POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS WITH A SOCIAL INCLUSION LENS

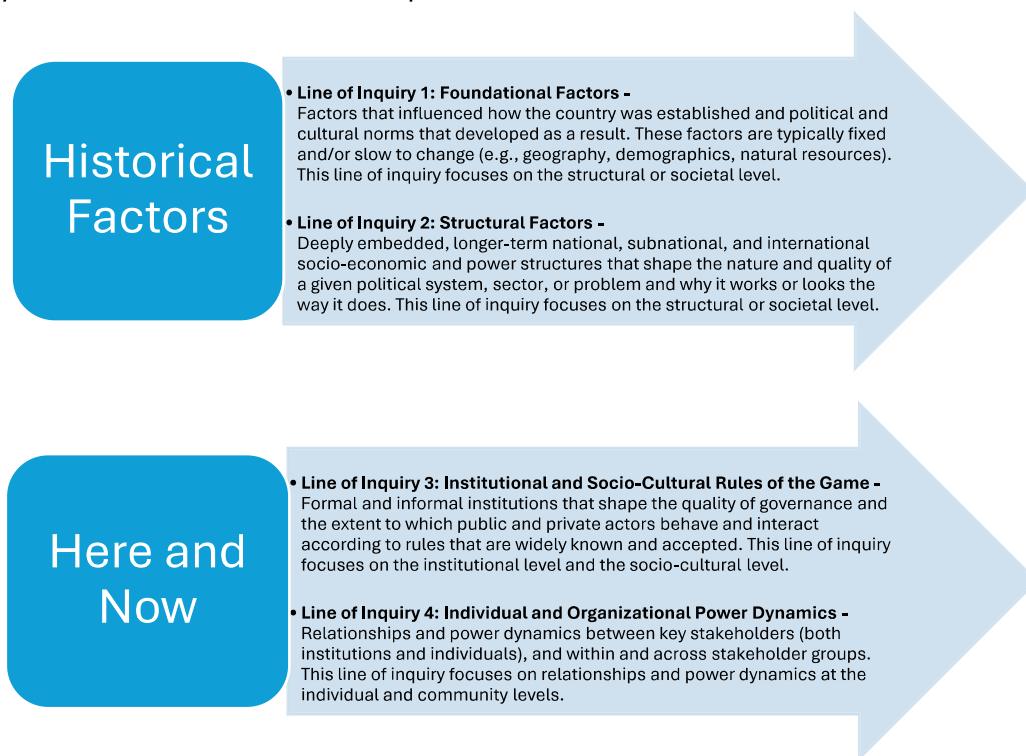# Political Economy Analysis with a Social Inclusion Lens (PEASIL)

Overview

The Political Economy Analysis with a Social Inclusion Lens (PEASIL) facilitates a structured analysis of the political, economic, and social factors that influence and shape Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) challenges and opportunities in a particular country or context, as well as the historical and current events and the power dynamics that shape them. The PEASIL can be used to determine which forces a program can work with, work around, or work to change, as well as pathways that reinforce existing local assets and neutralize opposing forces that would inhibit desired changes.

The PEASIL framework structure is adapted from USAID's Applied PEA Framework and tailored to align with CEPPS programming priorities by integrating lines of political accountability[i] and embedding gender and social inclusion considerations in both a mainstreamed and targeted manner.[ii]

Lines of Inquiry

CEPPS has modified some of USAID's PEA assessment factors – particularly "foundational factors," "rules of the game," and "here and now" – and incorporated them in the PEASIL lines of inquiry. Additionally, because gender and inclusion dimensions are significantly shaped by power differentials and relationships within and across different identity groups, and because members of marginalized communities often wield different types of power than traditional powerholders, we have added a new line of inquiry on individual and institutional relationships and power dynamics.[iii] The four PEASIL lines of inquiry are listed below with brief descriptions:

Historical Factors

- **Line of Inquiry 1: Foundational Factors –** Factors that influenced how the country was established and political and cultural norms that developed as a result. These factors are typically fixed and/or slow to change (e.g., geography, demographics, natural resources). This line of inquiry focuses on the structural or societal level.

