

Good governance at the local level

Good Governance and Peacebuilding



The Hague Academy *for*
local governance

Learning objectives



At the end of the module participants will be able to:

- ▶ Describe the principles of good governance
- ▶ Distinguish between government and governance
- ▶ Explain the link between good governance and the SDGs
- ▶ Give examples of how the principles of good governance can be applied at the local level

Speaker's note:

Explain the learning objectives of this session.

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

What does good governance mean to you? Discuss in pairs (5 min)



Speaker's note:

- Ask the participants to discuss their thoughts on 'good governance' with their neighbour (5 min)
- Ask a few pairs to share what they discussed and write their input on a flipchart (5 min)
- Link the reflections of the participants to the definitions provided in the next three slides

Time: 10 minutes

Background information:

GOVERNANCE

The exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels.

It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences (UNDP, 1997).

Speaker's note:

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

UNDP 1997 policy paper

What does good governance mean?

- ▶ It concerns norms of **behaviour** that help ensuring that governments actually **deliver to their citizens the economic policies** that say they will deliver (Asian Development Bank, 1995).
- ▶ The combination of **transparent and accountable institutions**, strong **skills and competence**, and a fundamental **willingness to do the right thing**. Those enable a government to **deliver services** to its people **efficiently** (World Bank 2006).
- ▶ Governing systems which are **capable, responsive, inclusive, and transparent**. It entails meaningful and **inclusive political participation** (UNDP, 2011).

Speaker's note:

- Explain that there is no single definition of good governance and run through these definitions.
- Stress that good governance is about the processes for making and implementing decisions. It's not about making 'correct' decisions, but about the best possible process for making those decisions.

Time: 5 minutes

Background information:

Characteristics of good governance (UN)



PARTICIPATION



RULE OF
LAW



CONSENSUS
ORIENTED



EFFECTIVENESS
AND EFFICIENCY



EQUITY AND
INCLUSIVENESS



TRANSPARENCY



ACCOUNTABILITY



RESPONSIVENESS

Speaker's note:

- Share these 8 characteristics of good governance as defined by the UN in 2009
- Compare the characteristics of this list by the UN to the ones of the participants

Time: 10 minutes

Background information:

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
(<https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf>)

- Good governance is accountable

Accountability is a fundamental requirement of good governance. Local government has an obligation to **report, explain** and **be answerable** for the consequences of decisions it has made on behalf of the community it represents.

- Good governance is transparent

People should be able to **follow and understand the decision-making process**. This means that they will be able to clearly see **how and why** a decision was made – what information, advice and consultation council considered, and which legislative

requirements (when relevant) council followed.

- Good governance follows the rule of law

This means that decisions are **consistent with relevant legislation** or common law and are within the powers of council.

- Good governance is responsive

Local government should always try to **serve the needs of the entire community** while **balancing competing interests** in a timely, appropriate and responsive manner.

- Good governance is equitable and inclusive

A community's wellbeing results from **all of its members feeling their interests have been considered** by council in the decision-making process. This means that all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, should have opportunities to participate in the process.

- Good governance is effective and efficient

Local government should implement decisions and follow processes that make the **best use of the available people, resources and time** to ensure the best possible results for their community.

- Good governance is participatory

Anyone affected by or interested in a decision should have the opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision. This can happen in several ways – community members may be provided with **information**, asked for their **opinion**, given the opportunity to make **recommendations** or, in some cases, be **part of the actual decision-making** process.

It is important to remember that under the *Local Government Act 1989* the council is required to either make decisions or delegate the decision-making power to officers or Special Committees. For more information see [How decisions are made](#).

Group work (15 min)

What is needed for local governments in Ethiopia to fulfil the standards of good governance?



Speaker's note:

- Divide the participants into groups of 4-6 and explain this activity (3 min)
- Ask them to discuss this question (10 min)
- Each group gets one minute to report back in plenary (7 min)

Time: 20 minutes

Background information:



Speaker's note:

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

The Sustainable Development Goals are an ambitious set of 17 development goals and 169 targets to be achieved by 2030 that were defined and developed through an unprecedented dialogue among UN Member States, local authorities, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders.

Good governance & the SDGs



“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”

- ▶ Target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
- ▶ Target 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms
- ▶ Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- ▶ Target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

Speaker's note:

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

SDG 16 refers to effective accountable and inclusive institutions, which is a reference to good governance principles. It also links good governance explicitly to peaceful societies. In other words, the argument is made that good governance promotes peace. If you go into the targets, the link to good governance becomes even clearer.

Implications for Local Governments

- ▶ From government to governance
- ▶ Engaging community
- ▶ Use of partnerships
- ▶ Focus on inclusiveness
- ▶ More intelligent customers
- ▶ Joined-up working – horizontal communications
- ▶ Delegation of power
- ▶ Managing performance to deliver excellence

Speaker's note:

Time: *to be added by trainer according to planning*

Background information:

Adapted from the leadership presentation by John Jackson

Government to governance: Today Governance is distinct from Government. Governance is a way to manage power and policy, while government is an instrument to do so. Governance is seen as an alternative to conventional top-down government control, yet issues of legitimacy and accountability abound in the literature on governance. "Governance clearly embraces government institutions, but it also subsumes informal, non-governmental institutions operating within the public realm" (Bøås, 1998 quoted by Weiss, 2000).

Engaging community: citizens need to be involved in government decision making

Use of partnerships: Local governments cannot solve complex social problems alone, they need to enter partnerships with NGOs, private sector, other governmental agencies, universities, international organisations, etc.

Focus on inclusiveness: governance for all, particularly vulnerable and marginalised

communities

More intelligent customers: citizens are more educated and informed and as a consequence expect more

Joined-up working – horizontal communications: to solve problems that cross municipal boundaries, inter-municipal cooperation is important

Delegation of power: delegate responsibilities to NGOs, implementing agencies, private companies, etc.

Managing performance to deliver excellence: a focus on measuring and improving effectiveness (key performance indicators, customer satisfaction). Putting the 'consumer' experience at the centre

- ▶ **What concrete effects might good governance have on the relationship between government and citizens in Ethiopia?**



Speaker's note:

Discuss the question on the side plenary.

Time: 10 minutes

Background information:

Questions/reflections?



Speaker's note:

- Summarise the content of the session
- Ask if there are any outstanding questions

Time: 5 minutes

Background information: