

## Annex II

### The WLA-CdM Methodology

#### 1. Introduction

Democracy is a process; the task of building and governing inclusive, democratic societies is a never-ending challenge. Despite positive and encouraging news in some parts of the world, the current state of the world shows unexpected setbacks in the quality of democracy, even in countries that were considered strong prosperous democracies not long ago.

The World Leadership Alliance - Club de Madrid (WLA-CdM) aims to support democracies that deliver, prevent democratic decay and consolidate emerging democracies by targeting key triggers and drivers: leadership, inclusiveness and consensus-building. As such, WLA-CdM responds to a growing demand for democratic support, by providing the experience, access and convening power of its Members at the core of all initiatives.

The world does not fall short of recommendations to decision-makers; donors, consultancy firms, NGOs and academia all offer excellent advice and resources. However, the path to actual implementation often depends on whether decision-makers are able and willing to prioritise change. **Former leaders** are in a unique position to understand policymakers aiming to master the complex processes that lead to change. Free from the constraints of office, they are not bound by the interests or pressures of any institution or governments and may more openly share their experience with the leaders of today.

#### 2. How do we work?

Since the founding of WLA-CdM in 2002, our methodology has evolved, informed by the experience of project implementation and the ambition to continuously refine its added value.

##### *2.1 Modes of engagement*

The cross-cutting rationale of our working method is to count on Member engagement at the core of all initiatives. Moreover, all interventions of WLA-CdM will combine two or more of the modes of engagement below in order to ensure maximum impact and sustainability.

#### 1. Peer-to-Peer Advocacy

Political leaders around the world rely on their own resources – their political abilities, their networks and their creativity – to meet the challenges of democracy, governance and inclusion. External advice is an option that most of leaders want in their toolbox:

they appreciate information on best practices, examples of success and failures from other countries in similar situations, and strategic advice from trusted and experienced ‘peers’ who can assess the situation from a distance. Too often, however, external advice comes with strings attached. Most intergovernmental institutions, like-minded countries or corporate leaders in their networks have their own political agendas and are often regarded with suspicion by national actors. Impartial, external counsel is not readily found. While in office, WLA – CdM Members sought the development, adoption and implementation of policies that strengthened democracy, governance and inclusion. Now, their advice can help current leaders meet similar challenges. Peer-to-peer initiatives can take many forms depending on the circumstances. WLA-CdM Members have engaged as individuals or in task forces of several Members representing a variety of experience in specific project missions or in a series of missions depending on the needs and project characteristics.

## **2. Building bridges**

Members possess convening power to facilitate and negotiate consensus-building among a divided group of stakeholders, including the government, political parties, factions or civil society organisations. Oftentimes, members lead policy dialogues at the national level involving regional partners who have identified critical needs that can be addressed through the experience of a Member, as described below.

## **3. Loudspeakers for democratic ideas**

WLA - CdM Members have a voice that current leaders listen to and can act as sounding boards to explore innovative ideas. This puts them in a privileged position to convey messages that may otherwise receive scarce attention, to open spaces for civil society representatives to discuss policy matters with decision-makers, and to provide visibility to policy issues that otherwise would go unnoticed.

## **4. Mentoring of emerging leaders**

Members have a story to tell about their way to influence, how they overcame challenges and stayed on track. Given the range of experience that its membership provides, WLA - CdM is in a good position **to match mentors and with the needs of mentees** and ensure identification and impact in one-on-one or group interaction. In this sense, Members have engaged in intergenerational dialogue with youth leaders in several projects and initiatives.

## **5. Agenda-setting: Convening annual policy dialogues**

Once a year, WLA-CdM hosts an annual policy dialogue convening Members and state-of-the-art experts and influencers on a given topic. The overall objective is to stimulate new thinking in response to emerging opportunities and challenges relevant for the future of democracy. These policy dialogues offer a platform for discussing the most effective policy response to support stronger democracies and the outcome of the dialogues are applied in global advocacy and other initiatives for maximum impact.

## **6. Global advocacy and partnerships**

WLA-CdM Members have expertise and experience that are relevant to many ongoing global processes. Several of our projects have created opportunities for Members to advocate for democratic values and/or promote specific policy solutions coming from our projects or drawing on their expertise at various relevant global and regional fora.

### ***2.2 With whom do we work?***

- All our projects and initiatives, regardless of the mode of engagement, put our Members' experience at the core of their value-added;
- We have a formal body of advisors from all walks of life (but mostly academics and practitioners) whose expertise and experience complement that of our Members when needed;
- At a global level, we partner with like-minded international organizations and public authorities;
- At country level, we partner with governmental, intergovernmental or civil society actors, whose knowledge of the national context in the political context complement our Members' expertise. The Secretariat's role in identifying and forming those partnerships is crucial;
- We are a member of the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD), which allows us to collaborate and draw on best practices from many other organizations in the design and implementation of our projects.

### 3. *When and where is advice needed?*

There are a number of situations where WLA-CdM's work takes on a particularly relevance.

- In **democratic transitions** – the period immediately following the end or removal of a non-democratic regime but preceding the consolidation of democracy as the preferred system of government for all – political situations are often delicate and fast moving. Political leaders face the daunting task of bringing together divided and often polarized political factions, addressing demands for transitional justice and putting in place policy structures to ensure that the nascent democracy will deliver concrete and expected results for its citizens.
- WLA-CdM also brings vital aid to **post-conflict situations**. Whether national or transnational, violent conflicts leave citizens as divided, as they are devastated. Peace agreements generally involve political concessions from all sides, with the risk that some segments of the population may remain dissatisfied. After investing their political capital in conflict resolution, political leaders must ensure national reconciliation, address demands for transitional justice and put in place inclusive policies to ensure that all citizens benefit from post-conflict reconstruction efforts.
- There are other situations where peer advice can make a valuable contribution to less urgent but equally important political processes. Processes of **constitutional reform** or **socio-economic policy reform**, for example, may have profound implications for the social contract between citizens and the state. Political leaders who undertake such reforms may value external advice to negotiate the content of the reforms with various political and social groups, build consensus and ensure citizen buy-in.
- Peer advice can also help political leaders in situations requiring active **conflict prevention**. Enduring political or socio-economic exclusion, violent extremism or crime-related violence, for instance, may put political stability at risk and require political leaders to formulate policy responses that ensure the security of citizens while addressing the underlying causes of conflict.

External advice may also be helpful in situations where **latent factors** – such as disinformation - are threatening democracy, governance and inclusion unbeknownst to political leaders, or in ways not fully addressed by existing legal frameworks nor fully understood by political actors and citizens.

Most WLA – CdM Members, particularly those from transitional democracies, have faced one or several of these situations in their home country. They dedicated their time in office to the development, adoption and implementation of policies that strengthened democracy, governance and inclusion. Now, their advice can help current leaders meet these challenges.