



CALL TOWARDS GOOD GOVERNANCE: ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS*

Introduction

Governance consists of the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.

Governance comes from 'kybernan' (Greek) and is related to 'cybernetics'- meaning 'to steer' and 'keeping a ship on its course in the midst of unexpected changing circumstances'.¹ Governance can be regarded as 'control' in a broad perspective, meaning that governance includes the total set of controlling activities that keep the system (ship, organization) on the right (chosen) course.² Governance is a purposeful intervention in order to achieve a desired output, and describes a subsystem of decision making units for directing and coordinating operational subsystems.

Governance is a multifaceted concept encompassing all aspects of the exercise of authority through formal and informal institutions in the management of the resource endowment of a state.³ The concept of connected government is derived from the whole-of-government approach which is increasingly looking towards technology as a strategic tool and as an enabler for public service innovation and productivity growth. Connected or networked governance revolves around governmental collective action to advance the public good by engaging the creative efforts of all segments of society. It is about influencing the strategic actions of other stakeholders. ICT-based connected governance efforts are aimed at improved cooperation between government agencies, allowing for an enhanced, active and effective consultation and engagement with citizens, and a greater involvement with multi-stakeholders regionally and internationally.

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¹ For details, see N. Wiener, *Cybernetics or the Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine* MIT Press (2nd edition, 1972), RR Peterson (2002). Information Governance. PhD thesis, Tilburg University, Netherlands, available at http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/conf/olkc/archive/oklc5/papers/h-3_smits.pdf (accessed on 2 December, 2015).

² Malone TW & Crowston K (1994). *The Interdisciplinary Study of Coordination*. ACM computing surveys (26) 1: 87- 97, available at <http://ccs.mit.edu/papers/CCSWP157.html> (accessed on 2 December, 2015).

³ Jeff Huther and Anwar Shah, *Applying a Simple Measure of Good Governance*, World Bank,

In the 1990s, and a range of international institutions, including the multilateral development banks, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), formally adopted 'governance' agendas.⁴

Part-I

VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS ENGAGED IN PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE

A number of international organizations started the movement towards good governance.

➤ World Bank⁵

Since inception in 1944, the World Bank has expanded from a single institution to a closely associated group of five development institutions. It is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. It supports developing countries through policy advice, research and analysis, and technical assistance. It helps to keep informed developing countries' own investments. It sponsors, hosts, or participates in many conferences and forums on issues of development, often in collaboration with partners.

➤ United Nations⁶

The UN also provides a forum for its members to express their views in the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and other bodies and committees. By enabling dialogue between its members, and by hosting negotiations, the Organization has become a mechanism for governments to find areas of agreement and solve problems together. *The United Nations has been playing a central role in addressing many global issues. Confronted with new and future global challenges the UN needs to reposition itself and needs to build the capacity to live up to its mandate and ensure its decision-making process is more effective, efficient, transparent and inclusive.*

➤ IMF⁷

⁴ Elizabeth Drake et al. , *Good Governance and the World Bank*, Vivien Collingwood (ed). 4.

⁵ The World Bank was created at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference.It is a component of the World Bank Group, and a member of the United Nations Development Group.It has a multidisciplinary and diverse staff that includes economists, public policy experts, sector experts and social scientists

⁶ The United Nations officially came into existence on 24 October 1945, when the Charter had been ratified by China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States and by a majority of other signatories. It is currently made up of 193 Member States.

⁷ *It was conceived at a UN conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States, in July 1944. Now it is governed by and accountable to the 188 countries.*

Traditionally the IMF's main focus has been on encouraging countries to correct macroeconomic imbalances, reduce inflation, and undertake key trade, exchange, and other market reforms needed to improve efficiency and support sustained economic growth. While these remain its first order of business in all its member countries, increasingly the IMF has found that a much broader range of institutional reforms is needed if countries are to establish and maintain private sector confidence and thereby lay the basis for sustained growth.

➤ ***European Union***

The EU is an economic and political partnership between 28 European countries that together cover much of the continent. As it continues to grow, the EU remains focused on making its governing institutions more transparent and democratic. More powers are being given to the directly elected European Parliament, while national parliaments are being given a greater role, working alongside the European institutions. In turn, European citizens have an ever-increasing number of channels for taking part in the political process.

➤ ***World Youth Alliance***⁸

It is an accredited ECOSOC Civil Society Network NGO. WYA's work has brought the voice of young people to participate at international conferences and dialogue with ambassadors, diplomats, and state leaders. It participates directly at the United Nations, European Union, and Organization of American States.

➤ ***Transparency International***⁹

It works together with governments, businesses and citizens to stop the abuse of power, bribery and secret deals. The Open Governance Project seeks to further open governance by focusing on citizens and their power to generate positive change.

