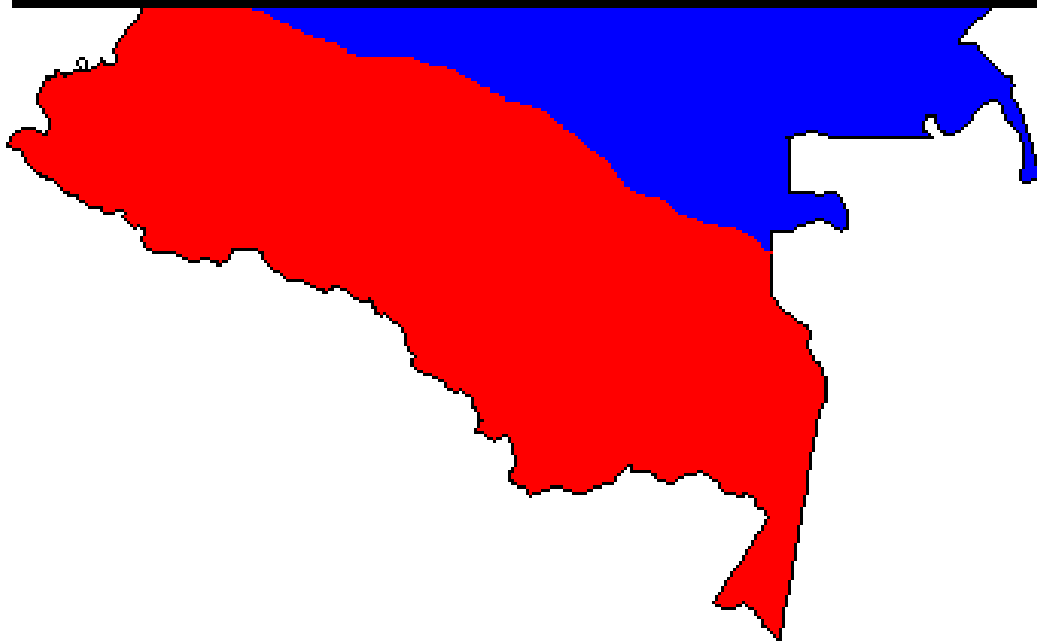


**Colombia Líder's Citizen Response System:
Adding Value with Civic Engagement**



**Final Report of Findings and Recommendations based on the
EPD workshop evaluation of the Colombia Líder Program**

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Executive Summary

In Colombia, high rates of poverty and inequality, and the lack of results in addressing these concerns through current policies and resource redistribution have raised a high level of public concern. As a result, there has been a need to create a monitoring system for poverty and inequality reduction schemes and to create incentives for good public management in order to better understand and address these growing problems. As a key component to addressing these concerns, Colombia Líder, a non-governmental governance monitoring project, was launched in October 2006 to promote best practices in public administration.

Colombia Líder, having successfully completed its first year of operation, requested the services of a team of graduate students from the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University in the City of New York. The team, comprised of four students within the Economic and Political Development (EPD) department of the school were contracted to conduct an evaluation of the Colombia Líder project's methodology and implementation and to provide constructive feedback and recommendations on strategies for future improvement and success. The EPD team conducted research and fieldwork activities in support of its client's initiatives in monitoring government practices and promoting good governance and civil society participation for a six month period from November 2007 to May 2008. The research detailed in this report is intended to be used in the following two ways: 1) to provide recommendations that will benefit Colombia Líder's internal organization and 2) to serve as a resource for potential technical or financial partners abroad that may be interested to fund or participate in this initiative.

Our recommendations based on field interviews with mayors, partner organizations, non-governmental organizations and citizen surveys, aim to build on the initial success of Colombia Líder and propose ways that the Project can assure its sustainability and meet its overall objectives to strengthen good governance and the participation of civil society. Based on our research, the EPD team **recommends that Colombia Líder establish itself as an independent organization** with a clearly defined, comprehensive development plan for each year of the award cycle. Doing so will ensure the autonomy and integrity of Colombia Líder's future activities. The EPD team's recommendations further address the **award nomination and selection process, ways to increase civil society participation and representation throughout all aspects of the Project, and supplemental activities towards strengthening good governance in between the four year award cycle.**

In making our recommendations, we realize that Colombia Líder faces capacity constraints and limited resources. While the following recommendations should be taken as a list to be accomplished over time and as capacity and resources increase, we urge Colombia Líder to make every effort to adopt the most crucial and immediate of these recommendations. Doing so will allow Líder to capitalize on the momentum it has

gained from its initial success and to strengthen the pivotal role that it has in highlighting and promoting good governance and civil society participation in the country.

1. Introduction

The Colombia Líder/EPD workshop team of 2007-2008 was contracted to conduct research and fieldwork activities in an effort to review Colombia Líder's first year of programming and to provide constructive feedback as Colombia Líder transitions to its follow-up activities in its program cycle. As an overview, the Colombia Líder/EPD team served as support in the program's initiative to monitor government practices, increase transparency and, in turn, contribute to efforts to decrease poverty and inequality throughout the country. The team's specific activities included meetings with executive members of the organization and potential or existing partners to review the project's progress and obtain necessary third party information for program assessment. Additional work included conducting semi-structured interviews with government officials in different municipalities as well as producing and distributing citizen questionnaires to capture and increase the public's voice with regards to best practices in local governance.

This final report is the conclusion of six months of research and consultation, including two fieldwork components. The report includes a brief outline of country context as well as background on Colombia Líder and the EPD team's methodology in addition to a detailed explanation of the team's findings and subsequent recommendations. The team's findings and recommendations are to be presented to Colombia Líder staff and partners as well as to the SIPA community at the culmination of the research period.¹ The research was used in the following efforts: 1) to provide recommendations that will benefit Colombia Líder's internal organization and 2) to serve as a resource for potential technical or financial partners abroad that may be interested in funding or participating in this initiative.

1.1 Colombia

General Overview

The Republic of Colombia is located in the northwestern region of South America. It shares borders with Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Panama and the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. According to the US State department, Colombia is the fourth largest country in South America (following Brazil, Argentina, and Peru) and the third most populous one behind Brazil and Mexico.²



¹ SIPA: School of International and Public Affairs, at Columbia University. This public presentation of the team's findings took place on the 24th April, 2008. In addition to the presentation a full report of the team's findings will be presented to the client, in both English and Spanish, for their future use.

² US State Department: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35754.htm>

Economic Growth

Agriculture has traditionally been the chief economic activity in Colombia. However, in recent years, manufactures, financial services and construction now contribute to 40.7 percent of the country's GDP, while agriculture contributes to only 7.2 percent.

Gross domestic product by sector

(% change, year on year)

	2006			2007		
	Full year	1 Qtr	2 Qtr	3 Qtr	4 Qtr	Full year
Agriculture & fishing	2.3	1.4	2.5	3.1	3.4	2.6
Mining	0.1	0.3	5.2	3.6	9.2	4.6
Electricity, gas & water	3.0	3.9	1.9	2.0	1.7	2.3
Manufacturing	10.8	14.4	12.1	8.1	8.3	10.6
Construction	14.8	30.5	6.9	2.7	16.0	13.3
Retail, hotels & restaurants	11.1	12.3	10.2	10.0	9.4	10.4
Transport & communications	10.3	10.4	12.5	12.4	14.4	12.5
Financial services	-1.7	6.5	42.8	4.0	20.1	16.8
GDP	6.8	8.3	6.9	6.8	8.1	7.5

Source: Country report EIU, April 2008²

Over the past few years, Colombia has been able to maintain significant economic growth. According to the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), Colombia's growth in GDP has risen from 3.4 percent in 1997 to 7.5 percent in this current year. Based on ISI Emerging Financial Markets data, per-capita income in Colombia amounts to roughly US \$3,974 in 2008. Despite impressive and consistent economic growth throughout the past decade, Colombia still deals with persistently high levels of poverty. Currently, 17.8 percent of the population lives in extreme poverty on less than US \$2 per day, with 7 percent living on less than US \$1 per day. Infant mortality for children under the age of 5 is 21 per 1,000. Unemployment fluctuates very little from year to year and reached 12.8 percent in 2007, but has slowly been reduced over time.⁴ Reductions in unemployment by 11% from 2002 to 2008 complement the national economic growth.

² Country report Colombia. Economist Intelligence Unit, April 2008.
http://portal.eiu.com/index.asp?layout=displayIssue&publication_id=1750000975

⁴ World Bank Country Brief:
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/LACEXT/COLOMBIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20214628~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:324946,00.html>

Forecast Summary

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Population (million)	40.1	40.8	41.6	42.3	43.1	43.8	44.6	45.3	46.0	46.8	47.5	48.3	49.0
GDP (US\$ billion)	105.6	98.0	85.5	83.1	81.9	80.3	79.5	98.5	123.0	137.1	157.1	191.8	201.1
GDP per capita (US\$)	2,635	2,401	2,056	1,964	1,902	1,833	1,783	2,174	2,672	2,932	3,307	3,974	4,106
GDP (annual variation in %)	3.4	0.6	-4.2	2.9	1.5	1.9	3.9	4.9	4.7	6.8	7.5	5.3	5.0
Consumption (annual variation in %)	5.3	-0.1	-3.2	1.4	2.3	2.2	1.7	4.8	4.9	5.6	6.3	5.0	4.3
Investment (annual variation in %)	-0.6	-6.3	-38.7	12.3	1.9	9.9	14.7	15.6	18.7	26.9	21.2	13.7	10.5
Unemployment (%)	12.0	15.7	18.0	19.5	13.5	15.6	11.4	12.1	10.4	11.8	9.9	10.2	9.9
Fiscal Balance (% of GDP)	-2.8	-3.7	-4.1	-4.2	-4.3	-3.6	-2.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.5	-0.9	-1.6	-1.9
Consumer Prices (annual variation in %)	17.7	16.7	9.2	8.7	7.6	7.0	6.5	5.5	4.9	4.5	5.7	4.9	4.1
Interest Rates (DTF, 90 days)	24.4	36.3	15.8	13.4	11.5	7.7	7.9	7.7	6.3	6.8	9.1	9.4	9.0
Exchange Rate (vs. US\$, end-of-period)	1,287	1,536	1,874	2,229	2,291	2,865	2,778	2,412	2,284	2,239	2,002	2,066	2,182
Current Account Balance (% of GDP)	-5.4	-5.0	0.8	0.9	-1.3	-1.7	-1.2	-0.9	-1.5	-2.2	-3.7	-3.7	-3.4
Trade Balance (% of GDP)	-3.6	-3.8	1.1	1.9	-0.6	-1.0	-1.0	0.0	0.0	-1.3	-1.8	-1.6	-1.1
Exports (annual variation in %)	8.5	-5.8	6.3	13.4	-6.2	-3.3	10.2	27.4	26.6	15.0	23.1	8.4	9.0
Imports (annual variation in %)	12.4	-4.8	-27.2	8.3	11.2	-1.0	9.4	20.6	26.6	23.4	25.7	7.0	6.4
Int. Reserves (months of imports)	7.7	7.2	9.1	9.4	9.5	10.2	9.4	9.7	8.5	7.1	7.6	7.1	6.7
External Debt (% of GDP)	30.4	34.4	39.1	40.2	47.7	51.3	47.1	38.1	30.8	29.9	27.9	24.6	24.9

Source: Latin Focus Consensus forecast. ³

Poverty and Inequality

The Human Development Index (HDI) measures the average progress of a country in human development. According to the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Report for the year 2007-2008, Colombia's Human Development Index is 0.791, (on a scale of 0 to 1, with 1 being most developed) which gives the country a ranking of 75th out of 177 countries.⁵

Unlike most other countries in Latin American and the Caribbean, Colombia has had to face unusually high and protracted levels of violence. In spite of progress made, poverty and inequality remain a main challenge for the country. In fact, persistent inequality—a characteristic that fosters violence—is one of Colombia's most chronic problems. The country's rate of inequality is one of the highest in Latin America—Colombians from the top quintile retain 60 percent of the national income.⁷

³ Columbia University. Business Library Database:
http://site.securities.com/docs.html?pc=CO&pub_id=LATINCONSENSUS

⁵ UNDP Human Development Report:
http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_COL.html

⁷ World Bank Country:
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/LACEXT/COLOMBIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20214628~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:324946,00.html>

The UNDP's Human Development Report estimates the share of income or consumption by the Colombia's poorest 10 percent to be 0.7 percent, while the share of

income or consumption by the richest 10 percent is 46.9 percent. The country's Gini coefficient is 58.6.⁴ Considering the negative toll that violence and conflict have taken on the country, if the Human Development Index were to take these into account, Colombia's score would decline. The 2003 national human development report, *Colombia's Conflict: Deadlock with a Way Out*, performed this calculation by introducing a human development index adjusted for violence. When considering a fourth variable, rate of homicides, to the index, the value of Colombia's HDI fell from 0.772 to 0.643."⁵

Colombian Politics

In comparison to its neighbors, Colombia is widely recognized for two characteristics: first, for being one of the Latin America's most established democracies, particularly due to the absence of dictatorships in the 20th century, and second, for having one of the longest protracted internal conflicts on the continent. The disparate relationship between these two has played a central role in Colombia's political and economic development for decades.

