



**National Report on Grenada's Compliance  
with Summit of the Americas Mandates  
towards Strengthening Democratic  
Governance**



**Canadian International  
Development Agency**

**Agence canadienne de  
développement international**



## I. Executive Summary

Grenada's compliance with the mandates approved in the Summit of the Americas geared towards strengthening democratic governance is mixed. Detailed examination of performance in the four thematic areas namely decentralization and local government, access to public information, freedom of expression and strengthening of the participation of civil society indicates a scorecard of successes and failures.

This mixed performance is clearly supported by the evaluation of the Government Compliance Index (EGCI) score of 0.14. Evaluation of the specific dimensions reveals various indices namely; participation of Civil Society 0.17, Freedom of Expression 0.04, Decentralization 0.22, Access to Information 0.14 and Gender 0.23. With respect to the composite index of the EGCI, Grenada ranks at nine relative to the twenty one countries evaluated.

There have been observable activities pursued by government targeted at strengthening democratic practices and autonomous decision making. For example these include reform measures in the areas of national budget preparation and the introduction of new legislation and governance practices. Relative to the budgetary process, structured consultations with stakeholders were widely pursued however, many concerns were cited about the extent to which recommendations were incorporated in Government's plans.

Government also introduced key legislation such as the Ombudsman Bill to provide for public redress, the Integrity in Public Office Bill to allow for disclosure of assets and revised Audit and the Procurement and Financial Management Acts to improve effectiveness and accountability. While this is clearly positive and indicative of apparent intent, the impact was negligible. This was due to the fact that there was no provision for resource and institutional support necessary for implementation.

Similarly, the introduction of a structured forum for dialogue with civil society and government was applauded as timely, strategic and instructive. However, this has not borne fruit due to the lack of trust and confidence in the process occasioned by government's inconsistency. Here government's actions were inconsistent with stated policy.

In the area of access to public information, relevant legislation has failed to progress beyond the draft stage. At the same time the public has witnessed repeated refusal by the government to provide entitled information to the parliament on request by the opposition. While this posture is adopted in parliament, many broadcast licences have been issued leading to the operation of many radio and TV stations. These allow for vibrant subscription to various talk shows and the free expression of views.

Many challenges remain in the area of freedom of expression. In the absence of relevant legislation, the media has been expressing tremendous concerns. They have been subjected to a barrage of legal actions by sitting politicians and other officials and subjected to intense pressure to facilitate government's public relations agenda. The relationship between civil society and the government remains strained primarily due to government's pernicious signals and actions.

There have been some notable successes in the area of gender empowerment. The involvement and visibility of women at the senior levels of governance is positive. Currently women constitute 38% of Parliamentarians and 80% of Permanent Secretaries the senior management team of the public service. Further, women are currently playing the lead role in new economic activities aimed at revitalizing the rural economy of Grenada.

Given the mixed performance of compliance, a number of actions need to be pursued in order to overcome identified deficits and to strengthen successes. Of crosscutting importance is the need to build trust and establish integrity among all parties as the basis for meaningful engagement and strengthening citizens' participation. Government need to establish clear policies, demonstrate consistent actions and political commitment and will towards deepening the democratic process. A clear demonstration of this will be the adequate provision of necessary resources and institutional support for the speedy implementation of appropriate legislation.

These actions are critical if Grenada is to make comparable progress relative to other evaluated countries in the region. This relative ranking is shown in Annex 3

## II. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this National Report is to present the results of the follow-up performed on Grenada regarding the putting into practice of the Summits of the Americas mandates during the period from 2006-2008, related to four central issues for the strengthening of democracy. These four issues are: access to public information, freedom of expression, local governments and decentralization and strengthening civil society participation.

As such, it seeks to specify the progress and the setbacks in this area in order to formulate a series of recommendations that could contribute to strengthen its implementation, especially related to the joint-work that can be done in advance regarding the alliances between civil society organizations and governments.

To achieve this, the results from Grenada are presented in the context of the Evaluation of Government Compliance Index (EGCI), as well as an analysis of this index in the domestic sphere. Based on the results and in looking towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas, to be held in April of 2009 in Trinidad and Tobago, a series of recommendations is presented that seeks to contribute to the strengthening of both civil society participation and the fulfillment of the summits mandates in the issues subject to monitoring.

*Project of follow-up on the Summits of the Americas and formation of the Active Democracy Network (1997-2008)*

Since 1997, work has been in progress on the **Citizens' Participation for the Summits of the Americas** Project, which has gone through a number of phases during the last 11 years. The wide variety of activities carried out has allowed for the formation of a continental network of civil society organizations, which in 2007 took the name of the Active Democracy Network. This network has participated in the monitoring of the mandates of the Americas Summits, which is

one of the most important achievements of the project. The work of the Network may be considered as one of the factors that have enabled this initiative to increase the number of participating countries in the Americas, which has presently reached a total of 22.

In its early stages, the Project, under the leadership of the Participa Corporation of Chile, was directed towards the promotion of the participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the preparation of proposals for the Second Summit of the Americas, which was held in Santiago, Chile in 1998.

In its second phase, now led by the Participa Corporation, the Esquel Group of the United States and the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), a set of activities . both on national and continental levels . were developed with the aim of promoting the participation of the organizations and social networks in the Summits process. In this connection, a series of consultations was first carried out with the CSOs in order to formulate proposals for the Third Summit of the Americas held in Quebec in April, 2001.

This cycle of consultations was centered on the themes of the strengthening of democracy, the creation of prosperity as well as the realization of human potential. It was developed in 18 countries: Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, as well as in Uruguay. The result of this was the formulation of 243 proposals which received the consensus of 900 CSOs and were presented to the governments within the framework of the Quebec Summit. More than half of those recommendations were included in the summit's Plan of Action.

Subsequently, an evaluation of this process was made and it was decided to develop a monitoring initiative regarding the degree of compliance on the part of the governments of certain mandates included in the Quebec Plan of Action

related to democratic governance. To this end, a methodology was devised which enabled the Project to extend its coverage to 21 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

This stage, known as the %Civil Society Follow-Up Strategy for the Implementation of the Quebec Plan of Action+, was carried out between July 2002 and March 2005. It was coordinated by Participa, FOCAL, the network Coordinator for Economic and Social Research (CRIES), the University of the Andes of Colombia and the Inter-American Network for Democracy (RID). The central objective was to monitor and promote compliance with the Quebec Action Plan on the thematic axis of strengthening democracy, by means of the improvement and broadening of citizen participation. The participating organizations designed and applied continental, sub-regional and national mechanisms of outreach and dissemination.

