

Case Study

Good Governance: Nigeria's Roadmap to Image Repair

Stevina Evuleocha*, Steve Ugbah

Dept. of Marketing & Entrepreneurship, College of Business & Economics, California State University, East Bay Hayward.

*Corresponding Author: Email: Stevina.evuleocha@csueastbay.edu

Abstract

The influence, relevance and regard a country commands in the global community has everything to do with its image or lack thereof. A positive image garners respect as well as an associated level of credibility for a target country. On the other hand, a negative image can lead to lack of respect for a country among the comity of nations. Laundering or rebranding the very bruised image of Nigeria may be a tough sell in light of the extensive image hemorrhaging that has occurred until this time. However, a target country needs to be seen as making strides in the direction of overcoming the character flaws that characterize its image challenges. This study evaluates the potential benefit of good governance as a panacea for Nigeria's badly bruised image. The study contributes to the ongoing debate on governance and development in sub-Saharan Africa, and provides recommendations for policy makers in emerging economies.

Keywords: *Good governance, Image-building, Development, Image rebranding, Emerging economies, International development.*

Introduction

Complaints about Nigeria's eroding image have skyrocketed in the wake of US travel advisories warning United States and British citizens about growing insecurity in Nigeria. Several rankings on governance and development indices have also found Nigeria lacking and scoring poorly. Additionally, the focus by both the Nigerian and international media on the monumental scale of corruption in government affairs has not helped matters either.

While Nigeria's battered image problem has traversed several administrations, and cannot be blamed squarely on the current administration, the escalation of violence by Boko Haram, demonstrated in the bombing of churches and public buildings such as the United Nations office in the capital city Abuja did not help matters for a country already negatively perceived [1]. Also germane to this discussion, is the ongoing exposure of corruption in high places without punishment, and the never ending international scams involving Nigerian citizens at home and abroad, some may argue that Nigeria's image and reputation problem is well deserved [2]. Spokespersons for the Jonathan administration

have however simplified the antecedents of Nigeria's image woes by blaming the opposition party in Nigeria as well as the western media [3].

Complaining about biased western reporting is unlikely to change an iota of Nigeria's image crisis. Instead, a concerted effort to address the underlining issues surrounding Nigeria's image woes may be the way to go. Naturally, this charge can only be led by a committed ruling class that can fight the war on corruption which has continued to be blamed for so many of Nigeria's image problems. Some measures of reputation include the Nation's Brand Index (NBI) which ranks 50 or so countries based on their attractiveness, reputation and image. NBI is published four times a year by a British scholar named Simon Anholt. A country's composite image score is derived from its scores on the quality of its exports, the character of governance, its attractiveness as a haven for tourists as well as its culture and heritage. [4] Nigeria has been rated well in the area of culture and heritage. However, positive attributes in other areas are currently blurred by numerous shortcomings including: sub-standard governance in a fractured

polity, the siege of Boko Haram as well as roving gangs of robbers and kidnappers; the failure to diversify the economy to eschew an overwhelming dependence on oil; rampant corruption in public life and the deplorable nature of basic available infrastructure.

It is within the context of changing Nigeria's badly soiled international image that this paper proposes the establishment of good governance as an elixir for Nigerian's image crisis. To properly conceptualize good governance and its attendant benefits for Nigeria's image, a review of the literature is beneficial.

Literature Review

Definitions of governance as well as what qualifies to be called good governance are abundant in the literature. While the bulk of definitions can be found in the literature of governmental and non-governmental agencies, most agree on the fundamentals of what constitutes good governance.

The World Bank defines governance as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development [5]. The UNDP defines governance as the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs at all levels. In this definition, governance includes but goes beyond the state. It encompasses the private sector and civil society. The UNDP believes that all the three sectors are critical for sustainable development [6]. The state creates a conducive political, legal and institutional environment while the private sector generates jobs and income. Civil society, by contrast facilitates political and social interaction by acting as the watchdog and by mobilizing groups to participate in economic, social and political activities. Any government that fails to take adequate cognizance of any of these three sectors will find the realization of good governance difficult.

