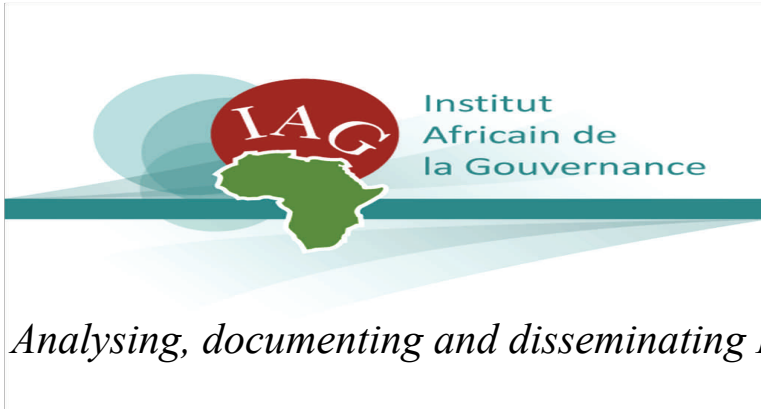


AGI Newsletter

Newsletter N°1
November 2009



Editorial

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The African Governance Institute is the result of a long process which has brought together numerous African and foreign leading figures and institutions, all stakeholders in promoting an African governance agenda. Thus, the AGI has been created to serve as a platform for political dialogue and advocacy on governance.

More than ever, the African continent needs an instrument to help it find and develop a perspective of governance respecting rights and conditions for effective development

AGI aims to be the result of a purely African socio-historical construction, neither copied nor imported; pro-active rather than simply reactive; the product of capitalising on existing experience and strategic research.

This African perspective of governance will give the possibility of real 'observation' in African countries (in the triple sense of 'observing, formulating an analysis, and proposing tenable adjustments, and maintaining these depending on the situation' based on Cheikh ANTA DIOP's concept- 1981).

Such is the challenge that faces the AGI at the moment where its physical and intellectual presence is increasing in the African governance landscape.

The objective of the AGI e-newsletter is to engage discussion on governance in Africa. A tool for capitalising on information, it aims to enable the exchange and sharing of ideas of experience on governance for development in Africa. In this sense, the AGI e-newsletter's objective is to be a force for creating a community of practices on legitimate governance. The first AGI newsletter will have the particularity of looking back at the origins of the Institute and particularly on the preparatory consultations, which allowed its maturation in order to better define its nature, mission and mandate.

Here then is the setting in which discussion is opening up on a new African perspective of governance.

Happy Reading!

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Thanks to

All the AGI team

Origins of the AGI



Mr Ousmane Sy
AGI Chair

The initiative to create the African Governance Institute (AGI) came about in 2003 as the result of discussions between the Chair of the African Union Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Director for Africa.

The central idea was to create a centre of excellence recognised by the African Union, in charge of leading innovative research on all forms of governance, and contributing to the advancement of democratic governance in Africa.

« The central idea is to create a centre of excellence in charge of leading innovative research on all forms of governance »

Consultations

In 2003, the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa asked for assistance from the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre in organising a series of consultations on the possible creation of an institute which envisaged the role of governance overall in development on the African continent. To this end, four consultations were organised.

The first took place in Oslo (Norway) on 30 September – 1 October 2003. Twelve African and other specialists on issues of governance examined the relevance of creating an African governance institute and unanimously concluded that it was an excellent idea. They recommended recruiting a team of experts to study its feasibility and prepare a technical report based on a study of governance institutes, centres and networks already in existence in Africa and the problems which they face.

The team of experts made a base-line study and carried out consultations with different institutions, in Africa and elsewhere, to determine, in drawing on their experience and work, if creating a pan-African governance institute was desirable and if so, to define the modalities of its creation and possibilities for future collaboration.

The team then produced a technical document in which it analysed the concept of governance as well as the problems which arise in Africa and suggested an approach to adopt and some solutions. The document defines the type of political and institutional reforms necessary, as well as capacities that should be created to strengthen governance. The report also places the Institute's vision, mission and functions as the foundations of an African strategy of democratic governance in the future.



Pr. Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja

Second consultation

The second consultation, devoted to the technical report, took place in Addis-Ababa (Ethiopia) on 13-14 September 2004. The Panel of Eminent Persons Chair from the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the Minister of Finance and Planning of Rwanda as well as representatives from the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) took part in this consultation. The participants approved the conclusions of the technical report and a working group was formed to carry out the final version of the technical report with a view to presenting it at a third consultation.



Third consultation

This took place at UNISA (University of South Africa) in Pretoria on 14-15 February 2005. Following the extremely positive and constructive discussion, which took place during this consultation, it was agreed that another consultation should be organised a few months later in order to develop the conceptual document and officially launch the AGI.



AGI meeting room

The African Governance
Institute team



Fourth consultation

This fourth and final consultation took place on 8 June 2005 in Dakar (Senegal) with the support of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). The meeting took place in two stages: the morning was devoted to a orientation seminar on governance organised by CODESRIA, and the afternoon to the conclusion of the consultation process begun in September 2003 with the examination and final approval of the document about creating the Institute.

The AGI was formally launched by His Excellency Abdoul Aziz Sow, Minister for NEPAD, African Economic Integration and Good Governance Policy of the Republic of Senegal



Maurice Engueleguele,
AGI Programme Co-ordinator



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NEWS

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Africa Governance Institute have the honour to announce the presentation of the second *Report sur la gouvernance en Afrique (Report on Governance in Africa)* on 5 November 2009 from 2.00 – 4.00 pm. The ceremony will take place at the AGI Headquarters in Dakar.

For further information, please contact Thierry Sanzhie Bokally
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The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) would like to inform you that there will be a presentation of the French version of the work, *Le Mécanisme Africain d'Evaluation par les Pairs: Leçons des pionniers* by Steven Gruzd and Herbert Ross. The event will be hosted by the AGI on 5 November 2009 from 09.00-11.00 am.

For further information, please contact Ms Bernadette Bule

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The AGI has just recorded its first academic success. Our colleague, Guislaine Thebault Diagne has successfully defended her political sciences thesis at IEP, Bordeaux on 'The internet and dynamics of the university institution: the role of distance learning, the example of Senegalese universities'. Mrs Thebault Diagne, in charge of setting up the AGI online resources centre, was awarded her PhD. All the team send her their warmest congratulation.

Foreword!

The Africa Governance Institute has been designed as a centre of high-level policy dialogue advanced study and training on governance in Africa. As such, it is destined to engage in advocacy for democratic governance and development in Africa; to develop leading research and innovative training methods, in order to find solutions to urgent challenges of governance identified during policy dialogues We are opening up our newsletter to those of you who would like to send us an article on related topic on governance in Africa. You can send us your text in French or English, preferably by e-mail.



Report on Governance in Africa



The African Peer Review Mechanism