For that stage, the Network decided to monitor the mandates related to:

- Access to public information.
- Freedom of expression.
- Local governments and decentralization.
- Strengthening of civil society participation.
- Judicial reforms and access to justice.

The results of this first exercise produced a series of National Reports in each of the 21 countries regarding the degree of implementation of the mandates of this Third Summit. Also, the Network presented a set of proposals in order to contribute to the improvement of the way governments comply with these mandates, in order to support the strengthening of democratic governance in the countries of the region. These results were included in the **Hemispheric Report**

2005<sup>1</sup>, which was brought to public attention at both the Monterrey Special Summit as well as the Fourth Summit of the Americas at Mar del Plata.

Also during this phase, a strategy for advocacy and dissemination was developed, both at national and continental levels. To this end, the website [www.sociedadcivil.net](http://www.sociedadcivil.net) was created and various activities were carried out in the 21 countries.

Once this stage was completed, a process of internal assessment and formulation of the next steps was initiated. The evaluation concluded that the Project had made an impact both at national as well as at regional and continental levels with regard to:

- Dissemination of the process of the Summits of the Americas in 21 countries of the Caribbean, Central America, Andes and the Southern Cone.
- Definition of the base lines in 21 countries regarding the situation of the themes being monitored (achievements and challenges).
- Broadening and strengthening, in some countries, of the dialogue between government and civil society regarding the deepening of CSOs participation on national, regional and continental levels.
- Dissemination and advocacy strategies in various forums of the Inter-American System, such as the activities related to the Summits of the Americas process as well as to the OAS General Assemblies.
- Broadening and strengthening of alliances with other networks and CSOs.

A new phase began in May 2007, coordinated by Corporacion Participa, Focal and the Venezuelan Institute of Social and Political Studies (INVESP, for its

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<sup>1</sup> Dicho informe se encuentra disponible en el portal [www.sociedadcivil.net](http://www.sociedadcivil.net), también [www.democraciaactiva.net](http://www.democraciaactiva.net).

Spanish acronym). This stage's general objective is the development of a series of activities during the 2007-2010 period with a view to strengthening the CSOs' participation in the Inter-American processes and, more specifically, with its presence at the V Summit of the Americas to be held in Trinidad and Tobago in April of 2009. This stage will focus on three central objectives:

- The need to **consolidate and broaden the Active Democracy Network** of civil society organizations.
- The importance of **emphasizing and supporting fulfillment of the mandates** related to the strengthening of democracy in the region.
- The establishment of **alliances between CSOs and governments** in order to implement the mandates of the Summits of the Americas.

In connection with these challenges, the II Stage of this project has developed three strategies between 2007 and 2008:

#### Strategy 1: Evaluation of compliance with the commitments

It will be carried out in 22 countries: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, the United States, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela. Its goal will be to monitor the commitments of the Summits of the Americas in four themes:

- Decentralization and local governments.
- Access to public information.
- Freedom of expression.
- Strengthening of civil society participation.

On the basis of the application in the different countries of the methodology for the creation of the Evaluation of Government Compliance Index (EGCI), each country produced national reports that include practical and specific recommendations, directed to the governments so that they can improve the implementation of the mandates of the Summits of the Americas. In addition, the Hemispheric Report (2006-2008) for the project was created based on these reports and the EGCI.

### Strategy 2: National Government-Civil Society Alliances

With the intention of improving the implementation of the mandates and given that work in alliance is vital for this, efforts are being made so that in 8 of the 22 countries national alliances would be created between SCOs and their respective governments. As such, we have favored the establishment of a joint-working agenda, based on concrete actions that contribute to the implementation of the commitments acquired in the process of the Summits of the Americas in the four thematic areas contemplated by the project.

### Strategy 3: Advocacy and dissemination

This is carried out in the 22 countries and will seek to present national and regional public opinion with the achievements of the monitoring of the process of the Americas Summits in the themes related to democratic governance and the broadening of citizen participation. It is intended to influence the improvement of the quality of dialogues that take place in the forums, which have been institutionalized in the OAS and in the process of the Summits for civil society participation.

## *The Evaluation of Government Compliance Index and the gender perspective*

### The EGCI

During this stage of the project, it was decided to develop a monitoring methodology, which consisted of the creation of this index (EGCI). With this new methodology we aimed to capture the specific aspects of each country in the best way possible, and aspired to improve the comparison between the results obtained for each country.

Based on this, this **quantifying** tool was put into practice so that the Active Democracy Network could summarize the evaluation that the SCO representatives and experts made of the degree of compliance of their respective governments with the mandates of the Summits of the Americas regarding the four issues for follow-up from 2006-2008.

The EGCI is an evaluation of the opinions of members of civil society organizations as well as experts on the four issues, regarding the progress or setbacks by the governments as far as the degree of the implementation of the mandates enacted at the Summits of the Americas, relating to the 4 issues subject to the follow-up. The governments themselves informed these groups about the activities that have been carried out, and based on this information the panels of evaluators emitted their opinions. It is an *ad-hoc* Index regarding these general, permanent mandates in that the action plans from the Summits of the Americas, as well as other inter-American mandates, have a very high degree of generality and fix few concrete or specific tasks oriented towards reaching goals in a determined period of time.

Thus, this approach has had the purpose of strengthening the Active Democracy Network in its appeal to governments to initiate processes and/or actions that look to progress on the implementation of the commitments contained in these

general, permanent mandates. This has been done through the three previously mentioned axes of the project: the creation of the EGCI in 22 countries, the establishment of National Alliances in 8 countries, as well as the strategy of dissemination and outreach developed around this initiative's activities.

The EGCI does not aim to put a value on the final results; rather it evaluates to what degree the actions taken . or not taken- by each government in question show evidence of advancement towards those final objectives. In this way, with a fixed goal in mind (for example, full recognition of freedom of expression) the EIGC measures how active each government has been in carrying out policies which allow the country to move in that direction and avoiding others which go against the principles or goals expressed in that mandate. The EIGC will thereby be a channel of expression for CSOs that participate in the process, since they can express themselves by valuing or criticizing what has, or has not been done by governments.

The EGCI was created based on the opinion of a Panel of Evaluation in each of the 22 countries, made up of experts on the thematic issues and interested SCO representatives, or those who have been affected by one of the thematic issues. This panel evaluated the degree of progress in the national governments on the fulfillment of the commitments assumed in the Summits of the Americas.

The results of the EGCI allow for each country to be able to:

- Have a single number that summarizes the value assigned by the Evaluation Panel regarding activities and policies carried out during a period of time by governments in connection with the implementation of the mandates in the 4 selected themes.
- Analyze inside each country the degree to which experts in each of the thematic areas and the CSOs which are interested in and/or have been affected by one of the thematic areas, perceived that the government has

complied with agreements signed, comparing their perception among the different thematic areas under scrutiny by the monitoring process.

