics. For example, a high district magnitude (the number of candidates elected in each district) reduces the percent of the vote needed to win a seat, thus encouraging more participation by small parties. The electoral system can empower voters to express their (dis)pleasure with a particular politician, or it can prohibit such direct targeting by forcing voters to choose among unchangeable party lists. Those concerned with ethnic or regional conflict concern themselves with the details of electoral laws, seeing that they create incentives to either encourage politicians to build broad coalitions among disparate voters or to build platforms along narrow and divisive lines. Finally, quota laws have had dramatic effects on representation of women and minority groups. Election and party laws, in sum, encompass a wide variety of topics. In this section, however, we focus on just one: the manner in which votes are translated into seats.

There are two basic types of electoral laws, majoritarian and proportional, with an almost unlimited number of permutations. Majoritarian systems, also known as single-member district systems, require candidates to win a plurality (or majority) of the vote to win the legislative post. Single-member district systems hinder representation of small groups, especially if they are regionally dispersed. They do, however, have two primary advantages. They encourage candidates to

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[33] See Norris (2008) for an overview of consociational mechanisms. Regional autonomy is just one aspect of consociationalism. Others include executive power-sharing, minority veto, and proportional representation.

build wide constituencies and discourage fragmentation of the party system. Since candidates must win a high percentage of the vote, marginal candidates are discouraged from competing, so these systems tend to have fewer parties. Moreover, these systems privilege governability since they can translate a minority of votes into a majority of seats. And since these systems elect a single candidate to represent a territory, responsibility is clear.[34]

Proportional representation (PR) systems have two basic subtypes. One allows voters to choose only among parties; the other allows voters to select individual candidates. The advantage of the first is accountability of the party as a whole, while the latter encourages direct ties between the voters and particular legislators. The former, then, is supposed to discourage local-level politicking, which may be advantageous to efficiency, but it is harmful to local-level accountability. Seeking to balance these accountability systems, many countries have chosen hybrid electoral systems. We describe some of these systems and their effects after outlining the basic systems.

Under the first system type, "closed-list proportional representation," each party creates a list of candidates. These candidates compete for multiple seats that are in competition in each electoral district. Usually based on population, each district (usually a state or province) is allocated a number of seats, termed the district magnitude. Seats are then assigned to the parties based on the proportion of vote they received: if the party wins three seats, the first three people on the party list take office. District magnitude is the important variable here. Magnitude can vary from one (termed a single-member district system, as in the United States or Britain) to the full size of the legislature (as in Israel). Larger district magnitude systems require a smaller percentage of the vote to win a seat. For example, it would take only 4 percent to guarantee a seat in a 25-seat district, and it is likely that a party could win a seat with far fewer votes (though to counter this possibility, many countries specify a minimum "threshold").

Proportional representation systems impact accountability, representation, and governability, and other aspects of democracy in several ways. First, as we have noted, if the district magnitude is large, small groups of voters are able to win seats in the legislature. But if many small groups win representatives, the large number of parties in the legislature may threaten governability. Accountability is also difficult in such situations, as no single group can credibly claim credit (or blame) for policy decisions. Closed-list PR systems, especially those with large district magnitudes, create a further problem by insulating party leaders. Leaders are generally at the top of the closed party lists, and thus unless a party fails to win any seats, voters' punishment reaches only rank-and-file candidates (Democracy International 2007). Kunicova and Rose-Ackerman (2005) argue that this

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[34] Here too there are exceptions. In the Argentine and Mexican senates, for example, the party winning the plurality of the vote wins two seats and the runner up is given one.

insulation of the leadership is associated with higher levels of corruption. A final impact of these systems of accountability comes in terms of localism. Since voters choose candidates for the state/province, no individual legislator represents a particular municipality, city, or lower-level political divisions.

The second type of proportional representation system is "open list." Under these rules, parties present the voters with lists of candidates who compete in multi-member districts, but voters indicate their preferences among the candidates on the list.

These systems have an impact similar to their closed list cousins in terms of multipartism, but open lists have a different impact on accountability. Open list electoral systems do allow voters to discriminate among co-partisans, but in so doing the systems creates incentives for intra-partisan rivalries. Further, since the candidates cannot use party platforms to differentiate themselves from their co-partisans, the system encourages candidates to compete on personalistic images rather than national policy goals.