According to Demeke (2000), governance is generally defined as the exercise of political economic and administrative authority and resources to manage a nation's affairs. Based on this, good governance could be taken to refer to the efficient and effective management of public resources and problems in dealing with the critical needs of the society. Good governance and sound public sector management constitute the major mechanisms for social transformation and are the cornerstone of successful economic policy [7].

In the last few years, prompted largely by its usage in international development literature, the concept of good governance has continued to grab the attention of scholars. In his 2009 book *Sustainable History and the Dignity of Man: A Philosophy of History and Civilizational Triumph*, Nayef Al-Rodhan 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, Al-Rodhan 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 [8].

In other cases, the definition of good governance goes further than mechanisms and proposes that good governance be equated with specific outcomes – in a Rawlsian sense of assuring that everyone, irrespective of social or economic status, has a voice in governing and receives just, fair, equitable treatment. [9] For example, the UNDP notes that: “Good governance is, among other things, participatory, transparent and accountable. It is also effective and equitable. And it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources.”- [10]

A review of the literature on good governance would be incomplete without the dissenting work of Dambisa Moyo, a Zambian economist who in her book *Dead Aid* argues that the private sector and free enterprise are what Africa needs not aid. She even argues that it is aid which causes corruption and conflict, and aid which inhibits social capital and foreign investment. According to Moyo, cut the aid flows and, with help from China, African economies will boom and there will be good governance. [10]

Governance has been severally defined by different institutions within varying contexts. For example, from the development viewpoint, the World Bank identifies three aspects of governance:

- The form of the political regime;
- The process by which authority is exercised for the management of a country's economic and social resources; and
- The capacity of government to formulate and implement policies and discharge functions. [11]

Similarly, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA 1996) defines governance as "the exercise of power by various levels of government that is effective, honest, equitable, transparent and accountable". [12] Kaufman et al for their part define governance as: "The traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised" For them, Fundamental aspects of governance" are: graft, rule of law, and government effectiveness. Other dimensions are: voice and accountability, political instability and violence, and regulatory burden. [13] In general, most of the literature agrees on common dimensions of governance like participation, rule of law, transparency, accountability, effective delivery of services and equity.

Operationalization of Good Governance

Good governance is an amorphous term used in international development literature to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources. Governance is "the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)". The term *governance* can apply to corporate, international, national, local governance or to the interactions between other sectors of society. [14]

The concept of "good governance" is often proffered as a template to compare ineffective economies or political bodies with viable economies and political bodies—The concept revolves around the accountability of governments and governing bodies to meet the needs of the masses rather than select groups in society. Consequently, the governments treated in the contemporary world as most "successful" are by and large the liberal democratic states located primarily in Europe and the Americas, those countries' institutions often set the standards by which to compare other states' institutions when the issue of governance comes up. [15]

Because concepts such as civil society, decentralization, 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 to 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. [16]

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." [17]

There is no single and exhaustive definition of "good governance," nor is there a moratorium on its scope, that commands universal acceptance. The term is used in an elastic manner, and can sometimes be a plus or a minus when operationalizing the terminology. Depending on the context and the overriding objective sought, good governance has been said at various times to include: full respect of human rights, the rule of law, effective participation, multi-actor partnerships, political pluralism, transparent and accountable processes and institutions, an efficient and effective public sector, legitimacy, access to knowledge, information and education, political empowerment of people, equity, sustainability, and attitudes and values that foster responsibility, solidarity and tolerance.

However, there is a significant degree of consensus that good governance relates to political and institutional processes and outcomes

that are deemed necessary to achieve the goals of development. It has been said that good governance is the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realization of human rights in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law.

