

The Local Governance Process Indicators (LGPI)

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Introduction

From Australia to Zambia, we witness striking inequalities in governance and development outcomes. Two neighbourhoods, sitting side-by-side, may differ dramatically in the extent to which people participate in decision-making, contribute to public goods, and enjoy adequate education, healthcare, or other services. Similarly, people of all genders, ages, and ethnic groups experience varied governance and development outcomes. Such inequalities in governance and service provision raise essential questions. What explains these differences, and what conditions facilitate effective local governance and service provision? How will decentralization processes impact governance, and where might they allow communities to flourish? In which communities can investments – public or private – realize the most gain?

Unfortunately, it is often impossible to find rigorous and systematic answers to these questions due to a lack of data on governance *processes* and development outcomes across various sectors at the local level. Without such data, we cannot: 1) determine the needs and opportunities of different communities; 2) understand where reforms and development programs are more likely to succeed; 3) provide citizens with advocacy tools they can use to demand better services; 4) undertake research to help explain why some communities enjoy better governance and development outcomes than others.

The Local Governance Process Indicators (LGPI) are designed to provide such information and enable comparative analysis. This briefing provides an overview of the LGPI, describes the issues for which the LGPI can yield particularly useful information, and outlines various modes through which the LGPI can be deployed to address these questions.

What is the LGPI?

The Local Governance Process Indicators (LGPI) employ household surveys to gather micro-level data from communities, including data on experience, perception, and satisfaction regarding cross-cutting governance issues, specifically barriers for health, education, security, voice and participation, and metrics of governance. To measure these dimensions, the LGPI emphasizes citizens' experiences. Individuals are asked, for instance, if they have problems in any of the named sectors. We then ask whether they took action to address these needs, what actions they took (e.g., using informal payments, personal connections, etc.), and whether their needs were met. The survey allows us to pinpoint individuals with unmet needs and further probe the experiences of those who accessed these services. It also allows us to ask about the quality of service delivery, if they have experienced problems, from whom they sought help to resolve problems, and the outcomes of that process. These surveys provide a

detailed map of institutional strengths and weaknesses, as experienced by citizens. This information can be combined with data gathered from civil servants, local elites, and service providers to yield a more nuanced governance picture.

The LGPI gathers information to assess governance (e.g., participation, transparency, legitimacy) and development (e.g., access to and quality of education, health services, dispute resolution). It is also a methodology that uses heavily clustered household surveys to establish local-level geographic and demographic measures. Finally, it is a tool for governments, civil societies, business communities, development specialists, and others. The LGPI collects, assesses, and benchmarks detailed information about local governance and service delivery issues. It identifies specific priority areas for reform, facilitates policy design and implementation, aids policymakers and development specialists in assessing reforms, empowers citizens to influence government efforts surrounding quality and access to public service delivery, and helps businesses and other stakeholders identify areas of need and opportunity.

The LGPI moves beyond standard governance measures in five important ways:

First, it overcomes problems of user-based surveys, which tend to only assess the experiences of those who have successfully accessed services while also going beyond surveys based on perception and satisfaction, which do not always accurately reflect citizens' experiences.

Second, the LGPI measures governance at the subnational level, making it ideal for designing and assessing decentralization efforts. Unlike most extant measures (e.g., World Governance Indicators, Quality of Government, community scorecards, etc.), it employs a methodology of heavily clustering surveys at the local level. This allows for explicit measures of local variation in governance and outcomes, usually only representative in surveys at the national level.

Third, the LGPI allows us to consider governance experiences beyond geographically delineated communities. Analyses based on age, ethnicity, class or gender, for instance, allow us to examine how different demographic groups may experience state and non-state institutions differently and the extent to which local inequalities exist across these communities.

Fourth, the LGPI focuses on governance by state and non-state actors, recognizing that non-state actors and institutions (e.g., the rules and norms governing engagement) play critical roles in governance practices and outcomes. This provides the basis for assessing different obstacles to effective decentralization.