- Contrast the reports supplied by governments to the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), on the degree of advancement and compliance of the mandates established at the Summits, with the evaluation made by civil society through the EIGC. This is possible, since the evaluation documents presented by the governments themselves regarding how they value their compliance with the agreements of the Quebec Plan of Action<sup>2</sup>. After reviewing some of these documents it becomes clear that they deserve an external revision as a critical counterbalance to each government's self-evaluation.
- Compare the performance of each government with the rest of the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean. The force of comparative arguments contributes to highlighting the importance of national debates (any country has a better or worse evaluation than the rest+). Both domestic and international experience of what has been called *social reporting*<sup>3</sup> endorses the power of these comparisons as a way of drawing attention and stimulating debate on insightful themes.

### The Gender Perspective

This stage of the follow-up strategy also supposed a new challenge: the incorporation of the gender perspective in the analysis. In this sense, the **gender perspective** sustains that, *the power relations that involve class, race, ethnicity, age and geographic location interact with gender and produce complex and hidden inequalities*<sup>4</sup> through which women and other sexual identities hold a position that is subordinated to men. Thus, the gender perspective demanded that the project include criteria for gender equity that emerged from the

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.summit-americas.org](http://www.summit-americas.org).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, the UNDP Reports on Human Development or the ECLAC Social Panorama.

<sup>4</sup> GEM, **Methodology of evaluation with gender perspective**, Mexico, 2005, pg. 22

definitions and mandates of the Summits, especially those of Quebec and Mar del Plata, as well as the inter-American framework of norms and standards on the human rights of women.

How was the gender perspective incorporated into the EGCI? Regarding the National Coordinators, two fundamental strategies were developed. First of all, people with experience working on the gender perspective were included on the working teams. Secondly, the *parity clause* and the *guarantee of inclusion* of expert people and organizations on gender issues were included in the Panel of Evaluation.

Based on this, **gender expertise** was guaranteed by the connection of the participants on the national working teams related with training in gender studies and work experience in the implementation of this analysis. The **guarantee of inclusion of expert people and organizations on gender issues** was sanctioned through gender equity in the formation of the Panels of Evaluation. Regarding the **parity clause**, this was also taken under consideration in as much as the incorporation of the gender perspective into this kind of methodology was taken into account.

This initiative would not have been possible without the support of the Canadian Agency for International Development (ACDI, for its Spanish acronym). We wish to express our special recognition of Racquel Smith.

Also, on the Grenada national team, we would like to express our gratitude for the contributions of Mr. Aaron Moses, Dr. Spencer Thomas, Mrs. Judy Williams, Ms Lisa Taylor, Mrs. Sally-Ann Bagwhan-Logie

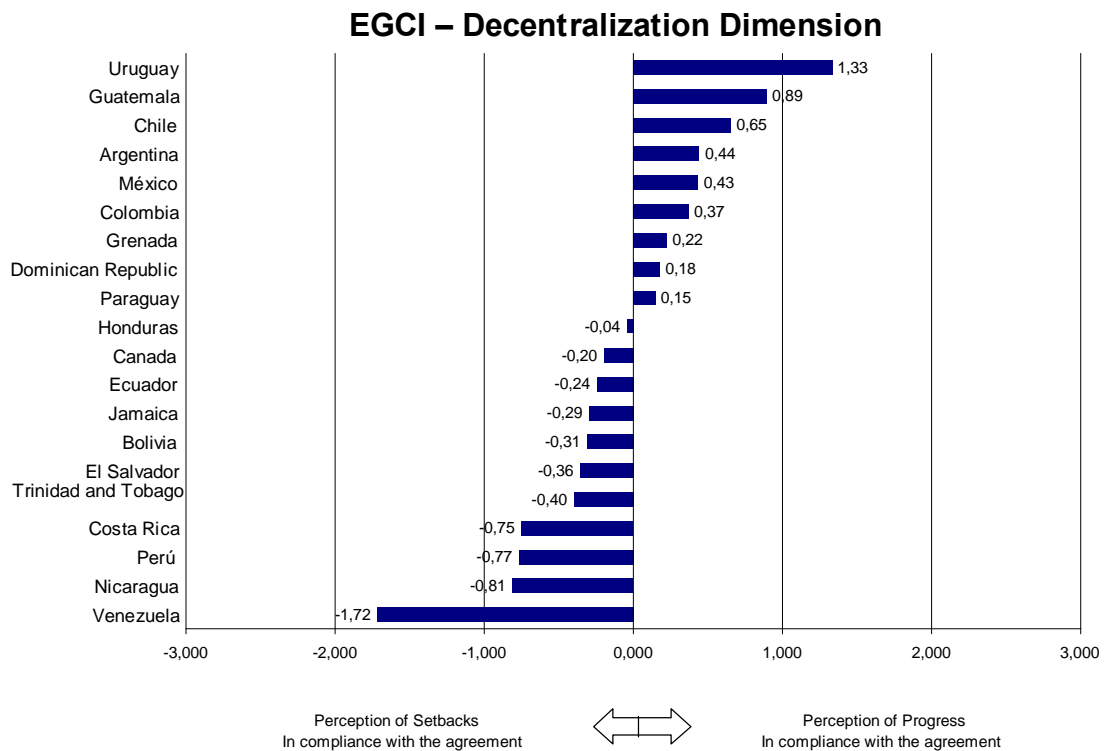
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### III. Fulfillment of mandates on a national level

#### A. Decentralization of Local Governments:

Grenada's score card on compliance with the mandates is mixed with success and failures in each category. This is supported by the EGCI index shown in Graph 1. In the area of decentralization, the score of 0.23 indicates marginal progress.

**Graph 1**



With respect to strengthening of regional and local democracy, there are many observable activities geared to promote democracy and autonomy in decision making. The Government has introduced several reform measures in the areas of budget, legislation and governance.

### ***Budgetary Reforms***

The Government has pursued a wide ranging process of consultations including all stakeholders during the elaboration of the budget. This wide ranging consultation process is welcomed by the vast majority of the citizenry. Despite this, the government has sought to reduce the debate time in the Lower House of Parliament. It posits that the debate in parliament has become a highly charged political affair which does not add value to the proceedings. Many argue that ensuring the enforcement of rules and procedures was the obvious choice rather than restricting the debate in the Parliament. The fallout of the restriction was the widely held perception that the action was undemocratic. Further there has been reduced media coverage of parliament proceedings. This is due to high transmission costs and the absence of regulatory mandates to ensure that national events are adequately covered by the privately owned media houses.