- **Line of Inquiry 2: Structural Factors –** Deeply embedded, longer-term national, subnational, and international socio-economic and power structures that shape the nature and quality of a given political system, sector, or problem and why it works or looks the way it does. This line of inquiry focuses on the structural or societal level.

Here and Now

- **Line of Inquiry 3: Institutional and Socio-Cultural Rules of the Game –** Formal and informal institutions that shape the quality of governance and the extent to which public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted. This line of inquiry focuses on the institutional level and the socio-cultural level.

- **Line of Inquiry 4: Individual and Organizational Power Dynamics –** Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (both institutions and individuals), and within and across stakeholder groups. This line of inquiry focuses on relationships and power dynamics at the individual and community levels.

The PEASIL lines of inquiry are organized along elements of time to help assessment teams understand how history informs the present. "Foundational factors" and "structural factors" are intended to capture historical context,[iv] while "institutional and socio-cultural rules of the game" and "individual and organizational power dynamics" are intended to capture the "here and now."[v]

Political Accountability and Stakeholder Groups

In addition to the lines of inquiry outlined above, CEPPS has drawn upon political accountability theory to incorporate vertical, diagonal, and horizontal lines of political accountability, organized by stakeholder group, into the framework. CEPPS's Global Theories of Change (GTOC)[vi] was developed based upon political accountability theory to present democracies as complex, self-organizing systems that must be both inclusive and accountable. In such a system, each stakeholder has an important role to play. Because this theory underpins CEPPS's approach to DRG programs, organizing the PEASIL framework in this way helps to ensure the assessment is tailored to CEPPS's approach to programming.
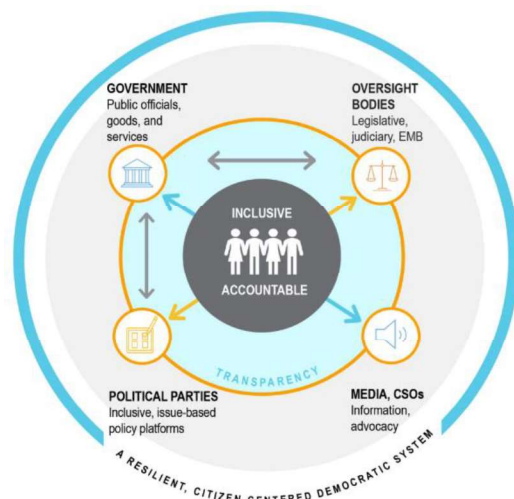

Figure 1: A visual representation of the GTOC and the relationships of accountability between key stakeholders

In alignment with political accountability theory and this GTOC, the stakeholder groups that are included in the PEASIL framework are:

Vertical Accountability	Diagonal Accountability	Horizontal Accountability
Citizens: Citizens must have equal access to participate and leverage their ability to freely express their interests. ***Political parties:*** Political parties must be responsive to and adequately represent all constituencies.	***Civil society:*** Civil society must advocate for change and actively monitor the political system to ensure democracy delivers. ***Independent media:*** Media must share credible information and call for transparency and accountability.	***Independent and government bodies:*** Institutions must uphold a system of checks and balances through transparency, meaningful public engagement, and adherence to their mandate. ***Transnational bodies and coalitions:*** Transnational bodies must set and uphold international standards and mechanisms to address challenges that transcend borders.

Embedding Inclusion

Inclusion is fundamental to democratic development. The CEPPS GTOC emphasizes inclusive accountability. CEPPS used the socio-ecological model[vii] to refine and organize its assessment criteria. The PEASIL assessment criteria explore how history informs current events, and how political, economic, and social norms, practices, institutions, and structures – as well as power dynamics within and among different groups of actors and institutions – interact with and influence one another and the current environment in which CEPPS programming will be implemented. Thus, gender and social inclusion are both a focus of and integrated across all analyses.

