

# **TRAINING MODULE ON DEVELOPING CAPACITIES OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION WORKERS**



**Institute of Social Development**

Training Module : Developing Capacities of Grassroots Peace and Reconciliation Workers  
Copyright : Institute of Social Development, Kandy.  
November 2021

Published by :  
Institute of Social Development (ISD)  
No. 246/4, Ranawana Road,  
Katugastota, 20800,  
Sri Lanka.

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Image Source : Google Images

Printed by :  
[www.printsrilanka.com](http://www.printsrilanka.com)



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# PREFACE

Since the 2015, the Institute of Social Development (ISD) has been focusing building capacities of grassroots peace and reconciliation promoters across the country through persistent awareness education and capacity building trainings. This remains crucial in ethnically polarized communities like Sri Lanka, given the significance of reconciliation, peace and memories of three decades of ethnic conflict into account. In this venture, the ISD capacitates the local communities covering 25 districts and conducts several capacity building workshops and discussions throughout the country with the support of activists, academics, legal practitioners as resource persons. Through series of programs on this nature, the ISD intends to create local peace promoters by enlightening them on a range of areas such as governance, democracy, pluralism, reconciliation and coexistence, accountability and conflict resolution.

To achieve the above objective, we requested concerned resource persons to prepare training module with pragmatic ideas which can be used by the peace promoters as well as the civil society organizations at the local level. As such, this module has been prepared by Dr. R. Ramesh, Department of Political Science, University of Peradeniya, with the view of imparting basic knowledge and having discussions with the participants during the workshops.

I firmly believe that this guidebook can be used by relevant parties and individuals who wish to promote sustainable peace, healthy and peaceful society in Sri Lanka where multi ethnic communities can live together without a sense of fear and suspicion. The ISD thus committed to protect and enrich pluralism, co-existence and unity in diversity in the post-war context of Sri Lanka.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Ramesh, Mr. M. S. Karthigainathan, Project Manager and all other staff members who are involved in the "***Building Local Capacity Project***" at the ISD and throughout country as local partners and peace promoters.

**P. Muthulingam**

Executive Director

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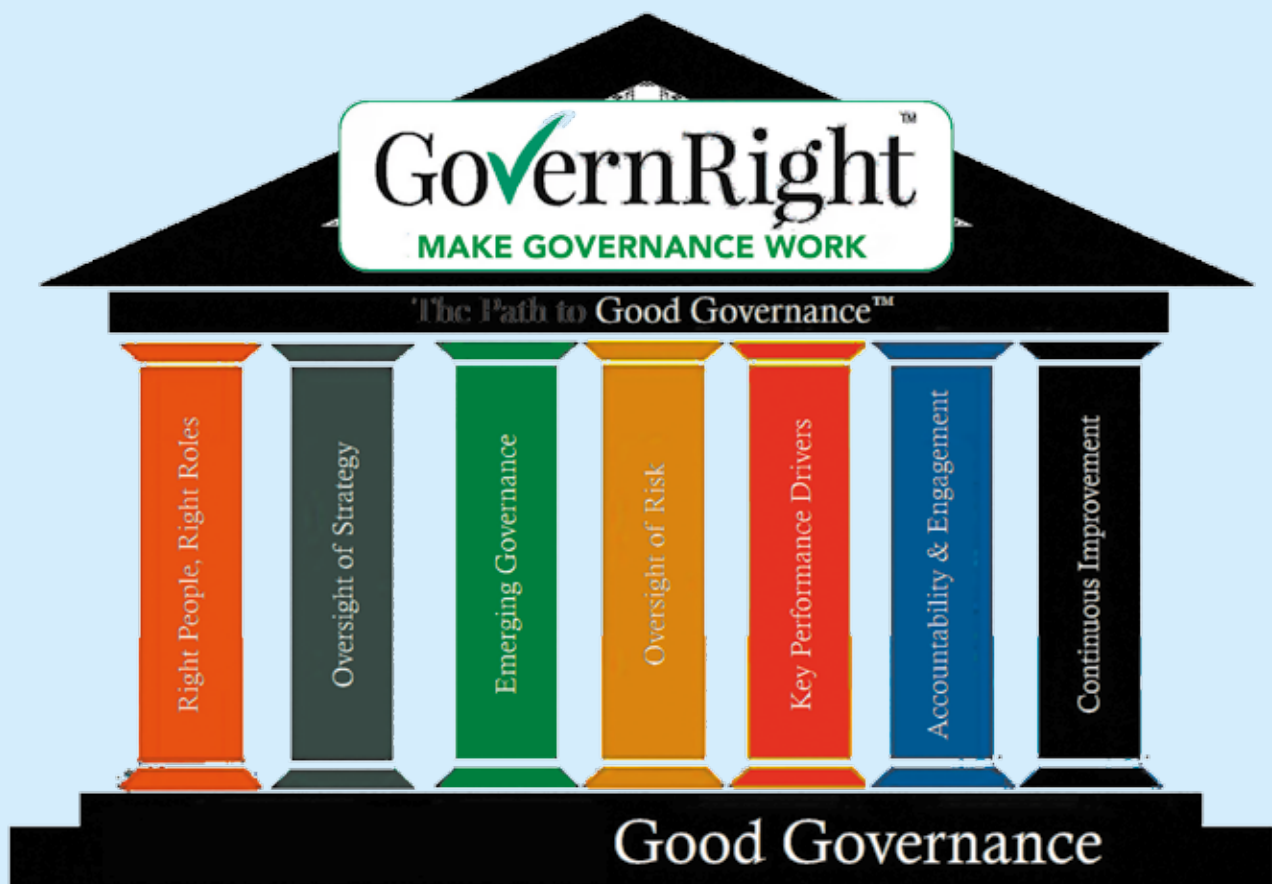


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# TRAINING MODULE ON GOOD GOVERNANCE







## TRAINING MODULE ON GOOD GOVERNANCE

### INTRODUCTION

Good governance is an ideal which is difficult to achieve and there are very few countries, societies or organizations which have even come close to fulfill it in total. However, to ensure sustainable human development, peace and social cohesion, action must be taken to make this ideal work. Thus, this manual is designed to provide trainings on good governance for TRF members those who involved in building peace, reconciliation and social cohesion and fraternity in 25 district of Sri Lanka. The increased participation and influence in planning, reporting and decision making enhances the capacity of local community and make them feel heard and proud.

### THIS MODULE COVERS THE FOLLOWING AREAS;

<b>01</b>	<b>EXPLAIN BRIEFLY THE CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>
<b>02</b>	<b>THE PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>
<b>03</b>	<b>REFLECT ON THE STRENGTHS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>
<b>04</b>	<b>EXPLAIN THE LINK BETWEEN GENDER AND GOOD GOVERNANCE, AND LEADERSHIP AND GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>
<b>05</b>	<b>DISCUSS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DECENTRALIZATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>
<b>06</b>	<b>EXPLAIN THE LINK BETWEEN GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS</b>

At the end of the training, participants will be to discuss and have dialogs at the local level on what is governance (Is it good or bad)? Why is good governance important? how to apply the concept of governance in different areas of society and how to promote the good governance for peace, sustainable development and reconciliation. The participants will also be to link good governance with human rights, gender and equality.

## WHAT IS GOVERNANCE (IS IT GOOD OR BAD)?

In general the concept of governance is not new and governance is defined as the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Governance describes a set of values, policies, and the institutions by which a society manages its social, political and economic processes through interactions among the government, civil society and private sectors. Since governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which the decisions are implemented, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors involved in decision-making and implementing, the decisions made and the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to implement the decisions. The government is just one of the actors in governance - civil society and market are another two powerful elements of governance.



## WHAT IS GOOD GOVERNANCE?

Governance refers to all processes of governing, the institutions, processes and practices through which issues of common concern are decided upon and regulated. Good governance adds a normative or evaluative attribute to the process of governing. From a human rights perspective it refers primarily to the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realisation of human rights.

While there is no internationally agreed definition of 'good governance', it may span the following topics: full respect of human rights, the rule of law, effective participation, multi-actor partnerships,



political pluralism, transparent and accountable processes and institutions, an efficient and effective public sector, legitimacy, access to knowledge, information and education, political empowerment of people, equity, sustainability, and attitudes and values that foster responsibility, solidarity and tolerance.

In summary, good governance relates to the political and institutional processes and outcomes that are necessary to achieve the goals of development. The true test of 'good' governance is the degree to which it delivers on the promise of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The key question is: are the institutions of governance effectively guaranteeing the right to health, adequate housing, sufficient food, quality education, fair justice and personal security?

## PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE



It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities and marginalized groups are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and the future of the society.

## PARTICIPATION

Participation by both men and women is a key cornerstone of good governance. Participation could be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives. It is important to point out that representative democracy does not necessarily mean that the concerns of the most vulnerable in society would be taken into consideration in decision making.



Participation needs to be ensured and organized. This means freedom of association and expression on one hand and an organized civil society on the other hand. Ideally participation means that individuals, marginalized, minorities and/or organizations are involved in decision making and not just informed about decisions already made. Thus participation creates trust among involved stakeholders along with solidarity and co-existence and mutual understanding.

## RULE OF LAW

Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially. It also requires full protection of human rights, particularly those of minorities. Impartial enforcement of laws requires an independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police force. Equality before law is a key principle important to ensure equal access to justice, fair trial or hearing, equal access to resources, services and to feel as rightful citizens of a country where she/he lives.



## TRANSPARENCY

Transparency means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It also means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. It also means that enough information is provided and that it is provided in easily understandable forms and media. It also refers that decisions are taken



and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations. There is public access to all information which is not classified for well-specified reasons as provided for by law (such as the protection of privacy or ensuring the fairness of procurement procedures). Information on decisions, implementation of policies and results is made available to the public in such a way as to enable it to effectively follow and contribute to the work of the government.

## RESPONSIVENESS

Good governance requires that institutions (e.g. central, provincial and local) and processes try to serve all stakeholders equally within a reasonable timeframe. Citizens should feel that the government is responsive to their needs and their voices are heard. This is particularly important for ethnic minorities, marginalized and vulnerable groups.

## CONSENSUS ORIENTED

There are several actors in the society with different viewpoints. Good governance requires mediation of the different interests in society to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved. It also requires a broad and long-term perspective on what is needed for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goals of such development. This can only result from an understanding of the historical, cultural and social contexts of a given society or community.



## EQUITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

A society's well-being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society. This requires that all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being. This also includes within the sphere of government, human



rights are respected, protected and implemented, and discrimination on any grounds is combated. Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded. Social cohesion and the integration of disadvantaged areas are promoted. Access to essential services is preserved, in particular for the most disadvantaged sections of the population. There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community and on how this can be achieved. Decisions are taken according to the will of the many, while the rights and legitimate interests of the few are respected.

## EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

Good governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while it is making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.



## ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is a key requirement of good governance. Not only governmental institutions, but also the private sector and civil society organizations, must be accountable to the public and to their institutional



stakeholders. Who is accountable to whom varies depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or an institution. In general an organization or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and following the rules of law.



## FREE, FAIR ELECTIONS AND PARTICIPATION

Local elections are conducted freely and fairly, according to international standards and national legislation, and without any fraud. Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life at local level. All men and women can have a voice in decision-making, either



directly or through legitimate intermediate bodies that represent their interests. Such broad participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association. All voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making, including over the allocation of resources.

## LEADERSHIP AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Define Leadership: State some of the qualities of a good leader while identifying the different types of leadership and significance of leadership for good governance. There remains close link between leadership and good governance.



