

Principles of Good Governance

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with the peculiarities of polling data application in evaluating public authorities' adherence to the good governance principles. Opportunities and threats of soft and polling data implementation are highlighted considering the possible interests of the main stakeholders of the governance process. Evaluation of 12 good governance principles realization on public opinion basis has been analyzed, while the most relevant methods of raw data collecting have been identified, taking into account the peculiarities of main target audiences: citizens, civil servants and civil society organizations representatives.

Keywords: Principles, good governance, public authorities and civil society

INTRODUCTION

Ten years ago, in 2008, the Council of Europe adopted the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level, including also the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance [1,2]. The Strategy and the Principles were agreed earlier at the 2007 Ministerial Conference in Valencia, Spain. The 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance encapsulate

fundamental values defining a common vision of democratic governance in Europe [3,4]. Using the 12 Principles as a reference point can help public authorities at any level measure and improve the quality of their governance and enhance service delivery to citizens [5,6].

12 Principles of Good Governance

- Participation, Representation, Fair Conduct of Elections
- Responsiveness
- Efficiency and Effectiveness
- Openness and Transparency
- Rule of Law
- Ethical Conduct
- Competence and Capacity
- Innovation and Openness to Change
- Sustainability and Long-term Orientation
- Sound Financial Management
- Human rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion
- Accountability

How the municipalities can adhere to the 12 principles in their activity? In order to help local authorities understand and implement the Principles, the Centre of Expertise has developed criteria and indicators for each one in order to ensure that "what gets measured, gets done!" Each municipality can now measure and score itself against the indicators, which allow them to identify their strengths and

weaknesses [7]. A municipality can also conduct surveys of citizens and municipal employees, and determine if the self-evaluation is in line with public opinion. Finally, a municipality can develop an action plan to address any weak point - for example, develop a code of ethics in order to raise awareness of ethical conduct and prevent corruption.

Is there any incentive system to recognize achievements of municipalities?

Municipalities, which are able to demonstrate adherence to the 12 Principles, can be recognized by receiving the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELOGE). The Label is symbolized by a crystal dodecahedron, each facet of which is engraved with one of the 12 Principles [8]. National authorities, associations or other relevant bodies can award the Label if they have accreditation from the Council of Europe. As of today, ELOGE was or is being awarded in Bulgaria, Norway, Malta, Spain, Greece, and Poland. Several other countries, including Ireland, France, Portugal, Ukraine, Italy, and various institutions have piloted the project and are applying for accreditations [9]. The feedback from local authorities that have used the ELOGE benchmark so far is very positive and inspiring - they encourage all of their colleagues to use the 12 Principles and to spread good governance across Europe [10]. The Centre of Expertise is available to provide any relevant support and training. Recently the terms "governance" and "good governance" are being increasingly used in development literature. Bad governance is being increasingly regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within our societies. Major donors and international financial institutions are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms that ensure "good governance" are undertaken [10]. This article tries to explain, as simply as possible, what "governance" and "good governance" means. Governance The concept of "governance" is not new [11]. It is as old as human civilization. Simply put "governance" means: the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Since governance is the process of decisionmaking and the process by which decisions are implemented, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors involved in decision-making and

implementing the decisions made and the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at and implement the decision. Government is one of the actors in governance [12]. Other actors involved in governance vary depending on the level of government that is under discussion. In rural areas, for example, other actors may include influential land lords, associations of peasant farmers, cooperatives, NGOs, researchinstitutes, religious leaders, finance institutions political parties, the military etc. The situation in urban areas is much more complex. Figure 1 provides the interconnections between actors involved in urban governance [12]. At the national level, in addition to the above actors, media, lobbyists, international donors, multi-national corporations, etc. may play a role in decisionmaking or in influencing the decision-making process. All actors other than government and the military are grouped together as part of the "civil society." In some countries in addition to the civil society, organized crime syndicates also influence decision-making, particularly in urban areas and at the national level. Similarly formal government structures are one means by which decisions are arrived at and implemented. At the national level, informal decision-making structures, such as "kitchen cabinets" or informal advisors may exist. In urban areas, organized crime syndicates such as the "land Mafia" may influence decision-making. In some rural areas locally powerful families may make or influence decision-making. Such, informal decision-making is often the result of corrupt practices or leads to corrupt practices. Good Governance Good governance has 8 major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society [11].