Fifth, the LGPI permits us to examine and compare relationships between governance and outcomes across sectors. The core instrument includes batteries on health, education, security, voice, participation, and other governance and service delivery metrics. This core helps detect unevenness in the strength of state and non-state actors, the nature of governance (e.g., transparency, participation, accountability), and the quality of outcomes.¹

¹ See Table 1 for a summary of comparisons with key indicators

How does the LGPI inform development programming and policymaking?

By assessing local-level governance and service delivery, the LGPI provides critical feedback to help government officials, political parties, civil society actors, the public, and the international development community in the decentralization process. It provides information on 1) the nature of governance and 2) the demand, quality, and accessibility of services. Through this twofold approach, the LGPI informs the design and implementation of reforms by assessing the local governance context and pinpointing local needs, providing a baseline by which to measure progress, and ultimately allowing an assessment of reform processes and development programs.

Governance. The LGPI provides information that allows us to assess governance at the local level. *Nature of governance* refers to the power structures and rules for solving collective action problems and providing collective benefits to the community in question. Within governance, we consider participation, transparency, corruption/accountability, extraction and social institutions. cc

Participation comprises institutions determining who participates, how, in what conditions, and over which issues.

Transparency considers the dissemination of information on decision-making and outcomes, as well as the ability of people in communities to witness decision-making.

Corruption describes the extent to which various leaders and entities are held accountable. It includes perceptions of accountability and individuals' experiences with leaders acting outside of institutions and mandates.

Extraction considers whether, how, and why individuals contribute to community public goods. It includes labor, material goods, and financial contributions, made in response to calls from the state or various non-state leaders, and driven by carrots, sticks, or intrinsic desire.

Social Institutions examines the expectations of rules and rewards (institution) that drive individuals' behavior, considering those related to gender, ethnicity, religion, and other non-state arenas of authority.

Service Delivery. We conceptualize service delivery performance from a citizen's perspective, with an eye on the availability and quality of services delivered to the respondents' respective communities. The questions allow us to assess the nature of service delivery (e.g., via state or non-state actors, per the law, or requiring informal payments and/or personal connections), the accessibility of services, and the quality of services delivered to individual respondents. The data can also measure the (in)equality of service delivery accessibility and quality across geographic and demographic communities.

What are the potential arrangements for implementing the LGPI?

Depending on goals and circumstances, the LGPI can be administered on various scales and arrangements.

The LGPI may require large- or smaller-scale implementation. Using the LGPI to study the drivers of governance and development outcomes requires large-scale implementation and data collection from enough communities to allow robust analysis. For example, the LGPI implemented in Malawi in 2016² included over 8000 household surveys in 269 communities, and the study of Kenya, Malawi and Zambia in 2019 included over 22,000 households in more than 850 communities. However, through interviews focused on the specific community (or communities) at the point of assessment or over the course of program implementation, the LGPI can also be used to pinpoint areas of need in a more limited number of communities.

There are also various potential arrangements for administering the LGPI. The instrument may be administered by a large survey firm with international linkages (as was the case for the LGPI in Kenya, 2019),³ by a local provider (as in Tunisia, 2015; Malawi, 2016, 2019; Zambia, 2019), or by local observatories. This latter mode of administration would entail the establishment of permanent teams in a municipality, district, or province. The team would implement the LGPI and complementary instruments (e.g., the World Bank Service Delivery Indicators (SDI), Country Diagnostic Assessments⁴), analyze results, and disseminate findings through reports and community-level meetings. GLD has not implemented the LGPI in this manner, but it has worked with local partners to disseminate findings through reports, community meetings, and consultations.

GLD's technical support is key to maintaining the integrity and quality of the measurements, regardless of the mode and scope of implementation. GLD works with local teams to revise and program the instrument, train for data collection, monitor implementation, and run analyses. It can also lead or assist in dissemination to national and/or international stakeholders. By doing so, GLD can help assure high-quality data, compare findings internationally (where desired), and assist national and international actors in making decisions and implementing policies to improve the lives of everyday citizens.

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² This implementation was supported by: Ragnhild Muriass and Lise Rakner at the Department of Comparative Politics, Bergen Norway; Vibeke Wang at the Christian Michelsen Institute in Bergen, Norway; and Boniface Dulani, Happy Kayuni and Asiyeti Chiweza at Chancellor College, University of Malawi. More information is available at <https://gld.gu.se>

³ The 2019 survey was administered by [lpsos](https://lpsos.org/), with GLD support in programming, training, and monitoring.

