



EDITORIAL

The AGI Newsletter extends the work of knowledge management and collective intelligence on Aid Effectiveness and Mutual Accountability committed in the context of the fourth High Level Forum (HLF) on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Busan (Republic of Korea), from November 29 to December 1, 2011.

For AGI, the achievement of these goals requires a true paradigm shift among both development partners and African partners.

For development partners, Ownership shall be supported at every different levels of governance. This involves reversing the structural logic of their actions in partner countries, where they have a major influence on the decision process regarding expenditures policy choices and the development of the conditions attached to these stakes.

For African partner countries, the challenge is twofold. On the one hand, it is about admitting that the lack of obvious progress in governance deeply impacts on building the confidence necessary to strengthen aid alignment and development of an approach crossing Top Down and Bottom Up logics in shared and legitimate programs. On the other hand, it is about keeping in mind the principle that aid should only be a supplement to support the implementation of programs primarily funded on local resources mobilization.

The two first articles of this newsletter illustrate this necessary dynamic. Meanwhile, the last papers raise the question of datas, which are vital to the previous outlined issues. Thus, they allow to get back to the work of knowledge management and collective intelligence on Developmental Governance.

The Editorial Team

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Old Habits die hard: Aid and Accountability in Sierra Leone

In January 2008, [Eurodad](#) and the Sierra Leonean organization [Campaign For Good Governance](#) jointly published the report 'Old Habits die hard: Aid and Accountability in Sierra Leone'. We reproduce below the Executive Summary. The full report is available online.

Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in the world and the country is heavily dependent on external aid to try and meet the most basic survival needs of the population. Much of this aid has been directed to rebuilding the country and government structures after a devastating civil war. Donors and the Sierra Leonean government have signed up to international commitments to make aid more effective for responding to the basic rights of poor people. Nonetheless, this research shows that progress has been piecemeal in bringing real change about in improving aid effectiveness.

Sierra Leone is very dependent on aid with nearly one half of the government budget being financed by international grants and loans. This fact, coupled with weak government structures are among the reasons why Sierra Leone has not moved forwards more quickly in implementing more efficient and effective aid modalities. These two factors put the government in a weak negotiating position vis-à-vis official donors.

Donors are funding approximately 265 different aid projects in Sierra Leone. Many of these projects are implemented unbeknownst to the government, which struggles to capture information about the diverse and competing initiatives in the country. Parallel governance structures are also regularly established – examples include the Decentralisation Secretariat, the HIV/AIDS secretariat, the Governance Reform Secretariat – as a way of donors pushing their priorities whilst bypassing government structures they do not trust.

Some donors however, – DFID, the European Commission, the World Bank and the African Development Bank – provide more than a quarter of their aid to Sierra Leone through budget support. Budget support by its nature avoids parallel systems by channelling aid directly into the national coffers. But budget support to Sierra Leone also comes laden with conditions, opening up the heart of the government to donor influence. Continued access to this kind of aid requires the government to implement detailed actions on complicated policy reforms (e.g. civil service reform, procurement, decentralisation) as well as to comply with the newer type of results based conditions (e.g. distribution of a certain number of bed nets to the population). Conditions are decided upon by donors who then present their proposal to the government, whose main room for negotiation lies with how ambitious the condition may be, not with whether the condition is an appropriate priority for the government that year.

Donors are struggling in Sierra Leone to respect the commitments they have made under the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, particularly around “ownership” and the need to relinquish control over allocation of aid resources and the policy agenda. A chicken and egg situation exists with the prevalent lack of trust between the government and the donors and donors’ continued practice of heavily conditioning their aid, setting up parallel project units to control their aid and trying to mould policy-making.

Citizens and civil society organisations are largely sidelined from any discussions about aid investment in Sierra Leone. One of the constraints for their participation is the poor level of information available about aid to the country. Lack of transparency was one of the most often cited problems with regards to aid flows and the government budget. Donors fail to provide accessible and useful information to the public about their activities. The government has made some progress in improving aid coordination and information through the establishment of the Development Assistance Coordination Office but the budget process continues to be a mystery for most civil society organisations.

Representatives from civil society organisations also challenge the closed door donor- government negotiation process which is undermining democracy by excluding both the legislature and citizens from the decision-making process. Donors are not doing enough to facilitate a more enabling environment for citizens to participate in decisions that affect them. This is despite the fact that a more engaged citizenry would mean a stronger demand from below for improved governance, an area in which several donors have invested heavily in recent years in trying to improve government institutions from above. Donors have done little thinking about how they themselves might be more accountable to the citizens they are aiming to support.

