

Institution: University of Essex
Unit of Assessment: 21 – Politics and International Studies
Title of case study: Measuring human rights performance and assessing the quality of democracy
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Essex research on developing quantitative indicators for assessing countries' performance on human rights and democracy has informed the work of a number of international organisations. Professor Todd Landman's research has been used by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in its provision of assessment frameworks and by the UN Development Programme in its work on democratic governance and sustainable development. Landman's research on democracy underpins the main resources employed by the inter-governmental organisation, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), based in Sweden. These resources have been translated into four languages and are used to assess the quality of democracy throughout the world. He also provides training for International IDEA's 150 members of staff on the measurement and assessment of democratic performance.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Since joining Essex in 1993 as part of an ESRC project on citizenship rights and social movements, Landman has developed a research programme focused on measuring and assessing human rights and democracy. He has subsequently held the positions of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor of Government.</p> <p>Landman's work initially concentrated on so-called 'standards-based' measures of democracy and human rights, but he soon developed an interest in events-based and survey-based measures, as well as the use of socio-economic and administrative statistics (the full statement of which appears in Landman and Carvalho, 2009). His work shows that triangulating sources of data on government performance with respect to democracy and human rights is critical for sustaining empirical inferences and for providing high-quality evidence-based policy inputs of the kind increasingly demanded by inter-governmental and governmental agencies. His human rights research developed an original way to code a country's treaty ratification that takes into account both its ratification of the treaty and the form of reservations it files at time of ratification. This coding scheme more accurately reflects <i>de jure</i> country commitment to human rights and has been used to analyse the relationship between the international law of human rights and the actual protection of human rights across the world (see Landman, 2005a).</p> <p>Landman's subsequent research in the field of human rights has developed a combined factor score of human rights protection that was published in <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> (Landman and Larizza, 2009). He has researched means of reflecting country-level human rights performance in ways appropriate for empirical studies and policy inputs. This continued work on refining human rights measurement features in his 2012 article in <i>The Journal of Human Rights</i>, which 'relativises' human rights performance by taking into account underlying social, economic and political conditions and ranking countries in absolute and relative performance. He was awarded an ESRC grant for £99,944 to construct a human rights atlas, which was launched on 3 December 2012 and provides a user-friendly web interface for visualising human rights and other country performance data (see www.humanrightsatlas.org). He is currently embarking on a project with Professor Tom Scotto at Essex that combines survey data and experimental data on how human rights problems are framed and perceived in an effort to enhance existing measures of human rights performance.</p> <p>Landman's research has been of interest to policy makers and practitioners in the fields of development assistance, democracy support, and the monitoring and implementation of human rights – as detailed in Section 4.</p>

3. References to the research

Landman, T. and J. Häusermann (2003) Map-making and analysis of the main international initiatives on developing indicators on democracy and good governance. University of Essex – Human Rights Centre, Eurostat Contract No. 200221200005: Final Report. <http://www.oecd.org/development/governance-development/20755719.pdf>

Landman, T. (2004) Measuring human rights: Principle, practice, and policy. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 26: 906-31. DOI: 10.1353/hrq.2004.0049

Landman, T. (2005a) *Protecting human rights: A comparative study*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press. ISBN 1589010639

Landman, T. (2005b) The political science of human rights. *British Journal of Political Science*, 33: 549-72. DOI: 10.1017/S0007123405000293

Landman, T. and E. Carvalho (2009) *Measuring human rights*, London: Routledge. ISBN 0415446503

Landman, T. and M. Larizza (2009) Inequality and human rights: Who controls what when and how. *International Studies Quarterly*, 53: 715-36. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-2478.2009.00553.x

Landman, T., D. Kernohan and A. Gohdes (2012) Relativizing human rights. *Journal of Human Rights*, 11: 460-485. DOI:10.1080/14754835.2012.730917

Research funding

Grants awarded to Todd Landman:

Mapping the initiatives to measure democracy, good governance, and human rights. Eurostat, 01.12.01 to 31.05.03, €85,027.

Mongolia state of democracy project. United Nations Development Programme, 01.08.05 to 31.07.06, £32,456.

Human Rights Atlas. ESRC (ES/J000728/1), 01.10.11 to 30.09.12, £99,944.

4. Details of the impact

Landman's research insights have been employed in various international contexts. He has informed the United Nations' work on measuring human rights performance, provided resources and training on democracy assessment for International IDEA, and been directly involved with projects assessing the quality of democracy in Mongolia and Ukraine.

Informing the work of the United Nations

Landman's work on measuring human rights performance has fed into international efforts spearheaded by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide assessment frameworks for state party reporting to UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies. Landman's background papers and participation in a series of high-level meetings in Geneva has fed directly into UN documentation [see corroborating sources 1 and 2]. These documents include references to Landman and Häusermann (2003) and Landman and Carvalho (2010). He worked on additional commissions with the UK Department for International Development and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) on assessing human rights [corroborating source 3], as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Minority Rights Group International, and the International Centre for Transitional Justice on human rights impact assessment and information systems management.

In October 2011 Landman was a keynote speaker in the parallel session of the UNDP's Oslo Governance Forum on mainstreaming human rights measures into nationally-based governance assessments [4]. In September 2012 he gave a keynote speech on the prospects for EU democracy promotion in the Arab Spring countries at the Representation of Rhine-Westphalia in Brussels, organised by the German Development Institute [5]. On these occasions, Landman was delivering core commentary and analysis for leading global and European policy makers: the UNDP event attracted 270 delegates from around the world; the Arab Spring event attracted 130 delegates working on issues relating to EU democracy promotion in Brussels. The UNDP appearance led to further briefings in the New York office and a commissioned study (£25,000) on the relationship between democratic governance and sustainable human development (2012-2013) [6].