The root cause of contemporary violence in Colombia originated from the 1948 urban resurrection called "el bogotazo". This was a bipartisan conflict between liberals and conservatives known as "la violencia" that extended into the creation of the left-wing guerrilla insurgency. As an attempt to end the violence of the period, the political parties agreed to initiate a phase of co-government, known as the National Front (1958- 74), which excluded nontraditional political groups. In the 1970s, second-generation guerrilla groups such as M-19 were founded on an agenda to confront traditional party control.⁶

After the end of National Front rule, and in conjunction with the return of free elections in the 1980s, the Colombian government negotiated a peace agreement with some guerrilla movements such as M-19 and began to implement reforms to deepen democracy in the country. These reforms included the 1991 constitution and various decentralizing measures like the formal inclusion of direct elections for governors, deputies, mayors, municipal and district councils, and members of local administrative boards.⁷

⁴ .586, on a scale of 0 to 1, with 1 corresponding to perfect inequality, where one person has all the income, and everyone else has none.

⁵ (UNDP 2004 report) – Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Evaluation of UNDP Contribution: Colombia, Evaluations Office, September 2007. p.4

⁶ Restrepo, Elvira Maria. *Colombian Criminal Justice in Crisis : Fear and Distrust*. Gordonsville, VA, USA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. p 6.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/columbia/Doc?id=10057726&ppg=33>

⁷ Solimano, Andres(Editor). *Essays on Peace and Development : The Case of Colombia and the International Experience*. Washington, DC, USA: World Bank Publications, 2000. p 22.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/columbia/Doc?id=5007377&ppg=22> Copyright © 2000. World Bank Publications. All rights reserved.

According to USAID, since taking office in 2002, President Alvaro Uribe has worked to address some of the country's ills and has achieved a fair amount of success. The president has reestablished state control over a large portion of the country and has managed to investor confidence in the country, resulting in a slight increase in foreign investment following the first couple of years of Uribe's presidency.⁹

That being said, the Uribe Administration is not without its critics. Many disapprove of the "hard line" approach of his government in areas like human rights and the uneven-handed policy the government has toward paramilitaries and guerrillas. The country is still plagued by problems with drug trafficking, corruption, persistent violence, and conflicts involving guerilla groups and paramilitaries that are constricting population patterns and holding back social and economic progress and institutional development.

The legitimacy of the State as an institution and its record of governance have been eroded by the armed conflict, corruption and cronyism, a management crisis, and the still-fragmented status of rule of law in Colombian territories despite an active and independent judiciary. On the social and economic front, Colombia has posted no gains in social indicators of poverty, inequality, or access to services in recent years. In fact, in some areas it has lost significant ground. For example, if one looks at UNDP's Human Development Report for the year 2000, Colombia's HDI (Human Development Index) was 0.772, which gave it a ranking of 68th in the world. The 2004 report lists Colombia's HDI (Human Development Index) at 0.773 with a 73rd ranking worldwide.¹⁰ The current report ranks Colombia as 75th with a score of 0.791.

The World Bank estimates that in Colombia violence, whether political, drug or paramilitary related, has taken a high toll in terms of human lives, social issues, and assets. The economic impact of the conflict is enormous. If Colombia had achieved peace 20 years ago, it is estimated that the income of an average Colombian today would be 50 percent higher and 2.5 million children would be living above the poverty line today (US \$2 per day).¹¹

The history of widespread corruption in Colombia is a cause for concern among international analysts who, despite Uribe's apparent achievements, still consider democracy in the country quite fragile. Corruption, or rather official impunity, links between drug lords, paramilitaries and the state (military), and assassinations of trade union and opposition political activists, all put a strain on Colombia's democratic process. Manuel Trujillo, a research associate at the Council on Hemispheric Affairs,

⁹ USAID Colombia Country Information:

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/regions/lac/colombia.html

¹⁰ UNDP: Human Development Reports: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2004/>

¹¹ World Bank Country Brief:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/LACEXT/COLOMBIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20214628~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:324946,00.html>

uses Guillermo O'Donnell's theory of "Delegative Democracy", to point out many missteps by Uribe and his administration, which he believes highlight the vulnerability of democracy in Colombia. The analysis points to the fact that institutions--the courts, Congress, national agencies, and political parties--are still quite weak and have all been undermined, in some cases publicly, by Uribe, a behavior which is obviously not conducive to a democratic environment.¹²

Improvements are being made, however, and the corruption average has decreased in recent years. In addition, the perception of the population regarding improvement of the corruption level is positive.⁸

Table 3. How effectively is government fighting corruption? The country view

Countries who believe government efforts to fight corruption are most effective	Countries who believe government efforts to fight corruption are least effective
Colombia	Albania
Dominican Republic	Argentina
Ecuador	Bulgaria
FYR Macedonia	Czech Republic
Ghana	Iceland
Hong Kong	Japan
Ireland	Lithuania
Malaysia	Norway
Nigeria	Peru
Singapore	Russia
Turkey	Ukraine
	United States

Source: Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer 2007. Countries were sorted in quintiles based on responses from 1 (very effective) to 5 (very ineffective). Countries listed belong to the top and bottom quintile

Moving Forward

Colombia's history of violence and insecurity has also led to considerable international concerns over the protection of human rights in the country where massacres, extrajudicial execution, murder, torture, forced disappearance and kidnapping, threats and forced displacement are all common. In August 2000, the U.S. government approved "Plan Colombia," pledging \$1.3 billion to fight drug trafficking. Andres Pastrana, then president, used the plan to undercut drug production and prevent guerrilla groups from benefiting from drug sales. Recently however, there has been a shift in policy on the part of the US Congress for the use of "Plan Colombia". While the total amount of funds available will remain the same in 2008, the US Senate insists that half of the money be spent on institution building and sustainable development programs. Manuel Trujillo believes that this shift in policy is simply a message from the US Congress to authorities in Colombia that it is time they reform the country's embattled civic institutions.¹³ Similar pressure is now coming with negotiations on the

¹² "*Delegative Democracy: The Case of Colombia*" Manuel Trujillo Research Associate at the [Council on Hemispheric Affairs](#), September 28th, 2007.

⁸ Report on the Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer 2007.

http://www.transparency.org/content/download/27256/410704/file/GCB_2007_report_en_02-12-2007.pdf

¹³ "*Delegative Democracy: The Case of Colombia*" Manuel Trujillo Research Associate at the [Council on Hemispheric Affairs](#), September 28th, 2007."

US – Colombia free trade agreement, as US legislators refuse to pass the needed legislation until human rights issues are addressed.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Decentralization and Local Governance

Though Colombia is characterized by a long history of civilian rule and regional diversity, the government was increasingly centralized beginning with the constitution of 1886 and up until the late 1960s. In fact, indications of national interest in decentralization were not noticeable until the ratification of the 1968 constitution, which established a mechanism whereby a regional fund for education and health would be financed from a fixed percentage of national revenues. Though significant, those steps represented more a deconcentration of the budget to sub-national administrative units than decentralization since the governors who appointed the mayors were themselves appointed by the national government.⁹

The early and more meaningful stages of Colombia's decentralization process took place during the period of 1982-1991. During those stages, the dominant goal was to achieve fiscal independence among levels of government while protecting the budget balance at the central level. The most aggressive efforts in the areas of fiscal and administrative decentralization were concentrated in two laws. Law 14, passed in 1983, sought to reinforce and modernize the sources of revenue for sub-national levels of government. This law granted autonomy to *departamentos* (provincial sub-divisions) and municipalities to set their own taxation rates within certain limits determined by law.¹⁰ In 1986, Law 12 was introduced. It required a gradual annual increase in municipal government's share in value added tax (VAT) or sales tax from 30.5 percent to 50 percent by 1992. The goal of this legislation was to give the municipalities, sufficient financial means to take on the new functions and responsibilities which had been assigned to them.¹¹

In the administrative field, during the 1982-1991 period, many functions such as responsibility for the majority of basic services including water supply, infrastructure, basic sanitation, agricultural assistance, health and education services, gradually devolved from the central government to municipal governments.

From a political perspective, many measures were also taken to strengthen local democracy through the encouragement and facilitation of community participation in public affairs. One such measure began in 1986 with the passage of Law 78/86 which

⁹ William Dillinger and Steve Webb. May 1999. "Decentralization and Fiscal Management in Colombia", p.7

¹⁰ Juan Echavarría, Carolina Rentería and Roberto Steiner, July 2002. "Decentralization and Bailouts in Colombia" p.9

¹¹ Henry Forero & Manuel Salazar. "Local Government and Decentralization" Environment and Urbanization vol 3 no 2 (1991): 122

removed from the departmental governors the power to appoint mayors. As a result, Colombia held its first mayoral elections in 1988. During the following three years, many more legislative reforms were enacted, aimed at transferring public service

responsibilities to the newly elected mayors. Through Laws 12/86, 24/88, and 29/89 and Decree 24/88 the government also provided the mayors with additional fiscal resources.¹²

The new constitution of 1991 significantly intensified the pace of decentralization in Colombia. It represented an effort to inaugurate greater democracy in a traditionally restrictive political regime. From a political perspective, governors were now required to participate in popular elections. The new constitution also gave greater fiscal autonomy to municipal and departmental authorities, which now had the right to administer and modify taxes so as to comply with their assigned functions. In terms of responsibilities, it made it quite clear that the different territorial levels would be guided by the principles of coordination, concurrence and subsidiarity.¹³

Obstacles to Decentralization

Despite the progress made in the decentralization process, there are still obstacles hindering its consolidation in Colombia. Some of the factors that have hindered major advances in this area are: lack of acknowledgment of territorial heterogeneity, particularly with regard to setting standards and adopting strategies; confusion in the distribution of functions; and lack of coordination and evaluation mechanisms. The Constitution of 1991 accelerated what had been a relatively slow process and adopted, in a single stroke, one of the most decentralized state structures in Latin America. However, it is not exactly clear whether or not the resources are being invested to attend to the priorities of the communities. Are the resources benefiting the poorest? Is the investment reaching the rural areas? Have services improved? And finally, how meaningful and extensive is local citizen participation fostered by these reforms? There is no way of getting a conclusive response to these questions, thus determining if the decentralized social expenditure has actually generated social welfare, in terms of poverty reduction and improvement of initial opportunities among lower income groups. It is precisely in this context that the Colombia Líder initiative proves to be extremely relevant and important in Colombian society.

