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MAKING LOCAL GOVERNANCE REFORM WORK

**Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms
in Philippine Local Governance**

A Toolkit

Prepared and published by the
Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance
De La Salle University



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Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance
De La Salle University
Manila, Philippines
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*This publication is dedicated
to the memory of Jesse M. Robredo (1958-2012),
champion of transparent, accountable,
responsive, and effective local governance*

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Introduction: Promoting Evidence-Based and Participatory Local Governance Reform

The importance of transparency and accountability in public governance has in recent years emerged to the forefront of development work. By *transparency*, we mean the availability for public scrutiny of information about public decisions and actions. By *accountability*, we mean the exercise of public authority and the use of public resources in ways that benefit the public interest.

Transparency and accountability are twin principles that are part of what is considered to be good governance. Transparent and accountable governance begins with the recognition that ultimate power resides in citizens. This recognition is then actualized through the provision of increased capacities for citizens to exact performance from public organizations and officials.

At the local level, transparent and accountable governance is key to realizing the promised benefits of decentralization. Devolution of powers from central to local government units is designed to bring about better delivery of public services. However, this causal connection is never automatic. A crucial ingredient to making devolution work is the actual capacities of citizens to demand better performance from powerwielders who are now much “closer” to them. Indeed, as Philippine and international experiences demonstrate, where structures and processes of governance are characterized by transparency and accountability, multiple stakeholders at the local level become more effective in promoting policies and programs that effectively respond to the concerns of local citizens.

This local governance toolkit emerged from the project, “Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms in Philippine Local Governance,” undertaken by the De La Salle University Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance in partnership with Global Integrity, an international nonprofit organization, and the Australian Agency for International Development. The broad goal of producing this toolkit is to assist in empowering various organizations and individuals in undertaking evidence-based and participatory local governance reform towards concrete improvements in local transparency and accountability.

Evidence-based and participatory reform

Many civil society organizations have long been engaged in governance programs that promote greater public transparency and accountability. Likewise, individuals in public organizations at both the national and local levels have emerged as important champions in promoting governance reforms. Here, we emphasize two crucial ingredients to successful governance reform – objective evidence and widespread participation. Without either one, noble intentions and actions fail to ensure that reforms correctly respond to underlying problems and engender the public support necessary to sustain such reforms.

Evidence-based processes of reform recognize that limitations to available public resources necessitate prioritizing reform efforts towards problematic issues whose resolution would generate the most desirable benefits. Systematic, objective assessments become anchored on searching for these problematic issues and weighing their relative impacts on desired outcomes. An effective assessment plan includes the identification of key indicators that would help recognize the problematic issues, and the specification of meaningful criteria to evaluate what are actually observed to be happening. Moreover, it involves mapping out the information needed to conduct this evaluation, as well as the means through which such information may be obtained.

Participatory processes of reform emphasize that no single individual or organization possesses a monopoly of the means to carry out reform efforts effectively. The participation of multiple stakeholders facilitates production of the variety of perspectives that eventually lead to innovative, responsive, and balanced recommendations for reform actions. Where a conducive environment for participation exists, meaningful partnerships among multiple stakeholders are also likely to emerge. Such partnerships are crucial for ensuring the credibility of reform efforts, and for generating cooperation in the implementation and monitoring of these reforms.

Effectively reforming local governance structures and processes towards greater transparency and accountability involves evidence-based and participatory processes. Through evidence-based and participatory processes, advocates of governance reform are able to identify significant focal points for intervention, arrive at well-informed plans for concrete action, and mobilize collaborative undertakings to carry out and sustain local governance reform.

Tools for improving local transparency and accountability

This toolkit is intended to provide a means for improving local transparency and accountability through evidence-based and participatory processes. The toolkit supplements other available materials by specifically focusing on how local transparency and accountability assessments may be conducted systematically, and just as important, how multiple stakeholders may contribute in translating the assessment results into a set of concrete, specific, actionable recommendations for reform.

We begin in the next chapter with a broad tool – a framework for viewing local transparency and accountability. We discuss an institutional approach focusing on mechanisms that foster transparent and accountable behavior, and demonstrate how this approach leads to productive assessments that can effectively inform governance reform efforts. We then describe seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms as they apply to Philippine local governance.

In Chapters 3 and 4, we present tools for conducting objective assessments of local transparency and accountability mechanisms. Informed by the mechanisms-based framework, Chapter 3 provides helpful guidelines for carrying out such assessments, including the preparation of assessment reports that effectively assist in planning local governance reform. The Philippine Local Governance Transparency and Accountability Indicators (PLG-TAI), consisting of a total of 175 specific indicators that address 45 key questions about the 7 broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms, is presented in Chapter 4. We include both the indicators and a guide to providing scores for these indicators, and also suggest ways in which these indicators may be adopted and adapted for local use.

Finally, in Chapter 5, we present tools and guidelines for organizing participatory multi-stakeholder workshops where local assessment results stimulate discussion and lead to collaborative action plans for improving local transparency and accountability. We provide discussion tools, designed from the mechanisms-based framework, that allow workshop participants to focus on how the features of transparency and accountability mechanisms may be improved and strengthened.

Taken in its entirety or as individual chapters, we hope that this toolkit can be useful for advocates of good local governance both within and outside government. In government, the toolkit can be particularly helpful in supplementing the efforts of national agencies (particularly, the Department of the Interior and Local Government) in monitoring the structures and processes that promote transparency and accountability in local governance. Local government officials may also wish to use the toolkit in initiating systematic self-assessments that provide them with an informed agenda for good local governance. Outside government, local civil society organizations, academic researchers, and private businesses are provided a broad framework and an extensive list of specific indicators to consider in the conduct of local governance assessments that help inform policy and institutional reform efforts.

Acknowledgements

The contents of this toolkit represent a distillation of the important lessons and insights gleaned from the implementation of a local governance transparency and accountability project of the Robredo Institute. The collaborative nature of this project – at the international, national, and local levels – gave rise to diverse perspectives and useful insights, many of which found their way into this toolkit.

At the national level, we worked with an Advisory Board, consisting of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the League of Cities, the League of Municipalities, other academic institutions, and civil society organizations. We thank these partners for the many productive discussions, as a group and singly, that generated important feedback on our work.

We also benefited greatly from working with project partners at the local level – local academics who served as Local Assessment Researchers and local civil society organizations that served as Local Workshop Conveners. They helped clarify important issues and contextual conditions faced at the local level, shared their insights about tools and processes that worked and those that didn't, and demonstrated the potentials of mainstreaming evidence-based and participatory processes of local governance reform. We thank them immensely.

Finally, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to two important project partners, Global Integrity and the Australian Agency for International Development. The original project and this toolkit that emerged from that project were made possible through their support. More importantly, their active involvement opened many opportunities for reflecting on our experiences and incorporating the lessons learned into a set of tools that can be shared to a wider audience in order to help promote greater transparency and accountability in Philippine local governance.▪

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Thinking about Transparency and Accountability: A Mechanisms-Based Framework

Transparency and accountability are two important principles that are part of what is considered to be good governance. A *transparent governance* is characterized by the availability of information about public decisions and actions for public scrutiny. An *accountable governance* is one in which those who exercise public authority and use public resources demonstrate that decisions and actions provide the maximum benefit for the public interest.

At the local level, transparent and accountable governance allows multiple stakeholders to become more successful in promoting local policies and programs that adequately respond to the concerns of local citizens. It is therefore important for various stakeholders to possess the capacities needed in effectively monitoring and assessing the extent to which transparency and accountability are exhibited in structures and processes of local governance. Ideally, this exercise should also assist in identifying the concrete steps that may be taken to promote greater transparency and accountability in local governance.

We present here what we've found to be a simple and useful framework for accomplishing these twin purposes. The framework is based on the simple idea of *mechanisms* as focal points in thinking about transparency and accountability in local governance. Focusing on *mechanisms of transparency and accountability* enables us to conduct a systematic analysis of current strengths and weaknesses, and also to offer concrete prescriptions that attempt to address the identified weaknesses. In so doing, a mechanisms-based framework allows us to engage in meaningful and constructive discussions for possible evidence-based policy and institutional reforms.

We first discuss the broad concept of a mechanism and the three aspects of mechanism design – existence, effectiveness, and citizen accessibility – that anchor the overall framework. We then describe the seven broad types of mechanisms that help promote transparency and accountability in local governance, and provide examples of more specific mechanisms under each type that are among those considered to be “best practices” internationally and in the Philippines.

Institutions, mechanisms, and mechanism design

It has often been observed that generating and sustaining transparent and accountable governance requires two complementary inputs. First, citizens themselves must place a premium on transparency and accountability, and demand these from their leaders. Second, leadership must be open to and governed by principles of transparency and accountability.

Institutional theory informs us about the conditions under which citizens may demand and leaders supply transparent and accountable governance. According to this approach, individuals are situated within the prevailing framework of rules that provide incentives and disincentives for certain types of behavior. The key to understanding individual behavior is the identification of how current institutional arrangements – structures, processes, rules, and norms of governance – render one’s behavior compatible with one’s interests. Important focal points of these types of analyses are the key mechanisms that generate this compatibility.

Fostering behavior consistent with the principles of transparency and accountability thus rely on mechanisms that align individual behavior with these important principles. Public officials will provide public information if there are mechanisms that activate adequate incentives for disclosure and disincentives for keeping information secret. Government workers will abide by rules prescribing the limits of their authority if there are mechanisms that reward compliance and penalize errant behavior. Citizens will report wrong-doing if there are mechanisms that channel their grievances into results and that protect them from any negative consequences arising from their actions.

In broad terms, transparency and accountability mechanisms refer to the set of organizations, structures, processes, and rules that act as safeguards against the abuse of authority and that promote transparency and accountability in local governance. Focusing on an examination of these mechanisms enables a deeper understanding of why problems in transparency and accountability may exist, and what may be done to prevent them.

A review of international and local best practices reveals seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms: (1) access to information, (2) proactive disclosure of information, (3) public participation, (4) local elections, (5) internal checks and balance, (6) rule-based procedures, and (7) external oversight institutions. Within each broad type, a variety of more specific and concrete mechanisms abound, such that different local areas may employ different specific mechanisms based on local goals, needs, resources, capacities, and conditions. For instance, websites have been particularly useful tools for disclosing public information, especially in cities and urbanized municipalities. Inadequate citizen access to the internet in rural municipalities, on the other hand, prompt other methods for ensuring that crucial information also reach the residents of far-flung areas.

Three important components of mechanism design allow for the systematic assessment of the seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms: (1) their *existence*, as specified by relevant policies; (2) their *effectiveness*, based on the soundness of institutional design; and (3) their practical *accessibility* to citizens who wish to utilize them.

The existence of a mechanism is often provided by a complement of laws, regulations, organizations, and processes. Oftentimes, national laws and regulations mandate the existence of a broad type of transparency and accountability mechanism at the local level. Beyond these, however, it is important to look into whether national mandates are concretely operationalized as specific local mechanisms. Local ordinances may provide for these specific mechanisms. Likewise, the designation of specific organizations (or parts of these organizations) and specific processes indicates the transparency and accountability mechanisms that are in place.

An examination of the institutional design of mechanisms provides insights about their likely effectiveness. Transparency and accountability mechanisms may be provided for by law but are doomed to fail from the outset because of poor design. A key interest here is in scrutinizing specific features of a mechanism that help bring about the intended results. Important features of transparency and accountability mechanisms are those that ensure their independence and insulation from political interference, allocate adequate staffing and resources, delegate appropriate powers, and provide for an effective monitoring system.

The design of transparency and accountability mechanisms must also consider their accessibility to local citizens. Where these mechanisms are located and the procedures that must be followed determine what costs in time and money are imposed on citizens who wish to utilize them. A special concern is whether certain groups of local citizens are systematically prevented – by intention or resulting from poor design – from availing of these mechanisms.

Seven broad types of T&A mechanisms

We now briefly discuss below the seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms, highlighting important issues related to their existence, effectiveness, and citizen accessibility.

Access to information

The availability of public information to citizens who wish to access them is a key feature of transparent and accountable governance. Citizens who possess relevant, timely and accurate information are better able to make informed decisions and undertake appropriate actions that promote their own welfare. At the same time, the public availability of information pertaining to official decisions and actions of local

government officials allows citizens to properly monitor and evaluate the performance of these officials.

Access to information mechanisms refer to mandated structures and processes for citizens to secure official documents such as the proceedings of official meetings, public contracts, local plans, budgets and ordinances, and even officially-filed asset disclosure and compliance records. At the most basic level, access to information mechanisms exist when the recognition of citizen rights to information is enshrined in law. These mechanisms are further operationalized when there are clearly-specified processes for obtaining requested information, including mandates to officially respond to requests for information and a formal appeals process in cases of denial.

How these processes are designed affect their effectiveness in promoting transparency and accountability and their accessibility to citizens. For instance, a clear specification of the types of information that may be withheld (specific guidelines on what constitute sensitive information affecting national and local security, for example) and the time period within which requests to access information must be processed prevents wide discretion in the release of information. Officially-designated structures and processes for the release of public information likewise allow citizens to identify bottlenecks that may be held accountable. Finally, channels of information that are closer to citizens (for instance, officially-dedicated phone lines and email addresses, as well as community-based mechanisms) promote the usability of the existing mechanisms for citizens to obtain public information.

Proactive disclosure of information

A related mechanism is the proactive public disclosure of specific types of information, particularly those that are critical to governance. Examples include local budgets and actual expenditures, regulatory requirements, processes for availing local government services, and taxes and penalties. These types of information have important direct impacts on citizens, and are therefore ideally available for public scrutiny even without any specific demand for access. Public transparency of crucial information enables citizens to readily evaluate public performance and provide input about the allocation of local resources. Moreover, it reduces the need for relying on informal networks to obtain information about what government services are available, how to avail of these services, and what costs may be incurred for them.

Official mandates for the public disclosure of critical information by local governments must provide clear guidelines on which specific official documents are required to be disclosed, as well as what specific venues qualify as *public* disclosure. Mandates are effective only when a monitoring system for compliance with these mandates is in place, with a corresponding enforcement system through a combination of rewards and penalties.

The manner in which public disclosure requirements are met has important implications for the accessibility of disclosed information to citizens. Official postings in

venues such as those outside local government offices or in websites may be supplemented by periodic bulletins sent to citizens or channeled through community-based organizations and even local public schools. In addition, adequate attention must be placed on the language used in these communications. If the intention is to create greater public awareness about the information contained in these official documents, then they need to be converted into a non-technical format and translated into a language (possibly the local dialect) that is easy for average citizens to understand.

Public participation

Mechanisms for citizens and citizen groups to participate in local governance processes promote local accountability by providing them with important opportunities to offer constructive input in decision-making and to express grievances about unmet needs and expectations. Citizen possession of crucial information is a pre-requisite to meaningful participation, implying that the first two broad mechanisms previously discussed are required for public participation to be effective. Moreover, for meaningful public participation to take place, consequential processes (such as local legislative sessions) must in general be open, and supplemented with the designation of specific arenas for participation (such as various local special bodies).

Effective mechanisms for public participation are those that are inclusive rather than exclusive, and substantive rather than symbolic. Non-onerous requirements and procedures for participation, such as those that allow for minimal registration and accreditation processes and those that relax stringent parliamentary procedures, encourage greater citizen participation. Likewise, when participatory processes seriously consider citizen input – whether in the form of suggestions or complaints – then citizens are more likely to value their own participation.

Meaningful and substantive participation is also promoted when there are complementary strategies that are implemented to increase the technical capacities needed in some participatory bodies. For instance, citizen representatives in local procurement boards are able to oversee the procurement process more effectively if they possess adequate knowledge of the relevant procurement laws and processes.

How well participatory mechanisms promote local accountability rely on important issues regarding who are able to participate. Oftentimes, the accessibility of participatory mechanisms is affected by mundane issues such as where and when public meetings are conducted. Equally important is the enforcement of guidelines that prevent any single individual or organization from choosing eligible participants, and those that guarantee freedom from censorship during public deliberations.

Local elections

Democratic elections serve as an important accountability mechanism by providing politicians with powerful incentives to respond to citizen concerns. Elections present citizens with an opportunity to review the performance of public officials, and to

reward or punish them accordingly. When electoral outcomes hinge primarily on the sentiments of informed voters, then politicians become motivated to consistently demonstrate how they use their authority to address issues of public concern.

The extent to which elections serve an accountability function therefore depend on the integrity of electoral processes and the level of competitiveness that is generated. Mechanisms that provide for effective, politically-insulated administrators of local elections who have adequate powers to enforce election laws help contribute to the integrity of elections. So, too, do the transparency of electoral processes and the effective roles of independent election observers. On the other hand, adequate campaign finance laws, effective powers to eliminate violence and intimidation of both voters and candidates, and the impartial application of election laws help generate free and fair electoral competition.

At the most basic level, accessibility issues related to elections as accountability mechanisms revolve around the capacity of citizens to exercise their right of suffrage. Beyond this, however, it is also important to consider the accessibility of election-related information, including not only election results but also the compliance of candidates with election laws and the outcomes of investigations into alleged violations of these laws. These accessibility concerns serve to reinforce the effectiveness of democratic elections as an accountability mechanism by exposing candidate, party, and election administrator action to public scrutiny.

Internal checks and balance

Internal checks and balance mechanisms provide the appropriate incentive structures for local public officials and local government personnel to discipline their own actions, and therefore promote the integrity of public transactions.

Specific examples of mechanisms that generate internal checks and balance fall under three types. First, mechanisms that prevent and penalize the misconduct of local officials include those that promote whistle-blowing, protect whistle-blowers against negative consequences, and lead to the prosecution of erring officials. Second, limits to discretion exist when deliberative processes in both local executive and legislative structures prevent unilateral decision-making on crucial matters, including the preparation and approval of local budgets. And third, conflicts of interests are managed when there are effective regulations that require the disclosure of assets owned by public officials and that govern the granting of public concessions and the receipt of gifts and hospitality.