Donor accountability to governments is undermined by the fact that so much of their pledged resources simply do not turn up on time. Poor predictability of funding – particularly budget support aid which is tied to the IMF's certificate of health – had serious consequences for poor people in Sierra Leone in 2007. The government received US\$26 million less from donors than it had budgeted for 2007, much of which was destined for spending on poverty reduction. The fact that no sanction exists if donors do not deliver on what they said they would do makes the concept of "mutual accountability" that donors have signed up to, extremely weak.

The main donors in the country have had significant comparative experience in trying to improve the quality of their aid in neighbouring West African countries, and also elsewhere. However donors own progress in improving the way they operate in Sierra Leone has been piece-meal and ad-hoc. The argument that Sierra Leone is a difficult country for donors to work in has some merit, but should not be a reason for donor agencies not to get their own houses in order. On the contrary the challenges faced by Sierra Leone demand that donors take immediate steps to improve the areas of their interventions that they themselves have control over.

Recommendations:

Donors

- Donors need to radically reduce the number and scope of conditions they attach to budget support. In addition they should cease tying their budget support to IMF targets.
- Donors need to drastically improve their transparency. They should provide disaggregated information regarding all the projects and programmes they fund in the country to the government and to the general public.
- Donors must not undermine the development of nascent civil society in the country but find ways to facilitate their engagement in public policy discussions
- Donors need to audit and evaluate their technical assistance to Sierra Leone. Any new technical assistance should demonstrate its responsiveness to need, its sustainability and how it builds on existing capacities
- Donors need to improve the predictability of their funding by both disbursing more of their money towards the beginning of the year to ease pressures on domestic borrowing and making multi-annual commitments for their aid.

Government of Sierra Leone

- The Government should use the commitments made by donors under the Paris Declaration as a basis for improving their negotiating strategy with donors.
- Lack of trust by donor agencies reduces the likelihood of donors handing more power over to the government to chart its own development. The government of Sierra Leone needs to take concrete actions to address endemic corruption.
- The Ministry of Finance may need to make more realistic budgets based on their experience of unpredictable financing from aid donors. They should nonetheless continue to pressure the donors to improve the predictability of their aid.
- The Government of Sierra Leone should recognise the important role played by civil society organisations and their capacity to contribute to policy debates.

Civil society organisations

- Civil society organisations need to improve their networking, organisation levels and communication channels.
- Civil society organisations should find ways to build constructive relationships with different government Ministries, Departments and Agencies as well as with donors without becoming co-opted by them.
- Urban-based policy and advocacy organisations need on the one hand to develop their research and communications skills so as to have more influence in policy making processes and on the other develop stronger links with community and membership-based organisations.

[See the full report online](#)

Home-Grown Solutions and Ownership

This paper has been prepared by Norman Girvan¹ for the [OECD Development Forum Informal Experts' Workshop on 'Ownership in Practice'](#) held in Paris on 27-28 September 2007.

1. Background

North-South relations are characterized by acute imbalances in power²--military, economic, technological; but not least in knowledge and information. The last describes a situation in which Northern donors and think tanks and Northern-controlled multilateral organizations dominate the development knowledge industry, (this is represented by Figure 1). In so doing they exert a major influence on the policies and decisions of governments in the South. This influence is conceptually distinct from that derived from donor conditionalities, but in practice the two are strongly interlinked. Policy advice is customarily bundled with development finance; and conditionalities are a codified form of prevailing orthodoxy. Northern influence also comes about through the training of talented Southern economists in the elite universities of the North, through intellectual innovation and trend-setting by Northern centres that set the standards for Southern institutions, through the norms of professional recruitment and advancement in the international academic community, through the concentration of knowledge resources in Northern centres³, and through historically rooted prejudices originating in the rise of the West and the legacy of colonial rule. Hence, within much of the South, Northern knowledge is automatically given greater legitimacy in policy making than Southern knowledge about itself.

This situation is in *fundamental* contradiction with the requirements of 'home-grown solutions and ownership'. Home-grown solutions must mean the generation, by local actors, of knowledge and of policy interventions that are *specific to the local environment* (and this does not just mean local adaptation of so-called 'universal principles' of good economic management). It involves recognition that knowledge is as important to development as physical capital or any other input and that development knowledge is largely context-specific. And ownership means *acceptance of, commitment to and responsibility for the implementation of*, these home-grown solutions. The two are, therefore, inextricably interlinked. Too often, 'ownership' is simply a euphemism for local buying-in to policies that are or externally generated and/or imposed. Small wonder that there is such a low rate of implementation!

The dominant tendency in development knowledge, as represented by the neo-liberal paradigm; assumes the inherent superiority of market-based solutions, private sector ownership and trade and investment liberalization in solving problems of resource allocation and development (recently supplemented by the mantra of 'good governance'). This is invoked as a universally valid principle; with customisation to particular economies taking place within this general framework. The efficacy of this approach is contradicted by the accumulation of policy failures accompanying the imposition of neo-liberal conditionalities, by powerful critiques of neo-liberalism within the academic community, and by the growing clamour for 'ownership' of development policies within the Global South. The present conjuncture opens a window of opportunity for a new approach.

2. Towards a new approach

We propose that a new approach to development knowledge should be informed by three basic 'epistemic principles',

- (i) recognition of *diversity* as an inherent--and desirable--characteristic of the global community;
- (ii) recognition of *specificity of national context* as the point of departure for analysis and policy making; and
- (iii) Recognition of *indigenous knowledge, effort and initiative* as the driving force of development.

Corresponding to these are three basic principles for North-South development partnerships:

- (i) The principal responsibility for development lies with the South itself. This principle applies with especial force to development research and policy making.
- (ii) Northern donors should be prepared to accept a wide degree of policy heterodoxy vis-à-vis the role of state, market and trade and investment liberalization; and of 'trial and error' in development policy.

- (iii) A major goal of development cooperation should be the accumulation of indigenous capabilities in the South for development research and policy-making. This is a long-term process that involves institution-building and social learning.

Figure 2 depicts an 'ideal' development knowledge system that is South-driven and North-supported.

3. A possible methodology

Below we set out an illustrative checklist of research, analytical and organisational tasks that would be involved in indigenising development research and policy making (DRP).

Technical/analytical aspect

- (i) **History.** Historically rooted and contextualised analysis is essential to understanding how an economy works and the economic culture.
- (ii) **Economic culture.** Ethnicity and class; the propensities of different socio-economic groups for savings, investment, and entrepreneurship; the nature and capacities of the 'state'; the structure and capacities of the 'private sector'.
- (iii) **Economic structure.** Role of different sectors in the economy, organization and ownership, land distribution and land tenure, monopoly and oligopoly; etc.
- (iv) **External relationships.** External trade and investment, external debt and external financing and their influence on the economy
- (v) **Macroeconomic situation.** Growth, inflation, fiscal situation, balance of payments, exchange rate regime, etc.
- (vi) **Social situation.** Income distribution, condition of different socio-economic groups, gender imbalances, poverty and social exclusion.
- (vii) **Development objectives.** Elaboration of socio-economic goals and targets to which major societal stakeholders subscribe.
- (viii) **Development strategy and policy.** Formulation of policies vis-à-vis role of state, market and private sector; taxation and expenditure; external opening of the economy; etc.
- (ix) **Feedback loops.** Evaluation studies of effect of policies; policy modification and refinement and policy innovation.

Process/organisational aspect

The process should be *participatory* and *iterative*. The ideal situation is one in which all major stakeholders in the country are involved in the research process (e.g. data collection, cooperating in survey research, discussion of research results) and in the formulation of development objectives, strategies, and policies. This is where democratic and participatory governance comes in—one cannot have participation in DRP without having it in the society as a whole. Furthermore, the process involves continuous experimentation, trial and error, and learning from failures and successes. One never 'gets it right' the first time around. And the world, and the society itself; is always changing.

4. Mobilizing local capacities

The other side of the participatory process is the mobilisation of local capacities. Obviously the role of *indigenous knowledge centres* is crucial; especially in the technical/analytical aspects. It is highly desirable to have one or several high-level centres of excellence at the apex of a national DRP system; or better still, as the hub of national network. For resource-challenged countries (small and/or low-income), a regional centre can be envisaged. But national centres of excellence are not enough: an important objective should be to develop/legitimise intermediate and low level research capacities within particular industries/sectors; socio-economic groups (e.g. business, farmers, women) and at the community level.

To function adequately as national/regional centres of excellence, indigenous knowledge centres must have the necessary authority and the resources. They must be in a position to determine their own agendas independently of external influences and to be responsive to the local needs. They must have the staff, equipment and overall budgetary support required to sustain long-term research commitments. Governments, business, civil society and external donors must provide material support, recognising fact that knowledge is as important to development as physical capital or any other input. Knowledge is not a luxury that only the rich can afford; it is a necessity that the poor cannot afford to do without.

5. Development partnership

Accordingly, a major objective of development cooperation activities should be to *support the research and problem-solving capabilities of centres in the South, of regional centres, and of South-South research and policy collaboration*. Southern centres may be helped with provision of complementary resources, expertise, information, training, and technology and by participating in collaborative research with Northern centres. Such assistance should never substitute for local effort and it should not be used as a means of influencing the agenda, staffing and ideological content of research and policy advice. Similarly, national participatory policy projects should only be supported when local actors take the initiative and the agenda is locally determined.