2.2 Measuring “Good Governance”

The terms “governance” and “good governance” are increasingly used in development literature. As “bad governance” is often blamed as the root cause for all ills in the world, international donors and financial institutions are beginning to base their aid and loans on the condition that reforms ensuring “good governance” are undertaken. In order to focus on the effects of good or bad governance, however, it is important to first define

¹² William Dillinger and Steve Webb. May 1999. “Decentralization and Fiscal Management in Colombia”, pp.5-6

¹³ Juan Echavarría, Carolina Rentería and Roberto Steiner, July 2002. “Decentralization and Bailouts in Colombia” p.9

the term. Governance, most simply stated, is “the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented).”¹⁴ This concept can be examined at a variety of levels: corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Depending on the level of analysis, governance will be measured and evaluated in a different manner. The definition and level of analysis that is most relevant here, for example, is that of the World Bank. The World Bank defines governance as, “of the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.”¹⁵ According to the United Nations Development Programme, good governance has eight main characteristics: participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law.¹⁶ Good governance ensures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account, and the voices of the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making. Good governance also entails being responsive to the present and future needs of society.

Focusing on national and local governance, there are several actors that are involved in the process. These actors include the government (national and local), civil society organizations, academia, political parties, the military, etc.¹⁷ Particularly in the case of developing countries, other actors such as the media, lobbyists, international donor organizations and multi-national corporations may also play an important role in influencing the decision-making process, either directly or indirectly. This adds to the complexity of any assessment of governance in a country. When the quality of governance has the ability to affect a country’s development and general progress in the world (and that of its population within its borders), it becomes imperative to develop the capacity to comprehensively monitor governance and its components. It is through monitoring and subsequent evaluation that poor situations can be addressed and rectified.

Though few would disagree with this characterization of good governance, monitoring and evaluating these characteristics proves to be more difficult. Several of the leading international aid and financial institutions have created tools and methods for measuring and evaluating governance. Over a decade of research in this area has led to various debates on the efficacy of measuring such a vague and inclusive concept – its strengths, weaknesses, and the greater importance of undertaking such an endeavor. Some of the main organizations working in this field include the Economic Intelligence

¹⁴ UNDP website. <http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp>

¹⁵ World Bank Governance Matters report. 2007 <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi2007/>

¹⁶ *ibid.* <http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp>

¹⁷ *ibid.* <http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp>

Unit, Freedom House, Transparency International and political risk services. Each organization relies on a different approach and has a specific focus in its analysis of good governance around the world. The Economic Intelligence Unit is the most economic of the three, relying on quantitative economic data and expert opinion to define its analysis. Freedom House, on the other hand, addresses the needs of scholars with its politically focused analysis. Both Transparency International and the International Country Risk Guide have a private sector focus with their analysis of corruption and investment opportunities.¹⁸ Limitations associated with the work of these organizations centers mainly on the tools they employ in their research. There are various limitations associated with using expert opinions or surveys or quantitative values to create an aggregated assessment of a.) an individual country's social, political and economic state of affairs and b.) the quality of governance on a global scale.

One of the most important challenges that organization's face in measuring good governance around the world is balancing the difference between *performance* indicators, which have a normative outcome (level of corruption), and *process* indicators, which measure the quality of governance in terms of how outcomes are achieved.¹⁹ Tackling this challenge involves the use of subjective data, which each organization addresses in its own way. One of the most widely used and respected sets of indicators is the World Bank's set of governance indicators.²⁰ These have been used and reformed for over a decade now. The aggregate indicators of the World Bank include: voice and accountability; political stability and absence of violence; government effectiveness; regulatory quality; rule of law; and control of corruption.²¹ These indicators combine the views of a large number of business, citizen and expert survey respondents in industrial and developing countries. The individual data sources underlying the aggregate indicators are taken from a diverse variety of survey institutes, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations.²²

Despite the overall praise and popularity of the World Bank governance indicators, they are not without criticism. For one, governance ranking depends largely on the subjective background and interests of the assessors. The indicators chosen by the World Bank certainly reflect the intense scrutiny and contemplation of the World Bank team, but they

¹⁸ Court, Julius, Goran Hyden and Ken Mease. "Assessing Governance: Methodological Challenges." World Governance Survey Discussion Paper 2, UN University. August 2002. p.3

¹⁹ Court, Julius, et.al. p.4

²⁰ Specifically cited in Julius Court, et.al. as well as in: "Indicators of Democracy and Good Governance as Measures of the Quality of Democracy in Africa: A Critical Appraisal" Dirk Berg-Schlosser. And "Map-Making and Analysis of the Main International Initiatives on Developing Indicators on Democracy and Good Governance" Dr. Todd Landman.

²¹ Kaufman, Daniel, Aart Kray and Massimo Mastruzzi. "Governance Matters VI: Governance Indicators 1996-2006". World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No.4280, July 2007

²² *ibid.* Kaufman, Daniel.

may also reflect the professional, cultural, racial, political, and commercial and foreign policy priorities of the Bank's dominant shareholders.²³

The six aggregate indicators of the World Bank are fairly comprehensive, but as they are adapted in line with new research and experiences in the field, there is a danger of "overstretching". The amount of data that is being reduced to six indicators may result in an obstruction of the truth about conditions of life of the people affected. In extreme cases, this could also result in excusing, or even entrenching, bad governance.²⁴ Another serious criticism associated with the World Bank indicators is the practice of weighing all factors equally. Different countries, particularly those at varying stages of development, may set priorities on specific characteristics of governance, but are not judged on such priorities.²⁵ The creators of the World Bank governance Indicators have been active in their continued research and revision of the topic. In their most recent paper, they state emphatically: "We emphasize the need to: transparently disclose and account for the margins of error in all indicators; draw from a diversity of indicators and exploit complementarities among them; submit all indicators to rigorous public and academic scrutiny, and, in light of the lessons of over a decade of existing indicators, to be realistic in the expectations of future indicators."²⁶ The field remains a young one, full of initial successes and the need for vast improvement.

2.3 Using Social Recognition in Governance and Administration

If we take good governance to be important and desirable for its positive effects on socioeconomic and political development, then monitoring and evaluation is necessary, but not necessarily sufficient in promoting this concept, particularly in developing countries. Just as success in the workplace is, among many inputs, a result of governance and the hard work of individuals, success in a country's development depends on multiple factors. The quality of governance may be analyzed through monitoring and evaluation tools, but whether this quality improves also depends on individual and groups efforts. To this end, employing some of the motivational strategies already existing in the private sector may prove beneficial.

In the workplace, two of the main motivators are money and recognition. Leaving aside money, for a moment, as a sometimes problematic approach to motivating public figures (corruption may become an issue), the use of recognition may prove rather successful over the long-term. One of the most agreed upon principles in the field of

²³ Kwaku Asante-Darko "What is Good Governance?" The Mail & Guardian Online 10.30.2007
http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=323356&area=/insight/insight_africa/

²⁴ Ibid. Kwaku Asante-Darko.

²⁵ Ibid. Kwaky Asante-Darko.

²⁶ Kaufmann Daniel, Aart Kraay. "Governance Indicators:Where Are We, Where Should We Be Going?" Policy Research Working Paper 4370,

organizational behavior is that positive reinforcers administered to critical employee behaviors will lead to performance improvement.²⁷ Albert Bandura discussed this concept as part of the larger themes of social cognitive theory.²⁸ In the work place,

social recognition may come in the form of formal praise or perhaps informal praise, either way; it must come in a public, social occasion.

A similar strategy to the use of social recognition in the workplace is currently being employed to national and local governance throughout the world. This social recognition has most notably come in the form of public awards or prizes. There are several examples of successful prizes already in operation throughout Latin America and Africa as well as in the United States.²⁹ In 1999, the Ford Foundation and the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University created eight of these awards, such as the Prize for Innovation and Citizenship in Chile and the Prize for Government and Local Administration in Mexico. Working towards similar goals, these awards also follow selection and evaluation criteria similar to that of Colombia Líder.

One of the newest prizes to be created is the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership, which is a \$5 million dollar prize awarded to a former African President who has demonstrated the greatest commitment to democracy and good governance. This prize was established in October 2006 and is the largest monetary prize in the world, exceeding the Nobel Peace Prize (worth \$1.3 million dollars).³⁰ The purpose of the Ibrahim Prize is to fight corruption and raise the quality of African leadership and governance, which is measured by a leader's ability to deliver security, health, education and economic development.³¹

Although the Ibrahim Prize differs from Colombia Líder in that it is a cash award, both prizes give an incentive that motivates good governance in their respective countries. Furthermore, the prizes are intended to counteract the negative image of corrupt political officials and to shine a positive light on exemplary leaders. As Mo Ibrahim, founder of the Prize has stated: "We need to get out of this pessimism that all African

²⁷ Luthans, Fred and Alexander D. Stajkovic. Ch.12 "Provide Recognition for Performance Improvement" in *The Blackwell Handbook of Principles of Organizational Behavior*, by: Edwin A. Locke. P.166

²⁸ Bandura, Albert. *Social Foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice-Hall. 1986

²⁹ The "Innovations in American Government Award"(U.S.), Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu; Premio Innovación y Ciudadanía (Chile), Ford Foundation and Ash Institute www.premioinnovacion.cl/acerca.asp; "Premio Gobierno y Gestion Local" (Mexico), Ford Foundation and CIDE www.premiomunicipal.org.mx; "MILGAP" (East Africa), UN Human Settlements Program www.unhabitat.org.

³⁰ BBC News. 'Prize Offered to Africa's leaders.' 26 October 2006. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6086088.stm

³¹ Williams, Stephen. 'Mo Ibrahim launches world's biggest prize.' African Business, December 2006. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa5327/is_/ai_n21403598

leaders are corrupt. There are some doing wonderful things and implementing the right policies. They need to be honored.”³²

Concerns and Criticisms

The idea of addressing governance and accountability issues through prizes is not without its critics, however. There has been debate and skepticism over the Ibrahim Prize’s ability to stimulate good governance. Some critics say that the Prize is most

likely to be awarded to leaders who would have governed well anyway (even in the absence of the award), and it is unclear whether it will motivate current leaders to change their behavior and practice good governance.³³ Others have questioned whether a significant cash prize should be used to “bribe” leaders to do work that they should already be doing (that is, practicing good governance).³⁴ Some critics also believe that a prize focused exclusively on leadership may divert attention to the need to build strong foundations for institutional changes to support democratic change.³⁵

Because Colombia Líder’s prize does not have a monetary value, it is important to note that a cash award does not necessarily provide greater incentive for good governance. While the Ibrahim Prize awards one leader \$500,000 every year for 10 years after office and \$200,000 a year for life³⁶, some argue that corrupt leaders who are already primarily motivated by wealth and power will not be deterred to steal much more than this cash amount.³⁷

One challenge that both the Ibrahim Prize and the Colombia Líder Award face is the inclusion of civil society. The Ibrahim Prize is based on an index developed by the Harvard Kennedy School and the objective is to make this index easily available to civil society, so that it can be used as a tool for accountability. However, critics have expressed concern over the fact that many African countries do not have strong, independent civil society organizations that can effectively utilize this index to bring about better leadership.³⁸

³² Ng’ang’a, Liz. ‘Mo Ibrahim unveiled.’ 5 November 2007. East African Magazine. <http://www.nationmedia.com/estafrican/05112007/Magazine/mag0511072.htm>

³³ ‘The Mo Ibrahim African Governance Index and Leadership Prize Revisited.’ The African Leadership and Progress Network. March 2008. <http://www.africanprogress.net/ibrahim-leadership-prize-index-revisited.htm>

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Juma, Calestous. ‘Trophy leaders are not enough.’ 27 October 2006. http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/calestous_juma/2006/10/rewarding_good_african_leaders.html

³⁶ Williams, Stefan.