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Part - II

⁸ The World Youth Alliance (WYA) started with Anna Halpine who stood up for her belief in the dignity of the person at the United Nations in 1999. Today, WYA has spread to six regions and continues to attract young people who wish to defend the dignity of the person through advocacy, education and culture.

⁹ Created in 1993, it has now members from more than 100 countries. It has an international secretariat in Berlin.

ROLE OF VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS VIS-À-VIS GOOD GOVERNANCE

This Part shall discuss the role of various international organizations in general in the field of good governance. It will specifically find out the Surveys, Indicators and other methods that compare the governance standards across globe.

A. World Bank

As a development institution, the World Bank has always had a vision of good governance. It re-invented this concept.

The World Bank has undertaken extensive research into areas such as institutional quality, governance, corruption and so on.¹⁰ The World Bank itself published two other important documents, in 1992 on Governance and Development and in 1994 on Governance: The World Bank's Experience. In this sense, to achieve its objective of reducing poverty, recipient donors were urged to promote reforms of their public sectors.

- The Bank puts great emphasis on the need to change developing countries from within. The good governance agenda explicitly recognises that aid cannot be effective in the absence of a 'good policy environment'.
- The current good governance agenda identifies a positive—albeit restricted—role for the state and institutions, in contrast with its pro-market stance of the 1980s. During that period, structural adjustment loans were designed to reduce state intervention in developing-country economies. In the 1990s, the central Bank paradigm changed from 'getting the prices right' to 'getting the institutions right'. Although extending the reach of the market remains at the core of the Bank's vision, this view is tempered by the recognition that the state can play an important role as the provider of institutions for the market.
- The good governance agenda has led the World Bank into previously uncharted territory, such as the issues of participation, corruption, and democratic reform. Although the exact direction of Bank policy in all these areas remains ambiguous, the good governance agenda has undoubtedly stretched the Bank's traditionally 'technocratic' character to a greater extent than ever before. The Bank's adoption of the good governance agenda raises critical

¹⁰ Key milestones in the World Bank discourse on governance are - Sub-Saharan Africa: from Crisis to Growth identifies a 'crisis in governance' 1989 ; The Wapenhans Report ,1993 ; Governance and Development 1992; World Development Report - The State in a Changing World 1999 etc.

questions about the organisation's role in the development process and in the system of global governance as a whole.

1. The Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF)

It emphasizes the inter-dependence of institutions and the human, physical, social and macroeconomic aspects of development. *It* seeks better balance in policy-making by highlighting the interdependence of all elements of development: social, structural, human, governance, environmental, economic, and financial.

2. World Development Report - Building Institutions for Markets, 2002

It identifies how institutions can promote the private sector and provides policy guidance on how to build them.

3. Worldwide Governance Indicators

It captures six key dimensions of governance (Voice & Accountability, Political Stability and Lack of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption) between 1996 and present.

B. United Nations

United Nations activities in support of governance are implemented through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), among others.

Various efforts of UN towards e-governance

1. The United Nations E-Government Development Database (UNeGovDD)

It is a benchmarking tool that provides a comparative assessment of the e-government development of UN Member States. It offers an interactive snapshot of each country's e-government development from a regional and global perspective. the database allows users to view, sort, and print information from the UN E-Development Data Centre and to download all the Surveys published to date.

2. METER, the Measurement and Evaluation Tool for E-Government Readiness

It is a ready-to-use evaluative tool enabling a country to self-assess its level of e-government readiness. Based on a holistic and functional methodology for e-government readiness

measurement, it comprises questions covering a range of issues in order to estimate and monitor what is the current state of factors affecting e-government development. Conceived to serve as an advisory tool, it helps to identify the key areas to work on, and how to prioritize them. By uncovering the level of e-government awareness, both at the central government and agency levels, as well as within the civil society, it leads to a full understanding of the changes that e-government development entails.

The analysis of the existing environment is crucial in order to appraise how ready a country is to embark in the significant processes of change inevitably associated with an e-government transformation. A seamless e-government, providing via a single portal the integrated delivery of information and services for convenience, effectiveness and empowerment, represents the ultimate goal for all national and local e-government programmes. However, taking e-government beyond the stage of having informational websites is not an easy course of action, and for the most part, lessons learned concerning e-government initiatives have shown that e-government is better achieved within a conducive environment that enables it to maximize its potential.