The true test of "good" governance is the degree to which it delivers on the promise of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The key question for us in this paper is: are the institutions of governance in Nigeria effectively delivering the right to health, adequate housing, sufficient food, quality education, fair justice, personal security as well as other variables on which good governance hinges? The use of rights here constitute a given – the very minimum a government ought to deliver to its citizenry. Consequently, the resolution of nation states that reflect common views of what constitutes human rights are evoked further in this analysis.

Good Governance as a Human Right

The concept of good governance has been clarified by the work of the former Commission on Human Rights. In its resolution 2000/64, the Commission identified the key attributes of good governance:

- Transparency
- Responsibility
- Accountability
- Participation
- Responsiveness (to the needs of the people)

By linking good governance to sustainable human development, emphasizing principles such as accountability, participation and the enjoyment of human rights, and rejecting prescriptive approaches to development assistance, the resolution stands as an implicit endorsement of the rights-based approach to development.

Resolution 2000/64 expressly linked good governance to an enabling environment conducive to the enjoyment of human rights and "prompting growth and sustainable human development." [18] One may argue that the current security situation in Nigeria poses the greatest challenge to achieving a conducive environment.

Good Governance and Human Rights

Good governance and human rights are mutually reinforcing. Human rights principles provide a set of values to guide the work of governments and

other political and social actors. They also provide a set of performance standards against which these actors can be held accountable. Moreover, human rights principles inform the content of good governance efforts: they may inform the development of legislative frameworks, policies, programs, budgetary allocations and other measures.

On the other hand, without good governance, human rights cannot be respected and protected in a sustainable manner. The implementation of human rights relies on a conducive and enabling environment. This includes appropriate legal frameworks and institutions as well as political, managerial and administrative processes responsible for responding to the rights and needs of the population. The links between good governance and human rights can be organized around four areas:

Democratic Institutions

When led by human rights values, good governance reforms of democratic institutions create avenues for the public to participate in policymaking either through formal institutions or informal consultations. They also establish mechanisms for the inclusion of multiple social groups in decision-making processes, especially locally. Finally, they may encourage civil society and local communities to formulate and express their positions on issues of importance to them.

Service Delivery

In the realm of delivering state services to the public, good governance reforms advance human rights when they improve the state's capacity to fulfill its responsibility to provide public goods which are essential for the protection of a number of human rights, such as the right to education, health and food. Reform initiatives may include mechanisms of accountability and transparency, culturally sensitive policy tools to ensure that services are accessible and acceptable to all, and paths for public participation in decision-making.

Rule of law

When it comes to the rule of law, human rights-sensitive good governance initiatives reform legislation and assist institutions ranging from penal systems to courts and parliaments to better implement that legislation. Good governance initiatives may include advocacy for legal reform, public awareness-raising on the national and international legal framework and capacity-building or reform of institutions.

Anti-Corruption

In fighting corruption, good governance efforts rely on principles such as accountability, transparency and participation to shape anti-corruption measures. Initiatives may include establishing institutions such as anti-corruption commissions, creating mechanisms of information sharing, and monitoring governments' use of public funds and implementation of policies.

Good Governance, Human Rights & Development

The interconnection between good governance, human rights and sustainable development has been made directly or indirectly by the international community in a number of declarations and other global conference documents. For example, the Declaration on the Right to Development proclaims that every human person and all peoples "are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development" (article 1). In the Millennium Declaration, world leaders affirmed their commitment to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law as well as to respect internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development. According to the United Nations strategy document on the millennium development goals (MDGs), entitled "The United Nations and the MDGs: a Core Strategy", "the MDGs have to be situated within the broader norms and standards of the Millennium Declaration," including those on "human rights, democracy and good governance."

The Concept of Good Governance in the Main International Human Rights Instruments

From a human rights perspective, the concept of good governance can be linked to principles and rights set out in the main international human rights instruments. Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the importance of a participatory government and article 28 states that everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration can be fully realized. The two International Covenants on Human Rights contain language that is more specific about the duties and role of governments in securing the respect for and realization of all human rights. Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights requires states parties to respect and to ensure the rights recognized in the Covenant and to take the necessary steps to give effect to those rights. In

particular, states should provide an effective remedy to individuals when their rights are violated, and provide a fair and effective judicial or administrative mechanism for the determination of individual rights or the violation thereof. Under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, states are obliged to take steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the Covenant by all appropriate means.

