

ROLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN GOOD GOVERNANCE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The capacity of a state to deliver public goods and services in an effective and reliable way constitutes one of the key variables for distinguishing between “successful” and “unsuccessful” societies. Public administration reform, aiming at good governance and modernisation of the state, is not an original goal, while its implementation differs from country to country. The term “good governance” is widely being discussed and also used from all the Western Balkans Countries in drafting and implementing public reforms and strategies in the path to EU. It is a broad term that includes values and practices such as legality, justice, trust of laws and institutions, efficiency, responsible budgeting, management of human resources and crisis management. An efficient, responsive, transparent and accountable public administration is not only of paramount importance for the proper functioning of a nation, it is a central part of democratic governance and also the basic means through which government strategies to achieve the integration goals can be implemented. This study aims to define a triangle, which describes the linkage of three essential components whose role is crucial in developing a country, especially in transition.

Keywords: *Public Administration, Good governance, Local government, Reform*

INTRODUCTION

Public Administration in a brief

Issues of public administration, local governance, and participation in processes are seen to play a vital role in overarching issues of development. They are decisive for the legitimacy of the state which rests in its capacity to deliver on its political promises, and perform specific

functions. Local governance structures and public administration are essential facilitators of this responsibility. The mechanisms enacted at local levels and the administrators that comprise these systems are the channel through which policy becomes action, and by which functions and services of the state are allocated. Participation is vital to facilitating a deliberative relationship between the state and citizenry. But if we talk about participation the key element is to highlight who must be the promoter. And of course the most substantive part is the public administration, the best representative. Some experts suggest conceptualizing public administration as "an organizational structure, a system, a function, an institutional construct, procedures and processes or just a set of practices in the exercise of public authority."

It also refers to a much broader process, in which the notions of public policy and civil service are contained and sequenced, an aspect particularly important in the post-conflict reconstruction period, as a government cannot implement all components of these changes at once. Hence, phases need to be distinguished in the building or rebuilding of a public administration.

Three broad models of public administration are usually distinguished: traditional public administration; public management, including new public management (NPM); and an emerging model of responsive governance that emphasizes networks, greater openness and partnerships with civil society and the private sector. NPM is often contrasted with a more participatory local governance approach. A new approach in e-governance is also being encouraged, as a move away from the classic NPM strategy. Each model offers different principles, tools and techniques. It is important to briefly delimit notions of and interplay between administration, governance, and government. Whereas public administration deals with those bodies that comprise the core of largely appointed officials that manage public processes and policy, and government refers to those officials appointed typically to the legislature or executive, governance is the space in which these actors operate. Thus, both administration and government are actors of governance. A local public official is a city manager as a translator of political and administrative logic with significant responsibilities to align the forces of politics and administration. We must pick out some of the elements into which a public official must be/have in order to best representation.

Responsibilities: Having strong responsibility to make sure that they provide not only information to our governing bodies, but to support the processes of governance that support the representative nature of the city council. I'm not talking about getting involved in electoral politics, but in things like public hearings, discussion, and deliberation; training people in the organization to anticipate and foster participation; and building structures of participation that will be seen as legitimate.

Roles: While city governments are attempting to become more accessible to citizens to promote community building, the professions are becoming more specialized and the city government is unintentionally becoming less accessible. The Public official's role has become that of a facilitator and alliance builder, promoting and nurturing partnerships that involve city responsibilities both within the city government as well as between it and other organizations, associations, and groups. I think the most important responsibility of any manager is to manage the values of the organization and to instill a sense of responsibility in employees for them.

Values: Efficiency, is not only connected to the prudent use of resources. It also connects to professionalism and rational, analytical thinking. It underpins the value of master plans, consultant reports, and the expertise that increasingly drives public policy.

-Representation, as a value is based on the understanding that elected officials represent citizens in the absence of direct democracy.

-Social equity, underpins many moral arguments that council members hear. It is based fundamentally on the belief that there shall be no second-class citizens and that services shall be provided fairly.

-Individual Rights, The emphasis on due process in government work that goes beyond the judiciary reflects the way this value has penetrated the thinking of government officials.

Effective public administration in society implies cooperation or partnerships in which national governments work collaboratively with lower levels of public administration, the private sector, organizations of civil society, and international organizations through democratic, transparent, and participative processes. The decentralisation of political, administrative and financial, material and human resources, as well as efforts to increase popular participation, are posited as logical alternatives to older centrist state conceptions. Local governments are thus the appropriate platform to anchor cooperation and partnership between national governments and lower levels of public governance and administration in driving the localisation and acceleration of public sector capacity to support sustainable local development. Strengthening the capacity of public local public administration to promote socially equitable economic growth and combat poverty in a climate change compliant manner. I should indicate that with a well defined institutional structure and an unambiguous responsibility and role assignment, the public service would require a clear system of procedures, regulations and coordination to facilitate local-level development. The new development challenges require innovation and a new administrative dynamism to respond.

Every development is local...