An identified weakness is the inadequate consultative framework relating to the passage of bills in the parliament. In many instances the first, second and third readings are accelerated in a single session of parliament. This leaves little time for broad consultation. In addition parliamentarians are not afforded adequate resources to effectively perform their functions.

### ***Legislative Response***

The Government has introduced new legislation on integrity in public life which seeks to curb excesses by public officials through public disclosure rules, transparency of process and accountability of actions. However the supportive infrastructure to implement this legislation is yet to be put in place. There is a concern that several provisions of the Act are restrictive and can pose difficulties to attract private citizens to perform public functions due to the

disclosure requirements. Further another major concern expressed relates the confidentiality and security of submitted information.

Similarly, the Government has also introduced an Ombudsman Bill to provide an opportunity for public redress on wide ranging issues. There is also a plan to introduce a Freedom of Information Act. This will allow the public enhanced access to information held within the government machinery. However, like many bills before, there is an expectation that implementation will be tardy as the institutional and supportive mechanisms will not be put in place in a timely manner.

## **Governance**

The Government took steps to project itself as a beacon for accountability, transparency and good governance. In this regard, there were plans for the periodic review of assets of all elected Officials. The Prime Minister for example introduced periodic meet the people tours where all matters of national importance are discussed. The media was also called upon to play a key role. There was increased access for citizens to voice their opinions in the local media via many talk shows. While this was a positive development there were many concerns. These include the abuse by political activists, the absence of evidence based contributions and the lack of training for media personnel.

While the Government was unable to agree on a new media policy, several new radio and television operators have received licences to broadcast to the public.

The Government instituted a structured forum for dialogue between Government and Civil Society. However, the multipartite consultation process has been in the main, a foiled attempt to involve civil society in the decision making process at the national level. There are plans to revive and revitalize

the Multipartite Consultation Committee but a key stumbling is the lack of trust that exists between the major stakeholders.

The Government also initiated a process to look at the introduction of local government in the island of Carriacou as a test site for local government on the national scale. Although the intent is noble, it is fraught with significant challenges including the lack of adequate resources to enable the process. This lack of committed resources conveys the perception that there is little political will and genuine commitment to give meaning to political rhetoric.

### **Modernization and Empowerment of Regional and Local Public Management**

The main observable activities are the ongoing public sector reform and modernization programme. This program includes the development of sector specific strategic plans and programmes in the areas of human resources, youth, gender, productive sector and technology. For example, a national gender policy and a human resource development policy have been elaborated.

### **Transfer of Competences from Central Level to Decentralization,**

The key observable activities are the enacting of national legislation to enable the establishment of a Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME) which allows for free movement of people across the Caricom Region. The Government has also introduced legislation to remove alien landholding requirements and has introduced Rights of Establishment whereby regional business can be facilitated without discrimination in each Country of the Region. Again, implementation is lagging.

## **Funding for Regional and Local Administration**

The government has launched a major initiative to update the Audit and Financial Management Acts. The Acts will replace two archaic pieces of legislation and will improve the transparency and accountability profile for national financial management. In addition the government continues its relationship with regional and international financial institutions with respect to the audit of its financial and fiscal programme. Despite these audits and reforms the government continues to be mired in deep suspicion of financial improprieties. The national economy is in a state of serious decline and concerted efforts must be placed on restoring the national economy on a more sound footing.

One of the key strategies for alleviating poverty and the revitalization of the rural economy is the financing of rural women's projects. These projects are designed to foster collaboration within communities and to engender self reliance. The projects involve considerable training and the provision of requisite financing for engaging in economic activities.

## **Respect and Valuation of the Regional-local cultural diversity**

The main observable activity is the recent amendment to the protected areas legislation which was a serious cause of concern among civil society. The amendment provided the avenue for government to unilaterally remove areas under protected area status on the grounds of national development. For many, this was a backward step and was geared to satisfy short-term political expediency and selfish motives. This policy move went against the earlier policy position pursued by the government which demonstrated a commitment towards the preservation of the environment and our national heritage.

## **Electronic Government and Access to Information Technology at Local Regional Level**

The government has completed a National ICT policy, established several websites, supported the establishment of the Caribbean Knowledge Learning Network and reformed the telecommunications sector through the introduction of competitive forces. The implementation of these measures is ongoing but much is left to be desired relative to the pace of implementation specifically for the ICT policy and the Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN). The fact that a foreign company has been awarded permission to engage in the provision of telecommunications services ahead of competitive national applicants was a major source of concern. While the citizenry has been exposed in recent years to enhanced access to ICT applications and services, Grenada still lags behind when compared to regional averages especially in areas of access to broadband applications and services.

### **Inclusion of Gender Dimension in Regional- Local Democratization**

It is widely held that given the high proportion of women representation at the national level and their high proportion among senior management in the public sector that the issue of gender discrimination is not a major concern. In fact significant strides have been made over the last three decades.

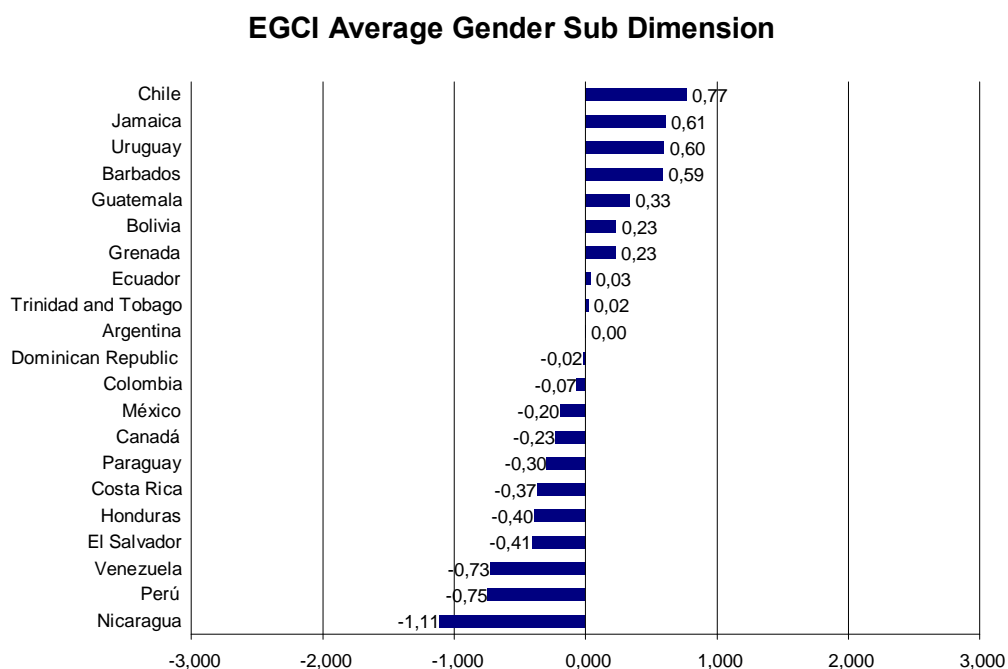
Grenada boasts of a high proportion of woman in the Houses of Parliament. The fact that 38 percent of the Parliamentarians are woman demonstrates the relatively enhanced access for women in Grenada as compared to the regional average.