Providing resources and training for International IDEA

Landman's work on democracy attracted the attention of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), a 28-member inter-governmental organisation based in Sweden. Between 2004 and 2009 he worked on a variety of democracy assessment projects, which culminated in the 2008 publication of *Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide* (a significantly revised version of the original *Handbook of Democracy Assessment*) and *Assessing the Quality of Democracy: An Overview of the International IDEA Framework* [7]. These documents, of which Landman was the lead author, are resources for assessing the quality of democracy in any country and are used by teams throughout the world [8]. The 'State of Democracy' programme at International IDEA is one of the main pillars of its activities and the Landman's *Practical Guide* and *Overview* serve as the main methods of application in the field. The Director of Global Programmes at International IDEA has stated that this work "continues to be a resource for teams in different parts of the world who want to assess the quality of their democracies" [8]. International IDEA has now translated these publications into Spanish, French, and Arabic (as well as a Thai version of the *Practical Guide*, produced by one of International IDEA's partners), and the most recent applications of them have been in Zambia, Chile and Ukraine [8].

Landman has been commissioned to provide training for IDEA's 150 staff for the period 2012-2014 (April and November annually) on issues relating to the measurement and assessment of democratic performance, as well as to provide an overview of the assessment framework. The Director of Global Programmes at IDEA writes:

"Not only has Dr Landman contributed to the content of the Institute's induction programme for new staff, but he also periodically lectures on democracy, democracy measurement and assessment to new staff at International IDEA. As a result of this contribution, more and more International IDEA regional programmes are prioritising democracy assessment in their work... Given his deep knowledge and experience of democracy assessment in general and the state of democracy assessment and approach in particular, Dr Landman remains an important resource for many assessment teams applying International IDEA's state of democracy assessment framework. This has made him the main intellectual partner for International IDEA's democracy assessment work" [8].

Assessing the quality of democracy in Mongolia and Ukraine

Landman's most notable direct involvements in democracy assessment have taken place in Mongolia and Ukraine. In Mongolia he assisted a local team of academics to develop a series of democratic governance indicators. One of the main outcomes of the assessment in Mongolia was the formal passage of a 9th Millennium Development Goal on democracy, human rights and zero tolerance of corruption in 2006. Mongolians now produce bi-annual assessments using the framework developed with Landman's assistance and input [9]. The 2009 'Millennium Development Goal-9 Indicators and the State of Democracy in Mongolia' report makes direct reference to assistance from the University of Essex and Landman's research [10].

In Ukraine, Landman is part of an international team of experts funded by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy assisting People First!—a Kiev-based NGO—to assess the quality of democracy in Ukraine and develop a Citizen’s Charter for Democracy. He participated in the first training workshop in November 2012 and continues to be engaged in the project throughout 2013 [11].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

All documents are available from HEI on request.

[1] UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2009) Methodological issues of qualitative and quantitative tools for measures compliance with the right to development; A/HRC/12/WG.2/TF/CRP.7/Add.1: 18 June 2009. See pp.19-20.

www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/development/right/docs/A.HRC.12.WG.2.TF.CRP.7.Add.1.pdf

[2] UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2012) Human rights indicators: A guide to measurement and implementation. See p. 51, note 7; p. 68, note 46.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Indicators/Pages/HRIndicatorsIndex.aspx>

[3] Berne Declaration, Canadian Council for International Co-operation and Misereor (2010) Human rights impact assessment for trade and investment agreements. Report of the Expert Seminar, June 23-24, 2010, Geneva, Switzerland. See p. 39, notes 13 and 18.

http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/food/docs/report_hria-seminar_2010.pdf

[4] Oslo Governance Forum – list of speakers, with slides:

http://www.oslogovernanceforum.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=210&Itemid=236

[5] Keynote speech on the prospects for EU democracy promotion in the Arab Spring countries at the Representation of Rhine-Westphalia in Brussels:

[http://www.die-gdi.de/CMS-Homepage/openwebcms3_e.nsf/\(ynDK_contentByKey\)/MRUR-8VFE43](http://www.die-gdi.de/CMS-Homepage/openwebcms3_e.nsf/(ynDK_contentByKey)/MRUR-8VFE43)

[6] Landman, T., A. Quiroz-Flores and D. Farquhar (2012) *Democratic governance and sustainable human development*. New York and Oslo: United Nations Development Programme.

[7] Beetham, D., E. Carvalho, T. Landman and S. Weir (eds.) (2008) *Assessing the quality of democracy: A practical guide*. Stockholm: International IDEA.

<http://www.idea.int/publications/aqd/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=28399>

Landman, T. (ed.) (2008) *Assessing the quality of democracy: An overview of the International IDEA Framework*. Stockholm: International IDEA.

[8] Director of Global Programmes, International IDEA.

[9] Details of project to support Mongolia in meeting 9th Millennium Development Goal:

<http://gaportal.org/undp-supported/mongolia>

[10] Institute of Philosophy, Sociology, and Law of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences & United Nations Development Program (2009) Millennium Development Goal-9 Indicators and the State of Democracy in Mongolia. See especially pp. 17, 19, 24.

http://gaportal.org/sites/default/files/mdg9_report_mongolia10.pdf

[11] Details of training workshop for People First!:

<https://peoplefirst.org.ua/en/about-foundation/news-and-events/state-of-democracy-assessment-in-ukraine>