Local government is the sphere of government closest to the people. Many basic services are delivered by local municipalities and local ward councilors are the politicians closest to communities. Organisations that play an activist and/or developmental role should understand how local government works and how to influence it. Municipalities and councilors should be sensitive to community views and responsive to local problems. Partnerships should be built between civil society and local government to address local issues. A number of laws outline participation processes that municipalities have to use to consult the community. Developmental local government means a local government committed to "work with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives". Extremely rapid changes at the global, national and local levels are forcing local communities to rethink the way they are organised and governed. All over the world communities must find new ways to sustain their economies, build their societies, protect their environments, improve personal safety and eliminate poverty. Performance management is a system that is used to make sure that all parts of the municipality work together to achieve the goals and targets that are set. Local governance and local development comprise the combined set of institutions, systems and processes, at the local level, through which local authorities interact with and provide services to citizens, groups and local communities and through which the later articulate their interests and needs, mediate their differences and exercise their rights and obligations. Therefore, local development is an essential condition to ensure the geographical spread of human development; effective local governance complements that process in support of inclusive and rights-compliant societies.

The blocks that make up effective, democratic local governance such as transparent and robust central-local relationships, citizen participation, including the equal participation of women, partnerships among key stakeholders at the local level, capacity of local actors, multiple flows of information, gender sensitive institutions of accountability, and an inclusive and pro-poor orientation, in many instance serve as guidelines to how governments have formulated their response to the increased demand for engagement by communities in the governance and management of their affairs at the local level. The capacity requirements by the public service to respond to local-level development needs may be numerous and varied but can generally been categorized into five major areas:

- Structure of the public service
- Defined roles and responsibilities
- Systems and procedures
- Human Resource
- Financial Resources

A clear demarcation of responsibilities among sector ministries and defined roles for the respective levels of public administration is a requirement in positioning for effective development management. Defined responsibility can then be expressed into definite actions and most importantly matched with the required resources. The matching of responsibilities to resources and to results is the best means to capacitate the public service to respond to its local development mandate. A response to the provision on these building elements for local-level development requires a managerial platform that regularly interacts with residents, communities, civil society and the private sector. This managerial platform is indeed the local public sector, which is run by the public service. The human resource in the public service may have the required skill, knowledge and even ability to respond to the new challenges of local level development but has such deplorable working conditions that it does not provide the least motivation to be innovative and facilitate development initiatives. The challenge is that we have responded with more training and skill transfer without a definite consideration of the issues related to motivation and condition of service.

Achieving Good Governance, how?

The notion of good governance started to be used when, in the mid-1980s, the World Bank studied the conditions of success and failure of adjustment programs (comparative study contrasting success in East Asia with greater difficulties in Sub-Saharan Africa). During this period, international support was conditioned upon 'good governance,' related to the functioning of state structures, and to the states role in the market and relationship to civil society. Good governance is firstly and above all the responsible use of power. The concept of good governance has been measured, studied and defined by numerous agents, international organisations and academics around the world, who have developed an array of theories as well as multiple and diverse standards for outlining what constitutes good governance.

In many policy papers and concept notes, governance has normative values attached. In its most objective form, the quality of governance may be "measured in terms of how well the various actors handle the rules that make up the basic dimensions of the political regime." Many of the criteria for assessing governance are subjective, making it difficult to clearly delineate and understand 'good' and 'bad' practices. Public administration reform and good governance continue to be key priorities under the political criteria. The overriding principles are transparency, accountability and effectiveness in the public administration. Adequate horizontal administrative procedures concerning human resource management and public financial management are crucial for the implementation of the reforms. The public administration must have the capacity to provide citizens and enterprises with quality public services, where possible

through the use of ICT (e-government). E-government has indeed the potential of improving the quality of public services while cutting the costs in the public administration. One could add that it also promotes transparency and accountability in the administration. By putting fundamental public services on line you'll reduce the risks for corruption. When we refer to the elements of "goodness" we have to think about components like *Government effectiveness*: the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the governments commitment to such policies. *Regulatory quality*: the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations, which permit and promote private sector development. *Rule of law*: the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, the police, and the courts, a well as the likelihood of crime and violence. *Control of corruption*: the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as 'capture' of the state by elites and private interests. The most common actions towards the adoption of good governance practices and principles are the reform of the civil service, the improvement of policymaking procedures, the promotion of transparency including e-governance initiatives, and decentralisation.

The current situation in the region is that of a politicised civil service where corrupt practices are facilitated. The recruitment procedures in most of the cases are opaque and are combined with political patronage. A career of work for the state turns into the reserved privilege of the few while maladministration and ineffectiveness are encouraged. Civil servants develop into a lethargic and passive body that functions disconnected from the citizens and has no interest in adopting an active role in the service of the state. Most of the civil service reform strategies focus on both the recruitment and the training of the personnel as well as the description of their tasks. Decentralisation constitutes one of the good governance principles in the sense that it brings democratic and effective governance closer to the citizens. The aim is the strengthening of local and regional authorities in order to be able to satisfy citizen's needs and to respond to the changes of their external environment. All we have to understand regarding to governance is that it is not performed only by top level managers or exclusively by governing body, it is about all levels in an organisation, because every public official has to focus on public service objectives.