Participation

Participation by both men and women is a key cornerstone of good governance. Participation could be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives. It is important to point out that representative democracy does not necessarily mean that the concerns of the most vulnerable in society would be taken into consideration in decision making [1]. Participation needs to be informed and organized. This means freedom of association and expression on the one hand and an organized civil society on the other hand. Rule of law Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially. It also requires full protection of human rights,

particularly those of minorities. Impartial enforcement of laws requires an independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police force. Transparency means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations [4]. It also means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. It also means that enough information is provided and that it is provided in easily understandable forms and media. Responsiveness Good governance requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe [6].

Characteristics of good governance

Consensus oriented

There are several actors and as many view- points in a given society. Good governance requires mediation of the different interests in society to reach a broad consensus in society on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved. It also requires a broad and long-term

perspective on what is needed for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goals of such development. This can only result from an understanding of the historical, cultural and social contexts of a given society or community[6].

Equity and inclusiveness

A society's well- being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society.

This requires all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well- being [10].

Effectiveness and efficiency

Good governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal.

The concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment [12].

Accountability

Accountability is a key requirement of good governance. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Who is accountable to whom varies depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or institution. In general an organization or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or

actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law. Good governance means- that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment [2].

In national governments

Good governance in the context of countries is a broad term, and in that regards, it is difficult to find a unique definition. According to [7] there are two dimensions to qualify governance as good or bad: the capacity of the state and the bureaucracy's autonomy. They both complement, in the sense that when the state is more capable, for instance through the collection of taxes, there should be more autonomy because the bureaucrats are able to conduct things well without being instructed with a lot of details. In less capable states, however, less discretion and more rules setting are desirable. Another way to think about good governance is through outcomes. Since governments carry out with goals like the provision of public goods to its citizens, there is no better way to think about good governance other than through deliverables, which are precisely the one demanded by citizens, like security, health, education, water, the enforcement of contracts, protection to property, protection to the environment

and their ability to vote and get paid fair wages [7]. Similarly, good governance might be approximated with provision of public services in an efficient manner, higher participation given to certain groups in the population like the poor and the minorities, the guarantee that citizens have the opportunity of checks and balances on the government, the establishment and enforcement of norms for the protection of the citizens and their property and the existence of independent judiciary systems. [4] in his review of Rothstein's book "The quality of government: corruption, social trust, and inequality in international perspective" mentions that the author relates good governance to the concept of impartiality, which is basically when the bureaucrats perform their tasks following the public interest rather than their self-interest. Lawson differs with him in that this impartial application of law ignores important factors like the economic liberalism, which matters due to its relation with economic growth

In local governments

Good governance is argued to be the most important in local governments. It tries to promote more relationships between government and: Empowered citizens
Neighborhood councils
Community councils

Good governance with local government aims to increase civil engagement with more members of the community in order to get the best options that serves the people.

In scientific exploration

Before there can be scientific experimentation, organizations must be compliant with good governance, meaning that testing must be moral and practical. Many research organizations such as SPICE (Stratospheric Particle Injection for Climate Engineering), a geoengineering research project that was formed in the U.K., was required to go through stages of evaluation before testing could be conducted if they were to be funded by stakeholders. In 2011 SPICE made plans to experiment with solar radiation. The method for this experiment included injecting stratospheric sulfur aerosols into the Earth's atmosphere. The

criteria or "stage-gate" that they must pass before performing their experiment included the following; identify safe and principle risks, test must be compliant with relevant regulations, future applications and impacts, and mechanisms put in place to review these in the light of new information, and that the stakeholders must be regarded and taken into account. Before research can be conducted in the field of geoengineering it must be scrutinized using good governance to ensure testing isn't harmful to the environment and to detail all the possible risks that may occur.