The human rights treaty monitoring bodies have given some attention to the different elements of good governance. In general comment No. 12, on the right to food, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stated that "Good governance is essential to the realization of all human rights, including the elimination of poverty and ensuring a satisfactory livelihood for all." The Committee on the Rights of the Child has on several occasions addressed the issue of governments' capacity to coordinate policies for the benefit of the child and the issue of decentralization of services and policy-making. It has also addressed corruption as a major obstacle to the achievement of the Convention's objectives. The Human Rights Committee generally addresses issues related to the provision of adequate remedies, due process and fair trial in the context of the administration of justice in each state. It regularly emphasizes the importance of independent and competent judges for the adequate protection of the rights set forth in the Convention. [19]

Measuring Good Governance

There has been a lot of chatter in recent months about a post-2015 Millennium Development Goal on governance on the heels of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. [21] The report of this panel identified "good governance and effective institutions as one of 12 "illustrative goals that nations might consider when adopting new development targets for the post 2015 era. Naturally, enshrining good governance in the post-2015 MDGs will clearly place good governance issues on the front burner. [20]

An added process for ranking nations on good governance is the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG). The IIAG is the most comprehensive collection of quantitative data on governance in Africa. Compiled in partnership with experts from a number of the continent's institutions, it provides an annual assessment of

governance in every African country. The IIAG provides a framework for citizens, governments, institutions and business to assess the delivery of public goods and services, and policy outcomes, across Africa. [21]

The IIAG provides:

- A framework for stakeholders to assess the delivery of public goods and services, and policy outcomes, in every African country
- A tool with which to govern, highlighting continental, regional, national and thematic governance results

The data are classified within four categories:

- Safety & Rule of Law
- Participation & Human Rights
- Sustainable Economic Opportunity
- Human Development.

The IIAG is compiled using many international and African sources. A full list of sources can be found at www.moibrahimfoundation.org/iiag-methodology. Paucity of data in Africa remains a core concern for the Foundation. Many crucial indicators of governance, such as poverty, do not yet meet the Foundation's inclusion criteria, specifically with regards to time series and country coverage.

In partnership with others, IIAG Foundation funds two major African initiatives: The Foundation is working with Afro barometer to expand its citizen surveys to cover over two thirds of African countries.

The Foundation is working with the Global Integrity Trust to create the African Integrity Indicators. The Trust maintains a network of experts in every African country to provide assessments of key social, economic and political indicators. [22]

Conclusion

It is clear from the foregoing that governance is a necessary indicator of development. Many countries globally continue to fall shy of governance expectations for one reason or another. Nigeria continues to struggle with corruption at all levels of society which is perceived by some to be

References

1. Mshelizza I (2011) Islamist sect Boko Haram claims Nigeria UN bombing. <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/08/29/us-nigeria-bombing-claim-idUSTRE77S3ZO20110829>>.
2. Smith DJ (2008) A culture of corruption: Everyday deception and popular discontent in Nigeria. 2nd ed. Princeton University Press. Princeton, NJ.

the main impediment to good governance the country faces. It goes without saying then that if Nigeria can tackle this cankerworm of corruption, it stands a chance to begin the journey down the path of good governance and subsequent image repair.

To achieve the benefits of good governance in overall country development starting from image repair, Nigeria has to first set up effective institutions that can stand the test of time. Effective institutions will prevent what we have seen thus far with each administration setting its own ground rules. When institutions are credible and effective, individual leaders may come and go, but Nigeria will not crumble as it almost did when there was a transition planning crisis just before the Goodluck Jonathan administration was inaugurated.