⁴ Recanatini, F. (2010). Country-Specific Diagnostic Assessments: An Alternative Approach for Policy Reform. Washington, DC: The World Bank Group.

Table 1. Overview of Datasets

<i>Index</i>	<i>Measures</i>	<i>Dominant Approach: Perceptions, Satisfaction, Experience</i>	<i>Non-State Governance</i>	<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Measurement Level</i>	<i>Applicable to Local Reform</i>	<i>Multi- Dimensional/ Cross- Sectoral</i>	<i>Inclusive Sampling Frame</i>	<i>Allow for Examining Inequalities & Marginalized Populations</i>
<i>Local Governance Process Indicators (LGPI)</i>	State and Non- State Governance Performance	Experience	Yes	Citizen	Local Level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Provincial Governance & Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI)</i>	State Governance Performance	Experience	No	Citizen	Province Level	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>World Justice Project Open Government Index (WJP)</i>	State Governance Performance	Perceptions and Satisfaction	No	Citizen & Expert	Country Level	No	No	No	No
<i>Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG)</i>	State Governance Performance	Perceptions and Satisfaction	No	Citizen & Expert	Country Level	No	Yes	No	No
<i>Worldwide Governance Index (WGI)</i>	State Governance Performance	Perceptions and Satisfaction	No	Citizen & Expert	Country Level	No	No	No	No

Service Delivery Indicators (SDI)	Health and Education Indicators	Experience	Yes	Citizen (Client & Provider)	School and Health Facility level	Yes	No	Yes	No ⁵
The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study	Education Performance and Outcomes	Experience	Yes	Citizen (Client & Provider)	School level	Yes	No	Yes	No
DHS Surveys	Health	Experience	Yes	Citizen (Client & Provider)	Citizen level	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Freedom House Indicators	State performance	Perceptions	No	Expert	Country-level	No	No	No	No
Varieties of Democracy	State Governance institutions and performance	Perceptions	No	Expert	Country-level	No	No	No	No
The Quality of Governance Expert Survey	State Governance institutions and performance	Perceptions	No	Expert	Country-Level	No	No	No	No
Doing Business Indicators	Governance performance re: business climate	Perceptions	No	Expert	Country-Level	No	No	No	No
Transparency International	Governance performance and institutions	Perceptions	No	Expert	Country-Level	No	No	No	No
Community Score Cards	Sectoral tool, used to examine performance of certain sectors	Perceptions and Satisfaction	Varies	Citizen	Individual level	Yes	No	No	No
Indicators of Citizen-Centric Public Service Delivery	Governance performance re: Public Service Delivery	Experience, Perception & Scenario	No	Citizen	Individual level	Yes	Yes	No	No
Citizen Report Cards	State Governance Performance	Perceptions and Experience	No	Citizen	Individual level	Yes	No	no (limited to users)	no (omits non users)
Good Society Index	State Governance Performance	Perceptions	no	Expert	Country-level	No	Infant Mortality Life Expectancy	No	No

⁵ Note. The SDI, TIMSS and Community Score Cards allow us to examine unequal treatment of those seeking service, but not to identify segments of the population unable to access services.

							Subjective well-being		
European Quality of Government Index	State Governance institutions and performance	Perceptions and experience	no	Citizen	Country-level	Regional	Yes	Yes	Yes
Global Health Security Index	Health	Perceptions and experience	No	Expert	Country-level	No	No	No	No
Corruption Perception Index	Corruption	Perceptions	No	Expert and businesspeople	Country-level	No	No	No	No
CIVICUS Monitor Index	Civic space and participation rights	Perceptions	Yes (partly)	Expert	Country-level	No	Hard to say.	No /NA	No
Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index	State Governance Performance	Perceptions	No	Expert	Country-Level	No	Yes	No	No
Open Budget Index	Fiscal transparency	Perceptions	No	Expert	Country-level	Yes, on fiscal issues	No	No	No
Social Institutions and Gender Index	Gender parity and women's rights	Perceptions/Legal/Experience	Yes	Expert	Country-level	No	Yes	NA	Yes (of gender)
Global State of Democracy Indices (GSoD)	State of democracies throughout time	Perceptions	No	Expert (half of the indicators from VDEM) and other data sources.	Country-level (N=174)	Hard to say	Yes	No	No
World Press Freedom Index	Press Freedom	Perceptions	No	Expert	Country-level	No	No	No	No
Praia Group	Governance	Public opinion surveys (Citizens' perceptions and experience), administrative data, censuses, expert opinions	No	Mixed	Country-level primarily	No (though segments could be)	Yes	NA	Potential