Similarly, 80 percent of Permanent Secretaries are female. Additionally the Cabinet secretary as the head of the Public sector, the Head of the Public Service Commission and the President of the Senate are also female.

The trend in the education system has been that women constitutes on average approximately seventy percent of the graduating classes from the secondary level and are thus able to go on to higher education or to be absorbed into the workforce. There is in fact a serious concern that the male students are lagging behind both in numbers graduating and quality of performance in their pursuit of academic and employment opportunities.

Graph 2 shows the relative position of Grenada in this category and confirms Grenada's progress. Grenada's score of 0.23 on gender constitutes the highest rating among the evaluated dimensions.

**Graph 2**



## Proposals

In attempting to strengthen the decentralization and local government process, government needs to build on its successes and to move expeditiously to address the observed shortcomings. The following needs to be pursued:-

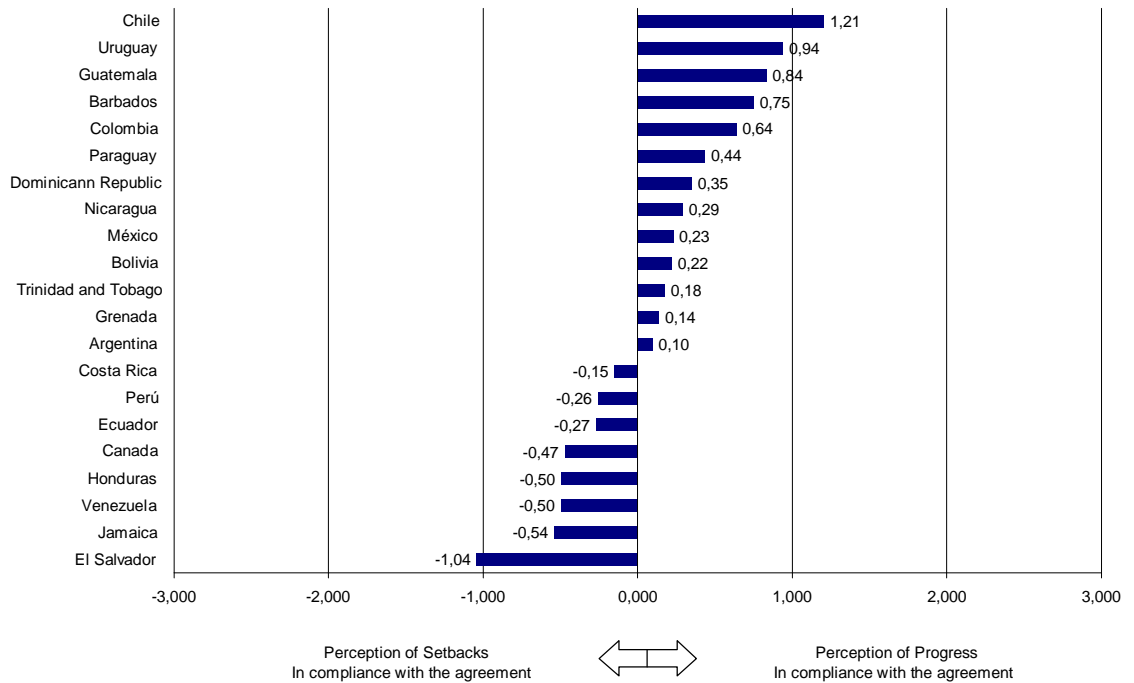
- All relevant legislation passed by government needs to be supported via the provision of budgetary and institutional support necessary for implementation.
- The modus operandi of government needs to change to reflect honesty, integrity and transparency in their relationship with civil society. There is a need to develop and enhance trust among major social partners.
- Government needs to outline clear policies on relevant areas to convey clear messages and avoid the lack of clarity.
- Government policy and actions after consultation with stakeholders should genuinely reflect due consideration on inputs. This is necessary to build confidence and trust in the consultative process.
- Government needs to demonstrate the political will and commitment to following through and implement local government particularly in Carriacou.
- Government actions should be consistent with stated policy. Government need to avoid expedient political and other actions that conflict with stated policy.
- Government should provide the necessary resources to fully implement the National Gender Policy

## B. Access to Public Information

Under the dimension of Access to Public Information, Grenada made very modest progress. As graph 3 indicates, the EGCI index is 0.14. This places Grenada in position twelve within the group of twenty countries evaluated. The most significant observable initiative by the government is legislative.

**Graph 3**

**EGCI - Access to Public Information Dimension**



### Legislation on Freedom of Access to Information

The initial draft of the new access to Information Legislation has been completed. The draft legislation is general taken from the harmonized draft to be used throughout the region. The major issue at hand is the implementation of the legislation once accented to by the Governor General. As it stands to date information is available from government departments and agencies but essentially at the discretion of the

Government. Information is also available through the Government Information System and the periodic press briefings by the Government. In many instances information is available without charge but in some instances fees are also applicable. The impending legislation is designed to introduce some structures in the information profile. It is generally agreed that most questions posed by opposition forces in the Parliament remains unanswered by the sitting Government.

### **Effective Access to Public Information**

Recently, there was a trend to restrict the public viewing on television of the Parliamentary Debates. There was grave concern that the sitting parliamentarians were not obeying the rules of Parliamentary Debates and that the situation disintegrated into an unruly town house meeting.

### **Use of New Information and Communication Technologies to Facilitate Access to Public Information**

With the licensing of several radio and television stations it is expected that this will enhance the access of information to the public. Public information is also available on the internet provided by private entrepreneurs and government. The Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN) project is expected to make a major contribution to access to public information.

The annual budget exercise is a shining example whereby the public is integrally involved in the budget preparation process through a series of organized consultations. The budget documents are available to the public. In the past however, there have been allegations that the decisions of the consultation process are largely ignored in the final documentation.

## **Electoral Expenditure**

The financing of general elections has been a hotly debated issue in Grenada particularly during the past thirteen years. The general public has witnessed a new approach to political campaigns characterized by high spending on public relations and electronic advertising. Evidence has surfaced confirming massive private sector funding of these campaigns and the direct use of money to entice voters and influence voting. Absolutely no information on electoral spending is available for public information as there are no laws governing funding rules, procedures and disclosure. Attempts by civil society to introduce a code of conduct for the general elections were strongly resisted by the government. The code of conduct was signed by all the other major parties and civil society organizations including the church.