Since this broad mechanism relies on the self-discipline of public officials, the principle of internal checks and balance is achieved only when officials perceive that regulations will be effectively enforced. Oversight bodies designed to lead to effective enforcement are therefore crucial. For instance, asset disclosures promote accountability only when they are independently and effectively audited, and when there are appropriate penalties for non-disclosure or incomplete/inaccurate disclosure. When

public officials are legally subject to administrative or criminal proceedings, the impartiality and effectiveness of units that undertake investigations and prosecute offenses become important features that promote self-discipline. In the same way, widely accessible processes for citizens to observe public transactions and to report any irregularity serve to provide public officials and government workers with the appropriate incentives to adhere to public standards of integrity.

Rule-based procedures

Related to internal checks and balance mechanisms are rule-based procedures, which impose the appropriate guidelines for transactions and activities that are undertaken by local government offices. Rule-based procedures, when publicly transparent, provide citizens with an important standard by which to evaluate public transactions. When effectively monitored and enforced, rule-based procedures also regulate discretionary decision-making by public officials.

At least four aspects of local governance are particularly important to be subject to clear and effective rule-based procedures: public procurement processes, personnel hiring and management, local tax assessment and collection, and the enforcement of local regulatory standards such as those pertaining to public health, safety and the environment.

From an accountability perspective, the effectiveness of rules-based procedures needs to be examined at two levels. At one level, the incorporation of adequate monitoring systems promotes compliance with rules that are designed in part to insulate the exercise of official local functions from personal, political or partisan motivations. In the second level, the rules themselves, as outcomes of rule-making processes, need to be evaluated in terms of their consistency with principles that promote the public welfare. For instance, procurement rules are designed in part to promote open and competitive bidding, rather than favoring a select group. In this regard, the public transparency of both the rules that are in place and the processes that led to the formulation of these rules contribute to local accountability.

External oversight institutions

The important roles of external oversight institutions in promoting local transparency and accountability have already been mentioned, but are also emphasized here as a separate broad type of transparency and accountability mechanism.

External oversight institutions refer to organizations outside the formal apparatus of local governments that monitor and review the performance of local public officials and government personnel. They include those formally endowed with oversight powers, such as higher levels of local governments and national agencies including the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Commission on Audit, the Civil Service Commission, and the Office of the Ombudsman. They also include social

institutions that perform important watchdog functions, such as civil society organizations and the media.

External oversight institutions are likely to be more effective in promoting local transparency and accountability when they are insulated from political interference and allowed to perform their watchdog functions without fear of harassment or retribution. Appropriately delegated powers to conduct investigations help ensure that the corresponding penalties are meted against those found guilty of violating public standards of integrity. The provision of adequate capacities – in personnel, budgets, and expertise, among others – also contributes to enhancing their effectiveness. Moreover, direct structures and processes that link citizens with these organizations promote their accessibility to those who may possess relevant information. Finally, requirements for these organizations to produce and publicly release regular reports also serve to increase the credibility of their roles in promoting local transparency and accountability.

Synthesis

Under what conditions can behavior consistent with the principles of transparency and accountability be expected from the multiple stakeholders of local governance? We have described a mechanisms-based framework, and suggest its usefulness in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of local transparency and accountability systems and in identifying potential areas for reform.

In sum, we find that three core elements in this framework are helpful in evidence-based governance reform initiatives. First, the seven broad types of mechanisms presented above provide focal points for examining how transparent and accountable behavior may be promoted. Second, the identification of more concrete and specific local mechanisms allows us to trace how the goals of transparency and accountability are achieved in different areas, with specific mechanisms varying depending on local needs and conditions. And third, examining whether these mechanisms exist, how their design aids in their effectiveness, and the ways in which they are made to be accessible to citizens assists in generating concrete ideas about the appropriate actions that may be undertaken to promote greater transparency and accountability in local governance.▪

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Using the Philippine Local Governance Transparency and Accountability Indicators: A Guide for Conducting Local Assessments

The Philippine Local Governance Transparency and Accountability Indicators (PLG-TAI) is a set of measures jointly developed by the DLSU Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance and Global Integrity, with input from various stakeholders. These measures aim to assess the strengths and weaknesses of mechanisms for transparency and accountability in Philippine local governance. With the city/municipal level as the basic unit of focus, the ultimate objective of the indicators is to systematically identify best practices and points for improvement, thereby empowering local stakeholders to plan and implement evidence-based local governance reform towards improvements in local transparency and accountability.

Local governance is a shared process of addressing common goals, problems, and concerns in a local community. Consistent with this view, it is not the intention of the indicators to focus exclusively on an evaluation of the performance of specific local government officials. The indicators do include the important roles of mayors and other city/municipal officials in promoting transparency and accountability. However, they also intend to capture the reality that other groups and institutions, including the national government and different local stakeholders, assume significant roles in generating good local governance.

The assessment indicators: An overview

The PLG-TAI revolves around the assessment of *mechanisms* for transparency and accountability. These mechanisms refer to the rules, organizations, structures, and processes that deter abuse of power and that promote transparency and accountability in local governance. The PLG-TAI therefore intends to assess the safeguards that are in place to foster greater public transparency and accountability at the local level.

The mechanisms that have been included in the PLG-TAI are based on an extensive review of the transparency and accountability literature, and an examination of what are relevant in the Philippine local context. These mechanisms comprise “best practices” for improving transparency and accountability that have been found to work well in various parts of the Philippines and internationally. They include public

disclosure requirements, conflicts-of-interest regulations, oversight institutions, citizen participation, and rules that limit discretionary decision-making. In a democratic context, the role of elections as potentially powerful mechanisms for exacting public accountability is also included.

The indicators, taken in their entirety, aim to capture the extent to which these mechanisms for improving transparency and accountability are in place (*existence* indicators), whether the design of these mechanisms indicate that they are likely to work (*effectiveness* indicators), and whether citizens are able to adequately utilize these mechanisms (*accessibility* indicators). The PLG-TAI therefore contains a combination of indicators that look into laws and policies, and their implementation and enforcement in practice.

In all, the PLG-TAI includes 45 main indicator questions, with a total of 175 specific indicators. These indicators are spread over seven categories representing various broad types of mechanisms for promoting transparency and accountability in local governance. The large size of this indicator list is meant to intensively capture the different facets of transparency and accountability mechanisms. Each indicator is phrased so as to focus on a particular detail about the existence, effectiveness, and citizen accessibility of these mechanisms. It is this attention to details that will allow for a systematic identification of strengths and weaknesses after the overall assessment has been concluded.

At the same time, the PLG-TAI is unable to cover all possible transparency and accountability mechanisms. Much effort has been exerted to include the most important mechanisms identified in the prevailing literature on transparency and accountability. In addition, important aspects of local governance that remain understudied in the Philippine context have been included. For instance, among the functions of local governments, the PLG-TAI excludes public service delivery (which is the focus of many other sets of assessment indicators) in order to focus on important issues related to the performance of the regulatory functions that have been devolved to local governments in the Philippines.

The PLG-TAI includes indicators for the following categories and sub-categories:

1. Access to information
2. Proactive disclosure of information
3. Public participation
 - 3.1. Constructive input
 - 3.2. Expression of grievance
4. Local elections
5. Internal checks and balance
6. Rule-based procedures
 - 6.1. Preventing and penalizing misconduct
 - 6.2. Instituting limits to discretion
 - 6.3. Managing conflicts of interest
7. External oversight institutions

Conducting the assessment

Local assessments are conducted by researchers who are responsible for prescribing scores for each indicator included in the PLG-TAI. The word “researcher” is not intended to mean that only “experts” are qualified to use these indicators. Indeed, the objective of producing this toolkit is to empower any stakeholder interested in promoting local governance reform.

Instead, the word “researcher” is used deliberately to convey the importance of conducting a systematic data-gathering effort from multiple sources so that the assigned scores become adequately supported by data. These data sources include: (1) national laws, city/municipal ordinances, or barangay ordinances; (2) academic, professional, or government studies; (3) media reports; and (4) key informant interviews with local government officials/personnel, local academics, local CSO/NGO representatives, and local journalists or media personnel.

The PLG-TAI includes scoring guides for all indicators in order to reduce differences in interpretation and promote inter-coder reliability. All indicators are scored on an ordinal scale of 0 to 100, with zero being the worst score and 100 the perfect score.

“In law” indicators are scored either a “yes” or a “no,” with “yes” receiving a score of 100 and “no” receiving a zero score. In general, “in practice” indicators are given possible scores of 0, 25, 50, 75, or 100. The scoring guide provides the criteria for determining which of these scores is merited for a particular indicator given the gathered data. The criteria included are for the 0, 50, and 100 scores. Scores of 25 and 75 are assigned when local conditions fall “in between” the specified criteria. Researchers are encouraged to provide additional brief comments when necessary to explain the assigned score for an indicator if local conditions are not adequately captured in the scoring criteria.

Typically, “in law” indicators are measures of the *existence* of a transparency and accountability mechanism. Researchers may initially uncover the existence of these mechanisms through key informant interviews, media reports, or published studies. Ultimately, researchers need to obtain a copy of the specific national or local statute that prescribes the existence of such mechanisms, and refer to the specific relevant provisions in the statute to justify an assigned score. For these types of indicators, a legal mandate is often sufficient to merit a “yes” score. “In law” indicators are *not* scored on the basis of whether they are implemented effectively.

The “in practice” indicators are what are used to assess the *effectiveness* of these mechanisms and their *accessibility* to local citizens. Effectiveness indicators examine the design of a mechanism (i.e., issues dealing with staffing, budget allocation, freedom from political interference, and the like) in order to evaluate whether they are

likely to work. Accessibility indicators typically measure the cost (in time and money) at which citizens are able to utilize these mechanisms.

For these types of indicators, researchers must interview a wide range of key informants – from local government offices, field offices of the appropriate national government agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector, and the media – in order to properly verify and triangulate obtained information. Media reports and published studies that refer to effectiveness and accessibility issues are secondary sources that may also be used.

For each indicator included in the PLG-TAI, therefore, researchers typically provide two to three things: (1) the prescribed score based on the scoring criteria; (2) the identified data sources that support the prescribed score; and (3) optional additional comments that explain the prescribed score.

In referring to data sources for each prescribed score, it is helpful for validation purposes that researchers include the following information:

- For national and local laws – identify the relevant law and the specific section in that law;
- For published studies/reports – identify the publication, author, date published, title, and website if available; and
- For key informant interviews – identify the person by name, title, organization, date of interview, and place of interview.

Reviewing and validating scores

Organizations interested in conducting transparency and accountability assessments must attempt to ensure the reliability and validity of the assessment results. It is usually helpful to identify other persons not directly part of the assessment (including persons external to the organization conducting the assessment) to assist in this process of validation.

The documentation submitted by researchers is particularly important in reviewing the completeness and accuracy of the data, and the validity of the assigned scores. Reviewers need to examine each score vis-à-vis submitted documentation, and provide appropriate comments and recommendations. When necessary, additional documentation may be requested to justify the assigned scores.

This process of reviewing the assessment results may lead to suggested score revisions. Any proposal for score revision should be discussed in a joint, open, and constructive manner. In this process, it is helpful for researchers and reviewers alike to remember that the purpose of the assessment is to allow for an evidence-based identification of potential reform actions. A meaningful review process therefore focuses less on issues concerning the *numerical accuracy* of scores, and more on whether there is *consistency* between the scores and the supporting documentation.

Preparing the assessment report

The main goal of the assessment report is to stimulate a discussion of actionable steps towards greater transparency and accountability in local governance. A useful assessment report is one that is able to present the relevant strengths and weaknesses in local transparency and accountability mechanisms based on the data gathered.

The numerical scores assigned by researchers are based on data that are consistent with the characteristics identified in the PLG-TAI scoring guide. They therefore provide a means to make qualitative judgments about “strengths” and “weaknesses” at two levels. At the first level, the assessment report may provide a broad picture of types of transparency and accountability mechanisms where improvements may be introduced. At the second level, the detailed information produced from the use of the PLG-TAI facilitates the identification of the specific features of these mechanisms for positive intervention, and even the formulation of concrete action plans to implement these improvements.

Identifying which among the seven types of mechanisms included in the PLG-TAI would benefit from some, or even substantial, improvement may be done by aggregating scores for each cluster of indicators. For instance, are the lower scores clustered around indicators regarding access to information or public participation? Is it necessary to improve mechanisms related to internal checks and balance or those that prescribe rule-based procedures? Answering these questions would require researchers to identify justifiable and acceptable threshold levels that differentiate “low” from “high” scores.

There are a variety of score aggregation methods that may be used. One simple aggregation method is getting the average of all scores for a given cluster of indicators. An alternative – or supplementary – method is to simply count the number of indicators for which scores fall below the identified threshold level. Researchers are advised to determine which method seems sensible given the goals of the assessment and local contextual conditions. Ultimately, the method that works best is the one that enables the constructive identification of potential areas for reform.

After an identification of types of transparency and accountability mechanisms that represent strengths and weaknesses, researchers are encouraged to examine the individual scores within each cluster of indicators in order to identify the specific features of a mechanism that may serve as focal points for reform. Here, it is useful to remember three characteristics of the PLG-TAI that hopefully assist in this process.

First, as previously discussed, the different indicators measure the existence, effectiveness, and accessibility dimensions of various transparency and accountability mechanisms. Looking at individual scores may therefore help diagnose the source of the weakness of particular mechanisms. For instance, are public participation mechanisms weak because these mechanisms are not in place (i.e., there are no laws

that mandate opening up governance processes to public participation or there are no specific bodies, organizations, and arenas that have been convened to elicit public participation), or because these mechanisms have been weakly designed (i.e., participatory mechanisms do not have substantial power to affect public policy or there is not enough budget allotted to regularly convene participatory bodies)? Similarly, are various mechanisms unable to perform their oversight functions properly because of poor design (i.e., inadequate staff or budget), or because they are inaccessible to citizens who may wish to file complaints, possibly due to the distant location of offices or the cumbersome procedures?

Second, the different indicators focus on various important details of local governance processes, so that assigned scores may also appropriately help identify concrete areas for reform. For example, when access to information mechanisms are in general weak, individual scores may help identify which information (e.g., local budgets, local procurement rules, etc.) are not accessible, or which steps (e.g., delivery of a state of local government report, posting of relevant tax regulations, etc.) may be taken to correct these weaknesses.

Finally, it is helpful to remember that the PLG-TAI was developed with the perspective that local governance is a process that is shared by multiple local and even national stakeholders. The assigned scores can therefore assist in identifying which stakeholders may best act to correct any deficiency. A law required to establish a mechanism may be needed at the national level because it is beyond the powers of a local government. A process that needs to be more accessible to local citizens may be best improved by a particular office within the local government rather than another. Civil society organizations, on their own and without waiting for government action, may work to improve capacities to monitor public transactions, such as those involving public procurement.

Ultimately, the local governance assessments aim to generate useful data to inform discussions about policy and institutional reforms that promote greater transparency and accountability in local governance. The assessment report is thus intended to provide the important input to this reform process by identifying both broad issues related to local transparency and accountability mechanisms, and the specific details where efforts for improvement may be productively focused.▪

4

The Philippine Local Governance Transparency and Accountability Indicators

The Philippine Local Governance Transparency and Accountability Indicators (PLG-TAI) consists of a total of 175 indicators for 45 key questions about seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms in local governance.

These indicators were developed to assist stakeholders who wish to conduct systematic assessments of the state of transparency and accountability in their local areas, and to use these assessments in informing potential reform efforts. Prospective users are advised to consult the mechanisms-based framework that informs these indicators, as well as the set of guidelines for the conduct of local governance assessments. Both documents are included in previous chapters of this toolkit.

In this chapter, we present the actual indicators and scoring guides. The discussion below is intended to briefly address issues that may be of concern to those who wish to adopt the indicators as they are, as well as those who wish to adapt the indicators to suit their own local contexts.

Adopting the PLG-TAI

The PLG-TAI was developed with the goal of examining the status of seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms in local governance. The way in which the various indicators are organized into categories and sub-categories facilitates this assessment. In addition, the PLG-TAI assists in the examination of specific mechanisms within each cluster, as well as specific aspects (existence, effectiveness, and accessibility) of these mechanisms, as reflected in the key questions and actual indicators for each category.

Prospective users who possess the same motivation to look at broad patterns, as well as specific strengths and weaknesses within these broad patterns, may benefit from the adoption and use of the entire PLG-TAI in its current form. Other users with more specific purposes, or whose limited resources prevent a systematic assessment of all mechanisms included in the PLG-TAI, may fall under two types.

First, users may be especially concerned about a certain type of transparency and accountability mechanism, and therefore focus only on categories and sub-categories of interest to them. For instance, organizations concerned about assessing and improving public transparency and the availability of public information may wish to include only the first two categories – Access to Information and Proactive Disclosure of Information – in their assessment initiative. In the same way, organizations interested in promoting the effective operationalization of participatory mechanisms would do well to devote limited resources to a systematic assessment that focuses on the indicators in the third PLG-TAI category, Public Participation.

Second, users may also be more concerned about a specific aspect of local governance, such as fiscal accountability, public procurement, local executive-legislative relations, or the administration of the local bureaucracy. In order to achieve this objective, organizations may wish to consider only the specific key questions and indicators found in the different categories that deal with these aspects of local governance.

Whether belonging to the first or second type, prospective users are advised to bear in mind the framework that guided the development of the PLG-TAI. In particular, when using only a selection of the indicators, special concern must be devoted to ensuring that the selected indicators include those that capture the three important components of the design of transparency and accountability mechanisms – whether the mechanisms exist, whether they are designed to promote their effectiveness, and whether they are implemented in a manner that promotes their accessibility to local citizens.

Adapting the PLG-TAI

The PLG-TAI may also serve as a template for organizations who wish to formulate and identify their own transparency and accountability indicators that are more reflective of and sensitive to specific local conditions, needs, and priorities. Examples of these types of situations include the assessment of other levels of local governance (for instance, provincial or barangay governance) and of other more specific aspects of local governance (for instance, the public delivery of health, education and other services).