Accordingly, CEPPS has embedded inclusion considerations in the design of the PEASIL framework by mainstreaming gender equity and social inclusion throughout the guiding questions for all assessment lines of inquiry and stakeholder groups, as well as adding a targeted line of inquiry to capture the political, economic, and social factors affecting relationships and power dynamics within and among individuals and organizations. This is to ensure that the PEASIL framework is consistent with CEPPS's commitment to promoting inclusive and equitable DRG processes and outcomes, and to ensure the PEASIL facilitates learning around crucial power dynamics and incentive structures based on identity and marginalization for individuals and institutions. Fully mainstreaming gender and inclusion into PEA frameworks in general, and the PEASIL in particular, is essential to both CEPPS's technical approach and its DRG work, as it aids CEPPS in designing democracy strengthening activities that transform, rather than replicate, harmful gender norms and social inequities resulting from differential power, influence, and incentives or disincentives.

Contextualizing the Framework

To adequately address the specific context of a given program, assessment teams should tailor the framework to their country and program context. Guiding this process is the assessment team's identification of the key problem or research questions they aim to answer through the PEASIL. Once they have identified the problem or question they will address through the PEASIL, assessment teams should determine whether they will cover each of the stakeholder groups in their PEASIL assessment, or whether they will select one or more stakeholders from the six. Regardless of the number of stakeholder groups they will analyze, assessment teams should analyze all lines of inquiry for each stakeholder selected. Similarly, some of the guiding questions may not be relevant to a particular program, and some lines of inquiry may require additional guiding questions that address an important aspect of the local context for a program. Teams must therefore adapt the questions to their context and program. The PEASIL framework is also meant to be updated and refined throughout the program cycle, as new information and insights emerge or the context changes with current events including e.g., shifts in power, emerging political crises, or the outbreak or cessation of a local or regional conflict.

The PEASIL Framework

The PEASIL assessment framework is a global tool for DRG practitioners to use for conducting an inclusive political economy analysis. The framework establishes four distinct lines of inquiry and six stakeholder groups, providing a set of guiding questions for each. These guiding questions, however, are neither exhaustive nor mandatory. The framework is meant to be flexible and adaptable to the needs and objectives of different programs and teams.

	PEASIL Assessment Lines of Inquiry		Political Accountability Theory					
			Vertical Accountability		Diagonal Accountability		Horizontal Accountability	
	Lines of Inquiry:	Description	Stakeholder group: Citizens	Stakeholder group: Political parties	Stakeholder group: Civil society	Stakeholder group: Independent media	Stakeholder group: Independent & government bodies	Stakeholder group: Transnational bodies & coalitions
			Citizens must have equal access to participate and leverage their ability to freely express their interests.	Political parties must be responsive to and adequately represent all constituencies.	Civil society must advocate for change and actively monitor the political system to ensure democracy delivers.	Media must share credible information and call for transparency and accountability.	Institutions must uphold a system of checks and balances through transparency, meaningful public engagement, and adherence to their mandate.	Transnational bodies must set and uphold international standards and mechanisms to address challenges that transcend borders.
Historical Context (Country Level of Analysis)	LOI 1: Foundational Factors	Factors that influenced how the country was established (e.g., geography, demographics, natural resources) and political and cultural norms that developed as a result.	Cross-cutting guiding questions					
	LOI 2: Structural Factors	Deeply embedded, longer-term national, subnational, and international socio-economic and power structures that shape the nature and quality of a given political system, sector, or problem and why it works or looks the way it does.						
Here and Now (DRG Sector Level of Analysis by Stakeholder Group)	LOI 3: Institutional and Socio-Cultural Rules of the Game	Formal and informal institutions (rules and norms) that shape the quality of governance and influence actors' behavior and their incentives, relationships, power differentials, and capacity for collective action, and the extent to which public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted.	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions
	LOI 4: Individual and Organizational Power Dynamics	Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (institutions and individuals), as well as within and across stakeholder groups. Looks beyond visible power to include hidden and invisible power. Considers the impact of intersectionality and varying degrees of power and privilege, including access to and control over resources and opportunities to hold leadership and decision-making roles.	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions	LOI- and stakeholder-specific guiding questions

