

Literature Review: Public Governance in Service of Sustainable Development in the Era of New Public Management

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Abstract

Governance and the effectiveness of public administration are considered indispensable tools for achieving, among other things, governments' objectives for sustainable development. This research examines the contribution of governance to reducing constraints hindering sustainable development and its management approach through a literature review, aiming to achieve a higher level of development mastery that reconciles economy, environment, and society, through Public Governance. Through our conceptual literature review, it is noteworthy that a significant impact link exists between public governance and sustainable development. Public governance, when coupled with effective public management—and in our case, the principles of New Public Management (NPM)—enables a more efficient achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This synergy between governance and management fosters greater coordination, resource allocation, and policy implementation, which are crucial for addressing the multidimensional challenges of sustainable development.

Keywords : Public Governance, Sustainable Development, New Public Management, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Classification JEL : H83

Paper type : Theoretical Research

1. Introduction

Since the 1980s, sustainable development (SD) and governance have received significant attention. Although the demand for more sustainable political and institutional compromises is gaining momentum and strengthening, governance, identified as a system of government substitution or collaborative management (Jessop, 1997; Kooiman, 1993; Rhodes, 1997), is essential for addressing sustainable development challenges.

Sustainable development provides a framework for reconciling economic growth, social integration, and environmental preservation (Zeijl-Rozema et al., 2007: 1–2).

From this perspective, governance is seen as a "new configuration" among the state, the market, and civil society, crucial for addressing sustainable development issues beyond conventional government norms based on hierarchical power (Zeijl-Rozema et al., 2007).

It is commonly recognized that poor governance quality hinders financial development and economic growth (Kaufman, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2009); what about sustainable development across all dimensions?

For governance to play a significant role in sustainable development, according to Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi (2010), a common consensus on governance definition must be reached. However, in all definitions, only rules, coercive mechanisms, and organization are emphasized.

Therefore, it is essential to question the impact of Public Governance on the deployment of Sustainable Development in the era of New Public Management (NPM), which adopts a holistic and participatory approach, does it respond to the challenges of Sustainable Development Goals?

Several theoretical and empirical studies have analyzed the issue of sustainable development and its socio-economic and environmental impact, particularly for developing countries. However, few studies, to our knowledge, have examined the potential impact of public governance on sustainable development in the era of New Public Management. First, let us recall our problem statement:

To what extent does the impact of public governance influence the implementation of sustainable development in the era of New Public Management (NPM)? In this regard, we pose the following research questions:

- a. How will public governance address the challenges of sustainable development?
- b. In what ways will public governance influence the quality of the implementation of sustainable development goals?
- c. What are the benefits of effective and efficient NPM in relation to sustainable development?

Accordingly, this study was undertaken to address the aforementioned questions through a literature review (Tashakkori, Teddie, 1998).

To address our issue, we will first define sustainable development by recalling its objectives. Then, we will recall the notion of public governance before delving into the theoretical review of studies that have found the link between the two concepts: public governance and sustainable development. Finally, we will discuss the results obtained.

2. Theoretical Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

• Sustainable Development

The concept of Sustainable Development (SD) was chronologically suggested by the report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland

Commission), in a document titled "Our Common Future". This conceptualization advocates that development requires anticipation and preparation with the aim of "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own" (Brundtland et al., 1987).

Initially, the notion of sustainable development is challenging, according to Martens (2006), who emphasizes that by principle, sustainable development must deal with various temporal and spatial dimensions, thus requiring a variety of stakeholders.

Indeed, sustainable development is not a single and precisely defined concept, and many statuses and interpretations remain. Hueting and Reijnders (2004) support the idea that sustainability is framed by natural constraints that can be delimited and specified scientifically.

In fact, while the very first official interpretation of SD, established by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), emphasizes development meeting present needs without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet theirs, the roots of sustainable development are nonetheless subject to environmental dilemmas, its modern and common reading includes ecological, economic, and social dimensions.

The United Nations has played a crucial role in promoting sustainable development globally, starting with the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1972. Subsequent steps include the adoption and ratification of Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration, the Rio+20 Conference, and the 2030 Agenda through the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set universal standards for common engagement among countries and stakeholders. Consequently, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 SDGs was ratified at the time of the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September 2015 (UN, 2015).

In this vein, it is worth noting that each goal (or objective) is associated with one to three indicators to assess progress towards their achievement. Ultimately, 232 agreed-upon indicators will qualify the assessment of each of the 17 main goals (UN, 2019).