Reform and standards

Three institutions can be reformed to promote good governance: the state, the private sector and civil

society. However, among different cultures, the need and demand for reform can vary depending on the priorities of

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that country's society. A variety of country level initiatives and international movements put emphasis on various types of governance reform. Each movement for reform establishes criteria for what they consider good governance

United Nations

The United Nations (UN) is playing an increasing role in good governance. According to former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, "Good governance is ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law; strengthening democracy; promoting transparency and capacity in public administration." To implement this, the UN follows eight principles: Participation - People should be able to voice their own opinions through legitimate immediate organizations or representatives. Rule of Law - Legal framework should be enforced impartially, especially on human right laws. Consensus Oriented - Mediates differing interests to meet the broad consensus on the best interests of a

International Monetary Fund

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was created at a United Nations (UN) conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. In 1996, the IMF declared "promoting good governance in all its aspects, including by ensuring the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector, and tackling corruption, as essential elements

World Bank

The World Bank introduced the concept in its 1992 report entitled "Governance and Development". According to the document, good governance is an essential complement to sound economic policies and is central to creating and sustaining an environment which fosters strong and equitable development. For

Main article: Worldwide Governance Indicators

The Worldwide Governance Indicators is a program funded by the World Bank to measure the quality of governance of over 200 countries. It uses six dimensions of governance for their measurements, Voice

Effects

International humanitarian funding

Good governance defines an ideal that is difficult to achieve in full, though it is

Akinyi

based on their own needs and agendas. The following are examples of good governance standards for prominent organizations in the international community.

community. Equity and Inclusiveness - People should have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being. Effectiveness and Efficiency - Processes and institutions should be able to produce results that meet the needs of their community while making the best of their resources. Accountability - Governmental institutions, private sectors, and civil society organizations should be held accountable to the public and institutional stakeholders. Transparency - Information should be accessible to the public and should be understandable and monitored. Responsiveness - Institutions and processes should serve all stakeholders.

of a framework within which economies can prosper". The IMF feels that corruption within economies is caused by the ineffective governance of the economy, either too much regulation or too little regulation. To receive loans from the IMF, countries must have certain good governance policies, as determined by the IMF, in place.

the World Bank, good governance consists of the following components: capacity and efficiency in public sector management, accountability, legal framework for development, and information and transparency. Worldwide Governance Indicators.

& Accountability, Political Stability and Lack of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. They have been studying countries since 1996 [19].

something development supporters consider donating to causes. Major

donors and international financial institutions, like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or World Bank, are basing their aid and loans on the

condition that the recipient undertake reforms ensuring good governance. This is mostly due to the close link between poor governance and corruption [21].

Democratization

Because concepts such as civil society, decentralisation, peaceful conflict management and accountability are often used when defining the concept of good governance, the definition of good governance promotes many ideas that closely align with effective democratic governance. Not surprisingly, emphasis on good governance can sometimes be

equated with promoting democratic government. However, a 2011 literature review analyzing the link between democracy and development by Alina Rocha Menocal of the Overseas Development Institute stresses the inconclusiveness of evidence on this relationship.

Example

A good example of this close association, for some actors, between western democratic governance and the concept of good governance is the following statement made by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Nigeria on August 12, 2009: Again, to refer to President Obama's speech, what Africa needs is not more strong men, it needs more strong democratic institutions that will stand the test of time. (Applause.) Without good governance, no amount of oil or no amount of aid, no amount of effort can guarantee Nigeria's success. But with

good governance, nothing can stop Nigeria. It's the same message that I have carried in all of my meetings, including my meeting this afternoon with your president. The United States supports the seven-point agenda for reform that was outlined by President Yar'Adua. We believe that delivering on roads and on electricity and on education and all the other points of that agenda will demonstrate the kind of concrete progress that the people of Nigeria are waiting for.