## **Proposals**

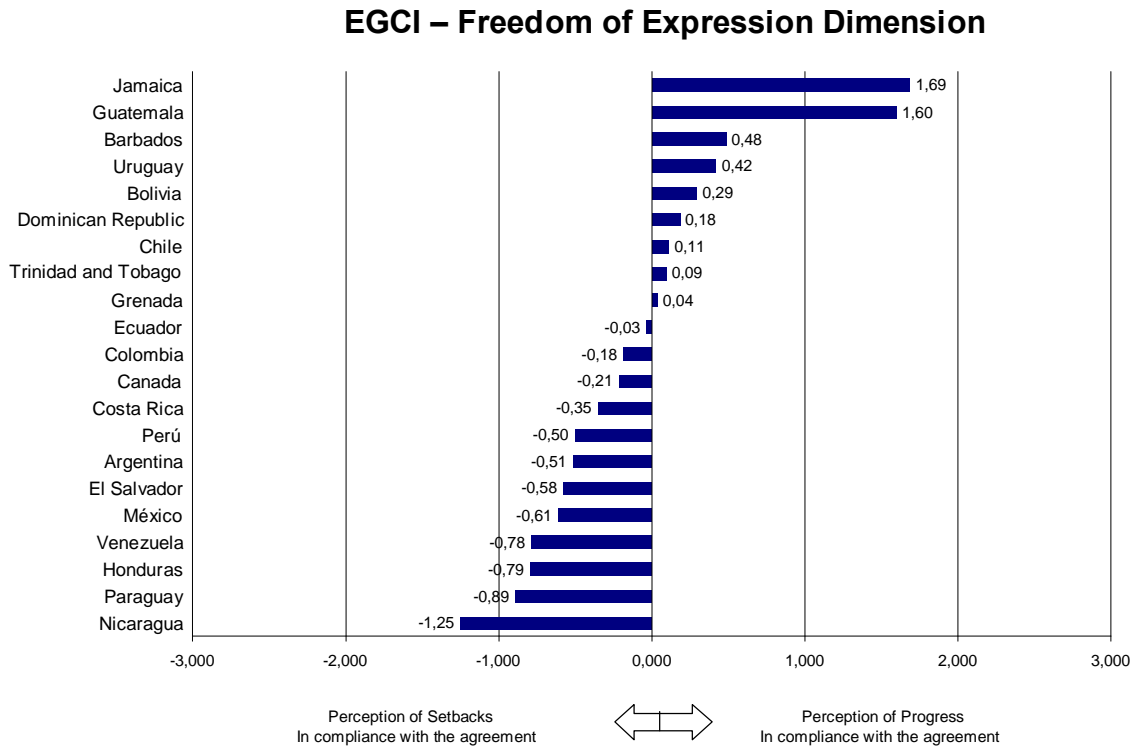
- Government should circulate the draft Access to Information bill for consultation and pass in the legislature. Budgetary and other support need to be provided to ensure implementation.
- Government needs to facilitate the adherence to rules and procedures in the Houses of Parliament through the appropriate choice of President of the Senate and Speaker of The House, the setting of the agenda and the effective management of Parliament sessions.
- Government must pursue the introduction of campaign financing rules and regulations. Further government should sign the code of conduct.

- Government needs to accelerate the ongoing e-government projects and related activities to enhance and facilitate improved public access to information.

### C. Freedom of Expression

The EGCI index on this dimension for Grenada is 0.04, the lowest of all the indices. This is shown in graph 4. Key actions by government are confined to legislative attempts. The major initiative was the completion of a Draft Freedom of Expression Bill but no further work was done.

**Graph 4**



## **Legislation on Freedom of Expression**

A draft Freedom of Expression legislation has been completed but no further work was done. This brought into focus the commitment and political will to get the issue concluded.

### **Censorship, limitations and sanctions**

Many persons in the media have been sued by sitting politicians for libel and slander. In fact many officials are on public record threatening litigation in this regard. While there are expanded opportunities for expression, there is a general move toward legal action being taken. There is no overt censorship but the possibility of criminal libel suit is an area of major concern. The media has been accused of carrying a political agenda and media practitioners have had that constant threat over their heads. There is evidence indicating that tremendous pressure is brought to bear on the media to conform to the wishes of government.

Generally however, citizens can freely express themselves. There is a wide array of fora for expression. With the liberalization of the telecommunications industry several new media houses were established. While there is no daily newspaper, there are at least five weekly publications. In addition through growing use of the internet and other broadband applications and services there are increased fora for expression.

## Proposals

- Government needs to pass Freedom of Expression Legislation. Support needs to be provided to facilitate implementation.
- Government needs to revisit the draft media policy with the view to institute a new policy. Most importantly, policy should be adhered to with mutual respect characterizing relations between the media and government.
- Public dialogue should be encouraged through the various consultative processes as a permanent feature of policy making, reporting and demonstration of accountability.

## **D. Strengthening Civil Society Participation:**

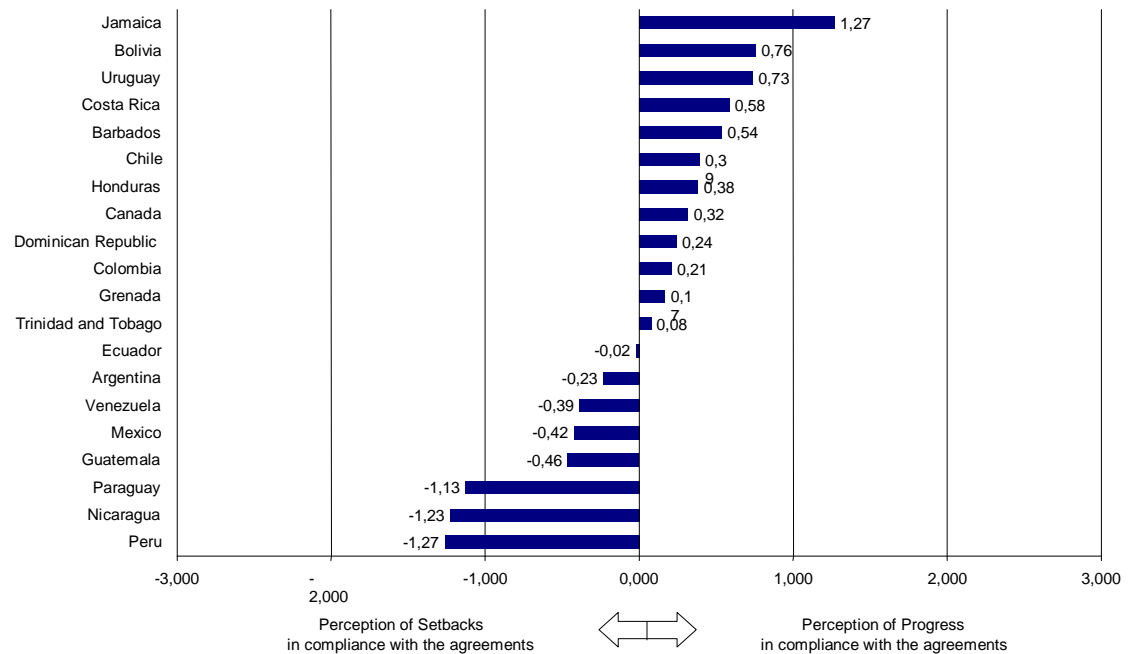
### **Legislative Changes which impact Civil Society Participation**