³⁷ ‘The Mo Ibrahim African Governance Index and Leadership Prize Revisited.’ The African Leadership and Progress Network. March 2008. <http://www.africanprogress.net/ibrahim-leadership-prize-index-revisited.htm>

³⁸ Ibid

Similarly, the case of Colombia Líder demonstrates the critical and challenging role of civil society participation in this process. One of Colombia Líder's specific objectives is to provide incentive for a culture of information, accountability and transparency through the participation of civil society on the local, regional and national levels.³⁹ This report specifically addresses the issue of civil society participation in its recommendations, paying particular attention to the need for Colombia Líder to construct a comprehensive strategy for strengthening civil society institutions and reinforcing a culture whereby civil society holds their elected officials accountable.

Awards for good governance and leadership, like the Ibrahim Prize and Colombia Líder, are positive initiatives that have promoted improved civic participation and the overall quality of government. These initiatives are still limited in the extent to which they foster change at the local, regional or national level. In order for these prizes to make a significant, lasting impact, they must be accompanied by a broader, comprehensive framework of institutional change, creating a culture of transparency and accountability, strengthening the role of civil society and providing leadership training for future leaders.

2.4 Strategies of Participation and Civic Engagement

The issue of citizen participation finds itself in most discussions of democracy and development. In the development context, participation is viewed as a means of strengthening the relevance, quality and sustainability of development projects and programs. Influential development organizations, such as the World Bank, define participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them.⁴⁰

With this modus operandi, the participation of stakeholders can be seen in the consultation or decision making of all levels of a development project, from initial needs assessments to monitoring and evaluation activities. This type of participation – social participation – has not been typically viewed as being related to broader issues of politics or governance, even when the development project is state driven.⁴¹

The type of participation that is seen as dealing with politics and governance – political participation – is defined by Nie and Verba (1972) as those legal activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take.⁴² Parry, Mosley and Day (1992) create a broader definition, by describing political participation as the process of formulation,

³⁹ Colombia Líder February 2008 Project Report, p. 3

⁴⁰ World Bank (1995), World Bank Participation Sourcebook, Environment Department Papers Participation Series Washington D.C. World Bank.

⁴¹ Gaventa, John and Camilo Valderrama. "Participation, Citizenship and Local Governance" Background note for workshop: Strengthening Participation in Local governance. Institute of Development Studies, June 1999. p.2

⁴² Verba S. and Nie, N., Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality. New York: Harper and Row Publishers: 1972. P.2

passage and implementation of public policies.⁴³ The main concern here is the actions of citizens aimed at influencing the decisions made by public officials. The repertoire of actions here spans from individual to collective, including voting, campaigning, and protest, to name a few. These activities are direct in their relation to public officials; they are not directly associated with governance itself, however.

Considering the important relationship between democracy and development, the role that participation plays in each area deserves further understanding, particularly with regards to where there is overlap. Each of the concepts of participation (social and political) implies using different methods for strengthening or enhancing its performance. Within the field of political participation, these methods have included voter education, sensitization to the rights and responsibilities of citizens, lobbying and advocacy, all aimed at developing a more informed and active citizenry, which can then better hold their elected representatives more accountable. Within the realm of social participation, however, the methods of developing participation are much broader in scope. They include methods of appraisal, planning, monitoring, training and awareness building. The emphasis here is on the importance of participation not only to hold others accountable, but as a means of self-development. Participation here includes the realm of knowledge and direct action, not just the realm of representation and accountability.⁴⁴

As democracy becomes more closely associated with development, the types of participation associated with each will need to converge. This merger of democracy, development and the need for participation is reflected in the concept of good governance. In fact, essential to the concept of good governance is the interaction of public and private social actors, particularly at the local level. Local governance calls for an increased participation of civil society in activities that have traditionally been a part of the public sphere. The combination of social and political participation methods at the local level is promoted as a means of improving the efficiency of public services, making local government more accountable, as well as deepening democracy.⁴⁵ Authors John Gaventa and Camilo Valderrama (1999) have called this combination of the social and political forms of participation “citizen participation” to reflect the direct ways in which citizens may now influence and exercise control in governance, in addition to the more traditional forms of indirect representation.⁴⁶

Barriers to citizens’ participation in local governance

Despite a concerted effort toward capitalizing on citizen participation at the local level, there is a gap between the possibilities of this type of participation and the realities of participatory politics. In order to fully realize the benefits of citizen participation in

⁴³ Parry, G., Moyser, G. and Day N., Political Participation and Democracy in Britain. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1992. p.16

⁴⁴ Gaventa, John and Camilo Valderrama. “Participation, Citizenship and Local Governance” Institute of Development Studies. June 1999. Background paper prepared for conference: Strengthening Participation in Local Governance. P.3

⁴⁵ Gaventa, John and Camilo Valderrama. “Participation, Citizenship and Local Governance” Institute of Development Studies. June 1999. Background paper prepared for conference: Strengthening Participation in Local Governance. P.4

⁴⁶ Gaventa, John and Camilo Valderrama. 1999. p4

democracy, development and governance, the barriers to its inclusion need to be understood. Gaventa and Valderrama (1999) outline several known barriers:

Power Relations: Citizen participation involves power and how it is exercised by different social actors in the space created between citizens and local authorities. The structure and available processes for participation within this space, however, are under the control of the government. How the space is defined and which actors, agendas and procedures are allowed is often determined by governmental institutions. "In Latin America, in examining the degree to which decentralization offers a space for more democratic participation at the grassroots, Schönwalder (1997) argues that not enough attention was paid to the question of power. In fact, local elites, local governments and other actors operating on the local scene, such as political parties and even some NGOs, have often been prone to co-opt popular movements in order to further their own agendas."⁴⁷

Level of citizen organization: Citizens are best able to deal with existing power relations when there is some history of effective grassroots organization. Drawing from experiences in Argentina, Peru and others in Latin America, Herzer and Pirez (1991) argue that citizens can influence decisions at the local level when there exists popular organizations with a certain presence at the local level and the occupation of political posts in the municipal government by parties or individuals who favor popular participation.⁴⁸

Participatory skills: As participation moves from lower to higher forms, the processes become more complex and demand different types of skills, knowledge, experience, leadership and managerial capabilities. The problem of weak participatory skills is a common thread through most countries moving toward a more participatory local government. The essential administrative and leadership skills of public officials at the local level are also weak or, in some cases, non-existent. This means that well-meaning or not, incompetent public officials may also become a barrier to citizen participation. The skills of citizen participants are not the only ones lacking.

Political will: For citizen participation to gain a meaningful hold on local governance, there needs to be political support of the process. The absence of a strong and determined central authority willing to provide and enforce opportunities for participation at the local level, as well as a lack of will on the part of local government to enforce these opportunities can have a detrimental effect on the ability of meaningful participation to take hold. This is particularly apparent in democracies where there is essentially one party rule or a weak opposition.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Gaventa and Valderrama. 1999. p.7 Schönwalder, G. (1997), New Democratic spaces at the Grassroots? Popular Participation in Latin America local Governments, Development and Change, 28/4:753-70. p.755

⁴⁸ Herzer, H., and Pirez, P. Municipal Government and Popular Participation. Environment and Urbanization, Vol. 3, No.1, April 1991. p.91

⁴⁹ Gaventa and Valderrama. 1999. p.8 See also: Velaquez, F. Local Governments in Intermediate Cities in Colombia; Municipal Administration: for whom? Environment and Urbanization, Vol. 3, No.1, April, 1991. Bohme

Participation level: In order to strengthen participation in local governance, direct citizen involvement in decision making by individuals or groups in public activities needs to be strengthened, often through (newly established) institutional channels such as monitoring committees and planning processes. Two multi-country studies (Cunill, 1991; Rosenfeld, 1994) examined this claim in the Latin American context. Their findings showed a wide variety of organs and modes of participation included in the legal frameworks of the countries studied. However, at the municipal level, the majority of these mechanisms had a consultative character, such that participation in even the best of cases was associated with the stages of plan formulation or execution of programs, but not with decision-making. Legislation exists in which organizations of civil society are recognized and have the right for information and to address demands and petitions but the formal spaces where these groups participate are not widely used.⁵⁰

Insufficient financial resources: Financial resources to implement development activities influenced or decided by local citizens come mainly from two sources: central allocations and local revenues. A common barrier for citizen participation in decision-making is the control of financial resources by higher levels of authority and the meager resources available for local activities.⁵¹ In many countries, such as Colombia, local authorities are unable to obtain the necessary revenue from the central authorities to support the variety of social and economic development programs the municipality requires.

Strategies for Addressing Barriers

Though there may be any combination of barriers to realizing citizen participation in local governance in a country, there are also several strategies for addressing the issues. A sample of these includes:⁵²

Participatory planning: aim is to influence the planning of local governments. This may take the form of a consultation period when local officials present their development plan and consult with the public in order to include their input. Colombian municipalities are beginning to implement this activity.

Citizen education and awareness building: using popular education and communication methodologies to strengthen the awareness of local citizens of their rights and responsibilities under new local governance legislation. These methodologies include using radio, theater, etc to reach diverse groups of citizens.

A. (1997), *Articulation of Social Actors and Participation: four experiences* (mimeo). Rosenfeld A. (1994). *Los gobiernos locales en America Latina*. Riadel. Documento de Trabajo. Herzer, H., and Pirez, P. 1991

⁵⁰ Cunill N. *Participacion Ciudadana: Dilemas y Perspectivas para la Democratizacion de los Estados Latinoamericanos*. Caracas: Centro Latinoamericano para el Desarrollo (CLAD), 1991.

Rosenfeld A. *Los gobiernos locales en America Latina*. Riadel. Documento de Trabajo, 1994.

⁵¹ Gaventa and Valderrama. 1991. p.9

⁵² Gaventa and Valderrama, 1991. p. 11

Training and sensitization of local officials: In some countries, particularly those where there are reservations made for women and minority representatives, a great deal of work has gone into training these newly elected representatives, many of whom have little or no previous leadership experience in formal politics. These efforts can also be extended to those public officials who, although typically considered part of the majority, may also have little or no experience in public administration.

Advocacy, alliances and collaboration: 1. participatory budgeting – allows citizens to participate in the decision-making over local allocation of resources; and 2. promoting accountability of elected officials to citizens – professional advocacy organizations, like the Public Affairs Centre in Bangalore, India, have developed report cards of local governments in their delivery of services. Community watch groups, such as the *veedurias* of Colombia, fall into this category.

3. Colombia Líder

3.1 Goals and Rationale

With the backdrop of increased government efforts to alleviate poverty and inequality, as well as fight corruption, Colombia Líder is an organization that seeks to change the conversation on governance and the government's relationship with civil society. It is a "citizen response" monitoring and evaluation program that promotes government transparency and the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of all Colombians.

In October 2006, Colombia Líder was created under the partnership of Semana S.A. Publications, Asobancaria, the Antonio Restrepo Barco Foundation, Fedesarrollo, Fescol, UNDP, RCN Radio and RCN Television. These organizations represent a broad segment of the opinion leaders in Colombia including the leading print media organization, the country's largest TV and radio networks, and a foundation created by representatives of two of Colombia's most well-known political families. Together these partners represent some of the most respected organizations in the country. The partnership's mandate: strengthen governance in Colombia, monitoring project results and increasing public involvement and awareness.⁵³ The influence and reach of the Colombia Líder partners is vital to the group's mission because it is through various leading media channels that Colombia Líder can reach the greater community and increase transparency.

Specific objectives of Colombia Líder include the following:

- Create a system to monitor governance, poverty and inequality in Colombia and create incentives for sound public management
- Make known the best practices of local and regional governments to enable replication of best practices at a national level

⁵³ Colombia Líder Homepage: <http://www.colombiaLíder.org>

- Create a culture of accountability with participation by society at the local, regional and national levels
- Contribute to strengthening local, regional and national governance by increasing transparency, the monitoring of results and citizen involvement
- Generate feedback to the government from the citizens' perspective and through expert analyses from various sectors
- Maintain an active dialogue concerning the reduction of poverty and inequality in the country, and continue to measure results
- Create incentives to generate timely and useful information concerning government policy and program results.