Despite the diversity of methods regarding sustainable development and the variety of their bases, a significant portion of authors claim to agree on the circumstance that sustainable development is consistent with the quest for a new development model. It is rooted at the intersection of three essential bases according to Bansal (2002):

- An economic principle that demands and prescribes intelligent, measured use of resources "to maintain a reasonable standard of living" without jeopardizing the future of future generations;
- An ecological norm that states that civil society must keep these resources safe;
- A social foundation implying that everyone must be satisfied impartially.

However, we can observe some overlapping elements and some evident divergences. For example, achieving zero hunger, clean water and sanitation, economic growth, and industry may be in disagreement with SDGs 13, 14, and 15, respectively: Climate Action - Life Below Water and Life on Land. Consequently, some of these incompatibilities were identified at COP26 in Glasgow (BBC News, 2021).

The position of companies regarding sustainable development (SD) covers a wide spectrum, ranging from the most classic inaction to the pursuit of some form of leadership in the field, encompassing all the intermediate forms of commitment, adaptation, or imitation. The strategy chosen will be determined by a complex combination of economic factors, particularly competitive ones, socio-ethical principles, and social perceptions, where the ability of actors to understand the complexity of environmental issues and give them meaning becomes central (Pasquero, 2002). Faced with the same societal challenges, the position of

companies, otherwise similar, can vary significantly. The issue of SD thus offers researchers multiple opportunities for analysis.

However, the field presents significant challenges. The inherent uncertainties of the SD concept place both managers and researchers in the unique context of an activity that has yet to find definitive references, and whose components may maintain relationships that are both difficult to grasp and ever-changing. Managers thus face the problem of operationalizing a constantly evolving concept, while researchers must link emerging management practices to socio-political evolution. We review some challenges that this situation poses for management research.

- **Governance and Public Governance**

The transition from governmentality to governance according to Berger (2003) highlights the shift from a centralized, top-down, and state-centric decision-making model to decentralized arrangements emphasizing a confusing structure and network of state and non-state actors (Bulkeley et al., 2003, p. 237).

The United Nations Development Programme (1997) similarly integrates governance as: "the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels, it includes mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, fulfill their obligations, and mediate their differences." It has also identified crucial attributes of good governance such as responsiveness, consensus orientation, and equity.

Currently, there is no unanimity on a definition of public governance; nevertheless, a large majority of international organizations have endeavored to clarify the notion. The various definitions of public governance proposed by these organizations are presented in Appendix A, including definitions from the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the European Commission, and finally the International Monetary Fund.

Similarly, these organizations have conducted evaluations of public governance through a number of indicators; we will focus on those emanating from the World Bank and the OECD (Appendix B).

Governance falls within a more descriptive framework as it stems from a formulation indexed to a particular historical reality from which it is inseparable, as it aims to account for it. Speaking of territorial governance, as soon as it involves specifying how and under what conditions a type of public action is likely to develop in our societies, implies indeed the production of a historically grounded concept. (Duran, 2001, p. 374). The programmatic use of governance seeks more to make it a means of formulating hypotheses about changes in the role of the state and the transformations in forms of coordination against the backdrop of major economic, political, and social transformations (globalization, transformation of capitalism, Europeanization, decentralization, etc.) (Pinson, 2003). Governance here does not refer to specific modes of action and coordination but to a research project that hypothesizes that forms of collective action in a variety of fields—public action, production and economic exchanges, collective action, etc.—are shaped by processes of hybridization, transfers from one domain to another, and rearticulation. P. Le Galès thus presents 'governance' as: A research project concerning the forms of coordination, steering, and management of sectors, groups, and society, beyond the traditional organs of government. (Le Galès, 2004, p. 242). Public governance is apprehended in various ways, generally embodying the interests and objectives of the organizations that issue them (Fabre et al., 2007).

Beyond the principle of governance, these organizations lean towards the notion of "good governance"; indeed, according to studies by the World Bank (1991) and the OECD DAC (1993), the manifestation of good governance has intensified alongside a transformation in

public authority and social order.

In fact, "good governance," according to the World Bank, and as described in the research of Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi (2006), includes fundamental characteristics, among others: efficiency and effectiveness, participation, and accountability, while the Council of Europe has circumscribed good governance in terms of twelve characteristics. These intertwine and associate various components of 'good practices' concerning public administration (Appendix C). Therefore, regardless of the indicators, approaches, or processes, an international consensus is quite explicit about the need to promote good governance as a pillar of development.