A good leader must be: Respectful, Visionary, Tolerant, Open and Accommodating, Transparent, Responsible in behavior, Consultative, Supportive, Able to delegate, Fair/impartial, Empathetic and Sympathetic, Accept faults, Flexible but firm, Decisive etc. Our country deserves leaders with these qualities. You need to demand all these attributes from your communities' leaders so they can effectively manage the affairs of your community. However, in real life situations, there exist two different types/kinds of leadership with related unique characteristics:

**Autocratic Leadership** : is very direct, dominating, impatient, hot-tempered unapproachable, impolite, harsh.

**Democratic Leadership** : is participatory, consultative, considerate, approachable, responsive, respectful, polite, delegating.

## GENDER AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

*A government officer visits a village and she/he summons a meeting of the entire community and expresses her/his intention to assist them with the construction of a community library, which she/he observed is the main community problem. She/he then selects a development committee and assigns tasks to people, giving them a deadline for the accomplishment of their tasks. Having done so, she/he leaves and comes back after one month to check on the progress of activities. To her/his greatest shock and disappointment, nothing has happened.*

### THINK ABOUT THIS STORY AND TRY TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWINGS QUESTIONS.

What is participation?

- Why is participation important?
- How can people's participation be improved in governance?
- What are the common factors that hinder people participation in governance process?

Participation is a process of joint dialogue, sharing and learning about situations to obtain consensus towards action and change. Participation is an active process by which community people influence the direction and implementation of a development project/activity. Participation includes the involvement of people in decision-making processes, implementation, sharing of benefits and costs, and taking part in the project/activity evaluation.

Some of the factors that hinder community participation are: members of the community are not involved at all stages of the activity; socio-cultural conflicts in the community; poor leadership; political interference; ignorance coupled with illiteracy; lack of commitment; stereotypes about women, youth, disabled people.

### THINK ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

To what level are women, youths and physically challenged represented in your program?

- To what extent do these groups participate in decision-making in local initiatives?
- How can you involve these groups of people in the activities of your organization?
- Why is it important to include these groups?



## INCLUSION IS IMPORTANT FOR PRACTICING GOOD GOVERNANCE:



## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS:

You need to develop relationships with your community/target groups and with local stakeholders. Better relationship will improve the reputation and impact of your work at the community level. A CSOs can establish credibility by:

- Keeping your demands/speaking moderate.
- Rather than attacking stakeholders in your community, employ variety of non-confrontational advocacy strategies.
- Bringing together all different groups across their community and hearing all views.
- Understanding its role in community.
- Fulfilling their role, being dedicated to your beneficiaries, promote accountability and transparency by meeting at least once a month, keeping record of the meeting, making it public, providing feedback/information to the community and stakeholders, making your financial record open to the public.

## DECENTRALIZATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Decentralization has been considered as a tool for good governance thorough the world and it enables people participation in governance process. Importantly, it helps local communities to easily access government institutions and variety of services and benefits. Under the centralized system, the heads of government departments at district

and provincial level are the extension of the central government. They do not have power and authority to act independently without consulting the central government office. Citizens may hardly participate in decision-making processes, and there is usually little consultation on issues that affect their lives.

#### **PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH CENTRALIZED POWER OFTEN INCLUDE:**

- Poor service delivery (corruption and mismanagement, marginalization)
- lack of transparency (e.g. not knowing what happens with tax money)
- lack of accountability (e.g. not knowing who is accountable when resources are mismanaged or services are not provided)
- Lack of participation (e.g. people are not involved in decision-making about development in their communities)

#### **ADVANTAGES ASSOCIATED WITH DECENTRALIZED POWER INCLUDE:**

- To improve efficiency of resource allocation
- To foster accountability and reduce corruption
- To facilitate cost recovery through mobilization of resources
- To manage resources controlled by local communities
- To increase local participation in governance and decision-making
- To increase mobilization of the local resources
- To increase individual identification and understanding of the project activities

#### **HOW ARE GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS LINKED.**

Good governance and human rights are mutually reinforcing. Human rights standards and principles provide a set of values to guide the work of governments and other political and social actors. They also provide a set of performance standards against which these actors can be held accountable. Moreover, human rights principles inform the content of good governance efforts: they may inform the development of legislative frameworks, policies, programmes, budgetary allocations and other measures.

On the other hand, without good governance, human rights cannot be respected and protected in a sustainable manner. The implementation of human rights relies on a conducive and enabling environment. This includes appropriate legal frameworks and

institutions as well as political, managerial and administrative processes responsible for responding to the rights and needs of the population.

## **THE LINKS BETWEEN GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS CAN BE ORGANISED AROUND FOUR AREAS:**

### **1. DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

When led by human rights values, good governance reforms of democratic institutions create avenues for the public to participate in policymaking either through formal institutions or informal consultations. They also establish mechanisms for the inclusion of multiple social groups in decision-making processes, especially locally. Finally, they may encourage civil society and local communities to formulate and express their positions on issues of importance to them.

### **2. PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY**

In the realm of delivering state services to the public, good governance reforms advance human rights when they improve the state's capacity to fulfil its responsibility to provide public goods which are essential for the protection of a number of human rights, such as the right to education, health and food. Reform initiatives may include mechanisms of accountability and transparency, culturally sensitive policy tools to ensure that services are accessible and acceptable to all, and paths for public participation in decision-making.

### **3. RULE OF LAW**

When it comes to the rule of law, human rights-sensitive good governance initiatives reform legislation and assist institutions ranging from penal systems to courts and parliaments to better implement that legislation. Good governance initiatives may include advocacy for legal reform, public awareness-raising on the national and international legal framework, and capacity-building or reform of institutions.

### **4. ANTI-CORRUPTION**

In fighting corruption, good governance efforts rely on principles such as accountability, transparency and participation to shape anti-corruption measures. Initiatives may include establishing institutions such as anti-corruption commissions, creating mechanisms of information sharing, and monitoring governments' use of public funds and implementation of policies.



# DEMOCRACY





## DEMOCRACY

***"WE WILL STRIVE FOR OUR COMMON GOAL OF PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AT THE HIGHEST QUALITY, NATIONALLY, REGIONALLY AND LOCALLY FOR ALL OUR CITIZENS".***

### INTRODUCTION

"Democracy" can be simply defined by the following terms: Government of the People or Government of the Majority. Democracy, as a State form, is to be distinguished from monarchy, aristocracy and dictatorship. You may have already heard about the most common definition of democracy: 'the government of the people, by the people and for the people' (Abraham Lincoln). To put it another way we can say that a government comes from the people; it is exercised by the people, and for the purpose of the people's own interests. Democracy is not the law of the majority, but the protection of the minority.

### SOME QUOTES ON DEMOCRACY

"The right to vote is not a privilege, it is a fundamental right and duty."

"Any departure from the principle of universal suffrage risks undermining the democratic validity of the legislature thus elected and the laws which it promulgates."

"Democracy doesn't recognize east or west; democracy is simply people's will."

"A minority may be right, and a majority is always wrong - Democracy is best conceived as a process of democratization."

"Democracy doesn't mean much if you are hungry or homeless, or have no health care or your children can't go to school; even if you have a vote, democracy is not effective."

## THE ORIGIN OF DEMOCRACY IN ANCIENT TIMES

Although democracy is newly resurgent, it is an old idea. More than 2,500 years ago in Athens and other cities of Greece, there was rule by the people (demos). Democracy (demokratia), or rule by the people, was an alternative to such traditional governments as monarchy, rule by one, and oligarchy, rule by the few. In the first democracies, citizens made and enforced the laws for their small republic, the polis or community of the city. There was majority rule by the citizens, the people of the community who participated directly in their assembly, the lawmaking body. The status of citizen, however, was restricted to free males of Greek descent, a minority of the population. Women and slaves could not be citizens, and only a small number of non-Greek males ever were granted the privilege of citizenship.

Ancient Greek democracy afforded citizens equal rights to participate directly in governance for the common good of their community. The claims of the community upon the person, however, were primary and superior to the claims of the person upon the community. A good citizen was expected to serve unconditionally the interests of the city-community, especially to defend its freedom and independence against the threat of foreign domination.

There was no sense of personal and private rights of individuals in the democracies of ancient Greece. The decisions made by a majority vote of citizens often disregarded the interests of those in the minority, and sometimes the citizen majority formed a tyranny that abused and oppressed individuals with unpopular opinions.

## DEMOCRACY : BASIC PRINCIPLES

In Abraham Lincoln's famous quotation (1863), democracy is "government of the people, by the people, for the people"; the three definitions can be understood as follows: - "of": power comes from the people - the people are the sovereign power that exercises power or gives the mandate to do so, and whoever is part of authority may be held responsible by the people; - "by": power is exercised either through elected representatives or direct rule by the citizens; - "for": power is exercised to serve the interests of the people, that is, the common good. In every country, democracy and the basic understanding of human rights have to be permanently developed to meet the challenges that every generation faces. Every generation has to be educated in democracy and human rights.

**DEMOCRACY AS A POLITICAL SYSTEM CORE ELEMENTS OF MODERN  
CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACIES INCLUDE:**



- A constitution, usually in written form, that sets the institutional framework for democracy protected in some countries by an independent, high court; human rights, usually not all, are protected as civil rights; - human rights are referred to in the constitution and then relegated to civil rights as guaranteed constitutionally.
- Governments that have signed human rights conventions are obligated to uphold the range of rights they have ratified, regardless of whether they are specifically referred to in the constitution; - the equal legal status of all citizens: all citizens are equally protected by the law through the principle of non-discrimination and are to fulfil their duties as defined by the law. - universal suffrage: this gives adult citizens, men and women, the right to vote for parties and/ or candidates in parliamentary elections.
- In addition, some systems include a referendum, that is, the right for citizens to make decisions on a certain issue by direct vote; - citizens enjoy human rights that give access to a wide range of ways to participate. This includes the freedom of the media from censorship and state control, the freedom of thought, expression and peaceful assembly, and the right of minorities and the political opposition to act freely; - pluralism and competition of interests and political objectives: individual citizens and groups may form or join parties or interest groups (lobbies), non-governmental organisations, etc. to promote their interests or political objectives.
- There is competition in promoting interests and unequal distribution of power and opportunities in realising them; - parliament: the body of elected representatives has the power of legislation, that is, to pass laws that are generally binding.
- The authority of parliament rests on the will of the majority of voters. If the majority in a parliamentary system shifts from one election to the next, a new government takes office. In presidential systems the head of government, the president, is elected separately by direct vote;
- Majority rule: the majority decides, the minority must accept the decision. Constitutions define limits for majority rule that protect the rights and interests of minorities. The quorum for the majority may vary, depending on the issue – for example, two-thirds for amendments to the constitution.
- Checks and balances: democracies combine two principles: the authority to exercise force rests with the state, amounting to a “disarmament of citizens”. However, to prevent power of force to turn into autocratic or dictatorial rule, all democratic systems include checks and balances. The classic model divides state powers into legislation, executive powers, and jurisdiction
- Temporary authority: a further means of controlling power is by bestowing authority for a fixed period of time only. Every election has this effect, and in some cases, the total period of office may be limited, who must step down after two four-year terms of office.

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF DEMOCRACIES SHARE SOME STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING.

### STRENGTHS OF DEMOCRACIES

- Democracy provides a framework and means for civilised, non-violent conflict resolution; the dynamics of conflict and pluralism support the solution of problems.
- Democracies are “strong peacekeepers” - both in their societies and in international politics.
- Democracy is the only system that facilitates an exchange of political leadership without changing the system of government.
- Democracies are learning communities that can accommodate human errors. The common good is defined by negotiation, not imposed by an autocratic authority.

### PROBLEMS OF DEMOCRACY

- Human rights reinforce democracies by providing a normative framework for political processes that is based on human dignity. Through ratification of human rights treaties, a government can extend to its citizens “promises” that maintain personal liberties and other rights.
- Parties and politicians tend to sacrifice long-term objectives for success in elections.
- Democracies create incentives for short-sighted policy making, for example at the expense of the environment or later generations (“muddling through”).
- Government for a people is government within the confines of a nation state. Increasing global interdependence, such as in economic and environmental developments, limits the scope of influence of democratic decision making in a nation state.

### HOW TO DISTINGUISH DEMOCRACY FROM NON - DEMOCRACY

#### ELECTIONS :

There is broad international agreement today about the minimal criteria a country must meet in order to cross the threshold of democracy. In an authentic democracy, the citizens or people choose representatives in government by means of free, fair, contested, and regularly scheduled elections in which practically all adults have the right to vote and otherwise participate in the electoral process. Between elections, all

persons living in a genuine democracy can participate freely to influence the decisions of their government. And members of minority parties are able to criticize and otherwise oppose the ruling party or parties without obstruction in their pursuit of victory in the next electoral contest to control the government. Popular sovereignty prevails; the government rules by consent of the people to whom it is accountable.

An authentic democracy of our time is anchored in a constitution, a framework for limited government that guarantees the rule of law to protect the political rights of individuals to freedom of speech, press, petition, assembly, and association. Thus, citizens can participate freely to elect their representatives in government and to hold them accountable during the period between elections. And they can freely associate and express their individuality and diversity in civil society, the private domain of life that exists independently of control by government. A legitimate constitution functions effectively in the daily lives of individuals to prevent the government from acting arbitrarily to impose either a tyranny of an elite group over the majority or a tyranny of the majority over unpopular minorities.

## CONSTITUTION

An authentic democracy of our time is anchored in a constitution, a framework for limited government that guarantees the rule of law to protect the political rights of individuals to freedom of speech, press, petition, assembly, and association. Thus, citizens can participate freely to elect their representatives in government and to hold them accountable during the period between elections. And they can freely associate and express their individuality and diversity in civil society, the private domain of life that exists independently of control by government. A legitimate constitution functions effectively in the daily lives of individuals to prevent the government from acting arbitrarily to impose either a tyranny of an elite group over the majority or a tyranny of the majority over unpopular minorities

### THE PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMOCRACY TODAY, WHICH DISTINGUISH IT FROM NON-DEMOCRACY, ARE

- Constitutionalism,
- Representation in government
- Individuals' rights to liberty
- Constitutionalism provides limited government and the rule of law based in a constitution.
- Representation of the people in government comes by way of free, fair, competitive, and periodic elections conducted in accordance with a constitution that protects individuals' rights to participate. And the ultimate desirable consequence

of constitutionalism and representative government through elections is the guarantee of rights to liberty for each person in the nation, majorities and minorities alike. Thus, liberty in an indirect or representative democracy depends upon constitutionalism, which limits and regulates the power of government in order to guard against tyranny of any kind.

- Constitutionalism in a democracy especially protects against the pitfall of majority tyranny, which has afflicted popular governments of times past and present. Only by constitutionally restraining the majority to protect the rights of minorities can there be the inclusion of all the people in the polity, a necessary condition for justice in a democracy today.

## ARGUMENTS FOR DEMOCRACY

- Enhance the individual's sense of dignity and self worth
- Encourage individuals to promote the well-being of their community
- Provide equal opportunities for individuals' self fulfillment
- Draw upon the collective wisdom of the people in making decisions
- Treat individuals as political and civic equals
- Protect the equal rights of all persons to life, liberty, and property
- Encourage economic productivity and a high quality of life by distributing rewards based on merit rather than inherited status
- Promote international peace, order, and stability, because democracies tend not to fight against each other
- Bring about orderly resolution of conflict within a country
- Make rulers accountable to the people they rule
- Justify the legitimacy of government by basing it on popular consent

## DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The values of freedom, respect for human rights and the principle of holding periodic and genuine elections by universal suffrage are essential elements of democracy. In turn, democracy provides an environment for the protection and effective realization of human rights. The connection between human rights and democracy is deep, and goes both ways: each is in some way dependent on the other, and incomplete without the other. However, a "democracy" is also incomplete without a thorough-going respect for human rights. Taking part in government, in a genuine way, is almost impossible to do without people having other basic rights respected.

## FOLLOWING ARE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DEMOCRACY TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS:

- 1 Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms
- 2 Freedom of association
- 3 Freedom of expression and opinion
- 4 Access to power and its exercise in accordance with the rule of law
- 5 The holding of periodic free and fair elections by universal suffrage and by secret ballot as the expression of the will of the people
- 6 A pluralistic system of political parties and organizations
- 7 The separation of powers
- 8 The independence of the judiciary
- 9 Transparency and accountability in public administration
- 10 Free, independent and pluralistic media

## THE PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMOCRACY TODAY, WHICH DISTINGUISH IT FROM NON-DEMOCRACY, ARE

- Democracy helps to prevent rule by cruel and vicious autocrats;
- Modern representative democracies do not fight wars with one another;
- Countries with democratic governments tend to be more prosperous than countries with nondemocratic governments; and
- Democracy tends to foster human development-as measured by health, education, personal income, and other indicators
- Democracy helps people to protect their fundamental interests;

- Democracy guarantees its citizens fundamental rights that nondemocratic systems do not, and cannot, grant; and
- Democracy ensures its citizens a broader range of personal freedoms than other forms of government do.
- Only democracy provides people with a maximum opportunity to live under laws of their own choosing;
- Only democracy provides people with a maximum opportunity to take moral responsibility for their choices and decisions about government policies; and
- Only in a democracy can there be a relatively high level of political equality.
- Effective participation: Before a policy is adopted or rejected, members of the political community have the opportunity to make their views about the policy known to other members.
- **Equality in voting:** Members of the political community have the opportunity to vote for or against the policy, and all votes are counted as equal.
- **Informed electorate:** Members of the political community have the opportunity, within a reasonable amount of time, to learn about the policy and about possible alternative policies and their likely consequences.
- **Fundamental rights:** Each of the necessary features of ideal democracy prescribes a right that is itself a necessary feature of ideal democracy: thus every member of the country has a right to communicate with others, a right to have his voted counted equally with the votes of others, a right to gather information, a right to participate on an equal footing with other members, and a right, with other members, to exercise control of the agenda. Democracy, therefore, consists of more than just political processes; it is also necessarily a system of fundamental rights.
- **Freedom of expression:** Citizens may express themselves publicly on a broad range of politically relevant subjects without fear of punishment.
- **Independent sources of information:** There exist sources of political information that are not under the control of the government or any single group and whose right to publish or otherwise disseminate information is protected by law; moreover, all citizens are entitled to seek out and use such sources of information.
- **Freedom of association:** Citizens have the right to form and to participate in independent political organizations, including parties and interest groups.

## WHY CITIZENS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DEMOCRACY

The establishment and maintenance of a democracy depend greatly upon effectively educating the people about the differences between constitutional democracy and various other types of government. If there would be “government of the people, by the people, for the people” - Abraham Lincoln’s pithy phrase about the meaning of democracy - then there must be education of the people about what it is, how to do it, and why it is good, or at least better than the alternatives to it.

In some countries, there were constitutions without constitutional governments and guarantees of human rights without the practical protection of them. These wrongful uses of the vocabulary and trappings of democracy demonstrated dramatically the importance of teaching citizens the concepts by which genuine democracy can be distinguished from its bogus imitators and rivals.

The great 19th-century French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville feared that flawed definitions of democracy would confuse people’s understanding of it and threaten its very existence. So, he bequeathed a wise warning about definitions and uses of words to the defenders of democracy against despotism. If more and more people are able to identify an authentic democracy, then democracy in our time might be more faithfully practiced and its blessings more extensively enjoyed.

## DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM

In a democracy, pluralism is considered and applied as a form of social order and policy. This can be of political, economic, religious, ethnic or of any other nature. A plural society is characterized by respect, acceptance and recognition of all points of view; no matter how different or diverging they can be; and their dissemination, as well as their enforcement should not be faced with any obstacle. Pluralism is based on controversial discussions whose results are often built on compromises which eventually satisfy all the involved groups, or at the very least, are acceptable as a whole. In pluralism, either dialogues, points of view exchanges or discussions, as well as ideas and opinions that are debated there have a constructive feature within the framework of social processes of expression of ideas and political will of citizens, even if they are either contrary to or opposed to the regime in place or even closer to the opposition.

## DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Governance is the exercise of a power or of an authority with the objective of managing the affairs of a State, an organization or a society. Democratic governance, or ‘good governance’, is based on the enforcement of the fundamental values of democracy in

the power exercise. But what are in fact these fundamental values of democracy? Given the fact that democracy constitutes a conviction, its orientation concerns fundamental values that help human beings to apply democratic transformations and to try to live this democracy. Those fundamental values, among others: justice, equality, solidarity, tolerance, pluralism, the taking into account of the minorities, non-violence, dialogue and negotiations, free community life. Democracy then respects and takes into consideration, as much as possible, the interests of the minorities in the framework of the adoption of majority decisions. The most important principles of good governance that can be drawn from the fundamental values of democracy are: participation, efficiency, efficacy, sense of responsibility and responsibility, the act of reporting, adaptation capacity, transparency, rule of law and participation.

## YOUNG PEOPLE AND DEMOCRACY

In fact, many young people are politically very active long before they get the vote, and in some ways, the impact of such activity can be stronger than the single vote they receive later on – and may or may not decide to use - once every 4 or 5 years. Politicians are often anxious to appeal to the youth vote, so they may be more likely to listen to the concerns of young people. Perhaps one of the most important ways that young people can begin to be engaged in community life and political activity is at a local level: here they will be more aware of the particular issues that are of concern to them and those with whom they come into contact, and they will be better able to have a direct impact. Democracy does not only deal with national or international issues: it needs to begin in our own neighborhoods. Youth organizations are one of the ways through which young people experience and practice democracy and, therefore, have an important role in democracy.



## ACCOUNTABILITY





## ACCOUNTABILITY

### INTRODUCTION

Accountability has been described as "the hallmark of modern democratic governance". This is not a new idea. Benjamin Disraeli, a 19th century British politician, wrote "... that all power is a trust; that we are accountable for its exercise. In politics and administration, responsibility was the technical term that was preferred to indicate the duty that persons in public authority had to "respond" in their conduct and actions as public officials.

Accountability, is a principle according to which a person or institution is responsible for a set of duties and can be required to give an account of their fulfilment to an authority that is in a position to issue rewards or punishment.

The phrase "accountability" is originally derived from the Latin word "accomptare" which means "to account" for something. It has often been used synonymously with other concepts such as "answerability", "enforcement", "responsibility", "blameworthiness", and "liability". However, the duplicity notwithstanding, all the terms used in connection with the concept of accountability are associated with one common meaning which is the "obligation and expectation of account-giving" about what one has done. It has to do with responsiveness and being answerable to somebody or the people.

### ACCORDING TO ROBERT BEHN, INDIVIDUALS EXERCISE ACCOUNTABILITY IN FOUR WAYS:

- For finance, when we establish detailed expectations about how public officials will handle public resources;
- For fairness or equity, when we create values, principles, and ethical standards to ensure that government and its employees treat its citizens fairly; for use (or abuse) of power, when we create rules to limit the discretion of public officials and to prevent those officials from abusing their power and discretion in finances or fairness; and finally,
- For performance, when we define the expectations for the actual outcomes that public officials will achieve using public resources and their invested power.



## ACCOUNTABILITY IN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION

Normally, accountability is said to apply to positions of public office. These comprise both political positions, where representatives or people covering other institutional roles deal with public affairs in the name and interest of the citizens, and administrative positions, where the link with the citizens is mediated by the government. The chain of accountability is different in the two cases, and so is the form that accountability takes.



**Political accountability:** In democracies, it depends, on the one hand, on the form and mechanisms of political representation, linking citizens to their legislators, and, on the other hand, on the formalized relationship between executive and legislative powers.

**Administrative accountability:** is apparently more straightforward because it operates within a more definite hierarchical structure where there is a certain division of labour and competencies and where both the content and the process of public decision making and, hence, the role played by individuals can be examined in more detail. There is another area of political and administrative accountability that is concerned less with how well (or badly) public officials operate in the public interest and more with whether they abuse their position of authority.

Accountability is here concerned with reducing the opportunities for corruption, maladministration, or legal impropriety that come to people in positions of power. Political and administrative institutions have a series of mechanisms and internal instruments for policing abuses of power, but, ultimately, accountability relies on more traditional legal instruments and the operations of the legal system and the courts at large.



A similar problem arises when one considers accountability from the reverse perspective of the identification of the people “to whom” officials (particularly in the public administration) should be accountable. It would seem that, in the most immediate sense, public servants are directly accountable to politicians and the government of the day. Yet, public servants’ accountability to their political “masters,” or to their superiors in the bureaucratic hierarchy, can only be justified as part of a longer chain, making them ultimately accountable to the citizens and the public at large.

## TYPES OF ACCOUNTABILITY

### ETHICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Respecting your coworkers and clients, not blaming others for your mistakes and apologizing when you're in the wrong is part of ethical accountability. Organizations and their employees have to be accountable for each other. For instance, if an employee does something wrong, the organization may have to issue an official apology on their behalf.



### FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

In an organization, financial accountability is concerned with creating a sound budget and ensuring minimal waste. Allocating resources efficiently would ensure that there's no excess expenditure. This is critical when you're in the planning stages of a new project where there are higher chances of exceeding your budget.



This is crucial to build public trust and confidence on government institutions and CSOs. Lack of financial accountability is more likely to distort core values good governance, legitimacy, public support and transparency – it also will create wrong perception on government institutions and CSOs.

### PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY



Personal accountability is whenever you make a conscious choice to take accountability for your actions. In the workplace, this can mean being accountable for your decisions and how it affects your coworkers. When you do something wrong, you could apologize instead of deflecting blame. Being productive at work and reflecting on your actions fall within the scope of personal accountability.

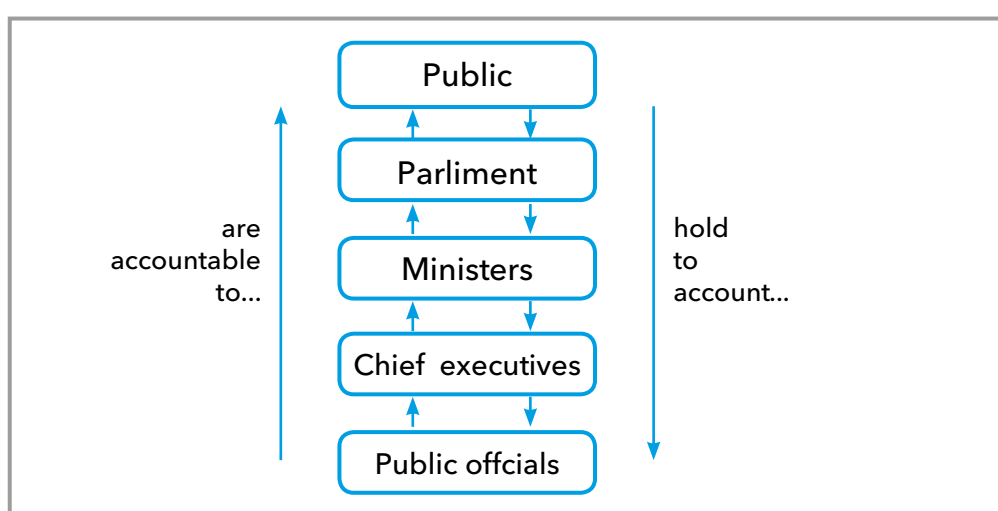
### PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

The obligations of agencies and public enterprises who have been trusted with the public resources, to be answerable to the fiscal and the social responsibilities that have been

assigned to them. These companies and agencies need to be accountable to the public at large and carry out the duties asked of them responsibly. Public accountability is an important pillar of any parliamentary democracy. Any public body that uses and manages public funds and resources is accountable to Parliament and public - this is applicable to CSOs as well. It is important that they understand and support the processes and systems that ensure public accountability.



**Public Accountability: Figure-01**



## SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Social accountability refers to the broad range of actions and mechanisms beyond voting that citizens can use to hold the state to account and make it responsive to their needs, as well as actions on the part of government, civil society, media and other societal actors that promote or facilitate these efforts.



Social accountability increases transparency and quality of government, policy development and implementation processes, and thus becomes the principal method for solving governance issues that hinder improvement of quality of life of citizens. In doing so, the government receives the propositions from their citizens and defines critical issues, explores their root causes and implements possible solutions (Word Bank). Thus, CSOs should advocate for social accountability at

the community level for issues related to peace, reconciliation, SDGs, social cohesion, development, corruption and preserving natural resources etc.

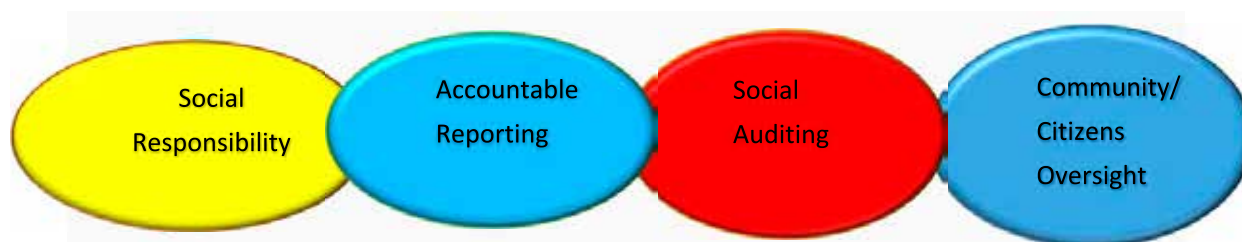
## OTHER COMMONLY USED DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY:

*Social accountability emerges through actions by citizens and civil society organization aimed at holding the state to account, as well as efforts by government and other actors (media, private sector, donors) to support these actions. It provides extra sets of checks and balances on the state in the interest of the public (UNDP).*



Social Accountability is a process of constructive engagement between citizens and government to check the conduct and performance of public officials, politicians, and service providers as they use public resources to deliver services, improve community welfare, and protect people's rights.

## THE CONCEPT OF "SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY" HAS BEEN TRANSLATED AND WIDELY USED AS :



## COMMON ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICE

- Constructive engagement between stakeholders, marked by a spirit of collaboration and not opposition. In social accountability, there is equal emphasis on recognizing and sustaining good practices, and on identifying problem areas for further improvement.
- Partnerships among different stakeholders, commonly between government institutions and the people who represent them and citizens or the groups (e.g., civil society) that represent their interests. There is a widespread hypothesis that involving other types of stakeholders - such as the private sector, industry experts, public service providers, and the media - increases the impact of social accountability initiatives.
- The use of evidence and tools as a basis for joint action. Tools and the methodologies for carrying them out are typically agreed on by all involved, and





can deal with perception or satisfaction data (e.g., citizen feedback on public services) to the more technical aspects of service delivery (e.g., monitoring expenditure on welfare).

- It is ideal that SA actions are embedded in naturally-occurring processes, especially when used as a tool for problem-solving. For this reason, the natural actors in a specific service delivery issue are those who benefit from or receive the service. In the case of schools, this can be the parent-teacher associations and students; in the case of local hospital, it is likely to be the immediate community around each hospital.

## DEMOCRACY AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Demands for more effective accountability have therefore tended to expand the instruments of political accountability, looking for ways in which political control can be exercised procedurally and in the course of decision making and not simply ex post facto. One can observe three tendencies in such a process of expansion.



- The first is the importance given to both administrative transparency and citizens' right of information. By opening up the process of decision making to public scrutiny, it is hoped that representatives and public officials will be forced to act in the public interest.
- The second is the introduction of various forms of more direct control or input from the citizens. Institutions such as the ombudsman, who can act as the direct voice of the individual citizen vis-à-vis the public administration, or the recall of public officials, which approximates to a form of imperative mandate, or the more frequent use of referendum on controversial issues are all ways in which public officials and public decision making in general are supposed to be brought into more immediate contact with the wishes of the citizens.
- The third avenue taken in the expansion of accountability, particularly as a way of curbing corruption and regulating private interest in public affairs, has been the introduction of stricter standards of conduct and the development of various registers

## ROLE OF NGOS IN ENHANCING ACCOUNTABILITY

The "circle of accountability" in which nonmajoritarian institutions are caught is also relevant to the role that nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are playing in the new accountability regimes. The so-called third sector, particularly in the form of international



NGOs and advocacy organizations, has increasingly taken on itself the task of monitoring the operation of both governments and intergovernmental institutions in relation to a number of fields where the rights of individuals and groups are concerned or where international public goods, such as environmental sustainability, are at stake. But as the role of NGOs has become more prominent as an instrument of accountability, they themselves have been made the object of new demands of accountability, which, however, involve the complex operation of identifying who are the "accountees"- those who finance them, their membership, the professional workers running them, or the people whose interests are the object of the NGOs' activities.



In developing countries, a very basic meaning of accountability for public officials is compliance with rules and regulations, but this legal obligation is just a basic foundation for the taking of further steps. The next level might be emphasizing an ethical character for public officials in carrying out public service. Up to these levels, penalties for wrong doing and or failure typically reflect the image of accountability system in many developing countries.

When a society becomes mature and democratic, more sophisticated levels of accountability are required. Simply being legal is not sufficient for public officials. Public officials should perform much more than what is legally and ethically required. Moreover accountability is not a fixed concept. Public officials should follow more advanced levels of public policies and procedure related to public accountability such as promoting answer-ability, responsiveness. Accountability should be embedded in organizational culture. There are major constraints in promoting public accountability. In most cases, "public sector is responsible for promoting public accountability, but it faces many challenges and constraints in doing so. The most serious challenges are the lack of transformational leadership and political will in many developing countries.

## RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Responsibility is an ethical concept that refers to the fact that individuals and groups have morally based obligations and duties to others and to larger ethical and moral codes, standards and traditions. The roles taken on by decision-makers imply a responsibility to perform certain functions associated with those roles. To be more



specific, responsibility refers to more than just the primary function of a role; it refers to the multiple facets of that function, which includes both processes and outcomes, and the consequences of the acts performed as part of that set of obligations. A responsible actor may be seen as one whose job involves a predetermined set of obligations that need to be met in order for the job to be accomplished.



Accountability is the readiness or preparedness to give an explanation or justification to stakeholders for one's judgments, intentions and actions. "It is a readiness to have one's actions judged by others and, where appropriate, accept responsibility for errors, misjudgments and negligence and recognition for competence, conscientiousness, excellence and wisdom." While responsibility is defined as a bundle

of obligations associated with a role, accountability could be defined as "blaming or crediting someone for an action"- normally associated with a recognized responsibility. The accountable actor is "held to external oversight, regulation, and mechanisms of punishment aimed to externally motivate responsive adjustment in order to maintain adherence with appropriate moral standards of action."

# GENDER AND GOVERNANCE





## GENDER AND GOVERNANCE

### INTRODUCTION

The module aims to explain the link between gender and governance and at the end of the training, participants will be able to understand the importance of fostering gender in governance process in all levels including community. The participation of women and men in formal and informal decision-making structures varies greatly between countries, but is generally in favour of men. Institutional as well as cultural, economic and societal factors limit women's opportunities and abilities to participate in decision-making and governance.

Women's low political representation and representation in governance institutions are therefore often used as an indicator of gender inequality. Women are underrepresented not only in the political sphere but also in decision-making within the private sector, at the village level and in civil society. At the local level, men usually dominate positions of power, including as religious and traditional leaders, local politicians and village elders.



Women's representation and leadership tend to be confined to areas that are traditionally 'feminine' such as social welfare. Women's representation in informal decision-making processes is often more common than their representation in formal positions and structures, but it tends to be hidden and therefore not as highly valued as it should be. In order to deepen democracy at the local, national and international level, it is important to ensure that women and men are able to participate on equal terms in both formal and informal decision-making structures, especially in governance institutions to make them empowered in all aspects of their life. Poor levels of participation and representation in decision-making bodies is exacerbated, for both men and women, by intersecting discriminations relating to ethnic group, socioeconomic status, religion, disability and sexual orientation.

## GOVERNANCE AND GENDER

Governance does not refer only to political participation but is defined as “the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in managing a country’s affairs”. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests; exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.” This definition stresses the need to look at formal as well as informal participation and involvement in political and economic processes that is looking at the role of the state as well as those of civil society, Non-Governmental Organizations and other institutions.



Governance does not belong only to the public realm, however, it has consequences for the private sphere since policies that protect individuals’ health and legal rights, or promotes welfare policy favourable to women’s empowerment; for example, ensure that these individuals can take an active role in the public sphere. Governance therefore crosses both

public and private spheres. Given the Sustainable Development Goals into account, government should pay much attention to include women in governance, from local, subnational and national levels. Gender equality cannot be achieved without creating equal space for women in government institutions.

## GENDER INEQUALITY AND GOVERNANCE

Gender Equality depends on democratic, and gender-sensitive governance since typically women, who are or feel marginalised from the public sphere and administration do not feel empowered to take action or participate in governance. More importantly, they do not take steps to make changes to ensure that governance is gender-sensitive. As a result, laws, policies and government institutions do not reflect the needs of all citizens, nor may they be conducive to encouraging progress, and protecting women’s rights. Therefore, civil society has to play a huge role through advocacy and collective actions to ensure gender equality in governance.





## CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION TO ENSURE GENDER EQUALITY IN GOVERNANCE

Civil society is often forgotten as a gendered domain. This can be partly attributed to failure to incorporate the household as a unit of analysis, and consequently forgetting to acknowledge the domestic responsibilities of women which impact on their time and energy to engage outside of the household. To understand participation in civil society it is important to look beyond a simple gender analysis and to incorporate an analysis of intersecting inequalities. Understanding which women and men are participating might reveal certain groups of men as being able to participate less than other groups of women. Actions can then be taken to particularly consult these hard-to-reach groups for programme interventions. The importance of gender in governance should be first educated at the civil society level to mobilize public support for this cause. Deepening this idea at the community level would help advocacy policy and institutional changes.



## GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

This topic has become a matter of serious concern in the world – but, in the case of Sri Lanka, there is no much debate on this important topic. Therefore, CSOs will have to play a big role to demand gender –budgeting which will help address numerous problems faced by women across the country. Interest in gender-responsive budgeting grew in the 1990s, alongside a more general interest in budget work within civil society.



It is driven by the premise that government policies, expenditure and revenue have different outcomes for women and men, girls and boys (and different groups of women and men, girls and boys). Such groups are distinct and have different needs and interests. Gender-responsive budget initiatives provide for assessment of the differing outcomes for different groups. The aim is not to establish separate budgets to address gender concerns, but to ensure that government budgets are allocated in an equitable way that satisfies the most pressing needs of individuals and groups.

Gender-responsive budgeting is not an isolated event, but an important aspect of gender mainstreaming and more effective public financial management. It focuses not only on the content of budgets, but also on the underlying policy process, in particular inclusiveness, transparency and accountability. Participatory budgeting initiatives have become a relevant aid instrument for gender-responsive budgeting and for the

more general participation of civil society in budgetary processes. Gender-responsive budgeting requires a significant shift in thinking and practice in the way that budgets are designed and implemented. It involves ambitious initiatives such as opening up the budget process to a wider group of stakeholders, prioritising equality, community consultation, and so forth.

## GENDER-RESPONSIVE REVENUE GENERATION

In most cases, gender-responsive budgeting focuses on the expenditure side (in particular, assessing the gender-specific effects of general government expenditure). The application of gender budgeting on the revenue side has been less defined. In order to get a full understanding of the income and gender impacts of government fiscal policy, however, government revenue must be analysed alongside expenditure to reveal and address gender biases. The goal of gender revenue analysis is to: 'identify and monitor the flow of sufficient financial resources so that gender equity is achieved in revenue generation and women and men, and girls and boys, benefit equally from programmes and services'.



## INVOLVEMENT OF NON-STATE ACTORS



The involvement of actors from outside the government executive in gender-responsive budgeting is important in supporting such work and in sustaining momentum for fiscal policy transformation and implementation. Gender budget work carried out within parliament and civil society can include research and efforts to influence the allocations of government money. This contributes to broader objectives of transparency, accountability and civic participation. Collaboration between civil society and parliament can also be effective in promoting support for and implementation of gender responsive budgeting initiatives. Further, gender-responsive budgeting can be adopted not only by government, but also by nongovernmental organizations, foundations, and other private sector organizations.

## WHY DOES GOVERNANCE MATTER FOR DELIVERING GENDER EQUALITY?

The government should have effective approach to closing remaining gender gaps in public life, scaling up inclusive approaches to policy making and public service delivery, and monitoring continuous progress in gender equality. For this, following are significant:



1. Good governance and accountability for gender equality;
2. Closing gender gaps in leadership in all branches of power; and
3. Gender equality in public employment.

There is growing global awareness that gender equality is the cornerstone of inclusive growth. Providing equal access to public and economic opportunities to both men and women is vital in accomplishing a more sustainable economy and improving national well-being. Failing to do so means losing the human capital of approximately half the citizenry, thus heavily compromising countries' full potential for growth and national development. Governance is key to delivering gender equality results. Meaningful changes on the ground require a coordinated, competent and powerful whole-of-government commitment, and clear and effective mechanisms in place within and across government institutions to be able to translate public policies, programmes, services and budgets into concrete benefits for men and women

All institutions and policy areas count for gender equality as they all impact men and women, and yet in a different way due to their different circumstances. This is why mainstreaming gender considerations throughout government is a fundamental commitment of countries that aspire to eliminate gender-based discrimination across the board and realise a fully inclusive society. For this following are important in a country and CSOs should make some intervention to achieve this;



## **SOUND GOVERNANCE FOR GENDER EQUALITY REMAINS A DISTANT GOAL: WHAT CHALLENGES REMAIN?**

Many developed countries have made important progress in closing the gender division in public life. However, much still needs to be done to equally include men and women in policy making and public governance, and to fully equip governments to effectively deliver gender fair policy outcomes. Women still lag behind men in access to decision-making and leadership positions. Therefore, during the training session, the following questions should be discussed in detail to provide participants with better understanding on fundamental barriers, challenges and issues in bringing gender equality in governance.

How can men and women equally participate in decision making and access political and public careers?

How can governments be better equipped to deliver meaningful social welfare, security and rights?

How can governments measure the gender-differentiated impact of their policy efforts on men and women?

How can national statistics systematically inform gender sensitive reforms?

These are some of the crucial questions to be discussed in trainings to internalize gender issues in governance.

## **THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME AVENUES FOR INTERVENTIONS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN GOVERNANCE WHERE CSOS CAN MAKE AN IMPACT;**

- Establish legal frameworks for gender equality;
- Strengthen institutions for adopting gender sensitive policies;
- Develop policy tools and guidelines for gender equality;
- Implement policies to promote equal representation of women in the Civil Service;
- Implement policies for improved work-life balance; and
- Foster women's access to leadership in politics, judiciary and the civil service.



## **WHY AN EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IS IMPORTANT FOR GENDERED GOVERNANCE**

To effectively implement a government vision and strategic plan for gender equality and mainstreaming, various institutions need to promote, produce knowledge on, implement, monitor and evaluate gender equality.

### **THIS INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK GENERALLY CONSISTS OF:**

- Central gender equality institutions, which promote gender equality and facilitate the implementation of gender equality and mainstreaming programmes at all levels
- Central Government (e.g. Cabinet and the Ministry of Finance), which is responsible for promoting gender mainstreaming in government policies and ensuring that ministries comply with gender mainstreaming requirements
- Line ministries and agencies, which are responsible should pursue gendered governance at all levels
- What kind of actions or activities can be carried out to promote gender equality in governance? Role of CSOs
- Make sure that gender equality policies are shared across the government and involve the highest possible level of government
- Clearly define and widely disseminate requirements indicating the actors in charge of implementing gender equality-related tasks and mainstreaming policies, and which resources will be allocated for this purpose
- Ensure the central government is willing, tasked and equipped to promote gender mainstreaming across government and provide a challenge function to ministries who do not comply.
- Advocacy to establish gender support mechanisms in line ministries and agencies to administer specific laws or regulations on gender equality, collect data, and develop sector specific plans, training and gender-sensitive personnel policies.
- Ensure that decisions on the implementation of gender equality and mainstreaming strategies are made on the basis of gender-disaggregated evidence and data.
- Ensure leadership of coordination efforts and that an effective coordination mechanism for gender mainstreaming is in place
- Introduce gender focal points and/or delivery units within line ministries can provide information on how laws or regulations are administered, data are collected, sectorial plans are developed and personnel are trained on gender-sensitive policies.

- Support data-collection in different institutions which ensure that high-quality gender-disaggregated evidence is available to support decision-making
- Fight for accountability and oversight structures that encourage compliance with gender equality policies, pinpoint deficiencies and redress remaining inequalities.
- Maintain robust co-ordination to ensure policy implementation to achieve above objectives

There are at least four major areas of governance programming with important gender dimensions,

## **GENDER AND PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM (OR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM) :**

Service delivery is a critical area of interface between women and the state, and often it is not a happy one. Women may be outright excluded, or bribes may be demanded of them for services which are theirs as of right, or services may be delivered in ways that reinforce gender stereotyped roles. The following are important questions to address this problem.

- How do women communicate their needs and demand to public service providers?
- How do they hold them accountable?
- How do accountability systems promote responsiveness to women clients, or punish failure to comply with national gender equality goals?

## **DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING DURING THE TRAINING AND HAVE DETAIL DISCUSSION ON THESE QUESTIONS WITH PRACTICAL EXAMPLES.**

- Do accountability institutions enable public authorities to answer more effectively to women?
- For this purpose, we should promote oversight institutions such as equal opportunities boards, human rights commissions, gender equality commissions, gender budgets.
- Also, discuss do these measures effectively include women or gender equality concerns?
- Are women's experiences of corruption addressed in anti-corruption interventions?



- Do women experience corruption differently than men? Arguably in some contexts women experience 'retail corruption' to a greater degree – having to pay small bribes for basic services.
- Arguably there are 'currencies' of corruption that are gendered – where sexual favors, not money, are demanded of women. Is this problem addressed in anti-corruption drives?

## RULE OF LAW

This critical area of governance reform has tremendous implications for women. This is at a number of levels: where basic legal systems are re-built after conflict, it is critical to ensure that abuses of women's rights are addressed and that judicial reform includes law reform to criminalize the abuses women experience, and training of legal personnel to prosecute these crimes more effectively.

## DECENTRALIZATION

This is the area where we do see considerable focused investment and programming to amplify women's voice in local decision-making and to bolster their skills for budget analysis, lobbying, etc. The effectiveness of governance reforms at a local level from a gender perspective ought to be tested by tracking local spending – is more money flowing into services that women need, such as ante-natal care, water and sanitation, street lighting?



## GENDER AND GOOD GOVERNANCE



We found that the meaning of women taking political office signified not only the creation of mechanisms for their entry into public office but also establishing women as legitimate political actors (as opposed to private persons who do not have a place in politics and the public sphere). Engendering governance institutions meant building accountability of governance institutions to women as citizens, changing rules, procedures and priorities that exclude the participation of poor women

and the incorporation of their interests in the development agenda, and the mobilization and organization of women's voice in civil society.

## THE PRACTICE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

What does citizenship mean for poor women? First, it meant the right to participate and to be agents. The meaning of citizenship for those groups who are on the margins of society is centrally about acquiring the power to define the problem of lack of rights and the solutions that would ameliorate this condition. Second, it meant aspiring for realizing substantive equality as opposed to formal equality. The case studies highlight how important it is to insist on the honest representation of the lived experience of specific categories of women (the most marginalized or those who are most affected by the specific lack of rights) in constructing substantive citizenship as against citizenship as formal rights.

Constructing voice Women's voice and women's organization as a political constituency within civil society are crucial in order to break through the barriers that restrict their participation in politics, within governance institutions and their claims to citizenship. In order to give 'voice' to women's demands an immense amount of work has to take place to organize and mobilize constituencies that grow into an awareness of the right to have a right, and the right to participate in decisions affecting their life.

Evidence shows the importance of citizen voice and constituting women as a political force, in order to shift and reshape institutional agendas, rules and practices. The task is twofold: on the one hand getting women more aware of their rights and more aware of how to hold institutions to account, and on the other intervening in organizational processes to reshape how organizations function.

Looking at institutions from the perspective of poor, marginalized women raised issues of broader institutional accountability, that institutions are not accountable to poor men also, and that there is often a lack of transparency. Hence redressing these imbalances from the point of poor women will result in better institutional accountability to all.





# TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION







## TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

***“PEACE AND RECONCILIATION ARE JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES AND IT MUST BE TAKEN ONE STEP AT A TIME.”***

### INTRODUCTION

This module aims to provide basic knowledge and understanding on truth and reconciliation for TRF members to undertake a series of outreach programs at the community level to foster peace, truth and reconciliation. This module is developed part of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Project of Institute of Social Development, which is being currently implemented in 25 districts of Sri Lanka.



The theme of reconciliation is receiving increasing national and international attention because it is seen as a key objective in transition processes after violent conflicts. Many countries are currently trying to define their reconciliation processes to recover from a violent past including Sri Lanka. This is a complex process, because reconciliation is a contested concept with a wide array of confusing and competing approaches, and it must always be carefully tailored to the given context, particularly to country-specific conflict and post-conflict dynamics.

### THE CONCEPT OF RECONCILIATION

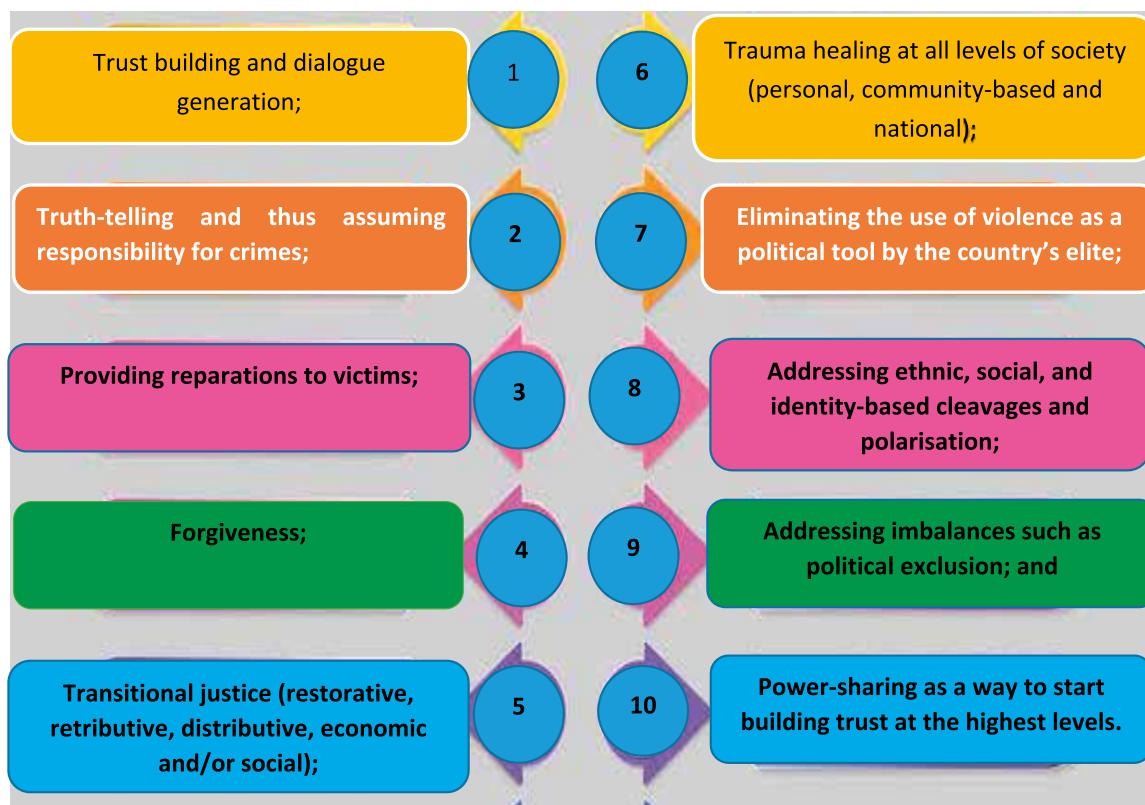
There is no simple, universal understanding of the term “reconciliation”. It is a contested concept that varies depending on the context, the nature of the conflict and the nature of the transition. One understanding of the term can be very useful in some settings, while in other contexts it can be quite controversial. Therefore, it is more important to focus on the purpose of reconciliation and on what we are trying to rebuild through a reconciliation process.



A very general definition would suggest that reconciliation is about building or rebuilding relationships damaged by violence and coercion, not only among people and groups

in society, but also between people/citizens and the state. It is also important to give specific consideration to societal stakeholders that have a great interest in reconciliation and peacebuilding, without having a strong or organized voice, e.g., victims, youth, ex-combatants, displaced people, diasporas, women, etc.

## ONE CAN PUT FORTH A LARGE NUMBER OF INTERPRETATIONS ON THE TERM "RECONCILIATION", INCLUDING:



## RECONCILIATION AND STATE BUILDING

Reconciliation can also be seen as an important element of statebuilding, and in particular of the role of the government. Governments often need to facilitate reconciliation processes as part of the process of being accountable to their societies and building confidence among the public. One example of an important government-led initiative is the development of new constitutional arrangements that are participatory and inclusive. Constitution making could be regarded as an important building block for reconciliation at the political level.



A final point is that state and non-state institutions are not solely the object of the exercise of reconciliation, but can also be important platforms for building reconciliation. For example, establishing a military that is accountable and that includes former warring groups can become an interesting space for reconciliation. Other institutional spaces

that can become platforms for reconciliation are the police, the justice system, the welfare system when delivering reparations, the education system, the private sector, religious institutions, etc.

## THEMATIC AREAS OF RECONCILIATION

### HEALING THE TRAUMA

Trauma and healing should be approached holistically. Trauma should not merely be understood as the psychological result of an event, but rather as a process that may change before, during and after the conflict. Therefore healing should be viewed as a process occurring sequentially within the wider social and political context of the conflict cycle. Truth, justice and reparation are all vital parts of the process of healing. However, reconciliation is not necessarily about repairing trauma, but rather about people learning to live positive lives in the context of trauma and sustained pain, which is as much a social and political question as a mental health issue.

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUTH, JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION



The journey towards reconciliation is not easy and should be viewed as both a goal and a process. Dealing with the past and transitional justice should contribute to a national dialogue; however, it should not be expected that this will of itself bring reconciliation, which is a complex and long-term process. Four ingredients are needed for a successful reconciliation process:

A truly inclusive national dialogue,

Political will and commitment from power elites,

Security and freedom to speak and move, and

A national vision or a set of goals defined by what citizens expect the country to look like in the future.

## TRUTH

Truth is another important aspect of reconciliation. In 2006, the Right to Truth was accepted by the UN General Assembly as a universally accepted norm and highlights the duty of the state to clarify the truth about past events and the history of violations to ensure that they do not happen again.



Truth is important to prevent the instrumentalization of historical facts that link responsibility for past violations to ethnic and religious adversaries. Groups in societies that are divided after mass crimes tend to deny the experience of the “other side”. However, victims and perpetrators have multiple roles and the claim to victimhood is seldom exclusive. Truth and fact-finding are needed to help people deal with different the various mythologies of the conflict, and are a means to an end and contribute to a process rather than being ends in themselves. Many institutional mechanisms can be used to find and document the truth, which could be done through projects to map violations, commissions of enquiry and truth commissions. These mechanisms deal with disappearances and are linked to investigating bodies, memorialization, reparation projects, access to information and archives, etc.

Transitional justice is necessary, but not sufficient in itself to achieve reconciliation. For instance, truth commissions that are not based on an inclusive national dialogue rarely serve their purpose beyond revealing facts and providing some criminal accountability. What needs to be discussed and focused on is a transformative transitional justice agenda. However, truth is important, particularly to prevent historical facts from being presented one-sidedly or linked to religious or ethnic adversaries. Truth and fact-finding are important to help people deal with mythologies of the conflict.

Women should be viewed as an important asset to achieve reconciliation and not only as victims of the conflict. The dehumanization of men during conflict should be addressed to prevent the recurrence of conflict. A challenge in addressing the gender dimension of reconciliation is the wide gap between international standards and the actual political commitment and resources needed to implement them.



## LEVELS OF RECONCILIATION WORK

Reconciliation efforts address issues at both the local and political levels, and these efforts need to run concurrently to each other so that synergies are created between the different levels.

## NATIONAL RECONCILIATION PROCESSES



Reviewing national constitutions in political reconciliation processes may reveal weaknesses that need to be addressed to prevent a relapse into conflict. These constitutional reform processes should include local and traditional structures. Another important issue at the political level is to create an inclusive system, with equal distribution of power, and checks and balances. The state should also play a key role in the accurate documentation of history.

## LOCAL-LEVEL RECONCILIATION

Develop system at the local level to promote truth, justice and reconciliation in the country. This can be started from settling family and community level disputes and then other conflicts that cut across ethnicity, religion, caste, gender etc.

## THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN RECONCILIATION

Civil society should not only be understood as NGOs, but also as churches, business associations, traditional leaders, women's and youth associations, diasporas, etc. These are all actors that can play a seminal and catalytic role as a societal asset, and need to be positively engaged in the process. This wider understanding of the term allows for a



better appreciation of the capacity that these organizations might bring to the work on reconciliation – particularly when they are embedded in social constituencies that are essential to inclusive reconciliation processes.

Civil society provides an intermediary role between the national and community levels, and is a key actor in advocating moral and ethical positions that represent the people. Civil society is important in defining the appropriate and inclusive policy framework for a reconciliation agenda. In the implementation phase civil society can be particularly important in conducting public outreach, providing support to victims when they are testifying and advocating for reparations.

After the official process, an important role would be to ensure that the reconciliation agenda is sustained. Civil society can also contribute in ensuring that the gender dimension is mainstreamed throughout the entire process. Moreover, if the state does not take responsibility for parts of the reconciliation process, such as documenting war crimes, civil society needs to ensure that this is done.

