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## POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INCLUSIVITY & RESILIENCY SUPPORT

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### Research, Evaluation & Learning Agenda

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#### PAIRS Programming

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With funding from the U.S. State Department's *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights (DRL)* NDI's Political Accountability, Inclusivity & Resilience Support (PAIRS) program portfolio supports resilient, stable democratic states by addressing three **interlocking democracy problems**:

- ✦ **Dysfunctional competition** for political power foments violent extremism and prevents the peaceful resolution of conflict
- ✦ **Endemic corruption** and unchecked governmental and political power erode trust in political institutions and undermines economic prosperity
- ✦ **Political exclusion** and closing political space foments injustice, alienates citizens, and enables violations of civic, political and human rights

NDI's overarching **Theory of Change** posits that the alienation and social cleavages that drive instability and conflict, exacerbate corruption and foster economic dependency are remedied by bolstering the three interlocking pillars of democratic reliance --inclusion, transparency and accountability -- to support democratic governance, representative institutions and economic growth.

#### Building An Evidence Base: A Roadmap for Evaluative Research

In collaboration with U.S. State Department's *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights (DRL)* and the International Republican Institute (IRI) NDI's PAIRS *Research, Evaluation & Learning (REL)* Initiative contributes to an emerging body of evidence on what works, for who, and why in the democracy, human rights and governance sector. NDI has identified three key Focal Areas for evaluative research, and additional lines of inquiry for understanding the effects of COVID-19 on democratic systems. Together, these questions provide a roadmap for selecting and prioritizing PAIRS programs for evaluations, as well as pursuing new insights on democracy and governance, through collaborative research with academic partners.

#### Focal Areas & Evaluative Research Questions

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##### ONE: Political Power, Conflict Mitigation and Rule of Law

**Under what conditions have NDI's PAIRS interventions contributed to:**

- ❖ Legal frameworks, justice systems and administrative mechanisms becoming impartial and institutionalized?
- ❖ Government, political and social actors supporting free and fair political competition and diverse political perspectives?
- ❖ Government, political and social actors mitigating drives of conflict?

##### TWO: Transparency & Accountability

**Under what conditions have NDI's PAIRS interventions contributed to:**

- ❖ Expanding and protecting the integrity of political information and discourse?
- ❖ Civil society and media holding accountable government and political institutions?
- ❖ Government and political actors strengthening and enforcing transparency and accountability mechanisms?

## COVID-19 & Democracy

The global pandemic has not only brought about health and economic crises, but has created opportunities for authoritarians to consolidate their powers and kick at the foundations of democratic architectures around the globe. Under the pandemic and its aftermath, NDI has identified priority areas for evaluations that improve NDI's understanding of the conditions under which:

1. The **integrity of political information and discourse** are protected and expanded
2. Government and political actors are strengthened to **enforce transparency and accountability mechanisms**
3. Communities are effectively **empowered and represented** in government, political and social structures.

## PAIRS Evaluation Advisory Committee

Managed by the Institute's *Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning* Unit, NDI's PAIRS Evaluation fund is informed and supported by an Advisory Committee made up of members from the Executive, Functional and Regional teams. These include: Aaron Azelton, Julia Brown, Shari Bryan, Jon Lovdal, Katy Mudge, Sophia Moestrup, Simon Osborn, Nicole Roswell and Kristen Sample

## THREE: Inclusion, Participation & Responsiveness

**Under what conditions have NDI's PAIRS interventions contributed to:**

- ❖ Citizens and civil society effectively articulating their interests and demand responses from government, political and social institutions?
- ❖ Government, political and social actors becoming more participative and responsive to the diverse interests of their constituencies, and combating stigmatization?
- ❖ Communities becoming more effectively empowered and represented in government, political and social structures.?

## COVID-19: Priority Lines of Inquiry:

**Under what conditions are NDI's PAIRS interventions contributing to:**

- ❖ Mitigating abuses of "States of Emergency" and the Rule of Law under the COVID pandemic?
- ❖ Removing risks and barriers for diverse actors to **democratically compete for, and use political power** during the COVID pandemic and in its aftermath?
- ❖ Ensuring respect for the **Right To Information**, and **mitigating disinformation** during the COVID pandemic?
- ❖ Building effective coalitions for governmental and political accountabilities that bridge **the digital divide** and **address gendered inequities** under the COVID pandemic?
- ❖ Bolstering the ability of legislatures to **exercise executive oversight** during the COVID pandemic and beyond?
- ❖ Increasing understanding of, and **respect for human rights** under the COVID pandemic and its aftermath?
- ❖ Aligning **community assets and improving social cohesion** as a means to enhance resilience to the COVID pandemic?
- ❖ Enhancing the **role of subnational governments** to respond to the COVID pandemic?

**For more information on this initiative, please contact Linda Stern, Director of Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning ([lstern@ndi.org](mailto:lstern@ndi.org))**