3.2 Colombia Líder Methodology

The Colombia Líder partnership strives to use the positive influences of social recognition through the power of the media to influence the performance and accountability of local and regional governments. The use of media as an active partner was not only for having coverage during the process but also for having an independent watchdog that is essential to the governance and accountability agenda. In addition, media was seen as a tool for the dissemination of program information and the best practices of winning officials.

Though the nomination process differs slightly from other prizes of its kind, the criteria for evaluation remain largely the same. These criteria, also used by the Innovations in Governance Award given by the Ash Institute at Harvard University, are grounded in the work of the Ash Institute and fall in line with the work of the World Bank. During its first awards cycle, Colombia Líder received a record of 188 applications of mayors and 18 of governors. Those applications were considered by the jury conformed by Claudia López, Beatriz Londoño, Carlos Caballero A., Pedro Medellín y Juan Carlos Echeverri. Decisions were based on:

- Local government leadership in the administration
- Reduction of poverty and inequalities
- Social policy
- Physical infrastructure
- Promotion of economic development
- Environment
- Fiscal discipline and reorganization of the Public Administration
- Promotion of civil society's participation

Moreover, the judges considered the management of the mayors and governors that were nominees. At the end, they selected the winners based on the following criteria: Impact, integral management, applicability, innovation, sustainability and participation. Finalists from the technical evaluation of applications were passed along to an expert committee to be vetted by their professional record, with anyone found to have any illicit

dealings or relationships to paramilitaries, drug traffickers, guerrillas, etc disqualified from the prize. Therefore final awards were granted based on an applicant's management and accomplishments in office as well as on the cleanliness of their record.

3.3 Initial Successes, subsequent Challenges

Our conclusions based on interviews with mayors, citizens, NGOs and partner organizations indicate that Colombia Líder had an overall successful first year. Líder enjoys the support of well known and highly respected partner organizations, which have helped bring much success and attention to the Project. In only a short amount of time, Colombia Líder has created a reputable "trademark" that other organizations would like to be a part of, which bodes well for its future success and sustainability.

Through the design of an award for good governance, Líder's purpose is twofold: first, to acknowledge the exemplary governance of selected mayors and governors and give them recognition. Based on the amount of media attention the winners received, Líder was extremely successful in this regard. Its second purpose is use the award as incentive and motivation to stimulate good governance and motivate mayors to strive for success in their current office. By its nature, giving a prize to someone elevates that person's work, which can then serve as an example for others to examine and adapt to his/her specific context. For example, former mayor of Bogotá Antanas Mockus has said that his administration was guided by the work of Nobel-Prize winning economist Douglass North, specifically on the investigation of the tension between formal and informal rules and how economic development is restrained when these rules clash.⁵⁴ This demonstrates how North's Nobel-Prize winning contribution helped to guide Mockus' innovative governing strategies.

Therefore, an important question to ask is whether or not the example set by the Colombia Líder award winners is something that current and future elected leaders want to emulate. Has the physical awarding of the prize to these individuals translated into something more significant, encouraging current leaders to look to their work to help inform and guide their own administrations? As Colombia Líder is still a new project, the potential for its long term impact has yet to be realized. The following sections of this report will address ways in which to strengthen this aspect of Líder.

Furthermore, Colombia Líder has the potential to change the conversation about governance in Colombia. As RCN radio reported in an interview with the award winning Mayor of Marquetalia, "If not for the award, we would not be talking to you, unless it was because something bad happened. Unfortunately, that is a tendency of ours in media communications." The Project's success in spotlighting good governance on the national level cannot be understated.

⁵⁴ Caballero, Maria Cristina. 'Academic turns city into a social experiment.' Harvard Gazette. March 11, 2004. <http://www.hno.harvard.edu/gazette/2004/03.11/01-mockus.html>

However, there are ways in which Colombia Líder can improve on the success of its first year. For one, its current operational structure is limited. As a ‘trademark’ association of partners and not an actual organization, Colombia Líder has limited autonomy. This is reflected in how its partners have the ability to influence all aspects of the project, including the decisions of the selection committee. As an established, non governmental organization, Colombia Líder would be able to have greater independence and be less inclined to bend to powerful influences.

Furthermore, we found that Colombia Líder has not fully capitalized on the momentum of the award. For one, from our interviews it seems that all prize winners have yet to be contacted and informed of their role in the Project moving forward. We believe that in order to strengthen the main purpose behind the award, which is to promote good governance, the knowledge and expertise of these winners must be utilized. Best practices should be compiled with all due haste after the awards ceremony in order to maintain momentum. Such a gap in time may lead Líder to squander the gains of the prize and miss the critical opportunity for these winners to truly contribute to the strengthening of good governance.

It should be remembered that the prize is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. Therefore, while there was significant emphasis on the actual awarding of the prize in November, this must be followed up with equal attention paid on how these winners will contribute to good governance in current and future leaders. While the prize has given the winners due recognition and undoubtedly helped their future political careers, Líder must be more proactive in translating these individual success stories into best practices that can help transform other municipalities in the country.

In addition, there are ways in which Colombia Líder can further strengthen its objectives to promote good governance and civil society participation. Through our research, we found that Colombia Líder generally lacked the involvement and participation of civil society. There appeared to be disconnect between one of Líder’s core principles which is to strengthen and empower civil society, and the actual level of civil society participation in the award process and the overall design and functioning of Colombia Líder.

Through our research, a reoccurring theme that we would like to emphasize is the importance of evaluating the mayors’ applications taking into consideration the unique and distinctly different set of challenges that they face in their municipalities, including its size, category, and the resources received from the central government. We would like to highlight the importance of this aspect of the evaluation as Colombia Líder moves forward.

Furthermore, while Colombia Líder received more award applications than initially expected, greater outreach is still needed to inform mayors and citizens of the nomination process. This is because only one-half of the mayors interviewed in the Boyaca and Quindio regions and one-third of the citizens surveyed outside of Bogotá

were familiar with the prize.⁵⁵ In addition to emailing and/or faxing the applications directly to mayors and advertising the award through print media, television and radio, Colombia Líder could reach a bigger cross section of the population by expanding its advertisement means to include loudspeaker announcements on a van (popular in category 6 municipalities) and more direct contact with church based and community groups to discuss the nomination process in their meetings.

We also found that as a new project, Colombia Líder is still trying to define itself and the direction it would like to take in the four years between award cycles. This ad hoc approach to planning activities made it at times a challenging task to evaluate. Before moving forward with significant project-related activities, Líder should take the time to critically evaluate what niche it would like to occupy in Colombia over the next five to ten years, and create a mission statement and development plan that address this overarching goal.

The following recommendations aim to build on the initial success of Colombia Líder and propose ways that the Project can assure its sustainability and meet its overall objectives to strengthen good governance and the participation of civil society.

4. Recommendations

4.1 General recommendations

Based on our research, **the EPD team recommends that Colombia Líder address issues related to the structure and organization of both itself and its program cycle.** Our recommendations are centered on Colombia Líder's organizational structure, award nomination and selection process, outreach to civil society, and supplemental activities towards strengthening good governance in between the four year award cycle.

We feel that **autonomy and integrity must be integral components** of any and all activities that Colombia Líder undertakes in the future. Líder must structure itself as an organization so that these two characteristics are **never compromised**. Additionally, we feel that in order for Líder to capitalize on the momentum it has from its initial success and on the unique position it finds itself within Colombian society, Líder **must develop a clear and comprehensive development plan** for each year of the awards cycle. This will enhance Colombia Líder's stature and recognition on a national level. Finally, the EPD team feels that Colombia Líder could do much more to address its goal of enhancing civil society's relationship with local and regional government. **Civil society should be represented in its many forms throughout the awards process and its supplementary activities.**

In making our recommendations, we realize that Colombia Líder faces capacity constraints and limited resources. However, we have also included recommendations for future phases of the Project, anticipating Líder's growing list of partner organizations

⁵⁵ For results of informal survey, please see Annex 3.

and increased funding opportunities. The following recommendations should be taken as a list to be accomplished over time, as capacity and resources increase. Many can be phased in over the next few years, however we urge Colombia Líder to make every effort to adopt the most crucial and immediate of these recommendations with all due haste. The following section expounds on each of the team's recommendations, as well as their significance and limitations.

4.2 Recommendations detailed by issue

1. Organizational Structure

Establish Colombia Líder as an independent Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

Considering the amount of success the initiative has had in its first year alone, we recommend that Colombia Líder begin the process of establishing itself as a registered, independent Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with a clearly defined mission statement, a board of directors, governing documents (by-laws), and internal procedures and policies addressing issues such as conflicts of interest and financial management.

The process of gaining non-profit status in Colombia is described in detail on the website <http://www.ccong.org.co>. However, the following is a summary of how to proceed with this process:

The first step is to organize a group of people that are interested in establishing an NGO and to define the contribution of each and the purpose of and resources available to the NGO. All members must then sign the Constitution Act, and present this statute to the mayor in his/her municipality. This statute should include the name and nature of the organization, its address, purpose, social objectives, social capital and equity, its members of the General Assembly and its Board of Directors. After review and approval of this document by City Hall, the signatures of the president and secretary are officially registered, along with the address of the NGO. Once this is done, the next step is to set up the accounting books and apply for a NIT (Tax Identification Number).⁵⁶

While Colombia Líder has done a remarkable job maximizing its resources during its first year of existence, establishing itself as an NGO will ensure greater autonomy and sustainability in the future. As an NGO, we believe Colombia Líder will be in a better position to apply for and receive grants from corporations, foundations, international organizations and tax-deductible individual contributions. This is particularly true if Líder wishes to raise money from US donors, in which case it will also need to apply for 501(c)(3) as a non-profit within the United States.⁵⁷ With adequate financial resources, Colombia Líder will be able to address some of its urgent needs such as:

⁵⁶ <http://www.ccong.org.co>

⁵⁷ to apply for 501c3 status as a non-profit organization in the United States, please see the United States Internal Revenue Website: <http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=96109,00.html>

- Hiring more full time staff to work on integral aspects of the program, namely Líder's plan to conduct "follow-up activities" during the interim years, as a means to assess mayors' progress in implementing their Development Plans;
- Contracting the technical support necessary to regularly update Líder's website and
- Ensuring consistency and program longevity by providing financial stability to its personnel.

The issue of transparency and accountability are the cornerstones of Colombia Líder. As such we recommend that as part of its restructuring, the roles and responsibilities of every decision maker be clearly defined, so as to avoid situations whereby one partner can influence or overturn a majority decision. Furthermore, the governing documents of Colombia Líder should also clearly define and limit the roles of the institutional partners and board members, in order to maintain the integrity of the prize's selection process.

We realize Colombia Líder had considered this step and there was concern over a lack of financial support for such a fledgling organization. We understand this concern, but feel that delaying this step in the hopes of increasing financial support may only result in a protracted struggle for resources.

2. Restructure the Nomination Process of the Colombia Líder Prize

Civil society organizations should nominate the mayor/governor for the initial round.

The majority of the mayors we interviewed believed that the award would be more meaningful if citizens nominated them in recognition of good governance. By placing the nomination process in the hands of civil society, Colombia Líder will help to promote and encourage the importance of citizen participation in local government. As citizens become more aware of the Colombia Líder prize and the nomination process, this can have a positive, long term impact, strengthening the participatory mechanisms for citizens that are already in place in municipalities. It will also help to gradually bring about one of Líder's key objectives, which is to develop a culture of information, transparency and accountability through the participation of civil society.

Therefore, we recommend that Colombia Líder solicit the initial nominations from civil society. Once these nominations have been received, Colombia Líder can then contact the mayor or governor directly and give them the opportunity to formally accept or decline the nomination. By accepting the nomination, the mayor/governor agrees to provide Colombia Líder with the required data and information for submission to the technical committee. This will circumvent Líder's problem with the quality of evaluation data submitted by civil society groups in last year's award process.