These different electoral systems, in sum, create incentives that drive the number of parties, the degree of localism, and the likelihood that candidates will build broad alliances. By requiring parties to provide a list of candidates, closed lists help party leaders centralize power. Open list systems (especially when the district magnitude is large) and single-member district systems, alternatively, privilege the independence of candidates from the party leaders by giving voters the power to determine who wins legislative seats.[35]

Recognizing the competing virtues and vices of majoritarian and different types of proportional representation systems, as well as the effects of variance in the size of the district magnitude, many countries have devised hybrid systems. Most common are "two-tiered" systems combining single-member districts with large magnitude closed-list proportional representation. This system, piloted in Germany, is now employed (though with important differences) in New Zealand, Mexico, Bolivia, Italy, Hungary, Japan, Lesotho, Mexico, New Zealand, Romania, Scotland, and Venezuela (Shugart and Wattenberg 1993). The clear goal of a two-tiered system is to produce some legislators directly responsible for their districts while still encouraging parties to elect a group of legislators dedicated to a partisan program. These systems also allow the parties to insulate policy or technical experts (and party leaders) from the campaign process by putting these "tecnícos" on the party list while the "politicos" run individual campaigns.

A second variation among the PR systems allows parties to put forth several candidates or closed lists of candidates who then compete together (and against one another) in each electoral district. In some of these systems, such as Japan's (until 1994) "single non-transferable vote" (SNTV), the votes for each party's candidates

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[35] If parties control candidate nominations, financing, career paths, or other valuable perquisites, they can retain some of that control over the legislators.

are not aggregated. This creates the problem of "wasted votes" since support beyond what a candidate needs to gain a seat is unhelpful to other members of that candidate's party (see, e.g. Cox 1997; Moon 1997). Related to the SNTV are the systems used in Uruguay and Colombia's system that was in place until 2003. Under Uruguay's "double-simultaneous vote" voters choose among multiple party factions at the presidential (until 2003), senatorial, and representative level. Unlike SNTV, the votes for the factions are added to generate a party total, so seats (and until 2003 the presidential winner) are divided according to the party's total before dividing among the factions. The pre-2003 Colombian system fits in between these systems, in that voters chose among closed lists of party factions, but the votes for each faction did not aggregate into a party total. Each of these systems puts important constraints on the party leadership, and each resulted in highly factionalized parties.

As its name implies, under the "single transferable vote" voters indicate second preferences, thus encouraging coalitions and centrist politics. This is similar to the "alternative vote," except that the former asks voters to choose among parties in a PR distribution of seats and the latter among candidates in a single-member district. Scholars (e.g.Lijphart 1977; Reilly 2001, 2002; Reilly 1999) concerned with ethnically divided societies promote these types of systems because they encourage candidates to pursue larger (national) constituencies in order to attract second place votes. For legislative elections, the alternative vote should help elect centrist candidates (see the Glossary for an example). While alternative vote systems do have important advantages, they require more voter sophistication and, at least in comparison with single-member district systems, they have the potential to prop up more extreme candidates who would otherwise be unable to attract enough votes to sustain their viability.[36]

Aside from the basic distinctions between majoritarian and the two types of proportional systems, electoral systems and party laws vary on many other dimensions. They can determine rules for candidate selection, requirements for party formation, and the restrictions on coalition formation. For example, they influence which parties can compete in elections by regulating the number of

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[36] Unlike a single-member district, the AV encourages extremists to compete, since voters could choose them with their first preference and then pick the more centrist candidate with the second vote. If the United States were to switch to the alternative vote, for example, new parties would form and compete, hoping to win voters dissatisfied with the two relatively centrist choices. Presumably one of the traditional parties would still win most elections (because second place votes from the extremes would transfer), but the extremes (based on ideology or identification with a particular group or interest) would be able to claim an electoral base. They might also win some of the seats if the centrist party supporters preferred the extreme to the other traditional party.

signatures a potential candidate has to collect or requiring different registration fees. They also set threshold requirements, such that small parties cannot receive seats in the legislature. Some countries also require regional distribution of the signatures to ensure that a party has a national basis. Peru goes even further; new parties have to establish committees of at least 50 people in two-thirds of the country's 25 regions and one-third of each province within those regions (for a total of 51 committees). Indonesia has similarly strong requirements for regional representation.[37]

These types of laws are not always effective. In practice most signature requirements are unobtrusive, and thresholds—most of which are in the range of 2-5 percent-- allow very small parties to gain legislative seats. Still, in cases with highly fragmented party systems, low thresholds can be important. In Russia, for example, nearly 50% of the vote in 1995 went to parties unable to attain legislative seats.