PEASIL Guiding Questions: Cross-cutting

Lines of Inquiry	Description	Questions
Historical Context *(Country Level of Analysis)*		
LOI 1: **Foundational Factors**	Factors that influenced how the country was established and cultural norms that developed as a result.	• When and how was the country founded? What historical dynamics laid the foundation for democracy (or autocracy)? • How have the historical governance structures, political transitions, and political institutions in the country shaped the electoral and political landscape? • Which actors and groups have shaped the country's governance structure and norms? Which actors or groups have been historically excluded or marginalized? • In what ways have demographic trends or geographic factors affected the way different groups of individuals engage in political and electoral processes?
LOI 2: **Structural Factors**	Deeply embedded, longer-term national, subnational and international power structures that shape the nature and quality of a given political system, sector or problem and why it works or looks the way it does.	• How is the country's political system characterized (i.e., what is the regime type)? • How does the economic structure and context--including income distribution, economic opportunities, and decision-making and transparency around government spending--affect political and electoral processes and political engagement? What role does economic stability or instability play in shaping the political climate and citizens' trust in governance? • Which actors or groups are currently in power? Is there room for new actors or groups? • In what ways do social hierarchies and group dynamics impact the exercise of political rights and participation in governance and accountability mechanisms?

PEASIL Guiding Questions for Stakeholder Group: Citizens

	Lines of Inquiry	Description	Questions
Here and Now (DRG Sector Level of Analysis by Stakeholder Group)	**LOI 3:** **Political Economy Rules of the Game**	Formal and informal institutions (rules and norms) that shape the quality of governance and influence actors' behavior and their incentives, relationships, power differentials, and capacity for collective action, and the extent to which public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted.	• What laws, regulations, or policies are currently in place to ensure inclusive participation in electoral processes? Are they fair/equitable/accessible to all? Are there any gaps or loopholes that need to be addressed? How does the legal and regulatory framework impact different groups of citizens? • What are the social and cultural norms and practices that either facilitate or hinder inclusive participation for different groups? • How do political and electoral stakeholders engage citizens/communicate electoral information/mobilize voters? Are there differences in reach/impact for different identity groups? • What, if any, recent initiatives or reforms have been introduced to increase (or limit or otherwise influence) citizen participation in elections? Which actors support these measures? Which do not? What are the motivations underlying these initiatives? • What role is technology playing in shaping contemporary electoral participation?
	LOI 4: **Socio-Cultural Power Dynamics**	Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (institutions and individuals), and within and across stakeholder groups. Looks beyond visible power to include hidden and invisible power. Considers the impact of intersectionality and varying degrees of power and privilege, including access to and control over resources and opportunities to hold leadership and decision-making roles.	• What are different (socio-economic/demographic) citizens' perceptions of their level of power and influence in electoral processes? How does that incentivize or disincentivize their participation? • What are the mechanisms through which marginalized groups or individuals can influence electoral outcomes despite systemic power imbalances? • Who has access to leadership and decision-making positions in the various political and electoral stakeholder institutions? • How are current socio-political events influencing citizens' willingness to participate in electoral processes? How are they influencing citizens' confidence in the integrity of electoral processes? To what extent do these answers differ for citizens with different degrees of marginalization or power/privilege? • How are current conflicts targeting members of marginalized groups?