The goal of METER is to arm governments with much of the information necessary to make changes and to define achievable implementation strategies and action plans in a tailored and effective way, to overcome internal and external obstacles and to support the overall objective of a fruitful e-Government development. Independently from its current level of e-government maturity each country should be aware of the point where it stands in the transformation process, in order to set goals and steps to reach its final aim through an efficient use of available resources and opportunities. However, it is recommendable that an e-government readiness assessment be undertaken when a country is prepared to follow the evaluation with an immediate or near-term action.

3. E-Government Surveys

It is published every two years. The Survey assesses the e-government readiness and extent of e-participation of the UN Member States according to a quantitative composite index of e-readiness based on website assessment, telecommunication infrastructure, and human resource endowment. The Survey serves as a tool for decision-makers to identify their strengths and challenges in the area of e-government development.

The UN e-Government Survey findings show that there are huge disparities in the access and use of information technologies, and that these disparities are not likely to be removed in the near future unless a concerted action is taken at the national, regional and the international levels.

If disparities in access and use of ICTs are to be removed in the collective march towards a global information society, Governments have to integrate e-government and access to ICTs in their national development plans. Governments cannot achieve this goal on their own and need to work in partnership with the private sector and civil society. International organizations and the donor community can also play an important role in devising new initiatives for e-government enabled sustainable development and ensuring that the digital divide is bridged. Inclusive and participatory governance demands that every person has equal opportunities. The new imperative of development is to employ e-government to promote access to ICTs and, social inclusion, to foster economic development and advance environmental protection.

C. IMF

IMF adopted in 1997 a policy on how to address economic governance, embodied in the Guidance Note “*The Role of the IMF in Governance Issues.*”

- The Fund works with its member countries to promote good governance and combat corruption. In the context of its surveillance, lending, and technical assistance, the IMF covers economic governance issues that fall within its mandate and expertise, concentrating on issues that are likely to have a significant impact on macroeconomic performance and the sustainability of sound economic policies. In doing so, the IMF stresses even handedness across its member countries and collaborates closely with other multilateral institutions.¹¹
- A multi-donor Topical Trust Fund launched in 2011 has enabled the IMF to considerably increase technical assistance in the management of natural resource wealth.
- IMF contributes to various working groups and international initiatives, including the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group, the OECD Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions, and the Stolen Assets Recovery (STAR) initiative.
- IMF surveillance involves annual reviews of countries’ economic policies, carried out through the so-called “Article IV consultations.” In the process, the IMF may provide policy advice, when relevant, on governance-related issues.

¹¹ *Good Governance- The IMF’s Role*, Policy Development and Review Department, August 1997.

- Good governance is also promoted through IMF-supported lending. When seeking financial support from the IMF, country authorities describe their economic policies in a “Letter of Intent.” When warranted, specific measures to strengthen governance may be included and thus become part of the program’s conditionality. Many of the structural conditions in IMF-supported programs focus on improving governance, including through better fiscal expenditure control, publication of audited accounts of government agencies and state enterprises, streamlined and less discretionary revenue administration, greater transparency in the management of natural resources, the publication of audited central bank accounts, and better enforcement of banking supervision.
- To improve the transparency, quality, and timeliness of data, the IMF encourages its members to subscribe to the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) or participate in the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS).

D. European Union

Coordinated and harmonised approach to development cooperation is one of the key principles of the EC assistance strategy, and in the area of Good Governance . It is strongly committed to supporting efforts towards more effective and coherent aid delivery to Ethiopia. It is also important with respect to promoting a consistent line among major donors on issues that are often politically sensitive.

Along this line, in the upcoming programming period, immediate priority will be given to supporting the national Justice Sector Reform programme and key national institutions such as the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, the Ombudsman Office, Parliament and the National Elections Board in the framework of the Democratic Institutions Programme (DIP) jointly with other donors.¹²

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E. Transparency International

It raises awareness of the damaging effects of corruption and works with partners in government, business and civil society to develop and implement effective measures to tackle it.

¹² Maurizio Carbone, *The European Union, Good Governance and Aid Coordination*, Third World Quarterly . 02/2010; 31(1).

- **The Integrity Pact (IP)**

It is a tool developed during the 1990s by Transparency International (TI) to help governments, businesses and civil society intent on fighting corruption in the field of public contracting. It consists of a process that includes an agreement between a government or government department

F. Good Governance International

Good Governance International (GGI) helps governments around the world use technology effectively to address governance challenges in the new millennium and seek to provide innovative information technology solutions. With the support of the governments and corporate and individual donors, GGI is making a difference to improve the lives of the world's poor.

An **online self-assessment tool** as part of its eGov Project aims to benefit other stakeholders around the world, this tool allows users to inexpensively assess e-government services and implement recommendations for making these services more effective, thus making governments more responsive and potentially more accountable. GGI has already assembled a team of world-renowned experts to polish the tool.