The experience in developing the PLG-TAI may provide important lessons in three issues related to indicator formulation. First, assessments generate useful information for planning governance reform when they focus on mechanisms rather than on individuals. Specific mechanisms may be different for provincial governance or for health governance than those included in the PLG-TAI, but thinking about how the seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms included here apply to these other situations provides a starting point to identifying concrete mechanisms-focused indicators. In this sense, and to emphasize a key point made previously, formulating a combination of indicators that assess the existence, effectiveness, and

accessibility of these mechanisms is particularly fruitful for later on identifying “strengths” that may be further supported or “weaknesses” that may be improved.

Second, the extensiveness of the list of indicators that are formulated depends in large part on the primary purposes of the assessment. Including more numerous mechanisms may allow for more specific mechanisms and more details about those mechanisms, but its use in the assessment will also require greater costs in gathering the data needed to produce valid assessment findings. In an assessment geared towards concrete reform efforts, it is advisable to anchor the choice of indicator inclusion on a prior consideration of the extent to which the availability of resources provides space for concrete actionable recommendations. For instance, in looking at incentive structures for whistle-blowing, limited resources for reform may necessitate moving away from indicators about the availability of monetary incentives and into those that measure the adequacy of protection for whistle-blowers.

Finally, the formulation of adequate scoring criteria for each indicator is extremely crucial for ensuring the validity, acceptability and usefulness of assessment results. The specification of scoring criteria reflects a balance between acceptable standards (the “best practices”) and a grounded understanding of local contextual realities. A particularly crucial issue is the setting of threshold levels. For instance, how much time is reasonable to receive an official response to a request for public information? Which venues for posting information are sufficiently accessible to the general public? How often must a body meet for it to be considered “regular”? Ultimately, the best scoring criteria are those that successfully provide for clear standards while also allowing for some variation in the actual means through which these standards may be met.▪

Philippine Local Governance Transparency and Accountability Indicators

Mechanisms and Indicators	100	SCORING GUIDE
		50
		0

I. Access to Information

<p>1</p> <p><i>Do citizens have a legal right of access to information at the city/municipality level?</i></p> <p>(1) In law, citizens have a right of access to city/municipality information and basic records.</p> <p>(2) In law, citizens have a right of appeal if access to a basic city/municipality record is denied.</p> <p>(3) In law, there is a prescribed formal mechanism through which citizens can request city/municipal government records.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there is a formal right to access city/municipal government documents, including constitutional guarantees. Exceptions can be made for local security reasons or individual privacy, but they should be limited in scope. All other government documents should be available upon public request.</p> <p>A YES score is earned if there is a formal process of appeal for rejected information requests. A YES score can still be earned if the appeals process involves redress through the courts rather than administrative appeal.</p> <p>A YES score is earned if there is a prescribed formal mechanism/institution through which citizens can access city/municipal government records available under freedom of information laws. This mechanism could be a city/municipality office (or offices within agencies) or an electronic request system.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there is no such right.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there is no such formal process.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there is no such formal mechanism or institution.</p>
<p>2</p> <p><i>Is the right of access to information at the city/municipality level effective ?</i></p> <p>(4) In practice, citizens receive responses to access to information requests within a reasonable time period.</p>	<p>Records are available on-line, or records can be obtained in 5 working days. Records are uniformly available; there are no delays for politically sensitive information. Legitimate exceptions are allowed for sensitive security-related information.</p>	<p>Records take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some additional delays may be experienced. Politically-sensitive information may be withheld without sufficient justification.</p> <p>Records take more than 10 working days to acquire. In some cases, most records may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records. Security exemptions may be abused to avoid disclosure of information. Records may also be generally unavailable or reported missing.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	
<p>(5) In practice, citizens can use the access to information mechanism at a reasonable cost.</p> <p>(6) In practice, the city/municipality acts on citizens' appeals for access to information requests within a reasonable time period.</p> <p>(7) In practice, the city/municipality acts on citizens' appeals for access to information requests at a reasonable cost.</p> <p>(8) In practice, the city/municipality gives reasons for denying an information request.</p>	<p>Records are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Records can be obtained at no/minimal cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to procure documents.</p> <p>The agency/entity acts on appeals quickly. While some backlog is expected and inevitable, appeals are acknowledged promptly and cases move steadily towards resolution.</p> <p>In most cases, the appeals mechanism is an affordable option to middle class citizens seeking to challenge an access to information determination.</p> <p>The city/municipal government always discloses to the requestor clear, specific, formal reasons for denying information requests. Explanations are given to the requestor in written form.</p>	<p>Records impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs/NGOs. Retrieving records may require a visit outside the city/municipality, such as to provincial or regional offices.</p> <p>The agency/entity acts on appeals quickly, but with some exceptions. Some appeals may not be acknowledged, and simple issues may take more than two weeks to resolve.</p> <p>In some cases, the appeals mechanism is not an affordable option to middle class citizens seeking to challenge an access to information determination.</p> <p>The city/municipal government usually discloses reasons for denying an information request to the requestor, with some exceptions. The reasons may be vague or difficult to obtain. If reasons are given, they are communicated verbally in most instances.</p>	<p>Retrieving records imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Records costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs/NGOs trying to access this information. Records may also be generally unavailable or reported missing.</p> <p>The agency/entity does not resolve appeals in a timely fashion. Appeals may be unacknowledged for many months, and simple issues may take more than a month to resolve.</p> <p>The prohibitive cost of utilizing the access to information appeals mechanism prevents middle class citizens from challenging access to information determinations.</p> <p>The city/municipal government does not regularly give reasons for denying an information request to the requestor.</p>	
	<p>Can citizens access the following documents from the city/municipal government?</p> <p>3 City/Municipality Budget Records</p>	<p>Budget documents are available on-line, or can be obtained in 5 working days. Budget documents are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information.</p>	<p>Records take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some additional delays may be experienced.</p>	<p>Records take more than two weeks to acquire. In some cases, most records may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records. Security exemptions may be abused to avoid disclosure of information.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE			
		100	50		
<p>(10) In practice, citizens can access budget documents at a reasonable cost.</p> <p>(11) In practice, citizens have access to information about the budget formulation process in the city/municipality.</p> <p>(12) In practice, citizens can access information about the transfer of funds from the national to the city/municipality level within a reasonable period.</p> <p>(13) In practice, citizens can access information about the transfer of funds from the national to the city/municipality level at a reasonable cost.</p>	<p>Budget documents are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Records can be obtained at no/minimal cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to obtain documents.</p> <p>Budget debates are public and records of these proceedings are easily accessible. Authors of individual budget items can easily be identified. Nearly all budget negotiations are conducted in these official proceedings.</p> <p>Information about transfer of funds are available on-line, or can be obtained in 5 working days. Information about transfer of funds are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information.</p> <p>Information about transfer of funds are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Information about transfer of funds can be obtained at little cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipal offices may be necessary to obtain the information.</p>	<p>Records impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs/NGOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to obtain documents.</p> <p>There is a formal, transparent process for budget debates, but major budget modifications may be negotiated in separate, closed sessions. Some items may be negotiated in closed sessions. Authors of individual line items may be difficult to identify.</p> <p>Information about transfer of funds takes more than 5 working days to obtain. Some delays may be experienced.</p> <p>Information about transfer of funds impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to obtain documents.</p>	<p>Retrieving records imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Records costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs/NGOs trying to access this information.</p> <p>Budget negotiations are effectively closed to the public. There may be a formal, transparent process, but most real discussions and debates happen in other, closed settings.</p> <p>Information about transfer of funds takes more than 10 working days to acquire. In some cases, information may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive information about transfer of funds.</p> <p>Retrieving information about transfer of funds imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Costs for retrieving information about transfer of funds are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs trying to access this information.</p>		
	<p><i>City/Municipality Procurement Records</i></p> <p>(14) In law, procurement rules in the city/municipality are available to the general public.</p>			<p>A YES score is earned if procurement rules are, by law, open to the public. These regulations are defined here as the rules governing the competitive procurement process.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if procurement rules are officially secret for any reason or if there are no procurement rules.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	0
(15) In practice, citizens can access public procurement records (including regulations and results) within a reasonable time period.	Procurement records are available on-line, or procurement records can be obtained in 5 working days. Procurement records are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information. These procurement records are defined here as the rules governing the competitive procurement process, as well as the results of public bidding.	Records take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some additional delays may be experienced. Politically-sensitive information may be withheld without sufficient justification.	Records take more than 10 working days to acquire. In some cases, most records may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records.	
	(16) In practice, citizens can access public procurement records (including regulations and results) at a reasonable cost.	Procurement records are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Procurement records can be obtained at little cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to obtain documents. These procurement records are defined here as the rules governing the competitive procurement process, as well as the results of public bidding.	Procurement records impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to obtain documents.	Retrieving procurement records imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Procurement records costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs trying to access this information.
<i>City/Municipality Audit Reports</i>				
(17) In law, citizens can access reports of the audit agency.	A YES score is earned if all Commission on Audit reports for the city/municipality are available to the general public.			A NO score is earned if any auditor reports for the city/municipality are not publicly available. This may include reports made exclusively to the legislature or the executive, or to other national agencies, which those bodies may choose not to distribute.
	(18) In practice, citizens can access audit reports within a reasonable time period.	Reports are available on-line, or records can be obtained in 5 working days. Reports are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information.	Records take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some additional delays may be experienced. Politically-sensitive information may be withheld without sufficient justification.	Records take more than 10 working days to acquire. In some cases, most records may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records.

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	0
6	(19) In practice, citizens can access the audit reports at a reasonable cost.	Reports are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Reports can be obtained at little cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to obtain documents.	Reports impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to obtain documents.	Retrieving reports imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Report costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs trying to access this information.
	<i>City/Municipality Legislative Records</i>			
	(20) In law, citizens are allowed access to city/municipal legislative decisions/agenda and the local development plan.	A YES score is earned if there is a general legal right to access records of legislative proceedings/decisions/agenda including voting records and the city/municipality development plan. A YES score can still be given if there are formal rules for specific exemptions to the right to disclosure (special secret sessions related to city/municipal security).		A NO score is earned if there is no general right to access documents recording legislative proceedings/decisions/agenda. A NO score is earned if the exemptions to the general right are not clearly defined by formal rules.
7	(21) In practice, citizens can access records of legislative processes and documents within a reasonable time period.	Records are available on-line, or records can be obtained in 5 working days. Records are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information.	Records take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some additional delays may be experienced.	Records take more than 10 working days to acquire. In some cases, most records may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records.
	(22) In practice, citizens can access records of legislative processes and documents at a reasonable cost.	Records are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Records can be obtained at little cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to obtain documents.	Records impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to obtain documents.	Retrieving records imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Records costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs trying to access this information.
	<i>City/Municipality Asset Disclosure Records</i>			
(23) In law, citizens can access the asset disclosure records of the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council.	A YES score is earned if the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council file an asset disclosure form that is, in law, accessible to the public (individuals, civil society groups or journalists).		A NO score is earned if there is no asset disclosure for the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council. A NO score is earned if the form is filed, but not available to the public.	

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	0
<p>(24) In practice, citizens can access the asset disclosure records of the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council within a reasonable time period.</p> <p>(25) In practice, citizens can access the asset disclosure records of the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council at a reasonable cost.</p>	<p>Records are available on-line, or records can be obtained in 5 working days. Records are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information.</p>	<p>Records take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some additional delays may be experienced.</p>	<p>Records take more than 10 working days to acquire. In some cases, most records may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records.</p>	
	<p>Records are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Records can be obtained at little cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to procure documents.</p>	<p>Records impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs/NGOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to procure documents.</p>	<p>Retrieving records imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Records costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs/NGOs trying to access this information.</p>	
<p>8 <i>City/Municipality Reports on Compliance with Public Regulatory Standards</i></p>				
<p>(26) In law, citizens can access reports on the compliance of businesses with public regulatory standards, including those for public health, safety and the environment.</p> <p>(27) In practice, citizens can access reports on compliance of businesses with public regulatory standards within a reasonable time period.</p> <p>(28) In practice, citizens can access reports on compliance of businesses with public regulatory standards at a reasonable cost.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if all compliance reports are available to the general public.</p>		<p>A NO score is earned if any compliance reports are not publicly available. This may include reports made exclusively to the legislature or the executive, which those bodies may choose not to distribute.</p>	
	<p>Reports are available on-line, or records can be obtained in 5 working days. Reports are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information.</p>	<p>Reports take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some delays may be experienced.</p>	<p>Reports take more than 10 working days to acquire. In some cases, most reports may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records.</p>	
<p>Reports are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Reports can be obtained at little cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to obtain documents.</p>	<p>Reports impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to obtain documents.</p>	<p>Retrieving reports imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Report costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs trying to access this information.</p>		

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	
9	<i>Barangay Documents</i>			
	(29) In law, the barangay council has a journal and records of proceedings which is published.	A YES score is earned if there is a legal requirement for the barangay council to have a journal and records of proceedings. A YES score may still be earned if citizens do not have access to this published journal.		A NO score is earned if there is no legal requirement for the barangay council to have a journal and records of proceedings.
	(30) In practice, citizens can access public barangay documents within a reasonable time period.	Public documents are available on-line, or public documents can be obtained in 5 working days. Public documents are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information.	Records take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some additional delays may be experienced. Politically-sensitive information may be withheld without sufficient justification.	Records take more than 10 working days to acquire. In some cases, most records may be available sooner, but there may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records. Security exemptions may be abused to avoid disclosure of information.
	(31) In practice, citizens can access public barangay documents at a reasonable cost.	Records are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Records can be obtained at no/minimal cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to obtain documents.	Records impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs/NGOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to obtain documents.	Retrieving records imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Records costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs/NGOs trying to access this information.
II. Proactive Disclosure of Information				
10	<i>Does the city/municipal government establish mechanisms to proactively disclose information to the public?</i>			
	(32) In practice, the city/municipal government establishes and maintains regular mechanisms to proactively provide information to the public.	A YES score is earned if there is a mechanism that the city/municipal government uses to release information to the public. These mechanisms may include a website, prominent billboards, bulletin boards, radio, and the social media. It may also include regular meetings with local journalists where such information is conveyed.		A NO score is earned if there is no such mechanism.

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	
<p>(33) In practice, citizens can access information provided by the city/municipality's proactive information disclosure mechanism.</p> <p>(34) In practice, the mayor/vice-mayor/executive officials give reasons for his/her actions/decisions.</p> <p>(35) In practice, the city/municipal mayor provides a general report to the public regarding important issues, proposed and enacted policies, and the status of local public plans/programs at least once a year.</p>	<p>The information dissemination mechanisms are easily accessible to citizens, and information is regularly updated. Accessible mechanisms may include a functioning website, bulletin boards that are prominent and located in areas that are generally open to the public, and publication in local newspapers with a general circulation.</p> <p>The mayor/vice-mayor/executive officials give formal, public explanations of all policy matters. There is no censoring of such sessions.</p> <p>The city/municipal mayor provides a report regarding important issues, proposed and enacted policies, and the status of local public plans/programs at least once a year. The report is made in a public venue and/or published in a publicly available format. The report contains clear and specific information.</p>	<p>In most cases, the information dissemination mechanisms are accessible to citizens, but there are some exceptions. In some cases, citizens face some difficulty in accessing information, especially those citizens in areas farther from the center of the city/municipality. There is also some considerable lag in the information posted for citizen viewing.</p> <p>The mayor/vice-mayor/executive officials give explanations of policy, but not always in a timely or complete way. Particular issues of political sensitivity may be censored by local government broadcasters.</p> <p>The city/municipal mayor provides a report regarding important issues, proposed and enacted policies, and the status of local public plans/programs at least once a year, but the report is mainly provided to other government offices, such as the local legislature. Information released to the general public is more limited and incomplete.</p>	<p>Information dissemination mechanisms, if they exist, are not accessible to citizens. They may be located in areas where access is limited. Posted information is rarely updated.</p> <p>The mayor/vice-mayor/executive officials do not give substantial justifications for policy. The local government routinely sensors such sessions.</p> <p>The city/municipal mayor does not provide such a report. A report may be submitted, but the lack of important details makes it meaningless.</p>	
	<p><i>Is there a legal framework that mandates the city/municipal government to proactively disclose budget information to the public?</i></p> <p>In law, the city/municipal government is required to proactively disclose the following key budget information to the public:</p>			
				0

11

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
		100	0
(36) (1) the executive budget proposal	A YES score is earned if there is a requirement, under law or regulation, for the city/municipal government to publish an executive budget summary that presents the government's detailed declaration of the policies and priorities it intends to pursue in the upcoming budget year, including the specific allocations to be made to each city/municipal department or agency.		A NO score is earned if no such requirement exists.
	A YES score is earned if there is a requirement, under law or regulation, for the city/municipal government to publish the legal document that authorizes the executive to implement the policy measures the budget contains. The enacted budget is issued by the city/municipal council after it approves the budget proposal presented to it by the executive.		A NO score is earned if no such requirement exists.
	A YES score is earned if there is a requirement, under law or regulation, for the city/municipal executive to publish any in-year budget report. These could be monthly or quarterly revenues collected, expenditures made, and debt incurred.		A NO score is earned if no such requirement exists.
	A YES score is earned if there is a requirement, under law or regulation, for the city/municipal executive to publish an end-of-year report summarizing the financial situation at the end of the fiscal year. This report should include an update on progress made in achieving the policy goals of the enacted budget.		A NO score is earned if no such requirement exists.
(37) (2) enacted budget			
(38) (3) in-year budget reports			
(39) (4) end-of-year budget report			

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
		100	50
(40) (5) a "citizen's budget" or other form of easy to understand budget summary	A YES score is earned if there is a requirement, under law or regulation, for the city/municipal government to publish a "citizen's budget" or other simplified versions of the budget that are easily accessible for a broad audience. This may include an oral presentation in a public medium, such as the radio.		A NO score is earned if no such requirement exists.
	(41) (6) audit reports assessing the city/municipal budget	A YES score is earned if there is a requirement, under law or regulation, for the city/municipal government to publish regularly updated audit reports covering the city/municipal budget. These audit reports are performed by governmental entities independent from the city/municipal executive and cover all activities undertaken by the executive.	A NO score is earned if no such requirement exists.
<p>12 <i>Is the legal framework that mandates the city/municipal government to proactively disclose budget information to the public effective?</i></p> <p>In practice, the city/municipal government makes the following key budget information available in a timely and updated manner:</p>			
(42) (1) the executive's budget proposal	A YES score is earned if the city/municipal government publishes an executive budget summary that presents the government's detailed declaration of the policies and priorities it intends to pursue in the upcoming budget year, including the specific allocations to be made to each city/municipal department or agency.		A NO score is earned if no executive budget proposal is published, or if the information is so vague or outdated as to render it meaningless.