Good governance means focusing on the organisation's purpose and on outcomes for citizens and service users.

The function of governance is to ensure that an organisation or partnership fulfills its purpose, achieves its intended outcomes for citizens and service users, and operates in an effective,

efficient and ethical manner. This principle should guide all governance activity. Each organisation has its own purpose. There are also some general purposes that are fundamental to all public governance, including providing good quality services and achieving value for money. The concept of 'public value' can be helpful when thinking about the unique purpose of public services and therefore of their governance. Public value refers to the things that public services produce, either directly or indirectly, using public money. Public value includes: outcomes (such as improved health and improved safety); services (such as primary care services and policing) and trust in public governance.

Good governance means performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles

Good governance requires all concerned to be clear about the functions of governance and their own roles and responsibilities and those of others, and to behave in ways that are consistent with those roles. Being clear about one's own role, and how it relates to that of others, increases the chance of performing the role well. Clarity about roles also helps all stakeholders to understand how the governance system works and who is accountable for what. In order to direct strategy and ensure that this is implemented and that the organisation achieves its goals, the governing body has to: allocate resources and monitor organisational and executive performance, delegate to management, oversee the appointment and contractual arrangements for senior executives, and make sure that effective management arrangements are in place, understand and manage risk.

Good governance means promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour

Good governance flows from a shared ethos or culture, as well as from systems and structures. It cannot be reduced to a set of rules, or achieved fully by compliance with a set of requirements. This spirit or ethos of good governance can be expressed as values and demonstrated in behaviour. Good governance builds on the seven principles for the conduct of people in public life. Known as the Nolan principles, these are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Good governance means taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk

Decision making in governance is complex and challenging. It must further the organisation's purpose and strategic direction and be robust in the medium and longer terms. To make such decisions, governors must be well informed. Risk management is important to the successful delivery of public services. An effective risk management system identifies and assesses risks,

decides on appropriate responses and then provides assurance that the chosen responses are effective. Public service organisations face a wide range of strategic, operational and financial risks, from both internal and external factors, which may prevent them from achieving their objectives. Risk management is a planned and systematic approach to identifying, evaluating and responding to risks and providing assurance that responses are effective.

Good governance means engaging stakeholders and making accountability real

Governing bodies of public services have multiple accountabilities: to the public (citizens) and to those who have the authority, and responsibility, to hold them to account on the public's behalf. Real accountability is concerned not only with reporting on or discussing actions already completed, but also with engaging with stakeholders to understand and respond to their views as the organisation plans and carries out its activities.

CONCLUSIONS

Good governance is the basic principle of our efforts to strengthen public administrations in partnership with our clients/citizens. This implies that public administrations shall continuously change and develop to a more open, transparent, accountable, equitable, cost-effective and responsive form of governance. Public administration through good governance must be providing services in strengthening institutions, capacity building measures, stakeholder involvement and decentralisation processes.. Yet, no one-size-fits-all formula was ever plausible. Indeed, the idea of an "administrative culture" is often evoked, only further emphasizing how difficult it is to achieve reform in this particular field. A successful reform process can only be individually tailored to each separate administration although universal principles do exist. Public administration reform, however, is not still an easy task anywhere.

Also the constraint of good governance are:

- Failure to make clear separation between what is public and what is private.
- Failure to establish a predictable framework of law and government behavior conducive to development or arbitrariness in the application of rules and laws
- Executive rules, regulations, licensing requirements and so forth, which impede, functioning of markets and encourage rent seeking.
- Priorities, inconsistent with development, resulting in a misallocation of resources
- Excessively narrowly based or nontransparent decision making.

One of the key recommendations is the imperative to develop a shared understanding of a coherent institutional architecture to anchor a cross practice that recognizes and re-enforces the conceptual and operational interconnections between local governance and administration as

generative force on one hand and sustainable local development as an outcome on the other. The empowerment of human resources is seen as a priority in the modernisation of the civil service in our countries and it includes rational planning, purposeful training, a recruitment based on objectivity and transparency and a system of career opportunities. In order to achieve transparency and to apply the values of good governance, an effective institutional framework must be applied, the participation of citizens in governance should be enhanced, and an effective system of internal and external control needs to be developed. Adopted reforms on law must introduce the principles of "professionalism, independence and integrity, political neutrality, transparency, service to the public, career continuity, accountability and correctness in the application of binding legislation". In local level good governance is needed for development. Without good governance the grass root development cannot be imagined. Corruptions, financial maladies, human rights violations, lack of accountability all the elements of good governance require at local level public institution. It is undoubtedly acknowledged that local development entails all the elements of good governance. So both of two are extremely related. As local government is subject of structural reforms like administrative-territorial reform, a backsight on the result of its implementation and if principles of good governance are achieved through, would be an interest for further research.

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