What sorts of activities in and of themselves will help with how Nigeria is perceived globally? Nigeria needs to enshrine accountability as one of the values of good governance. The absence of accountability creates an open season of sorts that causes elected leaders to squander the people's commonwealth. It is clearly because of the absence of accountability that corruption continues to fester.

Additionally, Nigeria needs to clean up its justice system. A sub standard justice system endangers the rule of law, and makes citizens unaccountable. An eroded justice system lacks the capacity to prosecute any sort of corrupt practices, limits citizen participation, and worsens our already poor image.

It is hoped that Nigeria would be one of the signatories to the much expected post 2015 MDGs which are expected to address the issue of governance in the next round of goals. With any luck, pledging to achieve good governance may be the first step in the right direction. This paper reviewed the concept of governance and good governance, and the role good governance can play if embraced in Nigeria. While an overwhelming majority of views were divergent, the fundamentals of good governance pointed to many common threads.

3. Douglas O (2014) Don't blame the Nigerian government" in an Interview with the Washington Post <http://jide-salu.com/2014/05/09/dont-blame-the-nigerian-government-senior-adviser-oronto-douglas-says/>.
4. Nation Brand Index (2013) Latest Findings. Anholt-GfK. 14 Nov. 2013. Web. 22 Aug. 2014. <http://www.gfk.com/news-and-events/press-room/press-releases/pages/nation-brand-index-2013-latest-findings.aspx>.
5. Reforming Public Institutions and Strengthening Governance: A World Bank Strategy. Washington, DC: World Bank, Public Sector Board, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, 2000. Web. 22 Aug. 2014. <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/Reforming.pdf>.
6. Democratic Governance." United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Web. 22 Aug. 2014. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/overview.html>.
7. Demeke M (2000) Good governance: An antidote to corruption www.jsd-africa.com/jsda/Vol13No5_Fall2011.../Good_Governance.pdf.
8. Al-Rodhan NRF (2009) Sustainable History and the Dignity of Man: A Philosophy of History and Civilisational Triumph. LIT Verlag. Zürich : New Brunswick [N.J.]
9. Rawls J (1999) A theory of Justice Boston. University Press. Cambridge, MA.
10. Moyo D (2009) Dead Aid. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. New York, NY.
11. World Bank. Governance: the World Bank's experience." World Bank, 1994
12. Governance. Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada. Web. 22 Aug. 2014. <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/governance>.
13. Kaufmann D (2005) Myths and Realities of Governance and Corruption." Published in: Global Competitiveness Report 2005-06 (October 2005): pp. 81-98.
14. UNESCAP (2009) What is good governance? <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf>
15. Khan M (2009) Governance, growth & poverty reduction." DESA Working Paper no. 75. New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs
16. Analyzing the Relationship between Democracy and Development. ODI. Web. 22 Aug. 2014. <http://www.odi.org/node/8129>.
17. Town Hall with Civil Society Representatives on Good Governance and Transparency (2009) Remarks by Hilary Rodham Clinton. Web. Transcript. 22 Aug. 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2009a/08/127830.htm>.
18. Good Governance and Human Rights. Good Governance and Human Rights. Web. 22 Aug. 2014. <http://www.ohchr.org/en/Issues/Development/GoodGovernance/Pages/GoodGovernanceIndex.aspx>.
19. UN Commission on Human Rights, Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/64 The role of good governance in the promotion of human rights". 27 April 2000, E/CN.4/RES/2000/64. 22 August 2014. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f28414.html>.
20. About High Level Panel. High Level Panel. Web. 22 Aug. 2014. <http://www.post2015hlp.org/about/>.
21. IIAG Methodology. Mo Ibrahim Foundation. Web. 22 Aug. 2014. www.moibrahimfoundation.org/iiag-methodology.
22. Home Page. Afrobarometer, Let The People Have A Say---An African-Led Series Of National Public Attitude Surveys On Democracy And Governance In Africa. 22 Aug. 2014. <http://www.afrobarometer.org>.