Civil Society Organizations are very vibrant in Grenada. Government actions and activities especially relating to socioeconomics are always under constant scrutiny. The multipartite consultation forum has been in existence since 1996 and the civil society forum for social dialogue was established in 2004. These initiatives have had mixed reviews. However, while the framework existed the functioning and implementation of agreed outcomes left much to be desired. In fact, the relationship between government and some Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have been quite acrimonious.

The formation by the government of its own NGO was viewed as an attempt by the government to marginalize other NGOs. This action was interpreted as a clear signal from government of its perception of existing NGOs as well as its intent. It must be noted however that there exists a high level of demand at the national level for government and civil society to collaborate on matters of national importance. It is against this background that the EGCI index for this dimension is 0.17 as shown in Graph 5.

## Graph 5

### EGCI – Strengthening of Civil Society Participation Dimension



There is no framework for support to civil society from the national government. While some civil society organizations receive a small level of budgetary support, there is no initiative specifically aimed at strengthening civil society. The budget support received is tied directly to programme areas. For example the local NGO Grencoda receives national budget support for its programme on legal aid and counseling. The resources received from government are a small fraction of the programme and in no way contributes to the strengthening of the organization. It should be noted that Civil Society Organizations lacked the required capacity and resources to ensure sustainability and depends to a large extent on external donor financing.

## **Proposals**

- Government needs to radically change its approach to its relations with Civil Societies. There is need for mutual respect acknowledging that roles are different but goals are congruent in the interest of achieving sustainable development of the country.
- Government needs to review and alter its approach to stakeholder consultations with a view to engendering trust, integrity and confidence in the process.

## Annex 1

### IV. Evaluation panel

<b>Name of persons contacted</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Recommended thematic area</b>
Dr. Buckmire	St. Andrew's Development Organization	Decentralization and local government
Elaine Henry - Mc Queen	Grenada National Organization of Women	Strengthening of civil society participation
Dr. Dessima Williams	GREMED	Decentralization and local government
Rev. Osbert James	Council of Churches	Strengthening of civil society participation
Judy Williams	GRENCODA	Strengthening of civil society participation
Madonna Harford	Trade Union Council	Strengthening of civil society participation
Ruggles Ferguson	Grenada Bar Association	Access to public information
Gloria Payne Banfield	Consultant	Decentralization and local government
Christopher De Riggs	Grenada Chamber of Industry and Commerce	Access to public information
Cecil Edwards	Grenada Employers Federation	Access to public information
Cecil Greenidge	Coordinator of Youth	Freedom of expression
Lucia Andall	Public Service Cooperative Credit Union	Freedom of expression
Brian Campbell	Communal Cooperative Credit Union	Freedom of expression
Keith Clouden	Farmers rep in Senate	Access to public information
Ray Roberts	Trade Union Congress	Freedom of expression
Ian DaBreo	Grenada Hotel and Tourism Association	Freedom of expression
Sandra Ferguson	Agency for Rural Transformation	Strengthening of civil society participation
Hilary Gabriel	Grenada National Council of the Disabled	Strengthening of civil society participation
Kriss Davies	GRENSAVE	Strengthening of civil society participation
Selbry Henry	Grencase	
Samuel Britton	GTCU	Decentralization and local government

Lindonna Glasgow	Min. of Social Development	All
Tyrone Buckmire	REAR	All
Dennis Thomas	Grenada Union of Teachers	All
George Vincent	GFFF	All
Pemba Braveboy	Youth	All
Linda Straker	Media	All
Gordon Paterson	Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry	All
Valerie Gordon	Development Consultant	All
Joseph Roberts	Consultant	All
Joselyn Paul	Ministry of Finance	All
Rapheal Paul		All
Albert Simon	Teacher	All
Recee Sam	Freelancer	All
Lerry Barry	Ministry of Sports	All
Cosmos Joseph	IICA	All
Alvin Campbell	NEWLO	All

### Expert Panel

Name of Expert Panel	Institution/Discipline	Contact	Email
<b>Dr. Spencer Thomas</b>	<b>Development Consultant</b>	1 473 407 5765 1 473 444 0207	<b>sthomas@ectel.int</b> <b>Spence105@hotmail.com</b>
<b>Mr. Aaron Moses</b>	<b>Development Consultant</b>	<b>440-1560/405-0121</b>	<b>amoses@caribsurf.com</b>
<b>Ms. Lisa Taylor</b>	<b>Attorney at Law</b>	<b>440-0048/440-7600</b>	<b>lisataylor@caribsurf.com</b>
<b>Ms. Sally-ann Bagwhang</b>	<b>Public Sector</b>		<b>sbagwhan.logie@gov.gd</b> <b>peqolina@yahoo.com</b>
<b>Ms. Judy Williams</b>	<b>GRENCODA General Secretary</b>	<b>444-8430/9490</b>	<b>grenco@spicisle.com</b>

## **Annex 2**

The **Plan of Action**, 33 issuing from the III Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in 2001, contains the unequivocal agreement of all 34 governments:

*To strengthen democracy, create prosperity and realize human potential, our Governments will:*

*“ promote mechanisms to facilitate citizen participation in politics, especially in local or municipal government;*

*“ promote the development, autonomy and institutional strengthening of local government in order to promote favorable conditions for the sustainable economic and social development of their communities;*

*“ strengthen the institutional capacity of local governments to allow full and equal citizen participation in public policies without any discrimination, facilitate access to those services fundamental to improving citizens’ quality of life, and strengthen decentralization and the integral development of these services in part through commensurate and timely funding and initiatives that permit local governments to generate and administer their own resources;*

*“ promote sharing of information, best practices and administrative expertise among local government personnel, associations of local governments, community associations and the public, in part by facilitating access to information and communications technologies by municipalities and by encouraging cooperation and coordination among national, subregional and regional organizations of mayors and local government;*

*“ stimulate international cooperation in training directors and managers*

*of local government; Support convening a meeting in Bolivia of ministers or authorities at the highest level responsible for policies on decentralization, local government and citizen participation in municipal government, and consider closely the recommendations of the Sixth Inter-American Conference of Mayors and other relevant processes.”*  
(p. 3)

The **Declaration of Mar del Plata** during the IV Summit of the Americas, Argentina, 2005 also provides support for mandates in the area of local government.