PEASIL Guiding Questions for Stakeholder Group: Political Parties

Lines of Inquiry	Description	Questions
LOI 3: Political Economy Rules of the Game	Formal and informal institutions (rules and norms) that shape the quality of governance and influence actors' behavior and their incentives, relationships, power differentials, and capacity for collective action, and the extent to which public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted.	• What are the legal requirements for party formation and the rules governing party operations and financing? To what extent are these applied equally to all parties, if at all? How do electoral laws and regulations impact the functioning of multi-party systems? • What are the existing unwritten rules or norms impacting participation in political parties? What is the role of e.g., loyalty, hierarchy, gender in determining who can be in positions of power? • Are there incentives or disincentives to promote intra-party inclusion and democracy, including diversifying party leadership? Does this differ across or within groups? • What processes or mechanisms do parties have in place for gathering input from citizens? How effective are these processes or mechanisms at reaching different groups? To what extent are there procedures/practices that prioritize the engagement of marginalized groups? • How are recent political or economic crises affecting the dynamics within the multi-party system? • What is the current state of inter-party dialogue and cooperation on issues of national importance?
LOI 4: Socio-Cultural Power Dynamics	Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (institutions and individuals), and within and across stakeholder groups. Looks beyond visible power to include hidden and invisible power. Considers the impact of intersectionality and varying degrees of power and privilege, including access to and control over resources and opportunities to hold leadership and decision-making roles.	• How do power dynamics between major and minor parties shape policy-making and legislative agendas? • In what ways do internal party power structures and power dynamics within parties impact the representation of diverse voices within parties? And in positions of power? How do these structures/dynamics affect the selection of candidates and the issues they prioritize? • How do external actors (e.g., donors, influential individuals) exert power over multi-party systems, and with what implications? • What are the current challenges and opportunities facing the multi-party system in promoting inclusive representation?

Here and Now (DRG Sector Level of Analysis by Stakeholder Group)

PEASIL Guiding Questions for Stakeholder Group: Civil Society

Lines of Inquiry	Description	Questions
LOI 3: **Political Economy Rules of the Game**	Formal and informal institutions (rules and norms) that shape the quality of governance and influence actors' behavior and their incentives, relationships, power differentials, and capacity for collective action, and the extent to which public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted.	• What (formal or informal) legal protections or rules are in place for civil society? To what extent, if at all, are these applied equally? To what extent do they enable or hinder civil society actors? • How do ownership, funding sources, and financial sustainability impact the independence of civil society? • What are the prevailing attitudes and policies towards freedom of assembly and association? To what extent are there specific topics that are off limits due to social convention, political pressure, state violence and harassment? • How is the digital landscape affecting the role and reach of civil society? To what extent has digital media provided new/different points of entry or vulnerabilities for civil society previously shut out? • How does the private sector participate or engage in and influence politics? What are the rules for private businesses or individuals lobbying or paying for campaign/political advertising? • To what extent do regional economic or political current events have spill-over effects from other countries on civil society and private enterprise?
LOI 4: **Socio-Cultural Power Dynamics**	Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (institutions and individuals), and within and across stakeholder groups. Looks beyond visible power to include hidden and invisible power. Considers the impact of intersectionality and varying degrees of power and privilege, including access to and control over resources and opportunities to hold leadership and decision-making roles.	• What power imbalances exist between and within civil society organizations and how do they affect collaborative efforts (e.g., advocacy coalitions)? Which CSOs have access to traditional political and electoral powerholders? • To what extent are there disparities in marginalized groups' trust in and/or access to civil society? • How do oversight mechanisms and power dynamics between civil society and political and government stakeholders influence the independence and objectivity of civil society when engaging in programming, research, monitoring activities, or advocacy related to electoral and political processes? How would you characterize the relationship between government, political leaders and civil society? • In what ways do hidden power structures within civil society influence their roles in governance and government transparency and accountability? In what ways do invisible power structures within civil society influence their roles in governance and government transparency and accountability? • How are current events and government actions impacting civil society's ability to operate? • Which marginalized groups have a stronger voice or coalition within civil society currently?

