

## Governance of the Government

**Governance of Public Institutions****A Knowledge-based Vision Based on the International and Egyptian Literature**

**The concept of governance has emerged in the 1980 under the demands of international organizations, especially those working in third world countries, that economic and social development efforts in those and other States should be accompanied by integrated visions of State and social governance or good governance.**

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These visions maintain objectives and policies that promote good governance, integrates systems for transparency, accountability and combating corruption along with parallel systems that promote engaging citizens and all segment of the society in governance and setting the general policies. It, consequently, promotes justice, equality, non-discrimination and all kinds of freedom in all societies.

These calls and demands were accompanied by developments and interactive deliberations since 1980s, prompting the development of new types of accountable, educated, responsive and open-minded government organizations in their communities. The term "governance in government institutions" emerged for the first time in the International Bank literature in 1989 as a negative corollary of different forms of corruption and mismanagement and their impact on the development conditions supported by the bank via its projects in many developing countries, especially in Africa.

In 1992, the International Bank directly linked Governance

to Development Management style. Governance or good governance is closely linked to accountability issues, especially in the government sector, and the promotion of decentralisation as well as developing the legislative frameworks that promote the development and improve the mechanisms of providing and exchanging information in the society to promote transparency, combating corruption and achieving the interest.

The International Bank has, moreover, defined Governance as the way through which power in the management of socio-economic resources of the state is exercised. It has set three dimensions for good governance: the form of the political system (the structures and institutions), managing of the political process (taking decisions for exploiting the resources of the country to achieve development), and the State's ability for planning and implementing the right policies. Therefore, promoting governance becomes the direct equivalent of obtaining development assistance or investments from lending agencies, and consequently linking it with adopting new policies by the states.



The International Bank supports the countries it deals with to establish institutions that are capable, efficient, open, inclusive and accountable, which is vital for sustainable development, and occupies a central position of the two goals of the International Bank, i.e. eradicating abject poverty and promoting shared prosperity. Consequently, the States having strong institutions thrive via creating an environment conducive to the development of the private sector, reducing poverty, offering valuable services and earning the trust of their citizens – a trust that exists whenever people can participate in decision making, and know that they will be listened to.

Furthermore, Governance is concerned with engaging individuals and NGOs in general policy making, decision making and assessing the performance of government institutions towards offering high quality public services – a process that allows institutions of all kinds to develop their international impact.

In 1997, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) extended the concept of governance to encompass more inclusive and diverse societal dimensions, defining it as: The exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage the affairs of a society at all levels. Such definition includes complex mechanisms, such as the instruments and institutions, through which citizens and groups can express their interests, exercise their legal rights, honour their obligations and accept mediation to settle their differences.

Therefore, governance is a management system and style that governs the relationships among the key players that impact the performance in the institution, whether governmental or non-governmental. It also includes the administrative prerequisites for the long-term success and strengthening of the institution and assigning responsibilities while maintain the rights of all stakeholders.

The UNDP provided another up-to-date definition of governance or good governance in 2004 as “the system of values, policies and institutions through which society manages its economic, political and social affairs via the interaction among the State, the civil society and the private sector”. The programme has focused on important dimensions of governance such as broader participation, transparency, decentralisation and the role of women, while linking governance to the goals of development.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has adopted a more general and broader concept of governance, namely the human development, which focuses on individuals rather than the State. The Programme believes that good governance can be defined as the process of decision-making and decision implementation. It, therefore, includes formal and informal dimensions, and - from a technical perspective – governance is the exercise of economic, political and administrative powers to manage the affairs of the groups, including mechanisms and processes through which individuals and groups can express their interests and preferences, enjoy their legal rights and settle their differences. That is, they are focused on the management of the affairs of the State and the society in all domains.

The United Nations Development Programme stresses the importance of peace-making and effective governance that is based on respecting human rights and the rule of law through

sound institutions that support accountable and accessible institutions implementing the rule of law and human rights, thereby, enhancing the potentials for lasting peace and a sustainable development for all.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development identifies certain key features for good governance which are related to the performance of responsibilities by various State authorities. It defines them as “performing the political, economic, administrative authorities required to manage the affairs of the State.” Good governance can be identified via inclusion, transparency, accountability, rule of law, efficiency, equality among other things.

The American Society for Auditors, moreover, has defined it as the policies and procedures used to guide the activities of the State institution, ensure achieving its goals and operations in a responsible and ethical manner, and achieve the desired objectives via carrying out the activities that guarantee the credibility of the government and justice in providing the services while maintaining the appropriate and ethical behaviour of government officials to reduce the risks of administrative and financial corruption.

From an institutional perspective, the Information and Decision Center Support defines Good Governance as “good administration of all State’s institutions through policies, procedures and practices that are based on the principles of governance.”

The center emphasises that the principles of Governance are “transparency, inclusion, accountability, rule of law, combating corruption, the pursuit for justice, non-discrimination among citizens and responding to their needs, seeking efficiency to take the policies and services to the highest level of effectiveness and quality towards citizens’ satisfaction.”

The concept of “Governance of the Government” has, therefore, developed from a mere governance of a project financed by the International Bank to the governance of the development administration of the State which was followed by the emergence of accountability issues in the government sector, promoting decentralisation, developing legislative frameworks, improving mechanisms of providing and exchanging information in the society to promote transparency and combat corruption, and achieving the public interest of the society. It, then, was further developed by implementing the inclusion of individuals and NGOs in the general policy and decision making process, and assessing the performance of the government. The definition of governance was further expanded to include more comprehensive and varied social dimensions: the United Nations Development Programme adopted a broader and a more comprehensive definition of Governance represented in the concept of human development that focuses on individuals. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development linked Governance with the performance of different State’s authorities of their responsibilities leading to the emergence of a new style for managing government institutions as the Information and Decision Support Center defines it as good administration of all State’s institutions through policies, procedures and practices that are based on transparency, inclusion, accountability, rule of law, combating corruption, justice, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness.

**Promoting Governance becomes the direct equivalent of obtaining development assistance or investments from lending agencies, and consequently linking it with adopting new policies by the states. The International Bank supports the countries it deals with to establish institutions that are capable, efficient, open, inclusive and accountable, which is vital for sustainable development.**

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