



## WHY IT'S IMPORTANT to build Informal Local Governance Institutions into the design, implementation and evaluation of our interventions

We are using “informal local governance institutions” (ILGI) to describe people, groups, processes and spaces that are a part of and play a significant role in local political contexts, but are not imbued with formal, legal, local government authority. ILGIs can have considerable influence over how people interact with governance processes, local governments and donor projects, for example what information they access, how they vote in elections and even to what extent they participate in deliberative forums.

### Examples of ILGIs

The specific characteristics of ILGIs are very context-dependent: they are rooted in different historical and political trajectories and have different levels of influence today. Examples include customary authorities and practices such as village chiefs, gatherings of elders (such as shura in Afghanistan or aksakals in parts of Central Asia), religious authorities, homeland/migrant groups, and informal sub-municipal structures (such as mesni zajedneca in parts of the Western Balkans).

### Common characteristics

- They are state-like to the extent that they enjoy general local territorial authority and deliver services.
- They stand in ambiguous, variable and contested relationships to the formal state apparatus.
- Intermediation between ‘their’ populations and the external world constitutes a significant part of their activities.

For more on what ILGIs are and how we can define them, please refer to the Literature Review (Mohmand 2015) developed together with this Framework.

## HOW TO USE the “Framework for Analysing Informal Local Governance Institutions”

### Who is this for?

Designed for use by SDC and partners. In most cases, it is advisable to associate local researchers or experts who have in-depth knowledge of how ILGIs function in practice as this can provide an additional complementary perspective.

### What does it do?

Structure a process that generates awareness and understanding about the role and influence of ILGIs in local governance. It is designed to complement existing SDC analytical tools, particularly those related to political economy analysis and can be used as a diagnostic aid throughout the PCM cycle. Please note, however, that the framework does not, and cannot, define or prescribe what next steps should be taken based on its analysis.

### How does it work?

While the framework is designed to be relatively generalizable, its use will be most effective if a precise operational question or problem is identified.

- **Practice-oriented research:** if SDC and partners *do not* have comprehensive experience working with ILGIs, it may be useful to start with research. This can include literature review, interviews and other data collection techniques.
- **Reflection workshop with a small group of stakeholders:** If SDC and partners already have knowledge and experience related to ILGIs, then a workshop may be useful to gather and synthesise the knowledge and discuss operational implications. In the latter case, it may still be useful to invite local experts. Covering all elements of this framework, the workshop will take 1.5–2 days. Alternatively, a selection could be made of the elements that are considered particularly relevant for a certain context.

Download the Framework for Understanding and Analysing Informal Local Governance Institutions and related case studies from: [www.shareweb.ch/site/DDLGN](http://www.shareweb.ch/site/DDLGN)

Photo credits: Macedonian Orthodox priest, Marjan Lazarevski; Elders from the town of Buur-Hakba in Somalia. Albany Associates, Homeland association in Mongolia, L. Elbegzaya; Rajkala Devi, the first woman sarpanch (village head) of her village in Alwar district of Rajasthan, India; UN Women/Ashutosh Negi; Local elders speak with U.S. Navy SEALs and their Afghan Partner Forces at a shura held in Gawrgin in Afghanistan, Staff Sgt. Kaily Brown, ResoluteSupportMedia; Female village chief, Shamiani Island in Tanzania, Frans Peeters.