- **Public Governance and Sustainable Development**

Several theoretical and empirical researches have been conducted on the issue of governance and its impact on sustainable development, such as the article by Andrew Massey (2021), which has demonstrated through its research that without a sufficient number of trained, competent, and honest public administrators, none of the other SDGs is widely achievable, meaning that none of the other 15 SDGs can be achieved without the coordination and implementation of SDGs 16 and 17. It should be noted that goals 16 and 17 are at the heart of public administration and the provision of good governance. The same research also concludes that it is crucial to recognize already that significant political issues and definitions of good governance are socially constructed and culturally linked, and that seeking to impose a single version on all others is a risk of failure.

In the same vein, other empirical research, notably that of Taner Güney (2016), who tried to find the correlation between public governance and sustainable development while trying to explain it, found that there is a proportional relationship between sustainable development and public administration. This relationship is not linear; according to Güney (2016), if public relations are not aware of sustainable development, this article also confirmed the existence of the impact of governance on the implementation of sustainable development goals at the level of developing countries and at the level of developed countries, empirically. It concludes that sustainable development depends on the improvement of the effectiveness of particular factors, notably volunteers, manufacturers' awareness, and increased efforts by politicians.

The article of Caiado, R. G., et al. (2018) tries to provide answers to the potential constraints encountered during the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, going beyond the impact of governance on development.

There is a mutual relationship between the two (In other words, sustainable development and its conception also have an impact on the establishment of good governance enabling the achievement of the 17 goals). Just like Sachs (2012), who highlights that sustainable development goals must include precise, timely, and available data for managers, policymakers, and the public, furthermore, Malik et al. (2015) noted that sustainable development goals must be "aspirational, universal, communicable, and measurable" and must establish the cornerstones for other countries to achieve global goals between 2015 and 2030.

It is expected that the new Sustainable Development Goals and their targets - in effect since January 1, 2016 - will guide decisions over the next fifteen years and fundamentally influence international policy and available finances for sustainable development, and will therefore shape future political efforts and the dynamics of natural capital (Terama et al., 2015). Moreover, governments are expected to use these goals to combat extreme poverty and address the challenges arising from ensuring sustainable development on environmental, social, and economic fronts in their respective communities (Choi et al., 2016).

2.2 Theories

This section aims to provide insights into our research object in view of relevant theories to build a solid and legitimate framework in the existing field. Due to the absence of literature on public governance and sustainable development in the public sector, we have chosen to articulate our research within the theoretical framework of three currents that have attempted to understand the relationship between these two concepts, namely: Agency Theory, Public Choice Theory, and Stakeholder Theory.

This article focuses on the issue of public governance, which is why we will rely on public choice theory, which assumes that all human behavior is dominated by self-interest and tends to maximize wealth. Therefore, individuals prefer individual satisfaction and reasons for efficiency.

As for Agency Theory, it suggests that it is preferable for principals to be different from agents so that principals have the opportunity to control and be accountable for what is produced by agents.

Thus, many activities (such as reducing the role of the state, reducing costs, introducing market mechanisms or privatization, separating the roles of buyers from those of suppliers, decentralizing management authority, performance management, more attention to quality, etc.) are carried out by developed countries to equip a more efficient and responsible state in responding to citizen expectations (Sayidah, Mulyaningtyas & Winedar, 2015).

For Stakeholder Theory, responsibilities are constraints that logically limit goal achievement (Ansoff, 1968), all the more so as it can be recalled here that Freeman (1984) states that the concept first appeared in 1963 by Ansoff and Stewart.

It is indeed about integrating various logics that initially appear opposing, and yet all legitimate, into a common project: a project that must be structured around a "stakeholder integration capacity" of stakeholders, who ensure the creation of sustainability-generating knowledge (Sharma, 2001, p. 155).

