

Transitional Processes & Citizen Inclusion in Kenya and South Sudan: Local Perspectives on Sustainable Peace

The National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Oslo Center and the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) have conducted a pilot project creating innovative bottom-up indicators of citizen inclusion and confidence (CIC) in transitional processes, which can inform national and international policymakers' understanding of citizen priorities around inclusion. Post-conflict transition periods offer a brief but critical opportunity to build the legitimacy of democratic systems, and to establish a foundation for inclusive political processes and institutions. Despite an emerging consensus that citizen inclusion in transition processes are necessary to foster legitimacy and stable political systems, there are still significant gaps in opportunities for citizens to influence transition process design, implementation, or evaluation. Based on the views of the Kenyans in the research conducted and the CIC indicators developed, NDI, the Oslo Center and EISA present the following recommendations in the Kenya context.

Policy recommendations – Kenya

1. An Effective transitional process needs to manage the expectations of stakeholders:
 - Clear and timely communication
 - Balanced preparation
 - Consensus and compromise in the negotiation process.
2. The devolution of government in Kenya has increased citizens' sense of inclusion, especially at the county level.

The devolution process should continue to be supported and strengthened going forward.

There should be clear lines of communication from the local levels of government up to the national level, and from the national level down to the local.
3. The roles and responsibilities of government officials at the various levels of government remain misunderstood by citizens.
 - Civic education directed at informing citizens on the roles and responsibilities of government (specifically the roles of the governors and county commissioners) would be beneficial.
 - Effective communication from these government officials would reinforce understanding from a citizen perspective regarding which official or department is responsible for various functions (for example, security is a county commissioner's responsibility, but is often thought to be a governor's responsibility).
4. Attitudes and priorities on peace and security vary within and between counties. This makes a national peace and security strategy ill-equipped to deal with concerns at local level.
5. Localized approaches to peace and security concerns and issues are more likely to enhance a sense of inclusion and be more sustainable and effective in the long term. There are currently low levels of trust in political parties. Building local level political party capacity is important in the devolved structure of government. This would enhance inclusion and participation and accountability.