While electoral systems create clear incentives for different behaviors, multiple factors mediate their impacts. Closed-list electoral systems, for example, will not produce party loyalist candidates if parties use primaries to determine candidates.[38] Similarly, district magnitude interacts with federalism and the number of societal divisions in encouraging more or fewer parties. In India, for example, single-member districts produce multiple and different parties in each state, rather than the same two parties. Cox (1997) adds that ethnic or other cleavages are more easily expressed in some electoral systems than others.   If there are multiple cleavages and permissive electoral systems (i.e., high magnitude and easy party formation rules), then the system should produce multiple parties. With few cleavages and/or more restrictive electoral systems, the number of parties should be smaller. Sometimes arcane laws, such as Brazil's pre-1998 provision by which incumbents were guaranteed a spot on (open) lists regardless their voting record, also change the expected effects of the electoral system

Norris (2008) offers a very useful analysis of electoral systems and their effects on democratic stability. Based on classifications by Reynolds and Reilly (2005), she finds that "countries using list PR electoral systems consistently rate as significantly the most democratic" (p. 117). Still, the statistical significance only transfers into a 5-10 point difference on her 100-point democracy scales (p. 123). Her tests also show, importantly, that quota systems for ethnic minorities ("positive

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[37] Their rule requires that new parties organize permanent offices in 2/3 of the provinces and 2/3 of the municipalities in those provinces. The law also requires the parties to demonstrate minimum support in the cities where they are organized. There are several ways for existing parties to meet the registration requirements. Such as winning at least three percent of the seats in one half of provincial legislatures or holding two percent of federal legislative seats.

[38] Primary and other candidate selection systems also vary tremendously, and with greatly differing effects. We discuss some of these issues in the next section.

action strategies") shore up democracy. Her case study of New Zealand, however, shows that the new system supporting minor parties "may have produced greater polarization" (p. 129).

In sum, electoral systems and party laws directly impact the quality and stability of democracy through their influence on the shape of the party systems, the patterns of competition, and the parties themselves. However, in addition to their impacts on democracy, party and electoral laws are changeable pieces of the political context. Development programs, therefore must not only consider how they impact politics, but whether these systems should be targets of reform.

5.3.5 Party and Campaign Finance: Laws and Rules

Party and campaign finance are governed by national laws and party rules. These regulations can drive parties from the political scene or privilege some groups in ways leading them to power. Since they regulate the intersection of politics and money, the laws that govern party and campaign finance also affect corruption (Griner and Zovatto 2005). In determining how societal groups can support their favored politicians, they affect how power politics is played. Private financing systems, for example, can help to reify existing economic structures, while public finance systems can work to level the electoral playing field (Nassmacher 2003).

Most countries devise elaborate sets of laws and many offer generous public financing, but parties are still free to pursue private sources (Griner and Zovatto 2005). Concerns with financing systems focus on several key issues. First, public financing usually privileges existing parties, because public financing is based on the parties' previous electoral successes. Private finance, however, gives the existing parties the same advantage, in that private donors are more likely to support groups that have shown an ability to win. Public sources may reduce the influence of wealthy donors.[39] Nassmacher (2003) adds two concerns with public financing: it can undermine the independence of parties, and the expense can generate popular opposition. These criticisms, of course, must be weighed against the benefits of leveling the playing field and limiting the influence of moneyed interests. Nassmacher argues that since each type of source has some deleterious consequences, allowing all types of finance sources (public, private interest groups, grass roots, or foreign) could balance the advantages certain parties would take from each individual type.

In addition to the sources of financing, party finance systems must consider oversight. National electoral commissions attempt to monitor campaign finance, but these efforts are challenged by secretive sources of funding, in-kind support (such as vehicles or advertising), and unreported cash transfers to and from the parties.

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[39] The U.S. view that campaign spending is tantamount to free speech, it should be added, does not necessarily impede private campaign contributions where public financing is also available.

Further, individuals and corporations can often obscure funding that they provide to parties.

Parties and governments create the rules and laws governing party and campaign finance based on the larger political context, and thus these systems work differently in different countries.   The executive system, the party system, and the electoral system are among the factors that determine the source and effects of the financing system. In presidential systems, donors' contributions tend to go straight to presidential candidates rather than to the party structure (Navas 1998). The party and electoral system also affect whether campaign contributions are targeted at candidates or parties. If candidates are anonymous cogs in the system, private funders are more likely to support the party leadership. Run-off elections, non-simultaneous executive and legislative elections, and the electoral calendar all affect the collection of campaign funds. Campaign seasons are usually short in parliamentary systems, and the costs are therefore lower than in presidential democracies.