There are concerns that civil society groups might not be capable of taking part in the nomination process due to a lack of information, capacity or interest. The following recommendation addresses this concern.

3. Outreach and Advertisement of the Colombia Líder Award Nomination Process

Earlier and increased outreach to civil society organizations

In order for citizens to have a more substantial role in the nomination process, it is imperative for Colombia Líder to increase its outreach to civil society organizations. This can be achieved through more direct contact with the mandatory participatory mechanisms that were established by the 1991 Constitution and Law 134/1994. Almost all of the mayors interviewed cited groups such as the Juntas Administradoras Comunes (JAC), Juntas de acción comunal, Veedurias ciudadanas and Consejos Territoriales de Planeación Municipal (CTPM) as a means for Colombia Líder to connect with civil society and disseminate information regarding the prize. Because mayors meet regularly with civil society organizations to give people a voice in the decision making process of their Municipal Development Plans, this would be a good space in which to start a dialogue regarding the Colombia Líder award nomination process.

While Colombia Líder should encourage mayors to discuss the award nomination in meetings with civil society groups, Líder can also mobilize citizens to advertise and discuss the award in their own communities. For instance, in an interview with a priest and youth group coordinator from Circasia, both volunteered to post fliers of Líder in the Church, as well as to discuss the nomination process in weekly youth group meetings.

However, we understand that one potential limitation to this recommendation is that smaller municipalities may have an advantage because mayors have a more direct relationship to citizens as compared to larger municipalities. Nevertheless, the importance of civic participation in the award nomination process is something that cannot be ignored.

4. Selection Process

Press Coverage for Finalists, and not just Winners

Because Colombia Líder's overall objective is to shine a positive light on good governance, finalists also deserve to be recognized. Press coverage of their achievements can be done through national print media, radio, TV and the Colombia Líder website. Shining a wider spotlight on the best practices of local and regional leaders will only serve to further Líder's goals.

Eliminate the selection of "overall winner"

During our field interviews, many individuals commented that they were unsurprised by former Mayor Sergio Fajardo Valderrama's overall win, and some noted that he had the "easiest ability to win," given that Medellín receives more resources than other

municipalities. We feel that the added competition of “overall winner” provides no value-added to the goals of Líder; we recommend eliminating it in the next selection process. Since each mayor faces distinctly different challenges and resource limitations in their municipalities and because of this, it is nearly impossible to objectively exalt one over the rest.

Furthermore, we believe that the purpose of the Colombia Líder award should be to build a network of leaders that people can look to as equally admirable in their own right. Removing an overall winner will help foster camaraderie and emphasize the importance of a network of leaders that each can turn to for support.

Institute Public Voting for selecting winners from list of finalists

In order to increase the public’s ability to participate in the selection process, one idea is to have a public voting period, which may include call-ins, text messaging and internet voting. This would alter the selection process so that winners in each category can be determined by the technical evaluation committee and public opinion (in addition to the vetting done by the expert committee). Specifically, this would mean that the technical committee and the expert committee would narrow down the applicants to a list of finalists (3 finalists per category, for example). These finalists would all be given extensive press coverage in order to showcase their efforts to the public. The public would then have the ability to choose the winners in each category.

There are concerns and limitations associated with allowing the public to make the final decision, and these should be mitigated to all extent possible. First of all, in order to the public to make any type of educated decision on who they feel is the winner, the press coverage must paint a clear picture of what each finalist has accomplished *in spite of the specific challenges and limitation they faced in their term in office*. Considering the caliber expected from each finalist, it is important to show them in relative terms. A second concern is that the public voting would turn into a “popularity contest”. While this is entirely possible, Colombia Líder would do better to take the attitude that citizens, particularly with the outreach that Líder should also be pursuing, will have the capacity to make an educated decision. In the end, however, this is a how democracy often works all over the world – popularity based on charm, looks, a personal-interest story, etc often influence votes. This does not mean that citizens cannot be trusted with the responsibility of casting a vote.

Lastly, there is the concern that the new media mechanisms that can be used for voting, such as cell phone calls, text messaging and internet voting, can be manipulated to one’s advantage. Before implementing such a program component, Colombia Líder should take pains to mitigate this concern as much as possible. For such an activity, Colombia Líder may wish to consider future partnerships with national cell phone companies. Such a partnership could assist Líder in developing a stringent monitoring mechanism that will ensure that the voting system is transparent and free from manipulation.

5. Supplementary Activities for Colombia Líder:

Strengthen the Role of Previous Winners in Líder's Capacity Building Activities

Colombia Líder can help to strengthen and build the capacity of current mayors by utilizing the talent of past winners. It is important that Colombia Líder is in the process of compiling a best practices book and distributing it to all current mayors. However, this activity must be reinforced with greater interaction between award winners and current public officials.

One way to do this is by holding regional seminars on specific issues, such as education, health, infrastructure and sanitation. As a means to promote peer learning, the past winners who demonstrated the best leadership in these subjects could be the main presenters in their specific areas of expertise. One of the winners could be responsible for each specific issue area, and then assemble a committee among the other finalists. This would ensure a more well-rounded perspective on the issue based on regional specifics and the size and resources of each municipality.

Although Colombia Líder had planned to organize training sessions with the former Governor of Atlántico, Carlos Rodado Noriega to give a session on potable water in Chocó, he has since been named an ambassador in Spain, which makes it impossible to take advantage of his experience. This is one example as to why Colombia Líder should not wait too long after the award ceremony to avail of the expertise of the winners.

In addition, conferences can be organized on a regional and national level and include academics and other experts dealing with national issues and how they manifest on a local level.

Maintain Contact with and Cultivate a Network of leaders

Colombia Líder should encourage the former winners to maintain contact with each other and to form a network of leaders that could be available to help each other in terms of capacity building activities (such as in seminars and conferences with current mayors.) Through this network, their best practices can be disseminated and relied upon in a more hands-on, personal way than simply through a book or the Líder website.

Furthermore, both winners and finalists should be contacted and engaged in this process from the very beginning and right after the awarding of the prize. The former governor of Boyacá, Jorge Eduardo Londoño Ullo, for instance, has not had any contact with Colombia Líder since becoming a runner-up and his insight and experience have yet to be utilized. From our interview with him, it is clear that he is both a willing and enthusiastic asset, not to mention a very accomplished and capable public servant.

As Londoño suggested, Colombia Líder should function like a leadership program in that its role is not just to award leaders that come to the foreground, but to seek future

leaders, cultivating their skills and experience for the future of Colombia. As he stated, “There is no reason the president of Colombia should only come from Bogotá, Medellín or Cali. There are leaders all throughout this country.” To that end, Colombia Líder should put effort into cultivating and fostering the leadership abilities (and public administration skills) of all elected leaders, particularly those who come from areas outside the traditional centers of power and influence and from all different political parties and forces.

Increase Support for Civil Society

In addition to focusing on the capacity of public officials, Colombia Líder should also offer some training and civic education for the general public. This can be done through a media campaign highlighting ways that citizens can get involved in community town hall meetings and by supporting educational seminars that are run by local civil society groups, focusing on issues such as identifying success in public administration, accountability and how to participate as a citizen. One way to achieve this is through forming partnerships with national NGOs including women’s organizations and church-based groups. This can be done in order to create demographic-specific civic education campaigns (such as focusing on youth through a partnership with OCASA).

The purpose of this kind of activity is to strengthen citizens’ ability to knowledgeably participate in the Colombia Líder awards process. These activities will help citizens understand the process of local government and public administration, where their responsibilities lie, how to evaluate good governance in a more objective manner, and how they can be effective participants.

Maintain Colombia Líder’s momentum through Public Relations and consistent press coverage of good governance in the four years between award cycles

In order to maintain momentum throughout the four year awards cycle and remain visible in the press and the minds of citizens, Colombia Líder should develop an overall Communication Strategy which may include radio, TV, newspapers, website and community leaders. This Communication Strategy will promote Líder’s underlying objectives of strengthening good governance and disseminating best practices.

Líder’s media partners should regularly publish pieces related to the program and its objectives. Possible pieces could include op-ed pieces and scholarly articles on issues pertaining to local government, letters from mayors and governors highlighting a specific issue they face and how they are addressing it, and letters and public-interest pieces from (or about) civil society organizations and individual citizens. Colombia Líder could also publish articles that spotlight specific municipalities and a noteworthy development project that mayors are working on. In doing so, Colombia Líder will continue to shine a spotlight on examples of good governance, as well as motivate mayors in their current positions.

Use of ‘Citizen Report Cards’ as part of the Poverty Observatory

As part of the poverty observatory and as a means of encouraging more thorough and consistent collection of data on public services and poverty reduction, Colombia Líder could create a ‘citizen report card’ system for municipalities. This would entail collecting and synthesizing into one easy-to-understand document (ideally a chart or graph) all of the data on government indicators (such as health, education, infrastructure, water, etc) that is already collected by regional and national agencies. These report cards are already being utilized in several parts of the world, such as in Bangalore, India and Zanzibar, Tanzania. The Public Affairs Foundation in Bangalore, India has pioneered this tool as a means of publicly monitoring public service provision. “As users or beneficiaries at the receiving end, their assessments of the quality, efficiency and adequacy of the services and the problems they face in their interactions with the public agencies can provide significant inputs for the improvement of service delivery and management processes.”⁵⁸ Having been established for several years now, the Public Affairs Foundation has the capacity to implement this tool through the use of comprehensive citizen surveys. Considering Colombia Líder’s current limitations with capacity and resources, the EPD team suggests altering this tool to better suit its needs.

By providing data on the indicators it monitors through the Poverty Observatory in an elementary fashion and making it available to all citizens and administrations, Colombia Líder would be providing a public administration and its constituents with the means to self-evaluate on a regular basis. Mayors and governors, having this information publicly available, would have an incentive to address weak areas of their public service provision. Making this information publicly available – in a way that is truly accessible to the average Colombian citizen – might also increase the likelihood that citizens will become more active with their local government.

This is an initiative that can begin on a pilot basis within the communities where Colombia Líder is set to monitor the government’s JUNTOS program. After evaluating the success and limitations of such a program, attempts can be made to institutionalize it at a national level. Colombia Líder can also encourage civil society organizations or the municipal governments themselves to produce the report cards, based on a consolidated model created by Colombia Líder or through the eventual use of comprehensive citizen surveys. The information on these report cards can be used by citizens and their local officials to monitor the progress of their administration. It can also be used by Colombia Líder as another means to evaluate the prize using quantitative information.

6. Future Partnerships

Collaborate with Established NGOs to take advantage of knowledge and expertise

Colombia Líder should consider forming partnerships with other NGOs in Colombia - both on a regional and on a national level – in order to take advantage of the networks and expertise already established. This is also a strategy for minimizing costs and

⁵⁸ Citizen Report Cards. A Resource Kit, Public Affairs Foundation. Bangalore, India. p.2

project duplication as well as the need for resources. Partnerships can take the form of collaboration on reports and research, co-sponsorship of seminars and conferences, etc. This strategy should seriously be considered when Colombia Líder would like to reach the grassroots level of larger municipalities and cities. In these scenarios, where a mayor's relationship with his/her constituency is often tenuous or impersonal, local NGOs can support a bridging effort between the mayor and the people. There are numerous partnerships that Colombia Líder could pursue; the following are a few suggestions:

Transparencia por Colombia. Transparencia por Colombia works on a national basis in Colombia. It evaluates the transparency in governance of municipalities and departments throughout the country based on the model used by its parent organization, Transparency International. The overarching goals of Transparencia por Colombia and Colombia Líder coincide, making collaborative partnerships between the two organizations mutually beneficial. The process of Transparencia por Colombia should be discussed at Colombia Líder seminars and conferences, with encouragement given to participation in their survey/diagnostics as a means of identifying areas for administrative improvement. If participation in Transparencia's analysis reaches a critical mass, then Colombia Líder should consider using the scores as a quantitative measure in the selection process for the Líder award.