Here and Now
(DRG Sector Level of Analysis by Stakeholder Group)

PEASIL Guiding Questions for Stakeholder Group: Independent Media

	Lines of Inquiry	Description	Questions
Here and Now (DRG Sector Level of Analysis by Stakeholder Group)	**LOI 3:** **Political Economy Rules of the Game**	Formal and informal institutions (rules and norms) that shape the quality of governance and influence actors' behavior and their incentives, relationships, power differentials, and capacity for collective action, and the extent to which public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted.	• What (formal or informal) legal protections or rules are in place for media outlets? To what extent, if at all, are these applied equally? To what extent do they enable or hinder independent media? • How do ownership, funding sources, revenue streams, and financial sustainability impact the independence of media? To what extent is state-owned media able to exercise independence in its journalism and reporting? • What are the prevailing attitudes and policies towards freedom of expression and press freedom? To what extent are there specific topics that are off limits due to social convention, political pressure, state violence and harassment, etc.? • How is the digital landscape altering the role and reach of independent media? To what extent has digital media provided new/different points of entry or vulnerabilities for independent media previously shut out? • To what extent do regional economic or political current events have spill-over effects from other countries on the media landscape?
	LOI 4: **Socio-Cultural Power Dynamics**	Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (institutions and individuals), and within and across stakeholder groups. Looks beyond visible power to include hidden and invisible power. Considers the impact of intersectionality and varying degrees of power and privilege, including access to and control over resources and opportunities to hold leadership and decision-making roles.	• What power imbalances exist between media outlets? Which media actors or platforms have access to traditional political and electoral powerholders? • To what extent are there disparities in marginalized groups' trust in and/or access to media? • How do oversight mechanisms and power dynamics between the media and political or government stakeholders influence the independence and objectivity of their reporting? How would you characterize the relationship between government and politicians and the media? • In what ways do hidden power structures within media sectors influence their roles in governance and government transparency and accountability? In what ways do invisible power structures within media sectors influence their roles in governance and government transparency and accountability? • How are current events and government actions impacting the media's ability to report? • How does the media cover issues related to inclusion and marginalized populations?

PEASIL Guiding Questions for Stakeholder Group: Independent and Government Bodies

Lines of Inquiry	Description	Questions
LOI 3: Political Economy Rules of the Game	Formal and informal institutions (rules and norms) that shape the quality of governance and influence actors' behavior and their incentives, relationships, power differentials, and capacity for collective action, and the extent to which public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted.	• What are the formal processes for legislative oversight and judicial review? To what extent are oversight institutions effectively independent (i.e., in practice, do they sanction or act against the interests of the government)? What informal practices or traditions support or undermine institutional oversight, transparency, and accountability? • What kind of mechanisms exist to enable public engagement and public oversight? Who has access to these spaces and mechanisms (in statute and in practice)? To what extent are marginalized groups able to conduct oversight of policy areas relevant to them? • What recent legislative or policy changes, if any, have affected the balance of power and oversight? Who brought these changes, and how have they affected the balance of power and oversight? • How are current political alignments influencing the effectiveness of checks and balances? • To what extent do regional economic or political current events have spill-over effects from other countries on domestic economic policy or government procurement processes?
LOI 4: Socio-Cultural Power Dynamics	Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (institutions and individuals), and within and across stakeholder groups. Looks beyond visible power to include hidden and invisible power. Considers the impact of intersectionality and varying degrees of power and privilege, including access to and control over resources and opportunities to hold leadership and decision-making roles.	• How do power dynamics within and between different branches of government affect the implementation of checks and balances? How do power dynamics within and between government and independent bodies affect the implementation of oversight? • What hidden power structures exist within oversight bodies that may affect their independence and effectiveness? What invisible power structures exist within oversight bodies that may affect their independence and effectiveness? • What citizen and civil society oversight mechanisms exist to promote transparency and accountability? Who has access to engage using these mechanisms? To what extent do some groups have more (or less) access to and influence on institutional processes and policy-making fora than others? • To what extent do some groups have more (or less) access to and ability to engage in institutional oversight? • To what extent do regional economic, political, or socio-cultural current events have spill-over effects from other countries on rights and protections of marginalized groups?