Data Set References

Local Governance Process Indicators (LGPI)

Author: Program on Governance and Local Development (GLD)
Title: Local Governance Process Indicators (LGPI)
Year of Publication:
Publisher: Governance and Local Development Institute
Edition: 1st
Access Information: <https://gld.gu.se/>

Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI)

Author: CECODES, VFF-CRT, RTA & UNDP
Title: Provincial and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI)
Year of Publication: 2018
Publisher: PAPI
Edition: 8th
Access Information: <http://papi.org.vn/eng/>

WJP Open Government Index

Author: World Justice Project
Title: WJP Open Government Index
Year of Publication: 2015
Publisher: World Justice Project
Edition: 1st
Access Information: <https://worldjusticeproject.org/>

Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG)

Author: Mo Ibrahim Foundation
Title: Ibrahim Index of African Governance
Year of Publication: 2018
Publisher: Mo Ibrahim Foundation
Edition: 12th
Access Information: <http://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iiag/>

Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)

Author: Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay
Title: Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)
Year of Publication: 2018
Publisher: The World Bank Group
Edition: 8th
Access Information: www.govindicators.org

Service Delivery Indicators (SDI)

Author: The World Bank Group
Title: Service Delivery Indicators
Year of Publication: 2016
Publisher: World Bank Publications
Edition: Various
Access Information: <https://www.sdindicators.org/>

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

Author: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)
Title: The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
Year of Publication: 2015
Publisher: TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, Lynch School of Education, Boston College
Edition: Various
Access Information: <https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/>

Demographic & Health Surveys (DHS)

Title: ICF. 2004-2017 Demographic and Health Surveys (various) [Datasets]
Year of Publication: 2017
Publisher: Rockville, Maryland: ICF [Distributor].
Edition: (Various)
Access Information: <https://dhsprogram.com/>

Freedom House Indicators

Author: Freedom House
Title: Freedom in the World Country Score
Year of Publication: 2018
Publisher: Freedom House
Edition: Various
Access Information: <https://freedomhouse.org/>

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)

Author: Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I. Lindberg, Jan Teorell, David Altman, Michael Bernhard, M. Steven Fish, Adam Glynn, Allen Hicken, Anna Lührmann, Kyle L. Marquardt, Kelly McMann, Pamela Paxton, Daniel Pemstein, Brigitte Seim, Rachel Sigman, Svend-Erik Skaaning, Jeffrey Staton, Steven Wilson, Agnes Cornell, Lisa Gastaldi, Haakon Gjerløw, Nina Ilchenko, Joshua Krusell, Laura Maxwell, Valeriya Mechkova, Juraj Medzihorsky, Josefine Pernes, Johannes von Römer, Natalia Stepanova, Aksel Sundström, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang, Tore Wig, and Daniel Ziblatt.
Title: V-Dem [Country-Year/Country-Date] Dataset

v9

Year of Publication: 2019

Publisher: Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)

Edition: 9th

Access Information:

<https://doi.org/10.23696/vdemcy19>

The Quality of Government Expert Survey Dataset

Author: Dahlström, Carl, Jan Teorell, Stefan

Dahlberg, Felix Hartmann, Annika Lindberg, and

Marina Nistotskaya.