In sum, while some basic principles, such as transparency, clearly further democracy, every political financing system has important limitations. Public financing may help ensure transparency and advance some organization building of resource-poor parties, but politics will often preclude serious consideration of these types of government expenditures. Even where it exists, public financing has potentially negative effects. If funding is based on previous electoral returns, then larger parties are advantaged and new parties face particularly high entry hurdles. Further, laws that fail to alter illicit practices may have the perverse effect of highlighting dysfunction.

5.4 Party Rules, Time, and Informal Institutions

While electoral laws, constitutions, and other aspects of legal-institutional structures have clear influences on the patterns of party development, the effect of institutions is similar to the function of outer walls of a house in determining interior design: they influence by constraining, but they are not determinant (Morgenstern and Vázquez-D'Elía 2007).   This section explains how party rules, informal institutions, and time affect the number of parties and the degree to which a party concentrates power. These non-institutional variables certainly influence other aspects of parties and party systems, so the two outcomes are merely prominent examples. Note that party rules are an endogenous variable in an explanation of party development; they may influence the shape of the party, but they also result from that shape.

Regardless of the institutional context, complex party organizations do not spring full-form from their creators' minds. New parties slowly develop their organizations, recruiting leaders at different levels, establishing outposts, and building ties to societal groups. Elites, voters, and the parties they comprise adapt and learn, following examples of other parties in their countries or elsewhere. Politicians also take signals and advice from political advisors and donor organizations. Rashkova (2010) argues that new democracies tend to have more

parties than older democracies, because elites and voters have yet to learn optimization strategies. The adapting process suggests that time is an important variable in explaining party form and performance.

Time, however, is an insufficient explanation of development. Parties may move, as Michels (1962) argued, towards oligarchical forms rather than open and complex organizations. Or, in a manner similar to O'Donnell's concerns with "delegative democracies," parties may institutionalize in suboptimal forms.

5.4.1 Rules for Candidate Choice

The means through which parties choose both executive and legislative candidates critically impact the representative process.   Though federal laws occasionally govern these processes, and electoral laws have an important impact, parties have great leeway in determining the means through which they choose their candidates.[40] Parties may allow direct citizen (or party member) input through primaries or conventions, or they may empower the party leadership to determine candidacies as they see fit. As we argued earlier, these distinctions imply choices among democratic virtues, because increasing citizen input may reinforce democratic tendencies, but it may also generate internal party competition and thus conflicts.[41] Primaries also impact on competitiveness. Carey and Polga-Hecimovich (2006) find that in Latin America presidential candidates selected through primaries are electorally stronger than other types. At the legislative level, primaries are uncommon, but a system allowing voter input at the time of candidate selection but preventing it (through closed-list PR) in the general election might balance competing needs of representation and governability.

5.4.2 INFORMAL INSTITUTIONS

While much of the preceding discussion has focused on formal institutions and laws, we should not ignore informal rules. While laws may create boundaries for political action, informal rules and practices define how parties work within those (often wide) bounds. Helmke and Levitsky (2006) define informal institutions as "socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels" (p. 5). Informal institutions are not simply cultural norms; they are enforceable and accepted societal rules.

Informal institutions have ambiguous effects on democratic development. With respect to governability, informal norms can enhance accommodation, power-sharing, and coalition building. Siavelis (2006) shows that in the case of Chile informal institutions favored accommodation and helped to prevent many of the problems associated with multiparty presidentialism. But informal institutions can

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[40] Laws may determine how many candidates must be chosen, whether voters or parties determine list orders, and whether lists must include a minimum number of women or minorities.

[41] For more discussion, see section 4.2.1.2.

also reduce transparency and public accountability. In Mexico, for example, the institutionalized practice of the *dedazo*, for example, the president's single-handed designation of his successor, was a nondemocratic mechanism for succession during the period of PRI dominance (Langston 2006).

Informal practices are difficult to change, but through institutional reform and by working with parties and voters, assistance programs can and do work to modify these practices. Voter education programs and encouraging policy-based campaigning, for example, can work against clientelistic practices. Similarly, support for women's groups can aid in changing discriminatory practices.