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(43) (2) the enacted budget	A YES score is earned if the city/municipal government publishes the legal document that authorizes the executive to implement the policy measures the budget contains. The enacted budget is issued by the city/municipal council after it approves the budget proposal presented to it by the executive.		A NO score is earned if no enacted budget is published, or if the information is so vague or outdated as to render it meaningless.
(44) (3) the in-year budget reports	A YES score is earned if the city/municipal executive publishes any in-year budget report. These could be monthly or quarterly revenues collected, expenditures made, and debt incurred.		A NO score is earned if no in-year budget reports are published, or if the information is so vague or outdated as to render it meaningless.
(45) (4) the end-of-year budget reports	A YES score is earned if the city/municipal executive publishes an end-of-year report summarizing the financial situation at the end of the fiscal year. This report should include an update on progress made in achieving the policy goals of the enacted budget.		A NO score is earned if no end-of-year budget reports are published, or if the information is so vague or outdated as to render it meaningless.
(46) (5) a "citizen's budget" or other form of easy to understand budget summary	A YES score is earned if the city/municipal government publishes a "citizen's budget" or other simplified versions of the budget that are easily accessible for a broad audience. This may include an oral presentation in a public medium, such as the radio.		A NO score is earned if no "citizen's budget" or equivalent documents are published, or if the information is so vague or outdated as to render it meaningless.
(47) (6) audit reports assessing the city/municipal budget	A YES score is earned if the city/municipal government publishes regularly updated audit reports covering the city/municipal budget. These audit reports are performed by governmental entities independent from the city/municipal executive and cover all activities undertaken by the executive.		A NO score is earned if no audit reports are published, or if the information is so vague or outdated as to render it meaningless.

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13	Does the city/municipal government disclose information about local tax policies and guidelines? (48) In law, citizens have the right to access information such as policies and guidelines in paying taxes. (49) In practice, the local taxation schemes are made available to the public.	A YES score is earned if tax information is required by the law to be made public.		A NO score is earned if there is no law that requires the local government to make tax information public.
		Local taxation schemes are available online or in the city/municipal hall, and the provision of information is indiscriminate.	Local taxation schemes are available online or in the city/municipal hall, but is hard to obtain. The site is not updated or records are not always available in the city/municipal hall.	Local taxation schemes are not available online or in the city/municipal hall. Citizens have to undergo a long process before they can get the information. Information may be orally communicated to inquiring citizens, but no document is available to show officially adopted local taxation schemes.
14	Does the city/municipal government disclose information about regulatory requirements for businesses? (50) In law, basic regulatory requirements for meeting public regulatory standards, including those for public health, safety, and the environment, covering businesses operating in the city/municipality are available to the general public. (51) In practice, basic regulatory requirements for meeting public standards on health, safety, and the environment, covering businesses operating in the city/municipality are made available to the public.	A YES score is earned if there is a legal framework that requires the city/municipal government to make public regulatory requirements for businesses publicly available.		A NO score is earned if there is no such legal framework.
		A YES score is earned if there is a mechanism through which the city/municipal government publishes public regulatory requirements for businesses. These mechanisms may include a website, publication in a local newspaper, bulletin boards, or billboards.		A NO score is earned if there is no such mechanism.

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		100	50
<p>III Public Participation</p> <p>III-1 Constructive Input</p> <p>15 <i>Are media and free speech protected at the city/municipality level?</i></p>			
(52) In law, freedom of the media is guaranteed.	A YES score is earned if freedom of the press is guaranteed in law, including to all political parties, religions, and ideologies.		A NO score is earned if any specific publication relating to government affairs is legally banned, or any general topic is prohibited from publication. Specific restrictions on media regarding privacy or slander are allowed, but not if these amount to legal censorship of a general topic, such as corruption or defense. A NO score is earned if non-government media is prohibited or restricted.
(53) In law, freedom of speech is guaranteed.	A YES score is earned if freedom of individual speech is guaranteed in law, including to all political parties, religions, and ideologies.		A NO score is earned if any individual speech is legally prohibited, regardless of topic. Specific exceptions for speech linked with a criminal act, such as a prohibition on death threats, are allowed. However, any non-specific prohibition earns a NO score.
(54) In practice, media can freely cover news without the need to secure any form of clearance or permission from the city/municipal government.	Media enjoys absolute freedom in covering local news. Media does not need to secure any form of clearance or permission from the city/municipal government.	Media enjoys limited freedom in covering local news. At times, the media needs to secure some form of clearance or permission from the city/municipal government, or coverage of official events by the media is by invitation only.	Media does not enjoy any freedom in covering local news. Media is prohibited from covering local events without express permission from the city/municipal government.

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
		100	0
16	Are CSOs/NGOs legally allowed to operate in the local level?		
	(55) In law, citizens can freely form CSOs/NGOs as watchdogs/advocates.	A YES score is earned when freedom to assemble into groups as watchdogs/advocates is protected by law regardless of political ideology, religion or objectives. Groups with a history of violence or terrorism (within the last ten years) may be banned. Groups sympathetic to or related to banned groups must be allowed if they have no history of violence. A YES score is still earned if citizens have the legal right to organize into CSOs/NGOs freely but in practice encounter obstacles in accreditation for inclusion in local political processes.	A NO score is earned when any single non-violent group is legally prohibited from organizing to promote good governance or anti-corruption. These groups may include non-violent separatist groups, political parties or religious groups.
	(56) In practice, the city/municipal government does not create barriers to the organization of new CSO/NGOs.	CSOs/NGOs can freely organize with little to no interaction with the government, other than voluntary registration.	Other than pro-government groups, CSOs/NGOs focused on being watchdogs/advocates are effectively prohibited, either by official requirements or by unofficial means, such as intimidation or fear.
17	Are CSO/NGOs able to participate in local governance processes?		
	(57) In law, there are enabling city/municipal ordinances that encourage and empower CSOs/NGOs to organize and/or to participate in the political/policymaking processes at the city/municipal level.	CSOs/NGOs must go through formal steps to form, requiring interaction with the state such as licenses or registration. Formation is possible, though there is some burden on the CSOs/NGOs. Some unofficial barriers, such as harassment of minority groups, may occur.	A NO score is earned if there are no such city/municipal ordinances.

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	0
(58) In practice, CSOs/NGOs actively engage in the political and policymaking process at the city/municipal level.	CSOs/NGOs are an essential component of the political process. CSOs/NGOs provide widely valued insights and have political power. They are able to participate in the crafting of city/municipal ordinances and resolutions through, for example, invitation as resource persons in official deliberations. They play a leading role in shaping public opinion on political matters.	CSOs/NGOs are active, but may not be relevant to political decisions or the policymaking process. Those CSOs/NGOs are willing to articulate opinions on political matters, but have little access to decision makers. They have some influence over public opinion, but considerably less than political figures.	CSOs/NGOs are effectively prohibited from engaging in the political process. Those CSOs/NGOs are unwilling to take positions on political issues. They are not relevant to changes in public opinion.	
(59) In practice, there is a wide variety of CSOs/NGOs that are accredited for participation in Local Special Bodies mandated by law.	CSOs/NGOs can freely submit themselves for registration and accreditation procedures for participation in Local Special Bodies. Registration and accreditation procedures are minimal. Selection of CSOs/NGOs for participation in Local Special Bodies is open and fair.	Registration and accreditation procedures for participation in Local Special Bodies are fairly stringent, preventing some CSOs/NGOs from applying for accreditation. Selection of CSOs/NGOs for participation in Local Special Bodies is largely based on political or personal considerations.	Registration and accreditation procedures for participation in Local Special Bodies are closed. There is no CSO/NGO participation in Local Special Bodies, or CSO/NGO participation is by invitation of local government officials only.	
(60) In practice, CSOs/NGOs participate in discussions and decisions made in Local Special Bodies	Local Special Bodies meet regularly, with meaningful and quality participation from CSOs/NGOs. These Local Special Bodies make key substantive decisions that incorporate insights from CSOs/NGOs.	Local Special Bodies have been convened but do not meet regularly. CSOs/NGOs are able to participate in discussions, but their insights are largely unincorporated in decisions that are made.	Local Special Bodies have been convened infrequently, if at all. When they do meet, CSO/NGO input is ignored or marginalized.	
<i>Can citizens provide input in the local budgetary allocation processes?</i>				
(61) In law, citizens have the right to participate and provide input into city/municipal budget debates and discussions.	A YES score is earned if there is a law that guarantees the right of the citizens to participate and provide input into city/municipal budget deliberations.		A NO score is earned if there is no such law.	
(62) In practice, citizens' input in budget hearings are considered in the review of the budget allocation plan.	Citizens in the city/municipality, usually acting through CSOs, can provide information or commentary to the budget debate through a formal process. This information is essential to the process of evaluating budget priorities.	Citizens in the city/municipality or CSOs can provide input, but this information is often not relevant to budget decisions.	Citizens in the city/municipality or CSOs have no formal access to provide input to the budget debate.	

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	0
19	<p><i>Can citizens access barangay governance processes?</i></p> <p>(63) In law, barangay council sessions are open to the public.</p> <p>(64) In practice, citizens may attend barangay assemblies and participate in discussions.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there is a law that assures the right of the citizens to have access to barangay council sessions. A YES score can still be earned if the law allows for exceptions which are minimal and clearly stated.</p> <p>The barangay council regularly holds assemblies that are open to citizens. Assemblies are conducted at a time and in a place so that it is reasonably convenient for citizens to attend. Assemblies allow for open discussions with citizens.</p>	<p>The barangay council holds assemblies, but attendance of citizens is somewhat constrained by choice of time and place. There is some discussion involving citizens, but certain issues important to citizens are not considered.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there is no law that assures the right of the citizens to have access to barangay council sessions.</p> <p>The barangay council rarely or never holds assemblies. When barangay assemblies are held, they are for dissemination of decisions or announcements, and not for open discussions of local issues.</p>
<p>III-2 Expression of Grievance</p>				
20	<p><i>Are citizens protected from recrimination or negative consequences when reporting corruption, graft, abuse of power, or abuse of resources?</i></p> <p>(65) In law, private individuals in the city/municipality who report cases of corruption, graft, abuse of power, or abuse of resources are protected from recrimination or other negative consequences.</p> <p>(66) In practice, private individuals who report cases of corruption, graft, abuse of power, or abuse of resources are protected from recrimination or other negative consequences.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there are specific laws against recrimination against private individual whistleblowers in the city/municipality. This may include prohibitions on termination, transfer, harassment or other consequences.</p> <p>Private individual whistleblowers in the city/municipality can report abuses of power without fear of negative consequences. This may be due to robust mechanisms to protect the identity of whistleblowers or may be due to a culture that encourages disclosure and accountability.</p>	<p>Whistleblowers among private individuals in the city/municipality are sometimes able to come forward without negative consequences, but in other cases, whistleblowers are punished for disclosing, through official, such as memo warnings and job reassignments, or unofficial means.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there are no legal protections for private individual whistleblowers in the city/municipality.</p> <p>Whistleblowers among private individuals in the city/municipality often face substantial negative consequences, such as losing a job, demotion or some form of harassment, including threats to one's life and one's family.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE			
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21	<p>Are there effective mechanisms (i.e., phone hotline, email address, local office) in the city/municipality where citizens can report complaints about business violations of local regulatory policies?</p>	<p>(67) In law, there is a mechanism (i.e. phone hotline, e-mail address, local office) through which citizens can report businesses that violate public regulatory standards, including those for public health, safety and the environment, in the city/municipality.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there is a mechanism in the city/municipality through which citizens can report businesses that violate public regulatory standards, including those for public health, safety, and the environment. These mechanisms include a phone hotline, e-mail address, or local office through which citizens' complaints are received.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if no such mechanism exists in the city/municipality.</p>	
		<p>(68) In practice, investigations are carried out to act on reports from citizens about businesses that violate public regulatory standards in the city/municipality.</p>	<p>The city/municipal government aggressively investigates reported violations of public regulatory standards, including those for public health, safety, and the environment. Complainant-citizens are provided timely information about the status of investigations. Investigations lead to appropriate sanctions for violators.</p>	<p>The city/municipal government initiates investigations on reported violations of public regulatory standards in the city/municipality, but it is limited in its effectiveness. It may be slow to act, unwilling to take on politically powerful offenders, reluctant to cooperate with other investigative agencies, or occasionally unable to enforce its judgments. Complainant-citizens are sometimes not updated on the status of investigations.</p>	<p>The city/municipal government does not effectively investigate reported violations of public regulatory standards in the city/municipality. It may start investigations but not complete them, refuse to cooperate with other investigative agencies, or fail to detect offenders. It may be partisan in its application of power. Complainant-citizens rarely hear about the status of violations they report.</p>
		<p>Can citizens hold their barangay officials accountable?</p>	<p>(69) In law, citizens can file complaints against erring barangay officials within a reasonable period.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines and procedures that includes a period to direct citizens who wish to file a complaint against a barangay official.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there are no formal guidelines and procedures to direct citizens who wish to file a complaint against a barangay official. A NO score is earned if such guidelines exist but do not provide a period for filing of complaints.</p>
22					

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<p>(70) In practice, citizens are given appropriate information in filing administrative complaints against elected barangay officials.</p>	<p>Information about filing complaints are available online or in the city/municipal hall. Citizens are accommodated and are responded to professionally whenever they inquire about filing administrative complaints. Information given are useful and complete.</p>	<p>Citizens encounter difficulties in obtaining information about filing an administrative complaint but are accommodated and responded professionally by city/municipal hall employees and officers.</p>	<p>Citizens are not made aware of the process of filing administrative complaints and are not accommodated at all whenever they ask city/municipal hall employees and officers.</p>
<p>IV Local Elections</p>			
<p>23 <i>Is there an effective legal framework that guarantees citizens' right to vote during local elections?</i></p>			
<p>(71) In law, universal and equal adult suffrage is guaranteed to all citizens.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if the right to vote is guaranteed to all citizens of the country (basic age limitations are allowed). A YES score can still be earned if voting procedures are, in practice, inconvenient or unfair.</p>		<p>A NO score is earned if suffrage is denied by law to any group of adult citizens for any reason. Citizen is defined broadly, to include all ethnicities, or anyone born in the country. A NO score is earned if homeless or impoverished people are legally prohibited from voting.</p>
<p>(72) In law, there is a legal framework requiring that city/municipal elections be held at regular intervals.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there is a statutory or other framework enshrined in law that mandates local elections at reasonable intervals.</p>		<p>A NO score is earned if no such framework exists.</p>
<p>(73) In practice, all adult citizens can vote.</p>	<p>Voting is open to all citizens regardless of race, gender, prior political affiliations, physical disability, or other traditional barriers.</p>	<p>Voting is often open to all citizens regardless of race, gender, prior political affiliations, physical disability, or other traditional barriers, with some exceptions.</p>	<p>Voting is not available to some demographics through some form of official or unofficial pressure. Voting may be too dangerous, expensive, or difficult for many people.</p>
<p>(74) In practice, ballots are secret or equivalently protected.</p>	<p>Ballots are secret, or there is a functional equivalent protection, in all cases.</p>	<p>Ballots are secret, or there is a functional equivalent protection, in most cases. Some exceptions to this practice have occurred. Ballots may be subject to tampering during transport or counting.</p>	<p>Ballot preferences are not secret. Ballots are routinely tampered with during transport and counting.</p>

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(75) In practice, local elections are held according to a regular schedule.	Local elections are always held according to a regular schedule, or there is a formal democratic process for calling a new election, with deadlines for mandatory elections.	Local elections are normally held according to a regular schedule, but there have been recent exceptions. The formal process for calling a new election may be flawed or abused.	Local elections are called arbitrarily by the government. There is no functioning schedule or deadline for new elections.	
(76) In practice, there is a clear and transparent system of voter registration.	There is a transparent system of voter registration that provides voters with sufficient time to understand their rights, check the accuracy of their registration, and ensure that errors are corrected before they vote.	There is a transparent voter registration system that provides voters with sufficient time to understand their rights, check the accuracy of their registration, and ensure that errors are corrected before they vote, but there are some problems. Voters may not have access to registration lists with sufficient time to correct errors before voting or registration lists may at times be inaccessible.	The system of voter registration is incomplete or does not exist. The city/municipal government may routinely falsify registration lists to affect voting patterns and limit access to the polls. Double voting and "ghost" voting by non-existent voters are common.	
(77) In practice, all citizens are able to exercise their right to vote.	Registration procedures for exercising the right to vote are transparent and accessible to all citizens. Voting procedures are transparent and easy to understand. There are no documented cases of systematically disenfranchised voters.	Some barriers exist in voter registration, such as unfairly applied regulatory requirements. Voting procedures are cumbersome, and prevent some voters from voting.	Citizens can effectively be barred in voter registration or on election day.	
<i>Is there an effective legal framework that guarantees free political competition during local elections?</i>				
(78) In law, all citizens have a right to form political parties at the city/municipality level.	A YES score is earned if citizens have the right to form political parties without interference from the city/municipal government. A YES score may still be earned if groups or individuals with a history of violence or terrorism (within the last ten years) are banned from forming political parties. Non-discriminatory minimal criteria (e.g. minimum age) are also allowed.		A NO score is earned if there are any legal or regulatory restrictions or prohibitions barring any types of political parties from being formed.	