G. Economist Intelligence Unit¹³

E-readiness is “the ‘state of play’ of a country’s information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and the ability of its consumers, businesses and governments to use ICT to their benefit. When a country does more online—or, as is increasingly the case, wirelessly—the premise is that its economy can become more transparent and efficient.”

Part-III

VARIOUS INITIATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION VIS-À-VIS GOOD GOVERNANCE

This Part shall identify the existing guiding material, formulated by the international organizations to lay down standards which can be adopted by various countries.

- **UN Declaration of the High-level Meeting on the Rule of Law,2012**

¹³ The EIU publishes a number of reports each year focussing on current issues affecting specific countries, regions and industries. These reports are available at no cost and help business leaders prepare for opportunity.

It reaffirms that human rights, the rule of law and democracy are interlinked and mutually reinforcing and that they belong to the universal and indivisible core values and principles of the United Nations.

- **The Declaration Partnership for Sustainable Global Growth**

It was adopted by the IMF's Interim Committee at its meeting in Washington on September 29, 1996. It identified "promoting good governance in all its aspects, including ensuring the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector, and tackling corruption" as an essential element of a framework within which economies can prosper.

The IMF's role in these issues has been evolving pragmatically as more was learned about the contribution that greater attention to governance issues could make to macroeconomic stability and sustainable growth. Executive Directors were strongly supportive of the role the IMF has been playing in this area in recent years. They also emphasized that the IMF's involvement in governance should be limited to its economic aspects.

- **WYA Declaration on Good Governance, 2006**

It calls on all persons, and in particular young people, to embrace their responsibility to foster free and just societies by actively promoting good governance and just leadership.

- **OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies, 2014**

It aims to support the development and implementation of digital government strategies that bring governments closer to citizens and businesses. It recognizes that today's technology is not only a strategic driver for improving public sector efficiency, but can also support effectiveness of policies and create more open, transparent, innovative, participatory and trustworthy governments. However, the multiplication of technological options may give rise to new risks and greater societal expectations that governments are not always fully prepared to address. Many governments still do not see technology as a collaborative means to shape public governance outcomes. A "business as usual" approach to technology that reinforces existing internal government processes only leads to failed projects and public criticism.

The Recommendation can enable a fundamental shift from citizen-centric approaches (government anticipating the needs of citizens and businesses) to citizen-driven approaches (citizens and businesses formulating and determining their needs **in partnership** with governments).

- **IMF Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency, 1998 and Guide on Resource Revenue Transparency, 2007**

The IMF Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency was developed in 1998 and updated in 2007. It identifies a set of principles and practices to help governments provide a clear picture of the structure and finances of government.

IMF issued its Guide on Resource Revenue Transparency in 2007. It presents detailed set of guidelines to address the issues arising from the sheer size of such resources for many countries, combined with the technical complexity and volatility of the transaction flows. It provides a summary overview of generally recognized good or best practices for transparency of resource revenue management that can be used by resource rich countries.

- **The Guidelines on Open Government Data for Citizen Engagement,2013**

It is a practical and easy-to-understand guideline for policy makers and technologists. It can be used to understand, design, implement and sustain open government data initiatives. The document is tailored to the needs and constraints of developing countries, but it can be used by anyone interested in opening up data. It contains the core principles of openness, best practices and case studies, checklists, step-by-step guidelines and practical policy recommendations. The document is an evolving tool. It also provides detailed advice on how to assess a countries readiness and how to successfully design, implement, evaluate, and sustain an OGD initiative for citizen engagement in managing development.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The progress made till now by various countries in good governance and e-governance would have not been possible without the direction shown by the above organizations. By providing information that tracks global government development trends these organizations help policy makers and practitioners in planning and implementing effective government strategies. The efforts in the form of declarations, resolutions, guidelines, and recommendations by all of them from time to time reaffirm their central role in effective and dynamic governance across the globe.

In 2014 for the first time, all 193 UN Member States now have national Websites. Between 2012 and 2014, the number of countries offering mobile apps and mobile portals doubled to almost 50 countries. Only 46 Member States have dedicated data portals. In November 2013, the United Nations Volunteers programme announced that UN DESA was one of the ten winners of the “Online Volunteering Award 2013” in recognition of the effort undertaken by the United Nations E-Government Survey 2014 Data Team led by the E-Government Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management.

The Government and the private sector have basically similar goals and that when they work together to identify the optimal development policy aims for their country, and effect policy measures to achieve these goals, the full potentialities of the country are realized. There is need to strengthen civil society, which includes participation of stakeholders and beneficiaries in development. *A universal set of principles for defining good governance can be fashioned. In addition, these principles can be usefully applied to help deal with current governance challenges.*