3. Empirical literature review

3.1 Challenges of SDGs and Implementation of Sustainable Development

In order to examine the impact of public governance on the implementation of sustainable development goals, it is first necessary to recall, based on our literature review, the main challenges facing the establishment of these goals. (Table 1)

Table 1: Variables, theoretically proven, impacting the implementation of sustainable development goals, made by us

Authors	Variables	Explanations
Stafford-Smith et al. (2016)	Interconnections between the goals	Obtaining a systematic and structured overview and an integrated approach to implementing the sustainable development goals requires closer attention to the interconnections among the sustainable development goals (SDGs).
Waage et al. (2015)		Considering harmony among the well-being goals remains a significant challenge in itself; balancing the preservation of the natural environment with other quality of life imperatives can be threatened by incentives to empower the most vulnerable groups and increasing opacity.
Koehler (2016)	Fragmentation of Policies	The sustainable development goals are modest and exhibit no harmony (relative to gender disparities, among other types of disparities). Essentially, this stems from the fact that policy recommendations [...] are often few, evolving, and fragmented.

Mboumboue and Njomo (2016)	Corruption & Bureaucracy	The major barriers to the deployment of renewable energy (which falls under the implementation of one of the SDGs) were corruption and bureaucracy, consequently hindering sustainable progress and environmental preservation.
Jasovsky et al. (2016)	International Collaboration	The sustainable development goals are affected by reluctance to acknowledge an issue requiring an intersectoral response, despite the solution being proposed by the same actors: a call for strengthened international collaboration and a more equitable distribution of responsibilities.
Alleyne et al. (2015)	Adaptation	The need for nations to embrace the sustainable development goals while taking into account their specific realities.
Stevens and Kanie (2016)	Governance and Sustainability	The capacity of the sustainable development goals to reshape essential governance strategies towards sustainability remains a significant subject to address.

Source: Prepared by the authors

From this table summarizing a number of factors - according to the elaborated literature review - impacting the quality of the implementation of sustainable development goals, it emerges primarily as the challenge of finding coherence, harmony, and interconnection not only among the sustainable development goals in question but also among the strategies to be highlighted for their deployment.

Moreover, it also concerns combating classical bureaucracy causing corruption and hindering the effective deployment of the goals, and above all, adapting this harmony, once found, to the context of each country according to its specificities. Based on this initial overview of these variables, it appears that public governance could provide some answers to this kind of challenges, which is the subject of the second part.

3.2 Contributions of public governance in the era of NPM

- **Public governance serving sustainable development**

The table below presents some variables, from the collected scientific articles, on both theoretical and empirical works highlighting the contributions of governance. It is noteworthy that most of the collected articles addressed its link with the deployment of sustainable development, specifically sustainable development goals.

Table 2: What responsibility does governance have in mitigating the challenges of sustainable development? made by us

Authors	Variables	Governance serving sustainable development
Chasek and Wagner (2016)	Leadership	Sustaining the mechanism open to all relevant governments and supervisors in favor of good governance. Inspiring and fostering resilient and robust leadership capable of establishing a framework and environment of understanding and mutual reliability and credibility.
Hák et al. (2016)	Efficiency	In order to achieve an effective operationalization process - aimed at the success and completion of the entire SDG agenda - the political process plays a crucial role.
Waage et al. (2015)	Stakeholder Engagement	Involving community organizations becomes the responsibility of governments through public governance, thus facilitating the implementation of sustainable development goals, notably through alignment and synergies between objectives.
Gupta and Vegelin (2016) Mugagga and Nabaasa (2016)	Collaboration	Power-holders are required to go beyond the necessary level of responsibility and thus contribute to creating conditions conducive to intensified and strengthened collaboration. Collaboration and participation require strategic planning.

Mboumboue and Njomo (2016) Public	Policies & Institutional Framework	Decision-makers can establish transparent and inspiring legal prerequisites with the aim of establishing credibility in constant planning, which would encourage the adoption of new ventures. This anticipation is the responsibility of decision-makers, namely the development of robust laws.
Khalili and Duecker (2013)	Initiative Taking	Government initiatives are capable of facilitating the adaptation of strategies for sustainable management.

Source: Prepared by the authors

From this table, we were able to gather a significant number of authors and researchers who have studied the impact of governance on sustainable development, which we can consider as a response to the first table that outlines the challenges of highlighting the various sustainable development goals. Here, it essentially involves governance that monitors and controls, takes initiatives to facilitate the adaptation of strategies, anticipates and implements methods to engage as many participants and collaborators as possible through incentive mechanisms by means of responsible supervision, inspiring trust, reliability, and leadership credibility among stakeholders. These are all key factors stemming from the governance responsibility that address practically all the challenges identified in the first table.

• Overview of New Public Management (NPM)

Given that we are in a review approach to understand the impact of public governance on the effective deployment of sustainable development, it is worth recalling that New Public Management (NPM) is an approach to public administration that applies knowledge and experience gained in the field of management and other disciplines to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery in modern bureaucracies.

