

Working Group “Population Dynamics and Political Governance / Role of Youth”

*Main Points of the Keynote Speech
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Relationship between Population Dynamics and Political Participation:

- Growing populations create demand and may constrain the state’s capacity to meet the requirements necessary for delivering adequate services.
- Population dynamics raise questions concerning a fair distribution of available resources.
- Rapid population growth increases the risk of exclusion and marginalization of large parts of the population.
- For preventing rising population numbers to have a destabilizing impact on a state, inclusive and functioning political negotiation processes between state and society need to be in place.
- Constructive state-society relations are a key element for the development of resilient states, enabling a sustainable management of growing populations as well as the formulation and implementation of responsible effective and citizen-oriented population policies.

The Approach of German Development Cooperation to Promote Political Participation:

- Objective of German Development Cooperation: enable different interest groups and social groups (particularly the disadvantaged or marginalised) to participate in political processes on an equal footing and have proper representation.

German Definition of Political Participation: All forces within society have an equal say in political decisions.
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- The principles of transparent, accountable and development-oriented government can only be upheld if an active civil society
 - is informed about policy decisions,
 - is involved and actively participates in decision-making processes and
 - is able to exercise a critical control function with regard to the state.
- This implies that civil society does not act in isolation from the state, but engages in a reciprocal relationship with the state. Hence, promoting political participation requires us to look at this relationship and ensure that it is a constructive one.

German Definition of Civil Society:

All forms of organised activity in which citizens engage and which are not profit-oriented and independent of party-political interests.

A Multi-Dimensional Strategy to Foster Constructive State-Society Relations:

cf. BMZ Special 168: “Promoting Constructive State-Society Relations. Transparency, Accountability, Legitimacy.”

The German Approach: A Multidimensional strategy