Here and Now (DRG Sector Level of Analysis by Stakeholder Group)

PEASIL Guiding Questions for Stakeholder Group: Transnational Bodies and Coalitions

Lines of Inquiry	Description	Questions
LOI 3: **Political Economy Rules of the Game**	Formal and informal institutions (rules and norms) that shape the quality of governance and influence actors' behavior and their incentives, relationships, power differentials, and capacity for collective action, and the extent to which public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted.	• What are the mechanisms for international oversight and how do they interact with national laws? • How do transnational bodies enforce compliance with international standards? • What informal international networks exist that influence accountability and human rights? • What international treaties, conventions, and other agreements has the country signed on to? To what extent, if at all, is the country making progress toward achievement of those standards? If there are domestic and/or international organizations monitoring the implementation of these agreements, who are the actors involved? • To what extent do regional economic or political current events have spill-over effects from other countries on transnational trade relations or coalitions?
LOI 4: **Socio-Cultural Power Dynamics**	Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (institutions and individuals), and within and across stakeholder groups. Looks beyond visible power to include hidden and invisible power. Considers the impact of intersectionality and varying degrees of power and privilege, including access to and control over resources and opportunities to hold leadership and decision-making roles.	• How do power dynamics within transnational bodies or coalitions influence decision-making and priority-setting? • In what ways do power relations between member states affect the enforcement of accountability measures? • How do hidden power structures within coalitions impact their ability to influence national policies and practices? How do invisible power structures within coalitions impact their ability to influence national policies and practices? • What champions exist to promote transnational bodies' efforts to establish mechanisms and uphold standards? What spoilers exist that have the ability to undermine transnational bodies' efforts to establish mechanisms and uphold standards? • What are the challenges and opportunities for strengthening transnational coalitions to advance human rights in the current context? • To what extent do regional economic, political, or socio-cultural current events have spill-over effects from other countries on transnational public diplomacy?

Here and Now (DRG Sector Level of Analysis by Stakeholder Group)

How to Conduct the PEASIL

Depending on resource availability and anticipated scope of the program, a "standard" PEASIL assessment may not be appropriate; the PEASIL can also be conducted as a "targeted" assessment.

Type of PEASIL	Description
Standard	A PEASIL that includes at least one stakeholder group from each of the three types of political accountability (vertical, diagonal, horizontal) within the framework.
Targeted	Conducting a PEASIL that focuses on only one stakeholder group (e.g., only citizens or only institutions) or one dimension of political accountability (e.g., only vertical accountability or only diagonal accountability).

The key steps of the PEASIL data collection and analysis process are as follows:

Desk Review → Stakeholder and Power Mapping → Key Informant Identification → Data Collection Tool Development → Interviews → Analysis across Lines of Inquiry

The PEASIL Assessment Final Report should follow the below outline:

Section	Description
Purpose	Explain the aim of the exercise and who the target audience will be for the final assessment report.
Methodology	Outline the methods used to conduct the assessment – typically a combination of desk review of existing primary and secondary data/reports and a limited number of KIIs.
Line of Inquiry 1 - 2: Foundational Factors, Structural Factors	Historical factors that influenced how the country was established and cultural norms that developed as a result. Deeply embedded, longer-term national, subnational and international power structures that shape the political system, sector or problem.
Line of Inquiry 3 - 4: Rules of the Game, Power Dynamics	Current formal and informal institutions that shape the quality of governance and how public and private actors behave and interact according to rules that are widely known and accepted. Relationships and power dynamics between key stakeholders (both institutions and individuals), and within and across stakeholder groups.
Analysis	Analysis of the ways in which findings from the different lines of inquiry and across lines of political accountability and stakeholder groups interact: How do they affect each other, and how do they influence/shape prospects for change?
Implications & Recommendations	Discussion about how the assessment findings are expected to influence programming: What are the operational implications of the PEASIL analysis on CEPPS programming and ways of working?

Endnotes

[i] To learn more about political accountability theory, see https://v-dem.net/media/publications/pb_22_final.pdf.

[ii] Programs and activities in which gender and inclusion of marginalized groups or individuals are integrated into all aspects of programming are said to be "mainstreamed." Standalone programs and activities that are specifically designed to focus on gender and inclusion of marginalized groups or individuals are said to be "targeted."