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<p>(79) In law, citizens have a right to run for political office at the city/municipality level.</p> <p>(80) In practice, all citizens are able to form political parties at the city/municipality level.</p> <p>(81) In practice, all citizens can run for local political office at the city/municipality level.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if all citizens (citizen or anyone born in the country) have the right under law to run for political office at the city/municipality level. A YES score may still be earned if individuals with a history of violence, terrorism, or criminality are banned from running for office.</p>		<p>A NO score is earned if there are any legal restrictions barring certain individuals or groups from running for political office.</p>
	<p>While there is no guarantee of electoral success, political parties can form freely without opposition.</p>	<p>Some barriers to formation are present, such as burdensome registration requirements that may not be fairly applied. Some parties' political viewpoints may draw pressure from the government, such as surveillance or intimidation. Some political parties or organizations may have extra barriers to getting on a ballot.</p>	<p>Some political parties are effectively barred from forming through some manner of official or unofficial pressure. This may include threats, arrest, or violence from competing parties or other groups.</p>
	<p>While there is no guarantee of electoral success, anyone can run for local office under transparent and equitable guidelines. There is a formal process for access to the ballot which is fairly applied. The costs of running a campaign are reasonable and do not deter candidates from entering a race.</p>	<p>Some barriers exist to getting on the ballot and bureaucratic or regulatory requirements for doing so may be unfairly applied. The costs of running a political campaign are significant and result in dissuading some citizens from running for office.</p>	<p>Citizens can effectively be barred from the ballot through government abuse of official rules and/or unofficial pressure. The costs of running a campaign are extremely high and result in most average citizens being unable to run an effective campaign for office.</p>

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Mechanisms and Indicators	(82) In practice, citizens and candidates are able to campaign freely and have equal access to campaign advertising opportunities.	Citizens and candidates, and their political parties, have equal access to regulated election billboards. They also have equal access to other campaign advertising opportunities within the constraints of campaign funds. They may conduct campaign activities in different locations without obstruction or harassment, whether from official government personnel or from armed non-state groups.	There is some favoritism in gaining access to regulated election billboards. Some candidates and parties experience constraints in gaining access to advertising opportunities. Campaign activities are generally possible in different locations, but encounter obstruction in some areas, whether from official government personnel or from armed non-state groups.	There are significant constraints to the campaign activities of some citizens, candidates, and parties, including access to regulated election billboards and other advertising opportunities, and the conduct of campaign activities in many areas.
	(83) In practice, elections are free from violence.	A YES score is earned if there were no documented cases of organized election-related violence in the specific study period.		A NO score is earned if there were any documented cases during the study period of election-related violence.
	(84) In practice, the military and security forces remain neutral during elections.	The military, military officers, and other security forces (including the local police force) refrain from overtly supporting or opposing political candidates or commenting on elections. The military or security forces refrain from physically interfering with political campaigns, rallies, or voting.	The military, military officers, and security forces (including the local police force) may be known to unofficially support or oppose particular candidates or parties. The military or security forces generally refrain from the use of force to support or oppose particular candidates or parties but there are exceptions.	The military or other security forces (including the local police force) are an active and explicit player in local politics and overtly support or oppose particular candidates or parties. The military or security forces routinely exercise the use of force to support or oppose parties or candidates.

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
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25	<i>Is there an effective and independent administration of local elections?</i>	(85) In law, there's a COMELEC or a set of election monitoring agencies/entities at the city/municipality level.	A YES score is earned if there is a domestic agency or set of domestic agencies/entities formally assigned to ensure the integrity of the city/municipality election process.	A NO score is earned if no domestic agency or set of domestic agencies/entities exists that monitors elections. A NO score is earned if elections are only monitored by an agency informally, such as poll booth monitoring by the police, only by international observers, or only by NGOs. A NO score is earned if the domestic election agency or set of domestic agencies simply facilitates the process of voting but is not empowered to report violations or abuses.
		(86) In law, the COMELEC is protected from political interference.	A YES score is earned only if the COMELEC has some formal organizational independence from the bodies contesting in the election. A YES score is still earned even if the entity is legally separate but in practice staffed by partisans.	A NO score is earned if the COMELEC is legally tied to bodies contesting the election (i.e. an executive branch agency or a committee of the local council). A NO score is automatically earned if there is no local COMELEC.
		(87) In practice, COMELEC appointments are made that support the independence of the agency.	Appointments to the COMELEC are made based on professional qualifications. Individuals appointed are free of conflicts of interest due to personal loyalties, family connections or other biases. Individuals appointed usually do not have clear political party affiliations.	Appointments are often based on political considerations. Individuals appointed often have conflicts of interest due to personal loyalties, family connections or other biases. Individuals appointed often have clear party loyalties.
		(88) In practice, the COMELEC has a professional, full-time staff.	The COMELEC has full-time staff sufficient to fulfill its basic mandate at the local level.	The COMELEC has no staff, or such a limited staff that it is clearly unqualified to fulfill its mandate.
		(89) In practice, the COMELEC makes timely, publicly available reports following an election cycle.	Reports are released to the public on a predictable schedule, without exceptions.	The COMELEC makes no public reports, or issues reports which are effectively secret, or issues reports of no value.
				Appointments are usually based on professional qualifications. However, individuals appointed may have clear party loyalties.
				The COMELEC has limited staff, or staff without necessary qualifications to fulfill its basic mandate.
				Reports are released, but may be delayed, difficult to access, or otherwise limited.

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(90) In practice, when necessary, the COMELEC imposes penalties on offenders.	When rules violations are discovered, the COMELEC is aggressive in penalizing offenders and/or in cooperating with other agencies in penalizing offenders.	The COMELEC enforces rules, but is limited in its effectiveness. The agency may be slow to act, unwilling to take on politically powerful offenders, reluctant to cooperate with other agencies, or occasionally unable to enforce its judgments.	The COMELEC does not effectively penalize offenders and/or cooperate with other agencies in penalizing offenders. The agency may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to make reasonable judgments against offenders. The agency may be partisan in its application of power.
<i>Are there independent entities that can effectively monitor elections and to which election results may be appealed?</i>			
(91) In law, domestic and international election observers are allowed to monitor elections.	A YES score is earned if domestic and international election observers are allowed to monitor the electoral process.		A NO score is earned if there are any legal or regulatory prohibitions on the monitoring of the electoral process by domestic or international election observers.
(92) In practice, election observers are able to effectively monitor elections.	Election observers have unfettered access to polling sites, counting stations, and voters themselves. The government does not interfere with the observers' activities.	Election observers generally have access to polling sites, counting stations, and voters but encounter restrictions in certain areas. The government may impose burdensome regulatory or bureaucratic requirements on observers to discourage their involvement.	Election observers' movements are significantly limited by the government and many polling and counting sites are restricted or barred from observers. The government imposes so many bureaucratic or regulatory burdens on the observers that their mission is rendered ineffective.
(93) In law, election results can be contested through the judicial system.	A YES score is earned if citizens or political parties can challenge allegedly fraudulent election results through the courts or other judicial mechanisms. Quasi-judicial systems outside the city/municipality, such as national-level COMELEC, also earn a YES score.		A NO score is earned if there is no legal right for citizens or political parties to challenge allegedly fraudulent election results in the courts or other judicial mechanisms.
(94) In practice, election results can be effectively appealed through the judicial system.	The electoral appeals mechanism takes cases from both candidates complaining of flaws in the electoral process as well as citizens bringing complaints related to denial of suffrage or registration errors. There is an expedited process for resolving such complaints to avoid delaying a timely announcement of electoral results.	The electoral appeals mechanism takes complaints from both candidates and voters but may not always act on complaints promptly. The appeals mechanism may be abused at times by parties or candidates seeking to delay the announcement of electoral results.	The electoral appeals mechanism rarely or never acts on complaints brought by candidates or citizens. Citizens may not be able to bring complaints related to denial of suffrage or voter registration errors.

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	0
27	<i>Are there regulations governing the financing of individual political candidates?</i>			
(95)	In law, there are regulations governing private contributions to individual political candidates.	A YES score is earned if there are any formal rules (by law or regulation) controlling private contributions to individual political candidates, including prohibitions against foreign donations.		A NO score is earned if there is no regulation of private contributions to individual political candidates.
(96)	In law, there are limits on individual donations to political candidates.	A YES score is earned if there are any limits in size on individual contributions to political candidates. A YES score is also earned if individual contributions are prohibited.		A NO score is earned if there are no limits on contributions from individuals. A NO score is also earned if limits are applied by the government on opposition candidates in a discriminatory manner.
(97)	In law, there are limits on corporate donations to individual political candidates.	A YES score is earned if there are any limits in size on corporate contributions to individual political candidates. A YES score is also earned if corporate contributions are prohibited.		A NO score is earned if there are no limits on corporate contributions to individual political candidates. A NO score is also earned if limits are applied by the government on opposition candidates in a discriminatory manner.
(98)	In law, there are requirements for the disclosure of donations to individual political candidates.	A YES score is earned if there are any requirements mandating the disclosure of financial contributions to individual political candidates.		A NO score is earned if there are no requirements mandating the disclosure of contributions to individual political candidates, existing regulations do not require a donor's name or amount given, or the regulations allow for anonymous donations.
(99)	In law, there are requirements for the independent auditing of the campaign finances of individual political candidates' campaigns.	A YES score is earned if there is a legal or regulatory requirement for the independent auditing of an individual candidate's campaign finances and expenditures. The auditing is performed by an impartial third-party. Random auditing also merits a YES score.		A NO score is earned if there are no legal or regulatory requirements for the independent auditing of an individual candidate's campaign finances and expenditures or if such requirements exist but allow for candidates to self-audit.

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<p>(100) In law, there is an agency or entity that monitors the financing of individual political candidates' campaigns.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there is a domestic agency or set of domestic agencies/entities formally assigned to monitor and enforce laws and regulations about the financing of individual political candidates' campaigns. A YES score is earned even if the agency/entity is ineffective in practice.</p>		<p>A NO score is earned if there is no such agency or entity.</p>
	<p><i>Are the regulations governing the financing of individual political candidates effective?</i></p> <p>(101) In practice, the existing regulations on the financing of electoral campaigns are effective in regulating an individual's ability to financially support a particular candidate.</p>	<p>Existing limits generally represent the full extent to which an individual can directly or indirectly financially support a particular candidate. However, exceptions and loopholes exist through which individuals can indirectly support particular political candidates above and beyond those formal limitations. Such loopholes could include making donations to third-party groups that advocate on behalf of (or against) a particular candidate; unregulated loans to candidates (rather than direct donations); or in-kind support that is not explicitly regulated by laws or regulations. The limits may be too high in the context of the overall costs of running a campaign.</p>	<p>Existing limits are routinely bypassed or willfully ignored. The vast majority of individual contributions to a particular political candidate are made outside of the formal limitation system. There is no enforcement of violations. Limits are so high that they are meaningless in the context of the overall costs of running a campaign.</p>

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Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
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<p>(102) In practice, the existing regulations on the financing of electoral campaigns are effective in regulating a company's ability to financially support a candidate.</p>	<p>Existing limits represent the full extent to which a company can directly or indirectly financially support an individual candidate. Limits are reasonably low enough in the context of the total costs of running a campaign to be meaningful.</p>	<p>Existing limits generally represent the full extent to which a company can directly or indirectly financially support an individual candidate. However, exceptions and loopholes exist through which companies can indirectly support individual candidates above and beyond those formal limitations. Such loopholes could include making donations to third-party groups that advocate on behalf of (or against) a particular candidate; unregulated loans to candidates (rather than direct donations); or in-kind support that is not explicitly regulated by laws or regulations. The limits may be too high in the context of the overall costs of running a campaign.</p>	<p>Existing limits are routinely bypassed or willfully ignored. The majority of corporate contributions to individual candidates are made outside of the formal limitation system. There is no enforcement of violations. Limits are so high that they are meaningless in the context of the overall costs of running a campaign.</p>
	<p>The agency or entity aggressively starts investigations into allegations of wrongdoing with respect to the financing of individual candidates' campaigns. The agency is fair in its application of this power.</p>	<p>The agency or entity will start investigations, but often relies on external pressure to set priorities, or has limited effectiveness when investigating. The agency, though limited in effectiveness, is still fair in its application of power.</p>	<p>The agency or entity rarely investigates on its own, or the agency or entity is partisan in its application of this power.</p>
<p>(103) In practice, when necessary, an agency or entity monitoring the financing of individual candidates' campaigns independently initiates investigations.</p>	<p>When rules violations are discovered, the agency or entity is aggressive in penalizing offenders.</p>	<p>The agency or entity does not effectively penalize offenders. The agency or entity may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to make reasonable judgments against offenders. The agency or entity may be partisan in its application of power.</p>	
<p>(104) In practice, when necessary, an agency or entity monitoring the financing of individual candidates' campaigns imposes penalties on offenders.</p>			

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
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(105) In practice, the finances of individual candidates' campaigns are subject to at least random auditing.	The finances of individual candidates' campaigns are subject to random auditing using generally accepted auditing practices. Regular auditing of all candidates' records also earns a 100 score.	The finances of individual candidates' campaigns are subject to some form of random auditing, but audits are limited in some way, such as using inadequate auditing standards, or the presence of exceptions to disclosed contributions.	The finances of individual candidates' campaigns are not subject to any regular random auditing, or the audits performed have no value in tracking contributions. Audits may be performed by entities known to be partisan or biased in their practices.	
29 <i>Can citizens access records related to the financing of individual candidates' campaigns?</i>				
(106) In practice, individual political candidates disclose their Statement of Contributions and Expenditures within a reasonable time period.	Individual candidates submit a report with their sources of funding and expenditures to COMELEC not later than one month after the election, as prescribed by law.	Individual candidates submit a report with their sources of funding and expenditures to COMELEC one to two months after the election. Reports may have been submitted but lack important details. Delays may occur when sensitive political information is involved.	Individual candidates never submit to COMELEC their sources of funding or expenditures or submit that report many months after the election. Reports may be submitted but the lack of important details makes them meaningless.	
(107) In practice, citizens can access the financial records of individual candidates (their revenues and expenditures) within a reasonable time period.	Records are available on-line, or records can be obtained in 5 working days. Records are uniformly available. There are no delays for politically sensitive information.	Records take more than 5 working days to obtain. Some delays may be experienced.	Records take more than 10 working days to acquire. There may be persistent delays in obtaining politically sensitive records.	
(108) In practice, citizens can access the financial records of individual candidates (their revenues and expenditures) at a reasonable cost.	Records are free to all citizens, or available for the cost of photocopying. Records can be obtained at little cost, such as by mail or on-line. A visit to city/municipality offices may be necessary to procure documents.	Records impose a financial burden on citizens, journalists or CSOs. A visit outside the city/municipality to provincial or regional offices may be necessary to procure documents.	Retrieving records imposes a major financial burden on citizens. Records costs are prohibitive to most citizens, journalists, or CSOs trying to access this information.	

Mechanisms and Indicators	SCORING GUIDE	
	100	0

V Internal Checks and Balance
V-1 Prevention of Misconduct of Local Officials

<p>30</p> <p><i>Can city/municipal officials be held accountable for any misconduct they commit?</i></p> <p>(109) In law, the mayor, vice-mayor, executive department heads, and other appointive non-civil service executive officials can be investigated, charged or prosecuted for criminal allegations.</p>		<p>A YES score is earned if the mayor, vice-mayor, executive department heads, and other appointive non-civil service executive officials can be investigated, charged or prosecuted for criminal allegations.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if the mayor, vice-mayor, executive department heads, and other appointive non-civil service executive officials cannot be investigated, charged or prosecuted for criminal allegations, or the executive branch controls whether investigative or prosecutorial immunity can be lifted.</p>
<p>(110) In law, the members of the city/municipal council are subject to criminal proceedings.</p>		<p>A YES score is earned if all members of the city/municipal council can, in law, be investigated and prosecuted for criminal allegations.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if any member of the city/municipal council cannot, in law, be investigated and prosecuted for criminal proceedings. A NO score is also earned if the city/municipal legislative branch itself controls whether investigative or prosecutorial immunity can be lifted on members of the council.</p>
<p>(111) In law, elected barangay officials can be held accountable for administrative misconduct, criminal, and/or civil actions.</p>		<p>A YES score is earned if barangay officials can, in law, be investigated and prosecuted for criminal allegations. A YES score is earned if there is a legal framework that provides a guideline for the procedure of preventive suspensions.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if any barangay official cannot, in law, be investigated and prosecuted for criminal proceedings. A NO score is earned if there is no legal framework that provides a guideline for the procedure of preventive suspensions.</p>
<p>31</p> <p><i>Are there effective internal mechanisms for civil servants to report misconduct of city/municipal officials?</i></p> <p>(112) In law, there is an internal mechanism (i.e. phone hotline, e-mail address, local office) through which civil servants can report corruption in the city/municipality.</p>		<p>A YES score is earned if there is a mechanism, or multiple mechanisms for multiple city/municipality agencies, through which civil servants can report cases of graft, misuse of public funds, or corruption. A YES score is earned if these mechanisms allow for anonymous reporting.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if no such mechanism (or equivalent series of mechanisms) exists in the city/municipality.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
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(113) In law, independence of the internal reporting mechanism in the city/municipality is protected to avoid political interference.	A YES score is earned if there is a law that guarantees the independence of internal monitoring from any political interference in the city/municipality.	A NO score is earned if there is no law that guarantees the independence of internal monitoring from any political interference in the city/municipality .		
(114) In practice, the internal reporting mechanism for public sector corruption in the city/municipality receives regular funding.	The agency/entity has a predictable source of funding that is fairly consistent from year to year. Political considerations are not a major factor in determining agency funding.	The agency/entity has a regular source of funding but may be pressured by cuts, or threats of cuts to the agency budget. Political considerations have an effect on agency funding.		Funding source is unreliable. Funding may be removed arbitrarily or as retaliation for agency actions.
(115) In practice, when necessary, the internal reporting mechanism for public sector corruption in the city/municipality initiates investigations.	When irregularities are discovered, the agency/entity is aggressive in conducting investigations or in cooperating with other agencies' investigations. Investigations lead to appropriate sanctions for offenders.	The agency/entity starts investigations, but is limited in its effectiveness. The agency/entity may be slow to act, unwilling to take on politically powerful offenders, reluctant to cooperate with other investigative agencies, or occasionally unable to enforce its judgments.		The agency/entity does not effectively investigate. The agency/entity may start investigations but not complete them, may refuse to cooperate with other investigative agencies, or may fail to detect offenders. The agency/entity may be partisan in its application of power.
<i>Are there incentive structures that encourage whistleblowers to report any misconduct of city/municipal officials?</i>				
(116) In law, there is an incentive/reward mechanism for whistle-blowers at the city/municipality level.	A YES score is earned if there is a law that guarantees whistle-blowers to be rewarded.			A NO score is earned if such law does not exist.
(117) In practice, whistleblowers are rewarded for reporting incidents of corruption or misuse of power according to what is provided by law.	Whistleblowers who report incidents of corruption or misuse of resources are always rewarded according to what is provided by law.	Whistleblowers who report incidents of corruption or misuse of resources are rewarded according to what is provided by law, but there are exceptions. The reward may be difficult to obtain, or it may take a long period to obtain the reward due to pressure exerted by powerful officials.		Whistleblowers who report incidents of corruption or misuse of resources are rarely or never rewarded according to what is provided by law. The process of obtaining rewards is cumbersome, or powerful officials are systematically able to prevent whistleblowers from obtaining their rewards.