OCASA. OCASA is a youth organization whose main focus is combating corruption and promoting better public administration throughout the country. This organization has chapters located at several universities throughout the country. In addition to their work coinciding with the goals of Colombia Líder, OCASA should be considered for partnership due to its connection with the youth of the country. Colombia Líder should bear in mind the importance of mobilizing young Colombians to engage with their local governments. Teaching and encouraging civic activism at this age can lead to greater public participation in the years to come. Mobilizing the youth vote can "change the conversation" on democracy in Colombia.

Colombian Cell Phone Companies. An increasingly popular form of participation in governance and society is with the use of the cell phone. Cell phones reach many parts of the country which still lack internet, and have managed to enter homes which may lack a fixed phone line or TV. There is also new technology which can connect cell phones to the internet (web sites), allowing people to access online information even when they don't have internet.⁵⁹ The use of cellular phones for participation in Colombia Líder activities, such as voting for best mayor/governor, is an opportunity that deserves further exploration and consideration. Partnerships with the main cell phone companies in Colombia (Movistar, ComCell, Tigo) could be pursued as a means of exploring such opportunities at low or no cost for the public. There are several caveats to consider before implementing such a program, however. These include consideration of the limitations of cellular use within certain demographics of the population and the need for a filtering system to mitigate the possibilities of manipulation.

⁵⁹ UNICEF is doing pioneering work in open-source technology, particularly in this field. Please see the the UNICEF website: <http://x.mepemepe.com>

Colombian Universities. One weakness that has become apparent from the EPD team's research is the general consensus that development-related data is inadequately available on a local, regional and national level. This shortfall hinders Colombia Líder along with other NGOs (national and international) in their work. Considering the importance of making local, regional and national data available to the public, and the central role it plays in Líder's programs, Colombia Líder should seriously consider establishing partnerships with universities throughout the country. These partnerships may be with various departments, such as social work, political science, and economics. They can serve to promote an increased and improved collection of data as well as provide academic studies of the work of Colombia Líder. This research can help Líder assess its progress and success over time as well as provide Colombian academics a chance to better understand the political climate of their country.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Positioning Colombia Líder for the future

Colombia is experiencing a transformation. Society is now more active and more involved in governmental issues. The various organizations that have been created to allow for the participation of society in the executive's decision-making process (such as the Juntas Administradoras Comunes (JAC), Juntas de acción communal, Veedurias ciudadanas, etc.) are tools that Colombia Líder should take advantage of in order to increase the participation of civil society. On a basic level, Colombian society is already aware of the quality of governance of its mayors and governors since it is affected by their every decision. As individuals become more organized and able to influence their destiny through their governments, the process of reducing poverty and social inequalities should quicken.

Colombia Líder must take into account that Colombia is facing a dramatic transformation in its political environment. The country is going through a compelling renovation in political leadership as the country seeks to purge its legislatures of corruption and nefarious relationships with drug traffickers, paramilitary and guerrillas. The country needs new leadership to replace the traditional politics of the previous decades. This opens up a space for Colombia Líder to make a real impact. It must endeavor to do this, however, with the full participation of Colombian society.

Colombia Líder must serve as more than a prize-giving institution: it has the potential to help strengthen the country's relatively new democracy.⁶⁰ It was only under the 1991 Constitution that citizens began to directly elect governors, deputies, mayors, and

⁶⁰ Colombia can be considered a "new democracy" due to the consideration that before 1988, all governors and mayors were appointed by the central government. No local or regional level elections makes for a weak case as a democratic country, though at the national level, Colombia has had free elections since at least the early 1980s.

members of local administrative boards. Such a relatively new process of citizen participation needs to be strengthened and reinforced through Líder's activities.

However, even prior to Colombia Líder's creation, mayors began using the power of citizen participation as a critical tool to improve their municipalities. In the case of the former Bogotá Mayor, Antanas Mockus asked people to hold their fellow citizens accountable for good public behavior and abiding by pedestrian traffic laws by distributing 350,000 "thumbs up" and "thumbs down" cards, which were meant to approve or disapprove of other citizens' behavior.⁶¹ Another example of how Mockus empowered civil society was when he asked people to call his office if they had met a trustworthy and honest taxi driver. After 150 calls, the mayor organized a meeting with the "good" taxi drivers in order to consider ways that he could improve the behavior of the "bad" ones.⁶²

Such positive examples of local, innovative governance are essential, especially in a country that is best known for its turbulent history and intractable conflict. Colombia Líder plays a critical role in transforming this image by highlighting good governance in a consistent, systematic way.

⁶¹ Caballero, Maria Cristina. 'Academic turns city into a social experiment.' Harvard Gazette. March 11, 2004. <http://www.hno.harvard.edu/gazette/2004/03.11/01-mockus.html>

⁶² Caballero, Maria Cristina.

Client Terms of Reference

The EPD team was contracted by Colombia Líder to 1.) evaluate the Colombia Líder program, and 2.) make recommendations to improve outcomes and impact through:

- Assessment of outcomes and impact of the first phase of Colombia Líder
- An evaluation of Colombia Líder's nomination/awards process, based on indicators used during the first phase of the project;
- Recommendations on methodology for Colombia Líder's second phase of the project;
- Assessment of possible technical and financial partners in the United States to ensure the project's long term sustainability;
- Formulation of suggestions for program improvements

The expected deliverables include a final report in English and Spanish, presentation of preliminary findings midway through consultation process, and presentation of findings at the conclusion of the EPD team's research and consultation period, which is scheduled to take place in late April 2008.

Methodology

To conduct its research and evaluation of the Colombia Líder program, the EPD team employed various tools to construct a well-rounded understanding of local politics and the local governments' relationship with citizens. This multi-pronged approach included desk research, personal interviews with key government and organizational stakeholders, third-party assessments of the organization's work, and, finally, surveys of citizens from throughout the country. The combination of tools used gave the EPD team a nuanced understanding of the main issues facing the client, Colombia Líder. The EPD team conducted this evaluation in five "phases", over a period of six months.

Phase One: Background

The first phase of the evaluation centered on desk research as a means of constructing an initial understanding of the client, its program, and the country context within which it must function. The EPD team reviewed the client's background documents in an effort to understand Colombia Líder's methodology, rationale, objectives and choice of indicators. Other research foci at this time included predominant methodology in monitoring governance, such as the Harvard governance indicators and World Bank governance indicators. The team also sought out similar programs with which to compare the client's program and strategy.

Phase Two: January Fieldwork

The second phase of the team's research involved fieldwork in Colombia, which centered on conducting informational interviews with the client's partner organizations, national and international NGOs, and poverty and decentralization experts. Two members of the EPD team visited Bogotá, Colombia to conduct fieldwork for a period of two weeks in January 2008. Informational interviews with representatives of the partner organizations afforded the team a clearer understanding of Colombia Líder's program rationale as well as the individual motivations of each partner organization. Interviews with the other organizations and with the

poverty and decentralization experts allowed the team to begin to place Colombia Líder's program and expertise within the larger context of political and economic development in Colombia.

Results of Phases 1 & 2

Findings from the initial background research and informational interviews of phases 1 and 2 allowed the EPD team to construct a work plan for its subsequent research. The team was able to identify weaknesses in the client's methodology and indicators. The team also took note of deviations in project implementation and was able to identify the likely causes. Perhaps most notably, the team noticed that while the client's objectives seemed sound and laudatory, its ability to meet them was lacking. This allowed the team to move forward with a more specific purpose in subsequent phases of the research and consultation period. Finally, at the conclusion of phase two of the team's research, the team provided the client with a detailed account of its initial findings and research plan for the remainder of the consultation.

Phase Three

Phase three of the EPD team's evaluation of Colombia Líder involved continued desk research, meetings with regional/national experts, and construction of evaluation tools in preparation for phase four of the team's research. Based on its initial findings after phases 1 & 2, the team focused on deepening the research needed for further exploration of its potential recommendations. These initial recommendations centered on increasing the role and participation of civil society in the Colombia Líder programs as well as strengthening the structure, organization and capacity of Colombia Líder. During this phase, the team also conducted further research in support of identifying possibilities, strategies and limitations of securing future financial and technical support for the Colombia Líder program.

Phase Four: March Fieldwork

Phase four of the team's evaluation consisted of a return to the field for further research. During the second round of fieldwork in March 2008, the EPD team focused on gathering information to create an in-depth understanding of the incentives and motivations as well as sociopolitical and economic concerns and constraints of the beneficiaries. The team utilized various tools to gather information from both current and former public officials and from individual citizens. These evaluation tools included semi-structured interviews (conducted with mayors and governors) and questionnaires (given to private citizens).

Results of Phases 3 & 4

Initial conclusions that arose from phase 2 and the subsequent research from phase 3 were "tested" in the field during phase 4 as a way of assessing the feasibility of initial recommendations and uncovering potentially hindering limitations, issues and concerns. The information gathered from the interviews and surveys clarified the main concerns and interests of the beneficiaries, which were important in identifying which issues and recommendations to continue pursuing and which the team should alter or drop altogether. This information largely supported the initial findings and recommendations of the team.

Phase Five: Final Recommendations

Upon completion of phases 3 and 4, the EPD team moved forward with making its final recommendations to the client. This final phase involved detailing and clarifying the team's findings and their consequences for Colombia Líder's future work, as well as expanding on the initial recommendations. The final recommendations were provided in detail, including any and all corroborating evidence from the team's research and the challenges and limitations associated with them. The final activities associated with phase 5 include the presentation of

the findings and recommendation to the EPD department and EPD colleagues, drafting of the final report in both English and Spanish for the client's use, and finally, conducting a tele/video-conference with Colombia Líder partners and staff in order to discuss the team's findings and recommendations.

Limitations to Fieldwork

There were several challenges and limitations involved with the EPD team's January and March fieldwork. Chief among them were the twin issues of time and budget. Ideally the team would have preferred to meet with several more NGOs, think tanks and academic institutions during its time in Colombia. The team made every effort to meet with a representative sample of the organizations working on issues of development, democracy and governance in Colombia. Though the team was able to gather a well-rounded response from those it did interview, having a larger sample would have made the findings more robust. This is also true of our meetings with mayors and governors and our informal surveys with citizens. Ideally we would have like to have the input of mayors and governors from all the departments, in order construct a more thorough image of the challenges of politics in Colombia. Due to limited time, the challenges of travel within the country, and the cost of doing so, we had to make due with the 10 mayors and governors we were able to be in contact with. A professionally conducted statistical survey would have been the ideal tool to use in our research, but we were again limited by time and budget. Such a survey would have taken months to design, field test and implement, not to mention the enormous cost and man power needed to see it through. The team had to settle with the informal survey it constructed in the field, which was itself an innovative solution to the problem of organizing focus groups.

The EPD team made every effort possible to ensure that its research and evaluation of Colombia Líder was as even-handed and objective as possible. The team realizes the limitations it faces, and has adjusted its recommendations and expectations accordingly. Therefore certain recommendations that could be strengthened with further research state as much.

Suggestions for further research

- Conduct market survey of new media and communications usage in Colombia to assess national usage of internet and cellular phones. How many people own cellular phones? How many are pay-as-you-go plans? Which areas of the country are without internet connectivity or cellular service? These areas would have to be addressed using more traditional forms of communication.
- Research to better understand the nature of public association in Colombia. Which types of organizations are most popular or have the widest reach within Colombian society? What is the economic or demographic breakdown of these types of associations? What are the divisions between the formal and the informal (associations, economy, etc). Understanding the nature of associational life in Colombia can help Colombia Líder better identify which types of organizations to pursue partnerships with in order to reach a wide segment of the population with its programs.