Moreover, New Public Management focuses on performance-oriented public sector management, rather than policy-oriented, and that is why we have chosen to recall its contributions. By observing it, we are able to find the link between this governance and sustainable development, in other words, the achievement of goals and performance as suggested by NPM, for this article, and that of achieving the 17 sustainable development goals.

The concept of New Public Management (NPM) is an important issue in public sector reform. This is because NPM concerns the concept of innovation in the public sector, which deals with changes that can be effectively applied in processes, products, services, and methods of service delivery to the public (Wicaksono, 2019). According to Hood (1991), although some NPM authors emphasize different aspects of NPM doctrine, they can actually be summarized in seven aspects.

These aspects are as follows:

- 1) “Professional management in the public sector
- 2) Performance standards and performance measures
- 3) Increased focus on outputs and outcomes
- 4) Division of work units in the public sector
- 5) Competition in the public sector
- 6) Adoption of business sector management to the public sector
- 7) Emphasis on discipline and increased savings in resource use.”

Therefore, the NPM has been accompanied by a process of decentralization and devolution in accordance with the principle of vertical subsidiarity, where agencies closer to citizens are considered capable of identifying problems and implementing solutions, which can help enhance the effectiveness of goal deployment, especially sustainable development goals.

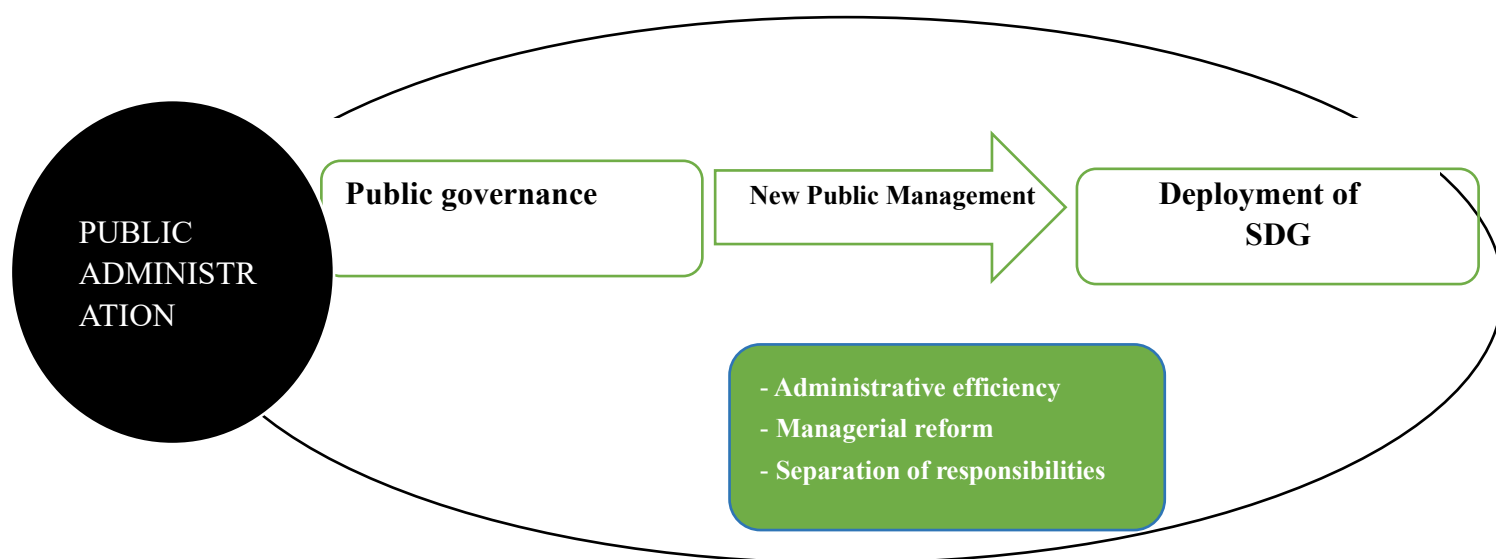
To further the discussion, network management requires clear expertise and role allocations.

The fuzzy asymmetry of power and tasks can create limitations and overlaps in the process, leaving social needs unmet and actors powerless (Barberis et al., 2019). Therefore, literature also draws attention to the clarity of sustainable development, the phase in which indicators are determined that can ultimately be used to assess their performance and the effectiveness of their goals.