Title: The QoG Expert Survey Dataset

Year of Publication: 2015

Publisher: University of Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute

Edition: 2nd

Access Information: <https://qog.pol.gu.se/>

Doing Business Indicators

Author: Doing Business

Title: Doing Business 2019

Year of Publication: 2018

Publisher: World Bank Publications

Edition: 16th

Access Information:

<https://www.doingbusiness.org/>

Transparency International

Author: Transparency International

Title: Corruption Perceptions Index

Year of Publication: 2018

Publisher: Transparency International

Edition: 24th

Access Information:

<https://www.transparency.org/>

Community Score Cards

Author: CARE Malawi

Title: The Community Score Card (CSC): A generic guide for implementing CARE's CSC process to improve quality of services."

Year of Publication: 2013

Publisher: Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc.

Access Information: <https://www.care.org/>

Indicators of Citizen-Centric Public Service Delivery

Author: Pfeil, Helene; Agarwal, Sanjay; Bernstein, David S.; Recanatini, Francesca; Knack, Stephen; Ladegaard, Peter Farup

Title: Indicators of Citizen-Centric Public Service Delivery

Year of Publication: 2018

Publisher: The World Bank Group

Edition: 1st

Access Information: <https://www.worldbank.org/>

Citizen report card (CRC) surveys

Author: Parmesh Shah, Janamejay Singh, and Swarnim Waglé

Title: Citizen report card surveys : a note on the concept and methodology

Year of Publication: 2004

Publisher: The World Bank Group

Edition: 1st

Access Information:

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/256591468780581056/citizen-report-card-surveys-a-note-on-the-concept-and-methodology>

Good Society Index

Author: Natalia Alvarado Pachon, Sören Holmberg, and Bo Rothstein

Title: The Good Society Index

Year of Publication: 2014

Publisher: Quality of Government Institute

Edition: 1st

Access Information: [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.gu.se/sites/default/files/2025-](chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.gu.se/sites/default/files/2025-02/2025_2_Alvarado%20Pachon_Holmberg_%20Rothstein.pdf)

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European Quality of Government Index (EQI)

Author: Nicholas Charron, Victor Lapuente, and Monika Bauhr

Title: The European Quality of Government Index

Year of Publication: 2024

Publisher: The Quality of Government Institute

Edition: 5th

Access Information:

<https://datafinder.qog.gu.se/dataset/eqi>

Global Health Security Index

Author: Nuclear Threat Initiative and John Hopkins Center for Health Security

Title: Global Health Security Index

Year of Publication: 2021

Publisher: Nuclear Threat Initiative and John Hopkins Center for Health Security

Edition: 2nd

Access Information: <https://ghsindex.org/>

CIVICUS Monitor Index

Author: CIVICUS

Title: CIVICUS Monitor Index

Year of Publication: 2024

Publisher: CIVICUS

Edition: 7th

Access Information: <https://monitor.civicus.org/>

Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index

Author: Bertelsmann Stiftung

Title: Transformation Index BTI

Year of Publication: 2024

Publisher: Bertelsmann Stiftung

Edition: 11th

Access Information: <https://bti-project.org/en/downloads>

Open Budget Index

Author: International Budget Partnership

Title: Open Budget Survey

Year of Publication: 2023

Publisher: International Budget Partnership

Edition: 9th

Access Information:

<https://internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey/download>

Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)

Author: OECD Development Centre

Title: Social Institution and Gender Index

Year of Publication: 2023

Publisher: OECD

Edition: NA

PRAIA Group

Author: The PRAIA Group

Title: Handbook on Governance Statistics

Year of Publication: Unknown

Access Information:

<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/dashboards/social-institutions-gender-index.html>

Global State of Democracy Indices (GSoD)

Author: International Institute for Democracy and

Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)

Title: Global State of Democracy Indices (GSoD)

Year of Publication: 2025

Publisher: International IDEA

Edition: Unknown

Access Information:

<https://www.idea.int/democracytracker/gso-d-indices/>

World Press Freedom Index

Author: Reporters without Borders

Title: World Press Freedom Index

Year of Publication: 2025

Publisher: Reporters without Borders

Edition: Unknown

Access Information:

https://rsf.org/en/methodology-used-compiling-world-press-freedom-index-2025?year=2025&data_type=general

Publisher: The PRAIA Group on Governance Statistics

Edition: 1st

Access Information: <https://grupopraia.com.cv/>