*“To achieve the abovementioned objectives [Framework for creating decent work] we will promote increased cooperation and coordination between local, regional, and national governments.”* (p. 10)

The **Declaration of Nuevo Leon**<sup>34</sup>, Special Summit in Monterrey, 2004, is also a source of government commitments regarding to local government and decentralization:

*“We also commit to the qualitative transformation of public administration through its modernization, simplification, decentralization, and transparency.”* (p. 2)

#### **b. Access to public information**

Mandates to governments treating issues of access to public information also emanate from the different Summit Declarations and Plan of Actions. The **Plan of Action** issuing from the III Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in 2001, contains the unequivocal agreement of all 34 governments:

*To strengthen democracy, create prosperity and realize human potential, our Governments will:*

*“work jointly to facilitate cooperation among national institutions with the responsibility to guarantee the protection, promotion and respect of human rights, and access to and freedom of information,*

*with the aim of developing best practices to improve the administration of information held by governments on individuals and facilitating citizen access to that information (p. 2)*

*“ensure that national legislation relating to freedom of expression is applied equitably to all, respecting freedom of expression and access to information of all citizens, and that journalists and opinion leaders are free to investigate and publish without fear of reprisals, harassment or retaliatory actions, including the misuse of anti-defamation laws.” (p.7*

In the **Declaration of Mar del Plata**, on the occasion of the IV Summit of the Americas Argentina, 2005, the governments also made commitments having to do with access to public information.

*“ We recognize that for democracy to prosper, governments must be responsive to the legitimate aspirations of their people and work to provide their people with the tools and opportunities to improve their lives. (p. 11)*

Arising from the Special Summit in Monterrey in 2004, the **Declaration of Nuevo Leon** also supports government mandates surrounding access to public information:

*“Access to information held by the State, subject to constitutional and legal norms, including those on privacy and confidentiality is an indispensable condition for citizen participation and promotes effective respect for human rights. We are committed to providing the legal and regulatory framework and the structures and conditions required to guarantee the right of access to information to our citizens.”(p. 11)*

### **c. Freedom of expression**

In the **Plan of Action**, of the III Summit of the Americas held in Quebec City

in 2001, the countries of the Americas committed themselves to:

*“ensure that national legislation relating to freedom of expression is applied equitably to all, respecting freedom of expression and access to information of all citizens, and that journalists and opinion leaders are free to investigate and publish without fear of reprisals, harassment or retaliatory actions, including the misuse of anti-defamation laws.” (p. 7)*

#### **d. Civil Society Participation**

With respect to civil society participation in democratic governance, the **Plan of Action**, issuing from the III Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in 2001 contains the unequivocal agreement of all 34 governments:

*To strengthen democracy, create prosperity and realize human potential, our Governments will:*

*“seek to establish public and private funding instruments aimed at building the capacity of civil society organizations in order to highlight the work and contribution of these organizations and to promote accountability;*

*“develop strategies at the national level and through the OAS, other multilateral organizations and MDBs to increase the capacity of civil society to participate more fully in the inter-American system, as well as in the political, economic and social development of their communities and countries, fostering representation and facilitating the participation of all sectors of society; and increase the institutional capacity of governments to receive, absorb and act on civil society input and advocacy, particularly through the use of information and communications technologies;*

*“promote participation of all minority groups in forging a stronger civil society;*

*“ develop educational programs, in conjunction with relevant civil society organizations, academic experts and others, as appropriate, to provide democracy and human rights education and to promote the introduction of books and educational materials that reflect the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of the Americas as part of primary and secondary school curricula”(p. 14)*

In the **Declaration of Mar del Plata**, during the IV Summit of the Americas in Argentina in 2005, the governments declared:

*“ we consider it essential to strengthen broad, transparent, and inclusive social dialogue with all concerned sectors of society, at the local, national, regional, and hemispheric levels. Social dialogue is an important and basic instrument to promote and consolidate democracy and to build societies with inclusion and social justice.” (Paragraph 36)*

*“ we reaffirm that the participatory nature of democracy in our countries in different aspects of public life contributes to the consolidation of democratic values and to freedom and solidarity in the Hemisphere.” (Paragraph 60)*

*“ increased participation by citizens, communities, and civil society will contribute to ensuring that the benefits of democracy are shared by society as a whole.”+(Paragraph 62)*

With further respect to civil society participation in governance, the **Plan of Action**<sup>35</sup> issuing from the IV Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata in 2005 contains the unequivocal agreement of all 34 governments:

*“ to promote tripartite and inclusive social dialogue and cooperation among social partners and governments.”(Paragraph 16)*

*“to promote an inclusive social tripartite and transparent dialogue as an instrument for the proposition of policies..” (Paragraph 24a)*

*“to make efforts aimed at facilitating the incorporation...of the information on the contribution to the generation of added value, reduction of poverty, fostering of social welfare by productive cooperatives and other independent labor categories” (Paragraph 26)*

Also, at the Special Summit in Monterrey in 2004, the governmentsq **Declaration of Nuevo Leon** also provides language that buttresses the mandates regarding civil society participation:

*“We agree that, through citizen participation, civil society organizations should contribute to the design, implementation, and evaluation of public policies adopted by different orders or levels of government. We recognize the role of civil society and its contribution to sound public administration and we reaffirm the importance of “continuing to forge new partnerships that will enable constructive ties to be built between governments, nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, and the diverse sectors of civil society to work in favor of development and democracy”(p. 11)*

### Annex 3

#### EGCI Composite Ranking

	Country	EGCI Score
1	Uruguay	0.86
2	Guatemala	0.72
3	Barbados	0.59
4	Chile	0.59
5	Jamaica	<b>0.53</b>
6	Colombia	0.26
7	Bolivia	0.24
8	Dominican Republic	0.24
9	Grenada	0.14
10	Trinidad and Tobago	-0.01
11	Argentina	-0.05
12	Mexico	-0.09
13	Canada	-0.14
14	Ecuador	-0.14
15	Costa Rica	-0.17
16	Honduras	-0.24
17	Paraguay	-0.36
18	El Salvador	-0.57
19	Peru	-0.70
20	Nicaragua	-0.75
21	Venezuela	-0.85