List of people consulted

Academic Contacts

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 José Antonio Ocampo
 Sonia Ospina

Public Officials, Colombia

Sergio Fajardo, former mayor of Medellín
 Dr. Jorge Londoño, former governor of Boyaca
 mayor of Zipaquirá
 governor of Caquetá
 Jorge Alberto Herrera Jaime, mayor of Paipa
 Elda Diaz Camargo (wife of Paipa Mayor)
 Jenny Hernandez, mayor of Tibasosa
 Arturo José Montejó Niño, mayor of Tunja
 Gloria Gutiérrez Botero, mayor of Montenegro
 Patricia Mora Ocampo, mayor of Circasia
 Jorge Omar Tejada Galvis, advisor to the mayor of Circasia
 Jose Reinel Henao, mayor of Quimbaya
 Alexander Perez Chalarca, mayor of Filandia
 Diego Arias Garcia, Secretary of government for Filandia, advisor to the mayor
 Jorge Ricardo Parra Sepulveda, mayor of Salento
 Luz Ensueno Betancur Botero, mayor of Dos Quebradas
 Natalia Botero, Advisor to Mayor Alejandro Martinez (Santa Rosa de Cabal)

Inter/National Organizations

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 Ana Maria Valencia, Transparencia Por Colombia
 Andrés Orión Alvarez Pérez, Antioquian Institute for Civic Responsibility and the State
 Marcela Jaramillo Suarez & Dr. Tore, Directora de Gestion, Federación Colombiana de Municipios
 Christina Schultz and Kelly Brooks, MSI Foundation /USAID

Partner Organizations

Mario Gomez and Carolina Londoño, Fundación Restrepo Barco
 Natalia Millan, Fedesarrollo
 Alejandro Santos, SEMANA publications
 Amparo Diaz, PNUD (UNDP Colombia)
 Maria Luisa Latorre, Fundación Santa Fe de Bogota,
 Alberto Maldonado, technical advisor on governance
 German Cardona, director of Colombia Líder and former mayor of Manizales

And private citizens from

Medellín (19)

Rio Negro (6)

Marinilla (9)

Itagui (4)

Santa Marta (2)

Chocó (1)

Cali (2)

Zipaquirá (2)

Circasia Priest Duberley Tapazco

Circasia Church Youth Group Coordinator Diego Fabian Montes

Informal Survey and results

Surveys conducted by Elizabeth Mendenhall and Daniel Green in Antioquia and Cundinamarca, between 3/18 – 3/28/2008

Surveys	total: 45	
age	Men	Women
18-30	15	14
31-45	2	5
46-60	4	3
over 60	1	1
total	22	23

1. How do you get information/news about your community?

Internet	18	17.31%
periodicals	30	28.85%
radio	19	18.27%
television	33	31.73%
other	4	3.85%
total responses	104	

3. Do you ever go to internet cafes? (if you don't have internet)

yes	15	53.57%
no	13	46.43%
total	28	

5. How often do you use your cellular phone?

Always	28	70.00%
often	5	12.50%
sometimes	7	17.50%
seldom	0	0.00%
total	40	

7. How often to you send/receive text messages?

Always	6	15.79%
often	11	28.95%
sometimes	16	42.11%
seldom	5	13.16%
total	38	

9. Do you know who is the mayor of your town?

Yes	37	84.09%
no	7	15.91%
total	44	

2. Do you have internet in your home or place of work?

Yes	33	73.33%
no	12	26.67%
total	45	

4. Do you have a cellular phone?

Yes	40	90.91%
no	4	9.09%
total	44	

6. Do you send/receive text messages with your cellular phone?

Yes	35	83.33%
no	7	16.67%
total	42	

8. Did you vote in the last elections?

Yes	31	68.89%
no	14	31.11%
total	45	

10. How do you hear about the work your mayor is doing?

Internet	4	6.35%
periodicals	17	26.98%
radio	14	22.22%
gov't publication	4	6.35%
television	15	23.81%
other	9	14.29%
total responses	63	

11. Does your mayor organize public meetings for the municipality?
(town hall meetings)

13. If you are dissatisfied with your mayor's work, or if you thought there was a problem that needed to be addressed, which of the following actions would you consider?

do nothing	12	27.27%
write a letter	13	29.55%
go to ombudsman, etc	15	34.09%
protest	4	9.09%
total	44	

15. Has your municipality improved over the past 5 years?

yes	37	86.05%
no	6	13.95%
total	43	

17. Which of the following methods of communication would you consider using to participate in Colombia Líder activities?

internet	21	40.38%
telephone call	7	13.46%
cell phone (call or txt)	6	11.54%
any/all of the above	12	23.08%
not interested	6	11.54%
total	52	

19. How would you classify this use of cell phones?

convenient	34	77.27%
More of a nuisance than a convenience	6	13.64%
no opinion	4	9.09%
total	44	

12. Please rate your mayor's quality of work on a scale of 1 to 5

1 (poor)	0	0.00%
2	2	4.55%
3	13	29.55%
4	20	45.45%
5 (great)	8	18.18%

total 43

14. Do you use/receive any public services?

yes	27	64.29%
no	15	35.71%

total 42

**this question was discarded due to the possible misunderstanding on the part of surveyees. "public service" was not clearly defined.

16. Are you familiar with the program Colombia Líder?

yes	14	31.11%
no	31	68.89%

total 45

18. If you could participate in/interact with your local government through the use of cell phones, would you consider this option?

yes	39	86.67%
no	6	13.33%

total 45



Sexo: hombre mujer

Edad: 18-30 31-45 46-60 60+

Formas de Comunicación

1. ¿Cómo busca Ud. Información y noticias de su comunidad (generalmente)?

(Marca todo lo que se aplica) internet diarios/revistas radio
televisión otro

2. ¿Tiene Ud. Internet en su casa o en su lugar de trabajo? Sí No

3. Si 'no', ¿Ud. va (o ha ido) a un internet cafe? Sí No
¿con cual frecuencia? _____ días/semana

4. ¿Tiene Ud. celular? Sí No

¿Con cuál frecuencia lo usa? Siempre a menudo a veces
muy poco solamente con mi trabajo solamente en caso de emergencias

5. ¿Mande Ud. o recibe mensajes de texto con su celular? Sí No

6. Si 'sí', ¿con cuál frecuencia los usa (textos)? Siempre a menudo
a veces muy poco

Usted y Su Gobierno

7. ¿Votó Ud. en las últimas elecciones? Sí No

8. Si 'no', ¿cuándo fue la última vez que Ud. votó? _____

9. ¿Sábe Ud. quién es el alcalde de su municipio? Sí No

10. ¿Cómo escucha Ud. noticias de lo que su alcalde está haciendo? Internet
diario/revista radio publicación del gobierno otro

11. ¿Organiza su alcalde (o su consejo) jornadas públicas con la gente del municipio?

Sí No ¿Cuántas veces por año? _____

12. ¿Qué opiña Ud. del trabajo de su alcalde? En una escala de 1 a 5 (1 = peor, 5 = mejor)

1 2 3 4 5

13. Si a Ud. no le gusta el trabajo de su alcalde, o piensa que hay un problema lo que debe denunciar, ¿ cómo lo manifestaría Ud.?

no haría nada escribir una carta de queja

utilizar la controloría, fiscalía o personero del municipio

organizarse públicamente (protesta, etc)

14. ¿ Recibe o utilice Ud. algún servicio público (proveído o administrado por el gobierno)?

Sí No ¿Cuál(es)? _____

15. ¿Qué opiña Ud., durante los 5 años pasados, se ha mejorado su municipio? Sí No
¿de qué manera está mejor? _____

16. ¿Conoce Ud. el programa Colombia Líder – lo cual da los premios a los mejores alcaldes y gobernadores? Sí No

17. Colombia Líder está considerando metas de incluir la ciudadanía en le proceso de otorgar a los alcaldes y gobernadores. ¿en cuáles de estas maneras considerará Ud. participar?

Por internet (en la página de web) por llamada por teléfono

Por celular (texto o llamada) cualquiera de estas formas

No me interesa participar de ninguna forma

18. Si habría formas alternativas de participar en la gobernabilidad o en la rendición de cuentas de su municipio (por alguna organización como Colombia Líder o directamente), por ejemplo, con el uso de celulares, ¿Ud. consideraría usarlas? Sí No

19. ¿Cómo Ud. clasificaría esta forma de usar celulares?

Conveniente más molestia que conveniente no tengo opinión

Interview Guide for March Fieldwork

I. Opening Segment

- Thanking the participant and interviewer introduces him/herself.
- Explain the general purpose of the interview and why the participant was chosen.
- Explain the presence and purpose of recording equipment and introduce observers.
- Address the issue of confidentiality.
- Invite the participant to introduce himself: (name, profession, communities served).

II. Second Segment

{Note to the Facilitator} This section could begin with an open-ended question.

- Begin by eliciting the interviewee's initial thoughts on the whole Colombia Líder initiative. How relevant he/she thinks it is? This may bring forth their opinions that they have been waiting to share knowing that this session was upcoming. If so, follow this path until exhausted or until about 10-15 minutes go by and then steer them to the selection process.
- Here we want to know whether or not they've applied last year? We are also interested on their views on the winners' selection process i.e. is it fair and transparent enough in their opinions?
- What about the eligibility requirements?

III. Third Segment

{Note to the Facilitator} In this section we want to give the opportunity to mayors to discuss what they consider to be impediments to their work. This should also allow us to learn about how effective the decentralization process has been in the country.

- What is the most challenging aspect of being a mayor in a city like.....?
- What has been some of the specific roadblocks you've encountered in your efforts to provide the best quality service to the citizens in.....?
- We know that since the early 1980s the government of Colombia has undertaken several decentralization reforms in an effort to give more responsibilities and provide more autonomy to the municipalities. As a mayor ofare you able to freely make your own decisions when it comes to budget allocations, tax revenues so as to provide the better services to the citizens in your city?
- Even though you are free to make your own decisions in terms of the types of services being provided to the citizens in your town, should you need it, can you

rely on the central government to provide technical assistance to your municipality?

- At the onset the national government of Columbia was very interested in making citizen participation a key component of the decentralization process which is precisely why, they have stopped to appoint mayors and governors in the country and established an electoral process instead. So, we would like to know the extent to which citizens are able participate in local affairs, and what are some of the mechanism currently in place to facilitate their participation?
- Many of Colombia's major municipalities have created what's called "Local Administrative Communities" as a way to encourage citizen participation. First of all, are any such communities in your town, if so what exactly do they do?
- What's the relationship like between the office of the mayor and local non-profit civil society organizations?
- Are there any members of the civil society on the management boards of public utility companies?

IV. Second Segment

{Note to the Facilitator} In this section we are interested in knowing how the mayors deal with citizen inquiries/complaints/concerns/requests, etc.

- We've heard of "the Ombudsman" which we understand is an institution whose main task is to impel the effectiveness of democratic institution and the safeguards of citizens' human rights. Our first question is, how closely does your office work with "the Ombudsman"?
- Is there a similar place where citizens can go to, to voice their complaints/concerns about services that they're entitled to but for whatever reason are not getting from the municipal government? Do you hold Town Hall meetings where citizens can voice their concerns?
- Do you have a website with information on your development plans? Do you have other means to make this information available to citizens?
- Currently, the Colombia Líder award is given every 4 years at the end of the mayor's term. Do you think it would be better to give the prize every 2 years instead? Do you think this will help motivate mayors to do a better job in their current positions?
- In the future, we are hoping to organize a "best practices" session for newly elected mayors to meet with the prize finalists. When do you think would be the best time to hold such a session?
- Last year, most of the mayors that applied nominated themselves for the award. We are trying to think of ways to improve citizen participation in the award process, and one way is to have citizens/civil society organizations nominate the mayors. What do you think of this idea?

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