Mechanisms and Indicators	SCORING GUIDE	
	100	0

33 *Are there effective protections for whistleblowers who report any misconduct of city/municipal officials?*

<p>(118) In law, city/municipality civil servants who report cases of corruption, graft, abuse of power, or abuse of resources are protected from recrimination or other negative consequences.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there are specific laws against recrimination against public sector whistleblowers in the city/municipality. This may include prohibitions on termination, transfer, harassment or other consequences.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there are no legal protections for public-sector whistleblowers in the city/municipality.</p>
<p>(119) In practice, civil servants who report cases of corruption, graft, abuse of power, or abuse of resources are protected from recrimination or other negative consequences.</p>	<p>Whistleblowers among civil servants in the city/municipality can report abuses of power without fear of negative consequences. This may be due to robust mechanisms to protect the identity of whistleblowers or may be due to a culture that encourages disclosure and accountability.</p>	<p>Whistleblowers among civil servants in the city/municipality often face substantial negative consequences, such as losing a job, demotion or some form of harassment, including threats to one's life and one's family.</p>

V-2 Limits to Discretion

34 *Are there adequate limits on the power of city/municipal mayors to make executive decisions?*

<p>(120) In practice, the mayor limits the use of executive orders for establishing new regulations, policies, or local government practices.</p>	<p>The mayor utilizes executive orders only when there is no constitutional or legal requirement for official legislative action or approval. Executive orders are limited in number and narrow in scope.</p>	<p>The mayor sometimes relies on executive orders to implement policies and regulations opposed by the local council. Some executive orders are overly broad in scope and are designed to circumvent constitutional or legal requirements for legislative action or approval.</p>
<p>(121) In practice, there is a city/municipality Finance Committee responsible for assisting and giving recommendations to the mayor regarding budgetary allocations.</p>	<p>There is a fully-functioning Local Finance Committee formed to assist and recommend changes in the budgetary allocations to the local chief executive. The recommendations of the Local Finance Committee are fully considered by the city/municipal mayor and the city/municipal council during budget deliberations.</p>	<p>The mayor routinely abuses executive orders to render the local council practically useless. Executive orders are the norm, not the exception, and directly contravene constitutional or legal requirements for legislative action or approval.</p> <p>There is no Local Finance Committee in the local government responsible for assisting and making recommendations in the budget allocation to the city/municipal mayor, or such a body exists but is not allowed to assist and make recommendations.</p>

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35 <i>Is there a balance between executive and legislative powers in the budget formulation process?</i>			
(122) In law, the city/municipal council can amend the budget proposed by the city/municipal mayor.	A YES score is earned if the city/municipal council has the power to see the proposed budget and amend it if necessary.		A NO score is earned if the city/municipal council has no such power.
(123) In law, budget authorization is done by the city/municipal legislative body.	A YES score is earned if the law mandates that budget authorization be done by the city/municipal legislative body.		A NO score is earned if budget authorization is not done by the city/municipal legislative body.
(124) In practice, the city/municipal budget is enacted after deliberations by the city/municipal council where members are able to discuss proposed amendments.	The budget proposal is submitted by the city/municipal mayor to the local legislative body with adequate time for council deliberations. Members of the city/municipal council are able to amend the proposed budget if necessary.	The city/municipal council is able to conduct some deliberations on the budget proposed by the city/municipal mayor, but there are constraints to these discussions. The budget proposal may not have been submitted early enough, or portions of the budget proposal are not open for discussions.	City/municipal council deliberations on the budget proposed by the city/municipal mayor are largely constrained. The city/municipal council is unable to propose amendments to the budget if necessary.
(125) In law, the mayor has the power to veto ordinance/s of the city/municipal council with budgetary implications.	A YES score is earned if the mayor has the mandate to veto ordinances of the city/municipal council with budgetary implications.		A NO score is earned if the city/municipality does not provide powers to the mayor to veto ordinances of the legislative council.

V-3 Management of Conflict of Interest

36 <i>Are there effective regulations governing gifts and hospitality offered to city/municipality officials and civil servants?</i>	
(126) In law, there are regulations governing gifts and hospitality offered to the mayor, vice mayor, and other top executive officials (i.e., department heads) of the city/municipality executive branch.	A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines regulating gifts and hospitality offered to members of the city/municipality executive branch of government. A NO score is earned if there are no guidelines or regulations with respect to gifts and hospitality offered to members of the city/municipality executive branch. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
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(127) In practice, the regulations governing gifts and hospitality offered to members of the city/municipality executive branch are effective.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to members of the city/municipality executive branch are enforced. Members of the city/municipality executive branch never or rarely accept gifts or hospitality above what is allowed.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to members of the local executive branch are generally applied through exceptions exist. Some executive officials are known to accept greater amounts of gifts and hospitality from outside interest groups or private sector actors than is allowed.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to members of the city/municipality executive branch are routinely ignored and unenforced. Members of the executive branch routinely accept significant amounts of gifts and hospitality from outside interest groups and actors seeking to influence their decisions.
(128) In law, there are regulations governing gifts and hospitality offered to members of the city/municipal council.	A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines regulating gifts and hospitality for members of the city/municipal council.		A NO score is earned if there are no guidelines or regulations with respect to gifts or hospitality offered to members of the city/municipal council. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.
(129) In practice, the regulations governing gifts and hospitality offered to members of the city/municipal council are effective.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to members of the city/municipal council are enforced. Members of the council never or rarely accept gifts or hospitality above what is allowed.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to members of the city/municipal council are generally applied though exceptions exist. Some members of the council are known to accept greater amounts of gifts and hospitality from outside interest groups or private sector actors than is allowed.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to members of the city/municipal council are routinely ignored and unenforced. Members of the council routinely accept significant amounts of gifts and hospitality from outside interest groups and actors seeking to influence their decisions.
(130) In law, there are regulations governing gifts and hospitality offered to civil servants at the city/municipality level.	A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines regulating gifts and hospitality for civil servants at the city/municipality level.		A NO score is earned if there are no guidelines or regulations with respect to gifts or hospitality offered to civil servants at the city/municipality level. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.
(131) In practice, the regulations governing gifts and hospitality offered to civil servants at the city/municipality level are effective.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to civil servants at the city/municipality level are enforced. Civil servants at the city/municipality level never or rarely accept gifts or hospitality above what is allowed.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to civil servants at the city/municipality level are generally applied though exceptions exist. Some civil servants are known to accept greater amounts of gifts and hospitality from outside interest groups or private sector actors than is allowed.	The regulations governing gifts and hospitality to civil servants at the city/municipality level are routinely ignored and unenforced. Civil servants routinely accept significant amounts of gifts and hospitality from outside interest groups and actors seeking to influence their decisions.

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
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37	<p><i>Are there effective regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of city/municipality officials and civil servants?</i></p> <p>(132) In law, there are regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of city/municipality executive officials.</p> <p>(133) In practice, the regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of local executive officials are effective.</p> <p>(134) In law, there are regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of the city/municipal council members.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines regulating the grant of public concessions (such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services) to family members and relatives of city/municipality executive officials.</p> <p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of local executive officials are enforced. Firms owned by family members and relatives of local executive officials are never given public concessions.</p> <p>A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines regulating the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of the city/municipal council.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p> <p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of local executive officials are generally applied though exceptions exist. Some public concessions are known to have been granted to family members and relatives of local executive officials.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p> <p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of local executive officials are routinely ignored and unenforced. Public concessions are routinely granted to family members and relatives of local executive officials.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
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<p>(135) In practice, the regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of city/municipal council members are effective.</p> <p>(136) In law, there are regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of city/municipal council members at the city/municipality level.</p> <p>(137) In practice, the regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of city/municipal council members are effective.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of city/municipal council members are enforced. Firms owned by family members and relatives of members of the council are never given public concessions.</p> <p>A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines regulating the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of civil servants at the city/municipality level.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of members of the city/municipal council are generally applied though exceptions exist. Some public concessions are known to have been granted to family members and relatives of members of the council.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of members of the city/municipal council are routinely ignored and unenforced. Public concessions are routinely granted to family members and relatives of members of the council.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p>	
	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of city/municipal council members are enforced. Firms owned by family members and relatives of members of the council are never given public concessions.</p> <p>A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines regulating the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of civil servants at the city/municipality level.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of members of the city/municipal council are generally applied though exceptions exist. Some public concessions are known to have been granted to family members and relatives of members of the council.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of members of the city/municipal council are routinely ignored and unenforced. Public concessions are routinely granted to family members and relatives of members of the council.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of members of the city/municipal council are routinely ignored and unenforced. Public concessions are routinely granted to family members and relatives of members of the council.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p>
	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of city/municipal council members are enforced. Firms owned by family members and relatives of members of the council are never given public concessions.</p> <p>A YES score is earned if there are formal guidelines regulating the grant of public concessions, such as contracts for government projects or the procurement of goods and services, to family members and relatives of civil servants at the city/municipality level.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of members of the city/municipal council are generally applied though exceptions exist. Some public concessions are known to have been granted to family members and relatives of members of the council.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of members of the city/municipal council are routinely ignored and unenforced. Public concessions are routinely granted to family members and relatives of members of the council.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p>	<p>The regulations governing the grant of public concessions to family members and relatives of members of the city/municipal council are routinely ignored and unenforced. Public concessions are routinely granted to family members and relatives of members of the council.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if there are no such guidelines or regulations. A NO score is earned if the guidelines are overly general and do not specify what is and is not appropriate.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
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38 Are there effective regulations governing asset disclosures of city/municipality officials?			
(138) In law, the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council are required to file a regular asset disclosure form.	A YES score is earned if the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council are all required by law to file an asset disclosure form while in office, illustrating sources of income, stock holdings, and other assets. This form need not be publicly available to score a YES.		A NO score is earned if the mayor and vice-mayor are not required to disclose assets.
(139) In law, there are requirements for the independent auditing of the asset disclosure forms submitted by the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council.	A YES score is earned if there is a legal or regulatory requirement for independent auditing of the asset disclosures of the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council. The auditing is performed by an impartial third-party. Random auditing also merits a YES score.		A NO score is earned if there are no legal or regulatory requirements for the independent auditing of asset disclosures of the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council or if such requirements exist but allow for self-auditing.
(140) In practice, asset disclosures by the mayor, vice-mayor, and members of the city/municipal council are audited.	The asset disclosures of city/municipality officials are subject to at least random auditing using generally accepted auditing practices.	The asset disclosures of city/municipality officials are subject to random auditing, but audits are limited in some way, such as using inadequate auditing standards, or the presence of exceptions to disclosed assets.	The asset disclosures of city/municipality officials are not audited, or the audits performed have no value. Audits may be performed by entities known to be partisan or biased in their practices.

Mechanisms and Indicators	SCORING GUIDE	
	100	0

VI Rule-Based Procedures		
<i>39 Are there effective regulations governing the public procurement process at the city/municipality level?</i>		
<p>(141) In law, the call for bids is required to be extensively publicized within a reasonable period before the actual bidding commences.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if the city/municipal government is required to publicly post or announce the call for bids. This can be done through major media outlets or on a publicly-accessible government register or log.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there is no requirement for the city/municipal government to publicly announce call for bids.</p>
<p>(142) In law, the results of the bidding are required to be made public.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if the city/municipal government is required to publicly post or announce the results of the public procurement process. This can be done through major media outlets or on a publicly-accessible government register or log.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if there is no requirement for the city/municipal government to publicly announce the results of the public procurement process.</p>
<p>(143) In practice, major procurement projects in the city/municipality level are effectively advertised.</p>	<p>There is a formal process of advertising public procurements. This may include a government website, newspaper advertising, or other official announcements. All major procurements are advertised in this way. Sufficient time is allowed for bidders to respond to advertisements.</p>	<p>There is no formal process of advertising major public procurements or the process is superficial and ineffective.</p>
<p>(144) In law, bids called by the city general services officer/municipal treasurer are made open for public competition.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if the procurement process is based on open public competition. A YES score is still earned if there are a few exceptions to competitive procurement processes, so long as these are minimal and there are clear guidelines covering these exceptions.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if the procurement process is not based on open public competition.</p>
<p>(145) In law, the city/municipality Bids and Awards Committee exercises the exclusive jurisdiction in deciding the winning bidder.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if the winning bidder is chosen by the city/municipality Bids and Awards Committee and the decision is free from any external influence.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if the winning bidder is chosen by another body. A NO score is earned if the city/municipality Bids and Awards Committee decides who the winning bidder is, but is influenced by other bodies.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
		100	50
(146) In law, companies guilty of major violations of procurement regulations (i.e. bribery) are prohibited from participating in future procurement bids.	A YES score is earned if there are formal procurement blacklists, designed to prevent convicted companies from doing business with the government.		A NO score is earned if no such process exists.
(147) In law, the losing bidder can file a protest against the decision of the Bids and Awards Committee within a reasonable period.	A YES score is earned if there is a formal appeals process for unsuccessful bidders.		A NO score is earned if no such process exists.
(148) In law, procurement without public bidding can only be made on justifiable grounds.	A YES score is earned if procurement without bidding is regulated by the grounds of procurement through personal canvass, emergency purchase, negotiated purchase, procurement from duly licensed manufacturers, exclusive Philippine agents or distributors and government entities.		A NO score is earned if procurement without bidding is not regulated by the grounds of procurement through personal canvass, emergency purchase, negotiated purchase, procurement from duly licensed manufacturers, exclusive Philippine agents or distributors and government entities.
(149) In practice, there is regular mandatory training for public procurement officials.	A YES score is earned if public procurement officials receive regular mandatory training to ensure professional standards in supervising the tendering process. A YES score is earned if such training is mandated for portions of the broader civil service, to include procurement officials.		A NO score is earned if there is no regular required training of public procurement officials or if training is sporadic, inconsistent, unrelated to procurement processes, or voluntary.
<i>Are there fair and transparent regulations governing taxes at the city/municipality level?</i>			
(150) In law, the rules governing the collection of city/municipal taxes are fair and do not discriminate against any particular group or taxpayers.	A YES score is earned if the rules governing the collection of city/municipal taxes are not unjust, excessive, oppressive, confiscatory or discriminatory to particular groups or taxpayers.		A NO score is earned if the rules governing the collection of city/municipal taxes are unjust, excessive, oppressive, confiscatory or discriminatory to particular groups or taxpayers.

40

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	0
(151) In practice, tax laws at the city/municipality level are enforced uniformly and without discrimination.	Tax laws (which may be economically unfair as written) at the city/municipality level are enforced consistently for all citizens. No general group of citizens is more or less likely to evade tax law than another.	Tax laws at the city/municipality level are generally enforced consistently, but some exceptions exist. For example, some groups may occasionally evade tax law. Some arbitrary and discriminatory tax rules exist.	Tax law at the city/municipality level is unequally applied. Some groups of citizens are consistently more or less likely to evade tax law than others. Tax regulations are, as a rule, written to be discriminatory and/or arbitrary.	
(152) In practice, the city/municipality tax collection agency practices are free from irregularities in the conduct of tax collection.	When irregularities are discovered, there is aggressive investigation and prosecution of erring city/municipal public officials. Tax collection agencies referred to here are those that collect local taxes.	The agency starts investigations, but is limited in its effectiveness. It may be slow to act, unwilling to take on politically powerful offenders, or occasionally unable to enforce its judgments.	The agency does not effectively investigate financial irregularities. It may start investigations but not complete them, or may fail to detect offenders. Agency personnel may be partisan in their application of power.	
<i>Are there effective regulations governing the management of the city/municipality civil service?</i>				
(153) In law, there are regulations requiring an impartial, independent, and fairly managed civil service at the city/municipality level.	A YES score is earned if there are specific formal rules establishing that the civil service carry out its duties independent of political interference in the city/municipality level. "Civil service" here refers to department personnel employed by the city/municipal government, rather than personnel of national government agencies assigned to the city/municipality.		A NO score is earned if there are no formal rules establishing an independent civil service in the city/municipality.	
(154) In practice, city/municipality civil servants who are appointed/promoted are qualified for the positions they fill.	City/municipality civil servants are generally appointed and promoted on the basis of merit. They possess competencies required for the performance of their duties.	City/municipality civil servants are generally appointed and promoted on the basis of merit, with some exceptions. Though there is no systematic favoritism in the local civil service, basic competencies in the performance of duties is somewhat lacking.	Appointment and promotion of city/municipality civil servants are generally made due to favoritism and patronage. Basic competencies in the performance of duties is systematically lacking.	