Role of political parties

Researchers at the Overseas Development Institute have criticized past studies of good governance to place too little importance on developing political parties, their capacity and their ties to their grassroots supporters. While political parties play a key role in well-functioning democracies, elsewhere political parties are disconnected from voters and dominated by elites, with few incentives or capabilities to increase the representation of other voters. Political parties can play a key role in pivotal moments of a state's development, either negatively (e.g. organizing and instigating violence) or positively (e.g. by leading dialogue in a fractured society). While

differences in the electoral system play their role in defining the number of parties and their influence once in power (proportional, first past the post, etc.), the funding and expertise available to parties also plays an important role not only in their existence, but their ability to connect to a broad base of support. While the United Nations Development Program and the European Commission have been providing funds to political parties since the 1990s, there are still calls to increase the support for capacity development activities including the development of party manifestos, party constitutions and campaigning skills.

Scholarly approaches

Nayef Al-Rodhan, in his 2009 book *Sustainable History and the Dignity of Man: A Philosophy of History and Civilisational Triumph*, proposed eight minimum criteria for ensuring good national governance. Al-Rodhan's eight

minimum criteria are: 1) participation, equity, and inclusiveness, 2) rule of law, 3) separation of powers, 4) free, independent, and responsible media, 5) government legitimacy, 6) accountability, 7) transparency, and 8) limiting the

distorting effect of money in politics. In the book, he argues that good national governance is an important component in creating a history of sustainability for the human race. For Al-Rodhan, the eight minimal criteria of good governance are expressions of the fundamental values of democracy and more liberal constitutionalism. The Tuskegee Study from 1932 to 1972 led to the signing of the National Research Act. This law outlined basic ethical ways in which research is to be carried out. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW) made regulations that required voluntary agreements for anyone who was to take

part in their studies. Governance is used in scientific studies to ensure that policies are safe and ethical when studies are being done on human subjects. After the National Research Act there have been other organizations put in place such as the Ethics Advisory Board, which reviews biomedical research. Many federal agencies adopted the Federal Policy for Protection of Human Rights in 1991. In 1995 President Bill Clinton established the National Bioethics Advisory Commission led by the Department of Health and Human Services with the task of reviewing regulations and policies to ensure the safety of research volunteers.

Criticism

According to Sam Agere, "The discretionary space left by the lack of a clear well-defined scope for what governance encompasses allows users to choose and set their own parameters." In the book *Contesting 'good' governance*, Eva Poluha and Mona Rosendahl contest standards that are common to western democracy as measures of "goodness" in government. By applying political anthropological methods, they conclude that while governments believe they apply concepts of good governance while making decisions, cultural differences can cause conflict with the heterogeneous standards of the international community. An additional source of good governance criticism is *The Intelligent Person's Guide to Good Governance*, written by Surendra Munshi. Munshi's work was created in order to "revive" good governance. Many individuals tend to either wave away and be bored with the idea of governance, or not have a clue to what it has at all. This book is a

generalized discussion on what the purpose of good governance is and how it serves that purpose throughout our society. Munshi targets the book toward anyone doing research or just simply "those concerned with the issue of governance". *Rethinking Systems: Configurations of Politics and Policy in Contemporary Governance*, written by Michael P. Crozier, is another work analyzing good governance. Crozier's article discusses the different dynamics of changes that occur throughout communication systems and the effect it has on governance. The idea of various perspectives is presented throughout the article. This allows the reader to be able to see what contemporary governance is like from different viewpoints. Crozier's motive was to also create an open mindset when referring to how governance and policy within society operate, especially with the constant changes occurring day to day.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it should be clear that good governance is an ideal which is difficult to achieve in its totality. Very few countries and societies have come close to achieving good governance

in its totality. However, to ensure sustainable human development, actions must be taken to work towards this ideal with the aim of making it a reality.

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Akinyi
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