



Sector Programme Governance

Good Governance – an enabling environment for development

Governance describes the way a state prepares and takes decisions, and how policies are formulated and implemented. Good Governance is inclusive, transparent, effective and accountable. This applies to political processes at local, national and international level.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the single most important international framework of reference. The 2030 Agenda and the implementation principles ascribe governance a key role in achieving peace, security and sustainable development. In the 2030 Agenda, governance is both a goal in its own right (SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and a key element in the long-term design and achievement of all other goals.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put additional strain on democracy and the rule of law. Governments in the partner countries of German development cooperation find themselves facing massive challenges as digitalisation, urbanisation, climate change and worsening inequality are changing societies and the needs of their people. The complex and radical nature of these global changes is stretching states to the limits. While democratic rules and practices are becoming more strongly rooted in some societies, autocratic trends are increasingly emerging in both young and established democracies. These global trends also pose particular challenges for German development cooperation.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has declared Good Governance to be both an objective of and an important precondition for German development cooperation. This means that democratically legitimated, accountable, functional institutions and administrative systems at all levels receive support. Inclusive political and negotiation processes, along with the rule of law and access to justice, are seen as objectives in their own right and accorded support.

Quick facts

Commissioning party	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
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Officer responsible for the commission	Dr Thomas Taraschewski

The promotion of political participation, strengthening democratic institutions and supporting civil society organisations' advocacy and control activities are some of the key entry points for Germany's development cooperation in the field of Good Governance. Transparent administrative systems at all levels are also important in building effective, accountable institutions in the public sector and making the political system as a whole efficient and citizen-responsive. The rule of law is the foundation of a democratic society and the basis of a functional market economy.

Objective

The main thrust of the Sector Programme Governance is to deliver swift, flexible advisory services to BMZ as required, in line with the current political priorities. The sector programme aims to support BMZ's ability to take action on governance issues and thus optimise the preconditions for German development cooperation to promote Good Governance as set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Alongside a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the international political and expert debate on governance issues, the programme ensures that important contacts are maintained, and works to enhance knowledge sharing and networking with relevant actors in the sector. Another objective is the further development of Good Governance approaches by identifying common ground and new issues and trends both within the national and international expert dialogue and in discourse within society.

Promoting gender equality, realising a human-rights-based approach and the principle of leaving no one behind as laid out in the 2030 Agenda are reflected in all areas of action, and issues like digitalisation in governance are being constantly refined and honed. This is also how the Sector Programme Governance is realising BMZ's quality criteria in the fields of digital technology, gender equality, human rights and inequality reduction.

Our Approach

The Sector Programme Governance advises BMZ on topical, overarching aspects of Good Governance. Programme topics also include decentralisation and local governance, the rule of law, administrative reform, promoting democracy and digital governance.

The programme's advisory and support services focus on positioning and further developing BMZ's strategies, methods and approaches in the governance sector in bilateral and international development cooperation. Collaboration within the framework of sectoral networks and international organisations, including International IDEA and the OECD/DAC Network on Governance, allows the sector programme to position German Good Governance approaches while also analysing international positions, discussions and trends for BMZ, and incorporating these in policy advisory services.

A central part of the programme is the Secretariat of the Development Partners Network on Decentralisation and Local Governance (DeLoG) founded in 2008. Today, DeLoG embraces 44 members and partners from the realms of bilateral and multilateral development. The Secretariat helps members network, cooperate and engage in joint learning. The work of the Secretariat is co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

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