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
		100	50
(155) In practice, city/municipality civil servants are protected by law against arbitrary dismissal or demotion.	City/municipality civil servants are protected by the law against arbitrary dismissal or demotion. Officers and employees can only be removed from their position if there is a valid cause. There is a hearing and a notice given to the officer/employee prior to his/her dismissal.	Although city/municipality civil servants are protected by the law, there are some instances where employees/officers are removed from the position without just cause.	City/municipality civil servants are routinely removed from office indiscriminately without any documented just cause.
42 <i>Are public regulatory standards effectively enforced by the city/municipal government?</i>			
(156) In practice, the city/municipal government offices that enforce public regulatory standards on business, including those for public health, safety and the environment, are appropriately staffed.	City/municipal government offices that enforce basic regulatory standards on businesses, including those for public health, safety and the environment, are staffed with adequate personnel. These personnel have the necessary competencies for their tasks.	City/municipal government offices that enforce public regulatory standards on businesses are somewhat constrained by staffing problems.	There are no functioning city/municipal government offices that enforce public regulatory standards on businesses.
(157) In practice, business inspections by city/municipal government officials to ensure that public regulatory standards, including those for public health, safety, and the environment, are being carried out in a uniform and even-handed manner.	Business inspections by the city/municipal government to ensure that public regulatory standards concerning public health, safety, and the environment are being met are designed and carried out in such a way as to ensure comprehensive compliance by all businesses with transparent regulatory requirements. Business inspections may be carried out through random monitoring of compliance.	Business inspections by the city/municipal government to ensure public regulatory standards are met are generally carried out in an even-handed way though exceptions exist. Bribes are occasionally paid to extract favorable treatment or expedited processing.	Business inspections to ensure that public regulatory standards are met are routinely carried out by city/municipal government officials in an ad hoc, arbitrary fashion designed to extract extra payments from businesses in exchange for favorable treatment, or to harass supporters of political opponents.
(158) In practice, city/municipal government offices can make recommendations for improved regulations based on compliance activities.	City/municipal government offices that enforce public regulatory standards on businesses are able to operate independently. They produce regular reports describing compliance. Recommendations for improving compliance are seriously considered by local businesses and other governmental entities and acted upon.	City/municipal government offices that produce regular reports with appropriate recommendations, but these recommendations are sometimes not acted upon.	No investigations are conducted to assess compliance with public regulatory standards. If investigations are conducted, they are generally not acted upon and/or made public.

Mechanisms and Indicators	100	SCORING GUIDE	50	0
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VII External Oversight Institutions

43 *Are there authorities outside the city/municipal government that can independently review the actions of local officials?*

<p>(159) In law, there is a separate branch/layer of government, such as the judiciary, provincial-level or national-level offices, that can review the actions of the mayor/vice-mayor/executive officials.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there is a formal process by which a branch/layer of government that is separate and distinct from the city/municipality (such as the judiciary, provincial-level or national-level offices) can pass judgments on the legality or constitutionality of actions taken by the city/municipal executive.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if no such mechanism exists. A NO score is earned if any review is vaguely established in law or regulation without formal procedures. A NO score is earned if general exemptions exist with respect to executive actions that are reviewable (a local security exemption, for example).</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices do not effectively review city/municipal executive policy. These institutions may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to pass judgments on local executive abuses. They may be partisan in their application of power.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if no such mechanism exists. A NO score is earned if any review is vaguely established in law or regulation without formal procedures. A NO score is earned if general exceptions exist exempting certain legislative actions from being reviewed (a local security exemption, for example).</p>
<p>(160) In practice, when necessary, the judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government office reviews the actions of the mayor/vice-mayor/executive officials.</p>	<p>When constitutional or legal questions or possible violations are raised, the judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices are aggressive in reviewing executive actions and can void illegal or unconstitutional actions. These institutions are fair and nonpartisan in their application of this power.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices will review executive actions, but is limited in its effectiveness. They may be slow to act, unwilling to take on politically sensitive issues, or occasionally unable to enforce judgments.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices do not effectively review laws passed by the city/municipal council. These institutions may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to pass judgments on local legislative abuses. They may be partisan in their application of power.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices do not effectively review laws passed by the city/municipal council. These institutions may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to pass judgments on local legislative abuses. They may be partisan in their application of power.</p>
<p>(161) In law, there is a separate branch/layer of government, such as the judiciary, provincial-level or national-level offices, that can review the laws passed by the city/municipal council.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there is a formal process by which a branch/layer of government that is separate and distinct from the city/municipality (such as the judiciary, provincial-level or national-level offices) can pass judgments on the legality or constitutionality of laws passed by the city/municipal council.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices will review laws passed by the city/municipal council, but is limited in its effectiveness. They may be slow to act, unwilling to take on politically sensitive issues, or occasionally unable to enforce judgments.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices do not effectively review laws passed by the city/municipal council. These institutions may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to pass judgments on local legislative abuses. They may be partisan in their application of power.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices do not effectively review laws passed by the city/municipal council. These institutions may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to pass judgments on local legislative abuses. They may be partisan in their application of power.</p>
<p>(162) In practice, when necessary, the judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government office reviews laws passed by the city/municipal council.</p>	<p>When constitutional or legal questions or possible violations are raised, the judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices are aggressive in reviewing laws passed by the city/municipal council, and can void illegal or unconstitutional actions. These institutions are fair and nonpartisan in their application of this power.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices will review laws passed by the city/municipal council, but is limited in its effectiveness. They may be slow to act, unwilling to take on politically sensitive issues, or occasionally unable to enforce judgments.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices do not effectively review laws passed by the city/municipal council. These institutions may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to pass judgments on local legislative abuses. They may be partisan in their application of power.</p>	<p>The judiciary and/or the appropriate provincial-level or national-level government offices do not effectively review laws passed by the city/municipal council. These institutions may make judgments but not enforce them, or may fail to pass judgments on local legislative abuses. They may be partisan in their application of power.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
		100	50
44	<p><i>Is there an independent agency that effectively audits financial transactions of the city/municipal government?</i></p> <p>(163) In law, there is a Commission on Audit that audits all accounts of the city/municipality including government revenues and expenditures.</p> <p>(164) In law, the Commission on Audit is protected from political interference.</p> <p>(165) In practice, audit institution personnel assigned at the city/municipality level are free from political interference by city/municipality government officials.</p> <p>(166) In practice, the Commission on Audit is able to make recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the city/municipality.</p> <p>(167) In practice, the Commission on Audit is able to initiate its own investigations</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there is a Commission on Audit whose primary mandate is to audit and track the movement of money through the city/municipality. This agency should be specifically charged to investigate and document the misuse of funds. A system of agencies located in each department is equivalent.</p> <p>A YES score is earned only if the agency has some formal organizational independence from the government. A YES score is earned even if the entity is legally separate but in practice staffed by partisans.</p> <p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials. Regulations exist that prevent the city/municipality personnel from colluding with local government officials. When such collusions are proven, local audit personnel are appropriately sanctioned.</p> <p>Audit agency reports are taken seriously by the city/municipal government, with negative findings drawing prompt corrective action.</p> <p>The audit agency can control the timing and pace of its investigations without any input from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality.</p>	<p>A NO score is earned if no such agency exists, or that function is a secondary concern of a larger body, such as the executive.</p> <p>A NO score is earned if the agency is a subordinate part of any government department or agency, such as the Department of Interior or the Justice Department.</p> <p>Local audit personnel are known to have close personal relations with city/municipality government officials. City/municipality audit personnel do not produce audit reports regularly, or audit reports contain missing documents.</p> <p>Audit reports are often ignored by the city/municipal government, or given superficial attention. Audit reports do not lead to policy changes.</p> <p>The audit agency must rely on approval from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality before initiating investigations. Politically sensitive investigations are almost impossible to move forward on.</p>
		<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>	<p>Local audit personnel are known to have close personal relations with city/municipality government officials. City/municipality audit personnel do not produce audit reports regularly, or audit reports contain missing documents.</p> <p>Audit reports are often ignored by the city/municipal government, or given superficial attention. Audit reports do not lead to policy changes.</p> <p>The audit agency must rely on approval from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality before initiating investigations. Politically sensitive investigations are almost impossible to move forward on.</p>
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		<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>	<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>
		<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>	<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>
		<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>	<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>
		<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>	<p>Local audit personnel are generally known to be independent of city/municipality government officials, but some personal relations may exist. Regulations exist that prevent city/municipality local audit personnel from colluding with local government officials. There is some difficulty in sanctioning local audit personnel for inappropriate actions.</p> <p>In most cases, audit agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur for politically sensitive issues, or particularly resistant agencies.</p> <p>The audit agency can generally decide what to investigate, and when, but is subject to pressure from the executive or legislative bodies in the city/municipality on politically sensitive issues.</p>

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE		
		100	50	0
(168) In practice, the Commission on Audit submits and publishes audit reports within the required time period.	The agency makes regular, publicly available, substantial reports to the legislature and/or directly outlining the full scope of its work.	The agency makes publicly available reports to the legislature and/or directly to the public that are sometimes delayed or incomplete.	The agency makes no reports of its activities, or makes reports that are consistently out of date, unavailable to the public, or insubstantial.	
(169) In law, there is an oversight agency that examines city/municipality public procurement processes and results.	A YES score is earned only if the agency has some formal organizational independence from the government. A YES score is earned even if the entity is legally separate but in practice staffed by partisans.		A NO score is earned if the agency is a subordinate part of any government department or agency, such as the Department of Interior or the Justice Department.	
(170) In practice, the oversight agency that examines city/municipality public procurement processes and results is effective.	The oversight agency that examines city/municipality public procurement processes and results is able to produce reports in a timely manner. Its findings prompt the appropriate corrective action.	In most cases, oversight agency reports are acted on, though some exceptions may occur.	Oversight agency reports are often ignored, and do not lead to corrective action of public procurement processes and results.	
45 <i>Can media and civil society organizations perform watchdog roles freely at the city/municipality level?</i>				
(171) In practice, media personnel are able to report on corruption cases without intimidation or harassment.	A YES score is earned if there were no documented cases of media personnel being assaulted in the specific study period. A YES score can be earned if there was an attack but it was clearly unrelated to the media personnel's work.		A NO score is earned if there were any documented cases during the study period of assault to media personnel related to stories that they have published or are currently working on.	
(172) In practice, media personnel are able to report on corruption cases without threat to their lives or that of their families.	A YES score is earned if there were no documented cases of media personnel being killed in the specific study period. A YES score can be earned if there was an attack but it was clearly unrelated to the media personnel's work.		A NO score is earned if there were any documented cases during the study period of the murder of media personnel related to stories that they have published or are currently working on.	

Mechanisms and Indicators		SCORING GUIDE	
		100	0
<p>(173) In practice, CSOs/NGOs have not been shut down by the city/municipality for their work as watchdogs/advocates during the study period.</p>	<p>A YES score is earned if there were no CSOs/NGOs shut down by the government or forced to cease operations because of their work as watchdogs/advocates during the study period.</p>		<p>A NO score is earned if any CSO/NGO has been effectively shut down by the government or forced to cease operations because of their work as watchdogs/advocates during the study period. The causal relationship between the cessation of operations and the CSOs/NGOs work may not be explicit. However, the burden of proof here is low. If it seems likely that the CSO/NGO was forced to cease operations due to its work, then the indicator is scored as a NO.</p>
	<p>A YES score is earned if there were no CSO/NGO activists imprisoned because of their work as watchdogs/advocates during the study period.</p>		<p>A NO score is earned if any activist was jailed in relation to work as watchdogs/advocates during the study period. The causal relationship between the official charges and the person's work may not be explicit. However, the burden of proof here is low. If it seems likely that the person was imprisoned due to his or her work, then the indicator is scored as a NO. "Imprisoned" is defined here as detention by the government lasting more than 24 hours.</p>
	<p>(175) In practice, CSO/NGO activists operate without threat of physical intimidation or harassment.</p>		<p>A YES score is earned if there were no documented cases of CSO/NGO activists as watchdogs/advocates being assaulted in the specific study period. A YES score can be earned if there was an attack but it was clearly unrelated to the activist's work.</p>

5

Organizing Multi-stakeholder Workshops: A Guide for Promoting Discussions on Local Governance Reform

Evidence-based governance reform initiatives begin with the design of appropriate assessment tools such that the resulting assessment findings may be easily translated into concrete plans of implementable actions. Without such a design, assessment results sometimes degenerate into finger-pointing or produce feelings of powerlessness in improving current conditions.

In previous chapters, we emphasized the usefulness of a mechanisms-based framework in understanding specific strengths and weaknesses in local transparency and accountability. We also presented the Philippine Local Governance Transparency and Accountability Indicators (PLG-TAI) as an assessment tool that was developed based on this framework, and provided a guide for its use in the conduct of local governance assessments.

In this chapter, we present additional guidelines and tools, focusing on how local multi-stakeholder workshops move forward the process of evidence-based local governance reform. These workshops aim to generate the participation of multiple stakeholders in the formulation of local action plans for improving local transparency and accountability systems.

The multiple stakeholders of local governance include actors both within and outside government that impinge on local governance processes and outcomes. They include local government officials (from both the executive and legislative branches) and other local government personnel, particularly those in the local Budget Office, the Treasurer's Office, the Planning and Development Office, and the Association of Barangay Chairpersons, among others. They also include locally-assigned personnel from national government agencies that deal extensively with, or have some oversight powers over, the local government, such as the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Commission on Audit, the Civil Service Commission, the Commission on Elections, and the Office of the Ombudsman. Finally, they include important stakeholders from outside government, such as non-government organizations, people's organizations, local cooperatives, academic institutions, the local media, and local business groups, among others.

The total number of workshop participants, and the exact allocation for each group of stakeholders, will vary from place to place, depending on local needs, resources, and conditions. Inclusiveness in the selection of participants helps ensure that workshop outputs benefit from a consideration of diverse perspectives. The resulting action plans will then reflect the ownership and commitment of the various stakeholders necessary to implement and sustain local governance reform.

Typically, the Workshop Convener, the local organization that invites participants to the workshop and manages its processes, is also the organization that spearheaded the Local Governance Assessment, with the goal of translating the assessment results into plans for action. Oftentimes, it is helpful for the Workshop Convener to be an organization generally perceived to act independently from local governments. This provides a measure of credibility in the assessment results, and generates an environment that is conducive to meaningful, non-partisan and non-politicized workshop discussions. Local governments may also wish to serve as Workshop Convener, but they must exercise great prudence to ensure that, from the selection of participants to the finalization of local action plans, workshop processes are not perceived to be slanted towards highly partisan objectives.

We prepare the guidelines below to assist prospective Workshop Conveners in facilitating participatory processes of evidence-based local governance reform. Our discussion assumes that a Local Governance Assessment using the PLG-TAI has been concluded, and that the pending task is to stimulate local discussions on the next-steps strategies that may be undertaken in light of the assessment results.

Workshop objectives and expected outputs

The broad goal of the Local Multi-Stakeholder Workshop on Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms is to empower the multiple stakeholders of local governance to use local governance assessment results in identifying concrete strategies for improving local transparency and accountability.

More specifically, the conduct of the workshop aims to enable workshop participants to:

1. Develop an appropriate understanding of a mechanisms-based framework that allows a close examination of the existence, effectiveness, and accessibility of local transparency and accountability mechanisms;
2. Share observations and diverse perspectives about the state of specific local transparency and accountability mechanisms;
3. Identify strengths and weaknesses in local transparency and accountability mechanisms based on discussions about the main findings of the Local Governance Assessment;
4. Identify and agree on concrete action-steps that improve the existence, effectiveness, and accessibility of local transparency and accountability mechanisms; and

5. Formulate a local action plan for improving local transparency and accountability mechanisms, including a specified time frame for implementation and the persons/organizations responsible for the implementation and the monitoring of implementation results.

In line with these workshop objectives, participants are expected to produce the following main outputs:

1. A list of the specific local transparency and accountability mechanisms currently existing (Small Group Discussion 1 output);
2. Qualitative observations about the effectiveness and accessibility of current local transparency and accountability mechanisms (Small Group Discussion 1 output);
3. Consensus points and diverging perspectives on the state of local transparency and accountability mechanisms (Plenary Discussion 1 output);
4. A list of concrete action-steps (policies, programs, and other initiatives) for improving the existence, effectiveness, and accessibility of local transparency and accountability mechanisms (Small Group Discussion 2 output); and
5. A local action plan for implementing next-steps strategies that improve local transparency and accountability mechanisms (Plenary Discussion 2 output).

General workshop design

The workshop is designed to be conducted over the duration of one whole day. A suggested workshop flow is attached as Annex 5A. Workshop processes consist of a combination of input presentations, small group discussions, and plenary discussions.

Input presentations

Input presentations provide workshop participants with information that is crucial for meaningful and productive workshop discussions aimed towards generating evidence-based recommendations for reform.

The substantive sessions of the workshop typically begin with a presentation of the mechanisms-based framework in understanding transparency and accountability (Chapter 2 in this toolkit). The broad goal of this presentation is to enable workshop participants to begin focusing on institutions, mechanisms, and the components of mechanism design as they relate to principles of transparency and accountability. In so doing, the presentation sets the tone for discussions that revolve around improving the design of local transparency and accountability mechanisms. Presenters also discuss the seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms, and invite workshop participants to begin thinking about how these broad mechanisms are observed as specific policies, programs, and initiatives in their local areas.

In the second input presentation, the major findings of the Local Governance Assessment (conducted prior to the workshop) are shared with workshop participants. The major task of the presenter is to identify strengths and weaknesses in local transparency and accountability mechanisms based on data generated from the assessment research (refer to the section, Preparing the assessment report, in Chapter 3 in this toolkit). A helpful presentation is one that demonstrates which among the seven broad types of mechanisms may be considered as “strong” and “weak” areas, and that disaggregates the analysis by identifying specific features of existing mechanisms that may lead to their ineffectiveness or inaccessibility for citizen use. The presentation thus provides a data-based “diagnosis” upon which later discussions on concrete action points are expected to be anchored.