6. Conclusion

Democracies require functioning political parties, but defining a course of action to aid party and party system development is no simple task. Because there are many potential development objectives, priorities are difficult to define. Many potential reforms favoring some desirable aspects of democracy also have negative impacts. Aid programs must contend with a complicated contextual setting that both influences party development but is also a potential target of reform. And finally, the targets of development programs have goals that differ from those of the providers of assistance: parties seek to win elections, while USAID programs seek to build democracy.

In response to these challenges we have proposed that aid programs focus on the role of parties and party systems with respect to different components of a developed democracy. We have collected these components under four categories: 1) accountability, representation, and participation, 2) governability and good governance, 3) stable and peaceful patterns of contestation, and 4) rule of law and fair and honest elections. We also argued that in pursuit of these development targets programs will necessarily work on the intermediate goal of building the parties' organizational and technical capacities. We stress, however, that programs working on this intermediary goal should maintain a focus on democratic development.

This document, then, calls for a theoretically driven approach to party development programs. USAID and its implementing partners must weigh competing development objectives and carefully consider the many factors affecting democratic development. In so doing, they will be able to make purposeful decisions about how programs focused on election-minded political parties affect democratic development. Our "Political Party Assessment Tool" aids the program design process by guiding an analysis of development needs. Our "Evaluation Approaches for Political Party Assistance: Methodologies and Tools" shows whether the programs have had their desired effects.

Glossary

Alternative vote (AV): Also known as the instant-runoff voting system (IRV), this voting system elects a single executive office or an individual legislative seat based on voters ranking their preferences among two or more of the candidates. If the initial count based on first-preference votes does not yield a candidate with a majority, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and votes for that candidate are redistributed according to the voters' second preferences. This process continues until one candidate receives more than half of all votes cast, at which point that candidate is declared the winner.

Table 10 provides an example. In the example there are five parties, presumably arrayed along a left-right axis. Voters rank order the candidates, so presumably Party A supporters would choose B as their second choice and party E voters would prefer D as their second choice. We can further assume that party B supporters would split their second choices between parties A and C, etc. In this case, party A would drop off first, so their 7 percent would transfer to party B. Then party E drops off, yielding a total of 42% for party D. When party B's votes transfer to party C, that party clears the 50% hurdle and is proclaimed the victor.

Table 10: Example of the Alternative Vote

	Party A (Left)	Party B	Party C (Center)	Party D	Party E (Right)
	Vote Percentages				
1st count	7	20	31	24	18
2nd count		27	31	24	18
3rd count		27	31	42	
4th count			58	42	

Ascriptive Representation: The mirroring of characteristics of the citizen characteristics, in terms of race, class, ethnicity, gender, and language, by government officials.

Bailiwicks: The focus of a representative on a particular area within their electoral district. Usually pertains to multimember districts where multiple legislators are jointly responsible for a large geographic area.

Cleavage: Social divisions that affect political allegiances and policies due to regional, ethnic, linguistic, class and religious differences among groups. Cleavages

can be cumulative, where the same groups of people are against one another on many issues, or crosscutting, where groups share common interests on some issues, but oppose one another on others.

Clientelism: A political system that exploits relations of patronage. Parties or local leaders act as "patrons" offering voters ("clients") jobs, protection, infrastructure and other benefits in exchange for their votes.

Closed List: A variant of party-list proportional representation where voters can only vote for political parties as a whole and thus have no influence on the pre-determined order in which party candidates are elected.

Constituent Service: Legislators´ assistance to constituents who have problems or concerns with issues related to governmental programs or agencies, such as pensions, welfare permits, etcetera.

Consociationalism: A mode of government that attempts to accommodate political conflicts through power sharing and compromise. Consociational mechanisms include grand coalitions, high levels of autonomy of regional governments, veto rights by regional governments or minority groups over national policies that directly affect them, proportionality in the legislature and perhaps the bureaucracy, and negotiated distribution of public office and scarce resources.

Constructive Vote of No-Confidence: is a variation on the motion that allows a parliament to withdraw confidence from a head of government, who then has to resign. Under the constructive vote of no-confidence, the parliament can only remove the current executive if they have decided upon a successor.

District Magnitude: Is the number of representatives elected from a given district (for a single legislative body). A single-member district has one representative (and a district magnitude of one), while a multi-member district has more than one.

Electoral Threshold: A requirement that a political party must receive a minimum percentage of votes, either nationally or within a particular district, to obtain any seats in the legislature.