However, the NPM risks causing tensions and stress among state personnel, reducing their participation in defining public services and leading to dysfunction during transition situations (Dan et Pollitt, 2014; Pollitt, 2009; Pollitt et Bouckaert, 2011). The NPM has been criticized for its opacity, vagueness, propensity for change over time, and subtlety and complexity (Christensen, Lægreid, Roness et Røvik 2007).

Through all of the above, we can outline the relationship between public governance and the effective achievement of sustainable development goals as follows:

Figure N1: The relationship between public governance and sustainable development



Source: Prepared by the authors

In this perspective, through the implementation of a new public management approach based on effective administration, managerial reform, and the separation of responsibilities between the political authority, which defines policies, and "agencies," which implement them, as well as the performance-based management of these agencies, these elements continuously contribute to the improvement of the achievement of sustainable development goals.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to try to understand the contribution of governance to the successful deployment of sustainable development by examining existing literature in this field and reinterpreting it. This research has expanded the current literature on governance, particularly public governance through New Public Management.

The study revealed that the adoption of good governance accompanied by administrative efficiency is likely to improve the implementation of sustainable development goals, given that the quality of public governance highlights the influence of public administration on the implementation of sustainable development goals.

However, the research showed that good public governance alone is insufficient to ensure the achievement of sustainable development goals. Therefore, the article concludes that the introduction of provisions emanating from the NPM is likely to influence the deployment of sustainable development goals, by bridging the prevailing logic in the public sector through

governance and accompanying it with the contributions of management reform. Consequently, an update is necessary to align with this change.

In summary, universal solutions are not always and systematically practicable, and it is crucial to harmonize personal interests with those of the community. It is imperative, then, to adapt the methods of New Public Management according to the individual structures of organizations, encouraging adaptability and individualization of approaches (Bartoli, 2005), in order to benefit from these advantages, particularly in favor of sustainable development. The NPM is not a panacea but a process that requires patience and consistency in the long term, discernment, and resolution.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Definitions of Public Governance from Global Organizations

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Governance is the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs at all levels. It relies on the complex mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and stakeholders articulate their interests, mediate their differences, and exercise their legal rights and obligations. Governance encompasses but also transcends government; it applies to all relevant actors, including the private sector and civil society organizations.
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	Governance is the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs at all levels. Governance is an objective concept that includes the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights, fulfill their obligations, and address their differences.
World Bank (WB)	La gouvernance comporte des traditions et des institutions par lesquelles l'autorité dans un pays est exercée. Cela inclut le processus par lequel les gouvernements sont choisis, contrôlés et remplacés, la capacité du gouvernement à élaborer et à appliquer d'une façon efficace des politiques saines et le respect des citoyens et de l'État pour les institutions régissant les interactions économiques et sociales entre eux.
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	Governance is a broad concept that encompasses all aspects of conducting public affairs, including economic policies and the regulatory framework.
European Commission (EC)	Governance refers to the rules, processes, and behaviors that influence the exercise of power at the European level, particularly from the perspectives of openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness, and coherence. Despite its broad and open nature, governance is a key element of policies and reforms aimed at poverty reduction, democratization, and global security.

Source: official websites of the organizations

Appendix B: Indicators of Good Public Governance

Indicators of governance according to the World Bank (WB)	Indicators of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
1) Voice and Accountability – VA; 2) Political Stability and absence of violence – PS; 3) Government Effectiveness – GE; 4) Regulatory Quality – RQ; 5) Rule of Law – RL; 6) Control of Corruption – CC.	1) The existence of the rule of law; 2) The management of the public sector; 3) The control of corruption; 4) The reduction of military expenditures.

Source: Kaufmann & al. (2010) and L'OECD (1995)

Appendix C: Principles of Good Governance According to Global Organizations

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 1997)	World Bank (1991) & OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (1993)	Council of Europe (1995)
➤ Participation, ➤ Rule of law, ➤ Responsiveness, ➤ Consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness, and efficiency, ➤ Accountability and strategic vision	➤ Effectiveness and efficiency, ➤ Rule of law, ➤ Participation, ➤ Accountability, ➤ Transparency, ➤ Respect for human rights, ➤ Combating corruption, ➤ Tolerance for diversity, ➤ Gender equality.	➤ Participation, representation, fair conduct of elections ➤ Responsiveness ➤ Effectiveness and efficiency ➤ 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

Source: Adapted from the official websites of the organizations