## KEY PRINCIPLES FOR RECONCILIATION AND PEACE BUILDING ACTIVISTS AND GROUPS

- There is no “one-size-fits-all” method of peacebuilding.
- Every conflict situation is unique and should be individually analyzed, and a vision of what positive change would bring should be created; this should inform all actions taken.
- Local actors are best placed to decide the most appropriate intervention; external players can share insight and experience but they can never tell local populations how to build peace.
- Always be well-prepared for peacebuilding activities.
- Do No Harm. Your safety and the safety of others is always the number one priority.



## TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION ACTIVISTS SHOULD UPHOLD THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES;

### INCLUSION



Peace and reconciliation activists need to think of themselves, their communities, and their countries as multidimensional to ensure all voices are heard. The exclusion of key actors and different voices is consistently a critical factor in failed peace efforts. This can mean exclusion of women, minorities, young people, and other underrepresented communities in society. Adopting an inclusive approach means being explicitly oriented toward social justice and peacebuilding as it seeks to identify pathways for broader inclusion and representation.

### EMPOWERMENT

Despite ample evidence that women not only make positive contributions to reconciliation and peace processes but are often a factor that ensures success, they are frequently excluded from in this initiatives. There is a need to make the case for increasing women's roles in peacebuilding. The key message is simple: if you don't have women involved in reconciliation and peacebuilding, you don't have peace. It is simply a strategic imperative.



### PREPARATION

Those who fail to prepare, prepare to fail. Whether it is preparing yourself, your own community for compromise or building consensus on what "reconciliation and peace" means, preparation is one of the keys to success. It includes self-evaluations and advice on tailoring visioning processes, language, negotiating, and preparing for reconciliation intervention



## EMPATHY

Effective reconciliation activists understand what is important to other communities. What are their interests and priorities? What do they want and why do they want it? We should know why an understanding of others outside of your community is so critical. Listen, understand, and respect the needs of others because a sustainable peace is one where all members feel good about what changes will come about as a result of a reconciliation intervention.



## DO NO HARM

One of the most important principles that guides a reconciliation and peace activists are Do No Harm. One should ensure that harm is not unwittingly done to their communities or themselves as a result of their intervention. Applying Do No Harm requires an understanding of the context in which you are working so that outcomes of your work are supporting the development of positive and lasting change.

## MINDSET AND CHARACTER OF TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WORKERS

Working in reconciliation and peacebuilding requires a particular mindset and character. It requires perseverance and commitment in order to achieve long-lasting positive change and sustainable peace. Key qualities and common traits of an effective peacebuilder often include





**Empathy** is understanding others' emotions and experiences as if you had lived them yourself. Empathy means you are able to put yourself in someone else's shoes in order to appreciate and value their perspectives. Practicing this principle also requires you to know how and when to listen and be silent.

**Adaptability** means you are flexible and able to make changes to your reconciliation plans. Conflict situations are fluid and evolving, and you need to be able to adapt to changing environments in order for your activism to remain relevant and effective

**Remaining unbiased and neutral** is key to being an effective reconciliation activist as it helps garner trust and confidence among all parties. In your activities you need to acknowledge different viewpoints and give space for others to speak, and by remaining neutral and not using your role to get your own personal agenda on the table you are able to help parties reach an agreement that is mutually acceptable.

**Motivation is vital for peace building and reconciliation.** An effective reconciliation activist is able to demonstrate enthusiasm that motivates others to participate and follow their lead. However, engaging in this work is challenging and can take a toll on a person, even the most experienced peace activist. To maintain the high-level of commitment and energy needed to engage in reconciliation requires dedicated time for self-care and self-reflection.



An effective peace activist should have **capacity** to create a vision for peace and clearly communicate that vision to others to encourage and inspire support. An even more effective activist can maintain the vision and guide others, even when times get rough.

**Creativity and critical thinking** are important for finding new and innovative ways to achieving your vision for peace, truth and reconciliation. Creative thinking can also be used for problem solving. As a peace and reconciliation activist you will be required to address problems that range from the logistics of your peacebuilding activity to the contextual obstacles preventing peace. Thinking creatively and critically for how to overcome these challenges is a fundamental skill for an effective peace activist.

## THE GENDER DIMENSIONS OF TRUTH, JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

There has been a tendency in the international community to portray women only as objects of sexual violence, neglecting other dimensions such as the political, socioeconomic and legal aspects of women's lives. Positive cases of improved rights for women to own property and to inherit can be found in Sierra Leone, Peru and South Africa. Women should also not only be seen as victims, but also as an important asset to achieve reconciliation.

A challenge in addressing the gender dimension of reconciliation is the wide gap between international standards on violence against women and the actual commitment of political and capital resources to implement these ambitious standards. Furthermore, one should not forget that it is important to include men when addressing the gender



dimension of reconciliation. The dehumanization of males during conflict can lead to the recurrence of conflict in which these men become the new perpetrators. Addressing the dehumanisation of men could also be crucial in preventing violence from mutating from political unrest to criminal behavior

## ROLE OF CSOS IN RECONCILIATION AND TRUTH

There are three stages in a reconciliation process, and each one requires a different role from CSOs.

1). **Defining appropriate policy frameworks for a reconciliation agenda:** Civil society plays a fundamental role at this stage, because often the state is more interested in reconciliation among elites or opposing political parties. The focus of civil society should be different: it has to engage with political authorities to explain the importance of a wider approach that emphasizes the need to include all the various groups in the reconciliation process.

2). **Implementation of the official reconciliation process:** At this stage, civil society can play a role in public outreach or public education on the role of the commissions (and presumably beyond just commissions as well). Another potential role in this phase could be that of supporting victims while they testify before official bodies, advocate for reparations, etc.

3). **After the official reconciliation process:** At this stage, it is critical to sustain the reconciliation agenda, implement the recommendations of the various commissions,

etc. Civil society should ensure that the agenda is not lost among the many competing demands placed on the state. Civil society can engage this phase by documenting facts, disseminating information and helping to ensure that “it will never happen again”. Another potential role is to safeguard the archives produced by official mechanisms, if necessary.



Civil society has a duty to ensure that in each phase of the reconciliation process gender is mainstreamed and the gendered experiences of conflict and reconciliation are recognized and engaged.

## RECONCILIATION EVENT THEMES

Your event may focus on the following areas, depending on the context and readiness of the group:

- Statement and discussion of intent – respectful dialogue, the creation of safe space, exploring relationships, and what can be done differently
- Sharing stories
- Better understanding of community issues today, and how we might work together to address these issues
- Developing links between Indigenous and non-Indigenous in the project areas, improve service delivery and healing
- Discussing collective advocacy and the role social workers can play to advocate for social justice
- Developing programs relevant to the experience of Indigenous communities today
- Building on the work of Indigenous communities and agencies to unite and heal families and communities



## SOME IMPORTANT QUALITIES AND TRAITS OF A RECONCILIATION AND PEACE ACTIVISTS;

- Honest
- Inspiring
- Wise
- Committed
- Patient
- Admits mistakes
- Hard working
- Dedicated
- Disciplined
- Sincere
- Passionate
- Constructive
- Listener
- Balanced
- Sensitive
- Communicator
- Timely
- Humble
- Nonviolent
- Discreet
- Devoted
- Courageous
- Hopeful
- Accepts challenge
- Respectful
- Aware of local cultures
- Articulate
- Knowledgeable
- Confident
- Lifelong-learner

# PLURALISM





## PLURALISM

***"IF DIVERSITY IS SEEN AS A SOURCE OF STRENGTH, SOCIETIES CAN BECOME HEALTHIER, MORE STABLE AND PROSPEROUS." KOFI ANNAN***

### INTRODUCTION



The module on pluralism aims to provide some understanding among TRF members to undertake some programs at the local level to build plural society and nation in Sri Lanka irrespective of ethnic, religious, linguistic, caste, gender and other forms of identities. Pluralism is an ethic of respect for human differences. A commitment to pluralism is an intentional process of valuing and perceiving human diversity as a positive and beneficial feature of society. Therefore, when applying a “pluralism lens,” diversity is not perceived as a challenge to overcome. Rather, it is an opportunity for continual development and more effective and inclusive solution-finding. Pluralism should be fostered through both institutions such as constitutions, legislatures, courts and schools and cultural habits of mind, norms and narratives. Pluralistic values can be nurtured by acknowledging and respecting all ethno-cultural, religious, socioeconomic, gender, sexual and linguistic backgrounds in daily activities, systems and processes, and by modelling attitudes and behaviours both with children and amongst adults.

### WHAT IS PLURALISM?

Pluralism refers to a basic quality of modern societies, where a wide range of religious and political beliefs – diversity – is accepted and where the ideal societies envisaged by different political parties may be incompatible with each other. In pluralist societies,



the general influence of many traditions and values, including religious belief, has waned. Individuals can, and must, work out for themselves which values they adhere to and how they wish to live their lives.



Pluralist societies therefore pose a challenge: individuals may enjoy a greater degree of personal liberty than ever before but, on the other hand, they need to work harder to bargain for agreement and compromise, without which no community can survive. This raises the question as to which political system can provide the best framework for the organisation of decision making in an open, pluralist society.

In a democracy, citizens basically agree on a set of principles, on rules of procedure and rights that allow them to disagree on many issues, but which also offer the tools to enable them to reach agreement by non-violent means. Democracy supports peace in pluralist societies by civilising conflict rather than suppressing it. The common interest is something to be worked out together, and bargained for, rather than to be defined in advance by any single party. Disagreement and conflict are normal and by no means harmful as long as their destructive potential is kept under control.

In democracy as a form of government, therefore, citizens are accorded such basic rights as freedom of conscience, belief and expression. When citizens use these rights, they will create disagreement and conflict, and they will have to bargain for a solution. To ensure that they agree on the rules of how to handle the conflicts and finally solve them, citizens of pluralist democracies are deemed to enter into a social contract with all other citizens to abide within the social and political conventions of that society.



## SUGGESTIONS FOR MANAGING PLURALISM

### 1. ESSENTIALITY OF DEMOCRATIC FRAMEWORK

Cultural pluralism in a society can be best managed within a democratic framework. Pluralism sits more comfortably with the democratic rather than with any other system of governance. Pluralism, in a sense, can be regarded as the very essence of democracy.





## 2. PREVENTING IMPOSITION OF THE PREDOMINANT IDENTITY

For a better management of a pluralistic society, one must clearly and consciously give up all notions of hitching the state to the cart of any predominant identity. No pluralistic model of a nation can be expected to embrace the predominant ethos as the national ethos, and the predominant culture as the main stream culture. Imposition of the predominant attitude and values is antithetical to democracy and the pluralistic model of nation building. If the primacy of the predominant values and culture is accepted, then the minorities are likely to be marginalized and alienated in the society.

## 3. VALUES OF HIGHER ORDER

While respecting different cultural identities and giving them full scope for flowering and expression, the management of a pluralistic society should be based on a set of universal values which transcend particularistic customs, practices and beliefs. The state should make an effort, with the help of the civil society, to develop a consensus on a set of such values.

Values and principles of higher order could be equality of human beings, universal brotherhood, respect for life, human dignity, fundamental freedoms, basic human rights, justice, equality, and protection of the environment.



## 4. CELEBRATION OF THE RICHNESS OF PLURALISM



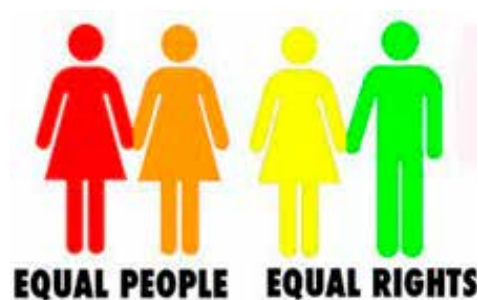
The positive potentialities of pluralism should be fully recognised, respected and utilised and the richness offered by it should be celebrated. Pluralism should be regarded not as a cause of conflict but as a source of strength. Individuals and groups should be given full freedom to pursue their community customs, norms, beliefs and practices. However, in the case of conflict, the universalist values should prevail.

Cultural identities are not tied. Unlike universal values, no cultural identity should be accepted as fixed. Such identities are generally time and space relative. They change with the change of time and place. Hence, they should be viewed in a dynamic context, susceptible to change in the changing contexts.

## 5. EQUALITY OF TREATMENT

All citizens should be extended equal treatment and should not be subjected to any kind of discrimination based on their cultural particularities. State should, however,

help cultural communities overcome disadvantages derived from cultural differences or past acts of injustice. This kind of affirmative action is provided in the constitutions of several countries, including those of USA and India.



## 6. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The rationale for affirmative action is that the state should not leave people where they are by providing them only equality of opportunity and extending non-discriminatory treatment. It should go further and ensure real equality by adopting discriminatory measures in their favour in order to lift them up. According to a pronouncement of the U.S. judiciary, affirmative action can be resorted to remove “the persisting or present and continuing effects of past discrimination”. It is designed to lift the “limitation on access to equal opportunity for participation in governance” and to “overcome substantial chronic under-representation of a social group”.



Affirmative action is a means of promoting social justice and human dignity. If inherited social injustice is allowed to fester, it is likely very soon to burst into conflict and violence. Affirmative action is also a means to empower the marginalized and backward sections of the population. In a large number of developing countries, the vast majority has no share in power. Unjust social order has given rise to unjust structure of power. This has to be redressed if equality and social justice have any meaning.

## 7. RESPECTING UNIVERSAL VALUES AND BELIEFS

The minority communities should be allowed and enabled to preserve and transmit their cultural heritage, values and practices except those which are inconsistent with universal values. However, there should be no coercion in getting rid of even the latter kind of traditions, values and practices. A dialogue should be initiated to bring about changes and the minorities should be permitted to maintain these particularities until they are persuaded to give them up.



## 8. HIGHEST STANDARDS IN STATE INSTITUTIONS

It is extremely important to maintain the highest standards in key state institutions like the civil service, police, armed forces and judiciary. They should be manned by individuals with merit and integrity. They should observe absolute impartiality and should be severely censured and punished in the case of any derogation from it. There should be transparency about their functioning. The laws and procedures they apply should be clear and simple and citizens should enjoy and exercise the right to information.



## 9. RESPONSIBILITY OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Political institutions like political parties, parliament, local government and trade unions should provide full opportunities to all cultural communities to hold elective and nominated positions in their decision-making bodies and participate in their activities. These institutions should, as a matter of polity, encourage and promote inter-cultural communication.



## 10. CULTIVATION OF CULTURAL AFFINITY WITH MINORITY COMMUNITIES

There should be a conscious effort at all levels to reach out to the minority communities. Members of the majority community should make it a point to familiarize themselves with the religion, philosophy, values, language, tradition and practices of the minority communities. These should be consciously appreciated and cherished. There should be arrangements for systematic and continuing inter-cultural communication. The state should, in collaboration with the civil society, initiate through media and the educational system, measures to enable citizens to overcome ignorance, prejudices and fixed mind sets regarding the characteristics of the people belonging to other communities. Textbooks particularly of history, philosophy and social studies, for the children and young people should be carefully screened to remove from them all stereotypes and misinformation.



## 11. EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The pluralistic societies can be constructively managed only if they are based on equity and social justice. It is impossible to establish communication and promote reconciliation between diverse cultural communities in a situation of inequality, domination and dependence. It is therefore incumbent upon the state to make laws and take other measures to ensure justice to all its citizens. A fundamental objective of development should be to ensure that its fruits are equitably shared. In any case, it must be ensured that the process of development does not lead to an emphasis of the prevailing inequality in the society. Therefore, a crucial measure to manage pluralism is to pursue a just development strategy built in provisions for reducing inter-personal, inter-communal and inter-regional inequalities.



## 12. ELIMINATION OF POVERTY

A pluralistic society cannot be managed effectively without a conscious polity to eliminate poverty and deprivations. Communities steeped in poverty will have no incentive to contribute to national integration and nation building. Similarly, deprivations of education, health, shelter, nutrition, constitute continuing threat to human dignity. And communities suffering from a loss of human dignity are scarcely expected to have any stake in the unity, prosperity and stability of the nation state.



## 13. BUILD CO-OPERATION THAN COMPETITION

Pluralism has a better chance to survive and prosper in a co-operative rather than a competitive manner. Competition among cultural communities is generally difficult to handle and may complicate the problem of managing pluralism. In the context of globalisation, the predominant value in modern society is competition and success, irrespective of the human cost it entails. This is destructive of compassion and sensitivity to others' sufferings. Some of the cultural communities, particularly the marginalized groups like the tribal, are likely to be the worst sufferers from the process of globalisation. There is no inherent contradiction between competition and compassion. However, in a condition of competition, it is necessary to go out of the way and take special care to nurture compassion and fellow feeling.



## 14. COMMUNICATION AND DIALOGUE TO REPLACE COERCION AND SUPPRESSION

Experience in several developing countries, including Sri Lanka, has shown that the urges and aspirations of the alienated cultural communities cannot be suppressed by coercive methods. The agitation and uprisings waged by these communities cannot be treated as merely a security or law and order problem. The real breakthrough in dealing with the problem of alienation is likely to come only when the coercive methods are replaced by communication and dialogue, and resentment is substituted by compassion and understanding.



## 15. PLURALISTIC SOCIETY MUST BE A NON-VIOLENT SOCIETY



A pluralistic society has also to be a non-violent society. A non-violent society can ever claim to have kept pluralism alive and prospering. Moreover, the state cannot without jeopardising the very basis of the pluralistic society, put up with acts of violence, aggression and intimidation by one community against the others. In such circumstances, the reaction of the state should be prompt, unambiguous, firm and decisive. In fact, the state should act firmly in anticipation of such acts of aggression and violence.

## 16. MEMORIES OF THE PAST

Finally, memories of the past, real or imagined, have the effect of keeping communal cleavages open and even widening them. At times, they become the pretext of fresh acts of vandalism and violence. South Africa is trying a very novel method of utilising the memories of the past for constructive purposes. It has set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which establishes and publishes the truth of past misdeeds, and requires their perpetrators to admit their guilt and express regret. But this process requires a very delicate handling which is possible only in a highly mature society.

## FEDERALISM AND PLURALISM

Federalism is a pluralistic model of governance in which unified political identity is reconciled with cultural and regional diversities. It is a political framework for reconciling unity with diversity. It is best calculated “to maintain and foster a national coherence while at the same time articulating and protecting the several diversities within the society to which value is assigned”. In a sense, it is a device to reconcile the commonalities implicit in the concept of the nation state with specificities and self-expression in a pluralistic society. It is also a model for a decentralised power structure.



Different countries have adopted different models of federalism, depending upon the history of their political, cultural and social evolution. US federalism is based on a melting pot approach to ethnic diversity where primordial distinctions have more or less been obliterated. In India, federalism has evolved mainly out of administrative and political convenience. Though such cultural diversities as language, religion, ethnicity have played a role in carving out some of the federating units, India is basically a regional federation.

## THE SPECIAL CASE OF MANAGING A MULTI-RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

Experience shows that in third world societies, people hold very strong allegiance to religion and get easily excited over religious issues. Moreover, there are always vested interests out to exploit religious sentiments. It is, therefore, not surprising that most frequent and virulent forms of hatred, disruption and violence in these societies occur in the name of religion. Multi-religious pluralism therefore, is particularly difficult to manage and presents special problems.



## SECULARISM AND PLURALISM

Secularism is the only viable democratic alternative available for managing multi-religious pluralism. In a multi-religious society, without secularism there cannot be real democracy, liberty of thought, expression and belief, and equality of status and opportunity to all citizens. This is the only means of keeping the nation state united and harnessing the energy and creativity of all sections of the society and giving the religious minorities a stake in the future of the nation.

If the state, in a multi-religious society, gives up secularism and tries to adopt the religion of the majority as the state religion, it is bound to affect the unity and cohesion of the nation and lead to instability and conflicts. If a minority group is a sizeable proportion of the population and is concentrated in a few parts of the country, the imposition of the religion of the majority may result in a civil war. In any event, a society which denies to its religious minorities a place of equality in the polity and pride over their religious identities and reduces them to the status of second class citizens, would not be able to seek their co- operation and harness their energy and talents. Such a society is unlikely to prosper.



Experience shows that the state has been able to impose the religion of the majority on the rest of the country only through intimidation and force. Another adverse implication is that with the breakdown of religious unity, other unities of the nation in the regional, linguistic, ethnic and other cultural fields also collapse for management of pluralism is not easily divisible.

Thus the weakening of secularism in one country poses a serious threat to the security and other interests of the minorities in other countries of the region. It is sometimes advocated that in the interest of peace and harmony, the religious minorities should seek to find an accommodation with the rising force of the predominant religion. There are also examples of the state itself compromising with groups of religious extremists.

### **THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF SECULARISM CAN BE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS;**

- Firstly, the state should not identify itself with any religion or faith. It should have an absolutely impartial attitude towards all religions. No public revenue should be sanctioned to promote the cause of any religion
- Secondly every citizen should have the right to freely profess, practice and propagate his or her religion. Every religious community should have the right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes, manage its own affairs on matters of religion, and own, acquire and administer movable and immovable property for this purpose.
- Thirdly, every citizen should have equality of status and opportunity irrespective of his or her religion. No citizen should suffer, on account of his or her religion, any disability or discrimination, particularly in respect of employment and posts and positions in the public sector. Besides, it should be incumbent upon the state not to permit discrimination, persecution, lawlessness or violence in the name of religion.

- Fourthly, the state's non-identification with any religion does not mean that religion should be driven out of the public domain and strictly confined to the private realm. The tremendous force of religion as a creative power should be recognised and harnessed for public purpose. We have the excellent example of Mahatma Gandhi having done so with remarkable efficacy.
- Fifthly, the state should have the power to make law to regulate or restrict any economic, financial, political or other secular activities which may be associated with religious practices.
- Sixth, the state should make laws to provide for social reforms or welfare affecting religion.
- Seventh, the state should have the authority to put restriction on freedom of religion on the ground of public order, morality and health.
- Eighth, the state should strictly enforce laws prohibiting the intrusion of religion into the electoral process.
- Ninth, to promote religious liberty and equal citizenship, the state may have to treat different religious communities differently. Equal respect to all religions may entail differential treatment. It may be particularly important to pay attention to the anxieties.

## PROMOTING PLURALISM THROUGH OUR PROJECT WORKS

Living with diversity is a shared global challenge, faced by developed and developing countries alike. Vulnerable groups, such as religious and ethnic minorities, are often subjected to various forms of political, economic, and cultural exclusion in their everyday lives. In order to create peaceful, pluralistic societies, these exclusionary practices must be systematically addressed. To do this, practitioners and policymakers must be able to monitor trends in exclusion and inclusion around the world. However, while there are tools that monitor specific aspects of diversity such as religious freedom or indigenous rights, there are currently no tools that evaluate a society's treatment of all types of diversity and assess practices across the economic, political, and cultural spheres. To address this critical gap, the we can focus the following.

- Raise awareness and catalyze debate about pluralism in the society;
- Include measures of recognition of diversity (laws, policies, practices by states and civil society) and belonging (attitudes and perceptions) across political, economic and cultural domains;
- Enable policymakers, practitioners and change-makers to assess the state of pluralism in their societies, identify where pluralism deficits are taking place, and highlight the pathways towards greater inclusion;



- Identify early signs of division and exclusion, apply conflict prevention, long before conflict becomes imminent;
- Promote inclusion for the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Find out the ways under which inclusion or exclusion was promoted in the past and make some intervention to address exclusion and promote inclusion