[iii] The CEPPS PEASIL lines of inquiry do not directly parallel the USAID PEA assessment factors. In the PEASIL, we have separated USAID's "foundational factors" into two lines of inquiry (foundational factors as one, structural factors as the other). While the lines of inquiry around foundational and structural factors address the historical context, the lines of inquiry around institutional and socio-cultural rules of the game and individual and organizational power dynamics address current events and present-day circumstances. Accordingly, we have integrated USAID's "here and now" assessment factor into these latter two lines of inquiry.

[iv] For the lines of inquiry designed to capture the historical context, it is important to note that there are often different perspectives or divergent views of history that cannot be easily reconciled, depending on whose account researchers' receive. This can be particularly true when it comes to attributing political and economic successes and failures to particular political leaders, institutions, government officials, or other powerholders. These differing ideas and beliefs often drive behavior, with marginalized communities typically reaping the consequences. For this reason, it is imperative that the assessment team obtain a diversity of local perspectives and interpretations of historical events and factors.

[v] These lines of inquiry incorporate "here and now" questions to assess how current events and circumstances influence the objectives and behavior of key actors and stakeholders, and how they respond to opportunities for and/or impediments to change. Description adapted or borrowed from the "here and now" assessment factor in USAID's Applied PEA Framework.

[vi] CEPPS's GTOC asserts: **IF** *all individuals have access to information pertaining to their rights, equal opportunity to participate in political processes, and the power and space to freely voice and advocate for their interests, AND **IF** political representatives, governing bodies, and oversight institutions have the power, will, and capacity to exercise accountability and deliver services to all, **THEN** the democratic ecosystem will be responsive to the needs and concerns of all individuals in society and resilient to risks and shocks.*

[vii] The socio-ecological model is a theoretical framework that takes a systems approach to explore "the influence of the social context on behavior, including institutional and cultural variables" (Sallis, J. F. & Owen, N. (2002). Ecological models of health behavior. As cited by Kincaid, Figueroa, Storey, and Underwood in "A Socio-Ecological Model of Communication for Social and Behavioral Change: A Brief Summary" (2020), accessed at https://breakthroughactionandresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/socio-ecological-model-of-communication-for-sbc.pdf. The socio-ecological framework explores the dynamic relationships between an individual and their environment at the micro, meso, and macro levels (including relationships; community; institutional, policy, and cultural environment; and the broader social, political, and economic systems).

The Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening

The Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) is comprised of nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organizations dedicated to advancing and supporting democratic practices and institutions around the globe. Established in 1995, CEPPS pools the expertise of three premier international organizations dedicated to democratic development: the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, the International Republican Institute, and the National Democratic Institute.

CEPPS has over 25 years of experience in collaboration and leadership in democracy, human rights and governance support. As a mission-driven, nonprofit democracy organization, we differ from many development actors by maintaining long-term relationships with political parties, election management bodies, parliaments, civil society organizations and democracy activists. CEPPS has experience supporting local partners in more than 140 countries. We have worked with our partners in all aspects of democratic governance, including civic organizations, political parties, elected bodies, and women's organizations. We have also conducted international election observations in more than 40 countries, as well as supported citizen election groups to mobilize millions of citizen observers to monitor elections and referenda.

About the Democratic Elections and Political Processes (DEPP) LWA

The Democratic Elections and Political Processes (DEPP) Leader with Associates Award (LWA) supports the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) goals and objectives, under the "Governing Justly and Democratically" area of the Foreign Assistance Framework. The LWA is administered by USAID's Center for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance, and allows Missions to propose Associate Awards and leverage Leader funding for four types of activities: rapid and flexible response, targeted interventions, pilot programs, and technical leadership research. DEPP builds on more than 25 years of partnership between USAID and CEPPS and supports results-driven interventions which promote inclusive, accountable, representative governance that delivers for all people by pooling the resources of seven premier international organizations dedicated to democratic development:

- Core Partners: The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).
- Senior Technical Partners: The American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI), The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Democracy Arch (D-Arch), and Internews.