Small group discussions

Small group discussions provide the environment for workshop participants to engage in meaningful dialogue about the status of local transparency and accountability mechanisms, and what may be done to improve them. Each discussion group typically consists of around five to seven members, with a group facilitator and documenter assigned by the Workshop Convener.

In the first small group discussion, workshop participants identify specific local policies, programs, and initiatives on transparency and accountability that they have observed, and arrive at qualitative assessments about their effectiveness and accessibility to citizens (refer to Annex 5B for the small group discussion module). The discussion is ideally held prior to the presentation of the assessment research findings, so that the participants’ own observations are generated independently. This provides an opportunity for later on discussing any points of agreement and disagreement between the findings of the Local Assessment Team and the articulated observations of workshop participants.

Focus questions for the first small group discussion (refer to Annex 5C for the discussion worksheet) consist of the following:

1. Based on your own experiences in working/dealing with local governance processes in your area (identify specific experiences), what are the local initiatives relevant to promoting transparency and accountability that you have observed? (*existence*)
2. What can you say about the quality/state of the local transparency and accountability mechanisms that you have identified?
 - a. Are these local mechanisms being implemented well? Why or why not? (*effectiveness*)
 - b. Are citizens and other organized sectors/groups able to use the identified local mechanisms? Why or why not? (*accessibility*)
 - c. What are your other observations about the strengths and weaknesses of these local mechanisms?

In the second small group discussion, workshop participants utilize the results of the Local Governance Assessment and the previous group discussion in generating diverse ideas intended to contribute to improvements in local transparency and accountability systems (refer to Annex 5D for the small group discussion module). Using the mechanisms-based framework as a planning tool, participants identify concrete doable strategies to strengthen the existence, effectiveness, and accessibility of local transparency and accountability mechanisms.

Focus questions for the second small group discussion (refer to Annex 5E for the discussion worksheet) consist of the following:

1. What specific local policies, programs, and initiatives may be adopted to strengthen local transparency and accountability mechanisms? (*existence*)
2. Based on the weaknesses in their institutional design that were identified in previous sessions, what are the features that may be incorporated so that these mechanisms work well in promoting local transparency and accountability? (*effectiveness*)
3. What are the additional steps that may be taken to enable more citizens and other organized sectors/groups to use these mechanisms? (*accessibility*)

Plenary discussions

Plenary discussions generate broader interactions among the different stakeholders in the workshop, and allow them to benefit from insights that surface in other groups. More importantly, plenary discussions facilitate the identification of consensus points, as well as points that represent diverging perspectives, among workshop participants. The plenary discussions thus serve as venues for participants to forge collaborative undertakings for the improvement of local governance.

The first plenary discussion typically occurs after all input presentations and the first small group discussion have been completed. The goal of this discussion is for participants to arrive at a common appreciation and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of local transparency and accountability mechanisms.

In this discussion, workshop participants are led through the process of synthesizing three streams of information: (1) the mechanisms-based framework that emphasizes an examination of the existence, effectiveness, and accessibility of local transparency and accountability mechanisms, (2) the main findings of the Local Governance Assessment, and (3) the qualitative observations made in small group discussions about the state of local transparency and accountability. This synthesis thus constitutes the “evidence” to be used in the planning of evidence-based local governance reform.

The second plenary discussion occurs after the completion of the second small group discussion. The main goal of this plenary is to put together the ideas emerging

from the small group discussions into a coherent and implementable plan of action for improving local transparency and accountability.

Towards this goal, workshop participants discuss each group's contributions, focusing on how specific, concrete, and actionable strategies address the identified weaknesses in the existence, effectiveness, and accessibility of local transparency and accountability mechanisms. Participants then identify the action-points that represent their consensus on the most important "next steps." This plenary discussion is ultimately intended to produce an agreed-upon plan of action for local governance reform that consists of the action-steps that will be undertaken, the time frame for implementation, the persons/organizations responsible for implementation, and the monitoring scheme to be put in place.

Synthesis

In sum, the conduct of multi-stakeholder workshops equips the multiple stakeholders of local governance with a *framework* with which to view issues related to transparency and accountability, *objective data* on strengths and weaknesses in local transparency and accountability mechanisms, a *process* for contributing insights that aim to improve identified weaknesses, and the *tools* that enable the identification of concrete, specific actionable reform strategies.

This evidence-based and participatory process of undertaking local governance reform produces a Local Action Plan that promotes better local transparency and accountability by improving the design of existing mechanisms intended to generate them. Ultimately, much depend on the extent to which the reform agenda adopted during the workshop is actually carried out. Workshop Conveners, therefore, assume important roles in monitoring the progress in the implementation of local action plans.▪

Annex 5A.
**Local Multi-Stakeholder Workshop on Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms:
 Suggested Workshop Flow**

Time	Session/Topic	Process/Method	Expected Session Outputs	Resources Needed
8:00 - 9:00 am	Arrival of participants	Registration	List of participants	<input type="checkbox"/> Registration table <input type="checkbox"/> Registration forms <input type="checkbox"/> Participant nametags For whole-day workshop: <input type="checkbox"/> LCD projector and screen <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop <input type="checkbox"/> Whiteboard and markers <input type="checkbox"/> Microphones
9:00 - 9:30 am	Opening activities	Welcome remarks (delivered by Workshop Convener) The lead facilitator facilitates the introduction of the workshop participants through a getting-to-know-you activity. S/he then generates from participants their expectations for the workshop. The lead facilitator presents the workshop objectives, program, and process, and aligns participant expectations with workshop objectives.	Agreement on workshop objectives and processes	<input type="checkbox"/> Open space for getting-to-know-you activity <input type="checkbox"/> Metacards and pentel pens for the generation of participant expectations <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint slides on workshop objectives, program, and process
9:30 - 10:10 am	Input presentation I: Framework on transparency and accountability mechanisms in local governance	Presentation of the framework for understanding transparency and accountability mechanisms in local governance (Chapter 2 in this toolkit) Open forum	Common appreciation and understanding of the mechanisms-based framework on local transparency and accountability	<input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint slides on the mechanisms-based framework <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation hand-outs

Time	Session/Topic	Process/Method	Expected Session Outputs	Resources Needed
10:10 - 11:10 am	Small group discussion I: Participant assessment of local T&A mechanisms	The lead facilitator explains the mechanics of the first small group discussion. Small group facilitators assist discussion group members in identifying specific local T&A mechanisms relevant to the 7 broad types of T&A mechanisms. Small group facilitators assist discussion group members in qualitatively assessing the state of local T&A mechanisms (refer to Annexes 5B and 5C in this toolkit).	Specific local T&A mechanisms identified as existing by participants, and assessed based on features that contribute to their effectiveness and accessibility (Worksheet 1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Guide questions <input type="checkbox"/> Worksheet 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Metacards, pencil pens and manila paper <input type="checkbox"/> Masking tape <input type="checkbox"/> AM snacks
11:10 - 12:00 pm	Input presentation II: Main findings of the local governance assessment	Presentation of the main findings of the assessment on local transparency and accountability mechanisms (delivered by the Local Assessment Team) Open forum	Common appreciation and understanding of the major assessment findings, with possible corrections and additional information provided by workshop participants	<input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint slides on the assessment findings <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation hand-outs
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch			
1:00 - 1:40 pm	Plenary discussion I: Synthesis of morning discussions	The lead facilitator summarizes the main findings of the Local Assessment Team, including responses to comments and questions raised during the open forum. The facilitator then provides a synthesis of the small group discussions, emphasizing how participants view the state of local T&A mechanisms.	Common appreciation and understanding of the state of local T&A mechanisms (specific strengths and weaknesses) based on the assessment research findings and discussions in small groups	<input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint slides on the synthesis of morning discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Additional notes with documentation of small group discussions

Time	Session/Topic	Process/Method	Expected Session Outputs	Resources Needed
		<p>Finally, the facilitator aligns the qualitative assessments from participants with the findings of the Local Assessment Team, identifying patterns of agreement and resolving any disagreements about the state of local T&A mechanisms.</p>		
1:40 - 3:10 pm	Small group discussion II: Participant identification of action-steps to improve local T&A mechanisms	<p>The lead facilitator explains the mechanics of the second small group discussion. Small group facilitators assist discussion group members in identifying and agreeing on concrete next-steps strategies for improving local T&A mechanisms. Facilitators align the discussion with the key weaknesses identified in the previous discussions, and with the existence-effectiveness-accessibility components of the mechanisms-based framework (refer to Annexes 5D and 5E in this toolkit).</p>	Specific and concrete ideas for a local action plan for improving local T&A mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/> Guide questions <input type="checkbox"/> Worksheet 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Metacards, pentel pens and manila paper <input type="checkbox"/> Masking tape <input type="checkbox"/> PM snacks

Time	Session/Topic	Process/Method	Expected Session Outputs	Resources Needed
3:10 - 4:00 pm	Plenary discussion II: Presentation and discussion of small group outputs	<p>The lead facilitator calls on a representative from each small group to report the group's recommendations for improving local T&A mechanisms.</p> <p>The facilitator generates feedback from other participants, and attempts to secure consensus on action-points. S/he then facilitates the identification of timeframes and assignments.</p>	Local action plan for improving local T&A mechanisms, with the relevant timelines and persons/organizations responsible identified	<input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint slides or manila papers with the output of small group discussions
4:00 - 4:30 pm	Closing activities	<p>The lead facilitator provides a synthesis of all presentations and small group outputs, and leads participants towards agreement on the local action plan.</p> <p>The facilitator generates feedback on workshop logistics, processes, and results. S/he calls on some participants to share key insights gained from the workshop.</p> <p>Closing remarks (preferably from two individuals, one CSO representative and one LGU official)</p>	Common appreciation and agreement on the local action plan for improving local T&A mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint slides on the synthesis of the whole-day workshop <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation tool

Annex 5B.
Small Group Discussion Module:
Identifying and Assessing
Specific Local Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms

Objectives

By the end of the allotted period, group members are expected to be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the mechanisms-based framework for viewing local transparency and accountability mechanisms, and the seven broad types of local transparency and accountability mechanisms;
2. Identify the specific transparency and accountability mechanisms found in the local area that operationalize the seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms; and
3. Generate qualitative observations about the extent to which the identified specific mechanisms are designed to be effective and accessible to local citizens.

Expected output: Accomplished Worksheet 1 based on group discussions

Suggested duration: One hour

Materials needed

- Worksheet 1
- Metacards, pentel pens, manila paper, and masking tape
- Laptop for documentation

Before the group discussions

This group discussion will benefit from multiple and varying perspectives on local transparency and accountability mechanisms. These varying perspectives often result from different types of interactions that participants have with local governance processes. It is therefore recommended that groups be formed in such a way that group members come from a combination of the following:

1. Local government officials,
2. Local government employees,
3. Officials/staff from national government agencies deployed in the area,
4. Representatives from civil society organizations,
5. Representatives from academic institutions, and
6. Representatives from the private sector.

Ideally, each group is composed of around five to seven members. One facilitator and one documenter should be assigned to each group.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces herself/himself and the assigned documenter. S/he then asks the participants to introduce themselves and the institutions they represent.
2. After the introductions, the facilitator explains the objectives and flow of the small group discussion. S/he then responds to possible questions and concerns of the participants.
3. The facilitator shows Worksheet 1 and discusses the following guide questions for the group discussion:
 - Based on your own experiences in working/dealing with local governance processes in your area (identify specific experiences), what are the local initiatives relevant to promoting transparency and accountability that you have observed? (*existence*)
 - What can you say about the quality/state of the local T&A mechanisms that you have identified?
 - Are these local mechanisms being implemented well? Why or why not? (*effectiveness*)
 - Are citizens and other organized sectors/groups able to use the identified local mechanisms? Why or why not? (*accessibility*)
 - What are your other observations about the strengths and weaknesses of these local mechanisms?
4. The facilitator encourages participants to first write down the various specific local transparency and accountability mechanisms that they have observed on the metacards provided (one metacard for each identified specific mechanism). S/he then assists participants in placing the identified specific mechanisms under the appropriate categories of seven broad transparency and accountability mechanisms.
5. The facilitator then uses the identified mechanisms visible to all participants in order to generate discussion about the other questions related to specific features affecting the effectiveness and accessibility to citizens of these mechanisms. As the discussion progresses, s/he encourages participants to write down on metacards key ideas emerging from the discussion, and to place them in the appropriate portions of Worksheet 1.
6. When all discussion questions have been answered, the facilitator summarizes the major points, observations, and questions raised by participants. If there are any confusing/vague statements in the Worksheet, s/he asks the group or the person/s involved to clarify her/his ideas as written down.

Note: If there is insufficient time, the facilitator may begin the discussion by asking participants to identify three or four of the seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms that are most relevant to their interactions with local governance processes. The group discussion may then focus on these categories.

**Annex 5C.
Worksheet 1:
Identifying and Assessing Specific Local Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms**

Broad Types of Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms	Identification of Local Initiatives		Qualitative Assessments of Local Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms	
	Existence (What are the local initiatives relevant to T&A that you have observed?)	Effectiveness (Are these local mechanisms being implemented well? Why or why not?)	Accessibility (Are citizens and other organized sectors/groups able to use these local mechanisms? Why or why not?)	Other Strengths and Weaknesses of Local T&A Mechanisms
1. Access to information				
2. Proactive disclosure of information				
3. Public participation				
4. Local elections				
5. Internal checks and balance				
6. Rule-based procedures				
7. External oversight institutions				

Annex 5D.
Small Group Discussion Module:
Identifying Next-Steps Strategies for Improving
Local Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms

Objectives

By the end of the allotted period, group members are expected to be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how the mechanisms-based framework for viewing local transparency and accountability mechanisms assists in the identification of concrete strategies for improving the design of specific local transparency and accountability mechanisms;
2. Generate concrete specific action steps that may be taken to improve the effectiveness of local transparency and accountability mechanisms; and
3. Generate concrete specific action steps that may be taken to improve the accessibility to citizens of local transparency and accountability mechanisms.

Expected output: Accomplished Worksheet 2 based on group discussions

Suggested duration: One and a half hours

Materials needed

- Worksheet 2
- Metacards, pentel pens, manila paper, and masking tape
- Laptop for documentation

Before the group discussions

For this group discussion, participants rely on their familiarity with various transparency and accountability mechanisms as they currently operate in the local area. This will differ among workshop participants, depending on their types of exposure to and interaction with local governance processes. It is therefore recommended that groups be formed based on participants' sectoral/institutional affiliation, as follows:

1. Local government officials,
2. Local government employees,
3. Officials/staff from national government agencies deployed in the area,
4. Representatives from civil society organizations,
5. Representatives from academic institutions, and
6. Representatives from the private sector.

Ideally, each group is composed of around five to seven members. Groups as specified above may be combined or split, with careful attention placed on the possible effects on group dynamics. One facilitator and one documenter should be assigned to each group.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces herself/himself and the assigned documenter. S/he then asks the participants to introduce themselves and the institutions they represent.
2. After the introductions, the facilitator explains the objectives and flow of the small group discussion. S/he then responds to possible questions and concerns of the participants.
3. The facilitator shows Worksheet 2 and discusses the following guide questions for the group discussion:
 - What specific local policies/programs/initiatives may be adopted to strengthen local transparency and accountability mechanisms? (*existence*)
 - Based on the weaknesses in their institutional design that were identified in previous sessions, what are the features that may be incorporated so that they work well in promoting transparency and accountability? (*effectiveness*)
 - What are the additional steps that may be taken to enable more citizens and other organized sectors/groups to use these mechanisms? (*accessibility*)
4. The facilitator encourages participants to first write down their ideas about specific local transparency and accountability mechanisms that may be adopted on the metacards provided (one metacard for each identified specific mechanism). S/he then assists participants in placing the identified specific mechanisms under the appropriate categories of seven broad transparency and accountability mechanisms.
5. The facilitator then uses the identified mechanisms visible to all participants in order to generate discussion about the other questions related to specific features that improve the effectiveness and accessibility to citizens of these mechanisms. As the discussion progresses, s/he encourages participants to write down on metacards key ideas emerging from the discussion, and to place them in the appropriate portions of Worksheet 2.
6. Throughout the discussion, the facilitator should refer the participants to the findings that were earlier generated (both by the Local Assessment Team and the earlier small group discussions) about strengths and weaknesses in local transparency and accountability mechanisms. S/he encourages participants to present concrete ideas that respond directly to these findings.
7. When all discussion questions have been answered, the facilitator summarizes the major points, observations, and questions raised by participants. If there are any confusing/vague statements in the Worksheet, s/he asks the group or the person/s involved to clarify her/his ideas as written down.

Note: If there is insufficient time, the facilitator may begin the discussion by asking participants to identify three or four of the seven broad types of transparency and accountability mechanisms that are most relevant to their interactions with local governance processes. The group discussion may then focus on these categories.

Annex 5E.
Worksheet 2:
Identifying Next-Steps Strategies for Improving Local Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms

Broad Types of Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms	Concrete Plans for Improving/Strengthening Local Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms		
	Existence (What specific local policies/programs/initiatives may be adopted to strengthen local transparency and accountability mechanisms?)	Effectiveness (What features may be incorporated in the design of these policies/programs/initiatives so that they work well in promoting local transparency and accountability?)	Accessibility (What additional steps may be taken to enable more citizens and other organized sectors/groups to use these transparency and accountability mechanisms?)
1. Access to information			
2. Proactive disclosure of information			
3. Public participation			
4. Local elections			
5. Internal checks and balance			
6. Rule-based procedures			
7. External oversight institutions			



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Note: Affiliations appearing above are those in effect during project implementation.

TRANSPARENCY

refers to the availability for public scrutiny of information about public decisions and actions.

ACCOUNTABILITY

refers to the exercise of public authority and the use of public resources in ways that benefit the public interest.

This **TOOLKIT**

is intended to assist in empowering various organizations and individuals in undertaking evidence-based and participatory processes of local governance reform. It focuses on how local transparency and accountability assessments may be conducted systematically, and how multiple stakeholders may translate assessment results into a set of concrete, specific, actionable recommendations

for **LOCAL GOVERNANCE REFORM**



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