Electoral Volatility: The degree of change in the support for a party between elections.

Federalism: A system of government in which sovereignty is divided between a central government and several provincial or state governments.

Horizontal Accountability: The capacity of state institutions to check abuses by other public agencies and branches of government.

Informal Institutions: Institutions that are known and enforced through cultural norms rather than the legal process.

Institutions: Human-made constructs that define the rules of the game in economic, social and political interactions. Institutions can be formal (such as constitutions, laws and rules, or organizations), or informal (which are known and enforced through cultural norms).

Majoritarian Electoral System: Generally used in conjunction with single-member districts, this system awards the victory only if a candidate wins 50% +1 of the votes. If no candidate meets this requirement, majoritarian systems stipulate a runoff. (Note the alternative vote, which has an instant runoff system, is a majoritarian system.) **Plurality** systems award the victory to the candidate with the largest vote total, regardless of whether they reached the 50% + 1 plateau.

Minority Government: An executive in which the congressional party or parties that support the government control less than 50 percent of the seats in the legislature.

Multiparty System: A party system in which there are three or more major contenders for power.

Open List: A variant of party-list proportional representation where voters have at least some influence on the order in which a party's candidates are elected.

Party Discipline: The degree to which members of a congressional party vote together. Sometimes discipline—where leaders impose voting decisions—is distinguished from cohesion—where legislators vote together owing to similar beliefs.

Party Nationalization: Refers both to the distribution of a party's support across a country and the degree to which that support is influenced by local rather than national issues.

Party System Institutionalization (PSI): Scholars have developed different definitions of PSI, and they usually refer to it as a process by which an organization becomes well established, is widely known, and will endure. Mainwaring and Scully (1995) define four parts of PSI: (1) stable patterns of interparty competition; (2) stable and deep roots of parties in society; (3) voters see parties and elections as legitimate and as the sole instruments for determining who governs; (4) and party organizations are characterized by stable rules and structures. Randall and Svåsand (2002) distinguish institutionalization of parties from that of party systems.

Poll Watcher: is a representative of a candidate, political party, civic organization or proposition who is legally in a polling place to observe the conduct of an election.

Populism: Political doctrine that supports the rights and powers of the common people in their struggle with the privileged elite. Populist leaders can espouse views from either end of the political spectrum, but more often claim not to be from any ideology. The term also implies a charismatic leader, and is often associated with a multiclass movement.

Proportional Representation (PR): An electoral system in which the share of seats won closely matches the share of popular votes received. It can take two main forms: closed list and open list (see entries on these terms).

Prospective Voting: The idea that voters make decision to support candidates on the promise of implementing particular policies.

Retrospective Voting: The idea that voters evaluate the past performance of parties or candidates when making their electoral choices.

Roll-Call Vote: A method of voting in a legislature where all present must indicate their vote by name. These votes can then become part of the public record.

Single Member District (SMD): A voting system in which one representative is elected from each electoral district. Examples of SMD are plurality voting systems (first-past-the-post), two-round (runoff) systems, instant-runoff voting, and approval voting. Of these, plurality (as in the United and the United Kingdom) and runoff voting (as in France) are the most common.

Single Transferable Vote (STV): An electoral law based on multimember districts and proportional representation in which voters rank candidates in order of preference. As candidates pass a specified electoral quota, they are elected and their surplus votes are apportioned to the remaining candidates until all the open seats are filled. In this way the results reflect fairly represent the preferences of the electors and, therefore, their support for both individuals and parties.

Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV): A variation within proportional representation electoral systems in which each voter casts one vote for a candidate but there is more than one seat to be filled in each electoral district. Those candidates with the highest vote totals fill these positions. Unlike the single transferable vote system, excess votes are not transferred under SNTV.

Social Capital: A key component for building and maintaining democracy, it refers to stocks of social trust, norms and networks that people can draw upon to solve common social problems.

Two-Tiered Electoral System: This type of hybrid electoral systems includes elements of both proportional representation and majoritarian electoral rules. It usually implies a tier of single-member districts overlaid by one or more closed-list proportional representation districts. The goal of this system is to produce some

legislators directly responsible for their districts while still encouraging parties to elect a group of legislators dedicated to a partisan program.

Unitary System: A centralized governmental system where local or regional governments exercise only the powers that the central government gives them.

Vertical Accountability: The means through which citizens, mass media and civil society seek to enforce standards of good performance on officials.

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