A start may be made by developing a 'model', or models, of ideal-type South-North collaboration in development research and policy making. (A different 'model' will be necessary for collaboration in policy making; however, this paper is concerned mostly with the research and policy advice aspect). Such models may be based on existing best practice experiences drawn from the Global South. Here, the experiences of organisations such as ECLAC, the South Centre, the Third World network, and national centres of excellence in the more advanced countries of the South will certainly be useful.

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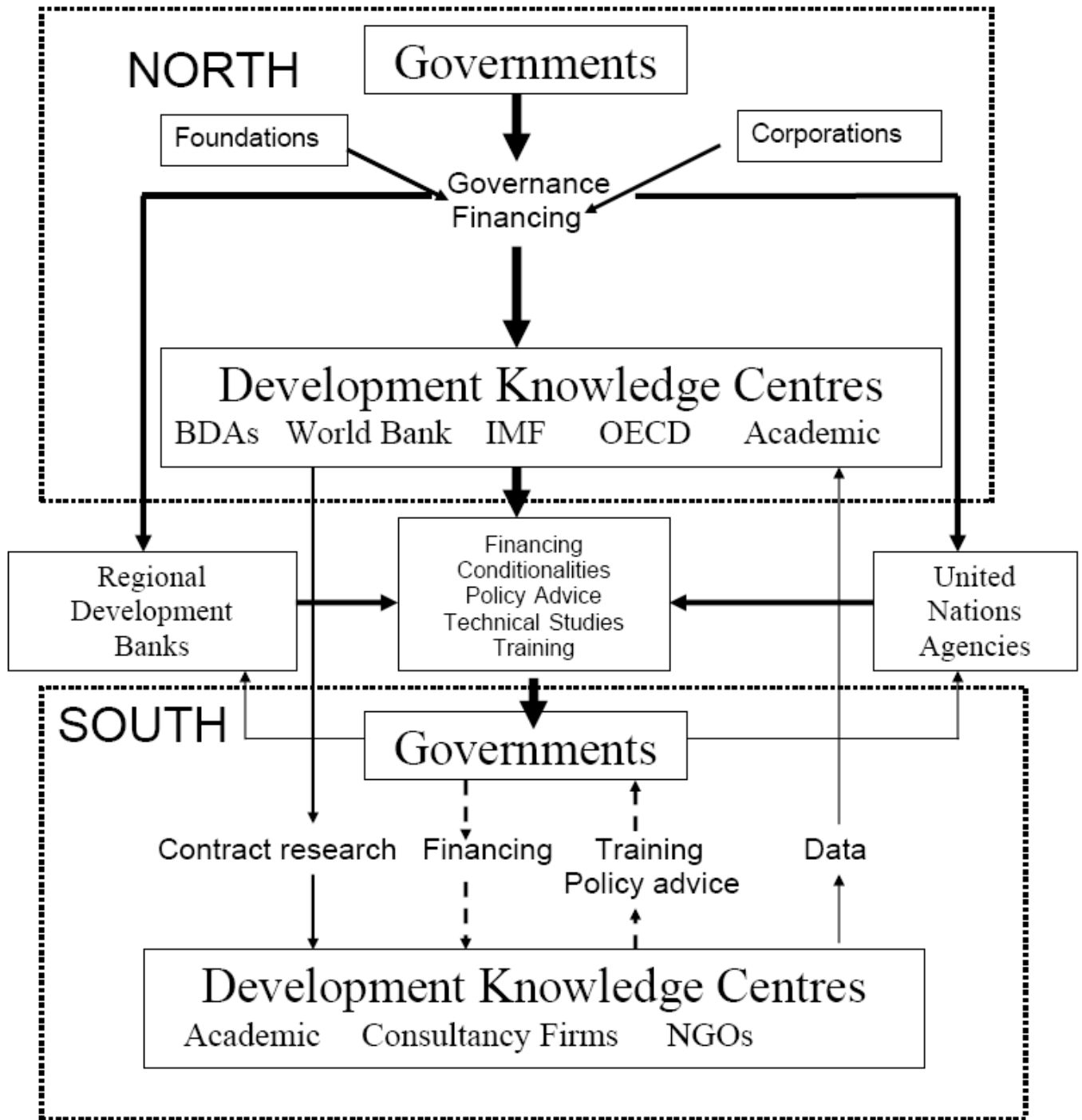
[Article online](#)

¹ This paper draws on my longer paper, "Power Imbalances and Development Knowledge", prepared for the Project on the Reform of the International Development Architecture of North-South Institute in Ottawa, Canada.

² It is recognised that some countries of the South have achieved significant weight in international affairs; and differentiation within the South is considerable. Nevertheless, the reality of power imbalances prevails for the majority of the countries in the South.

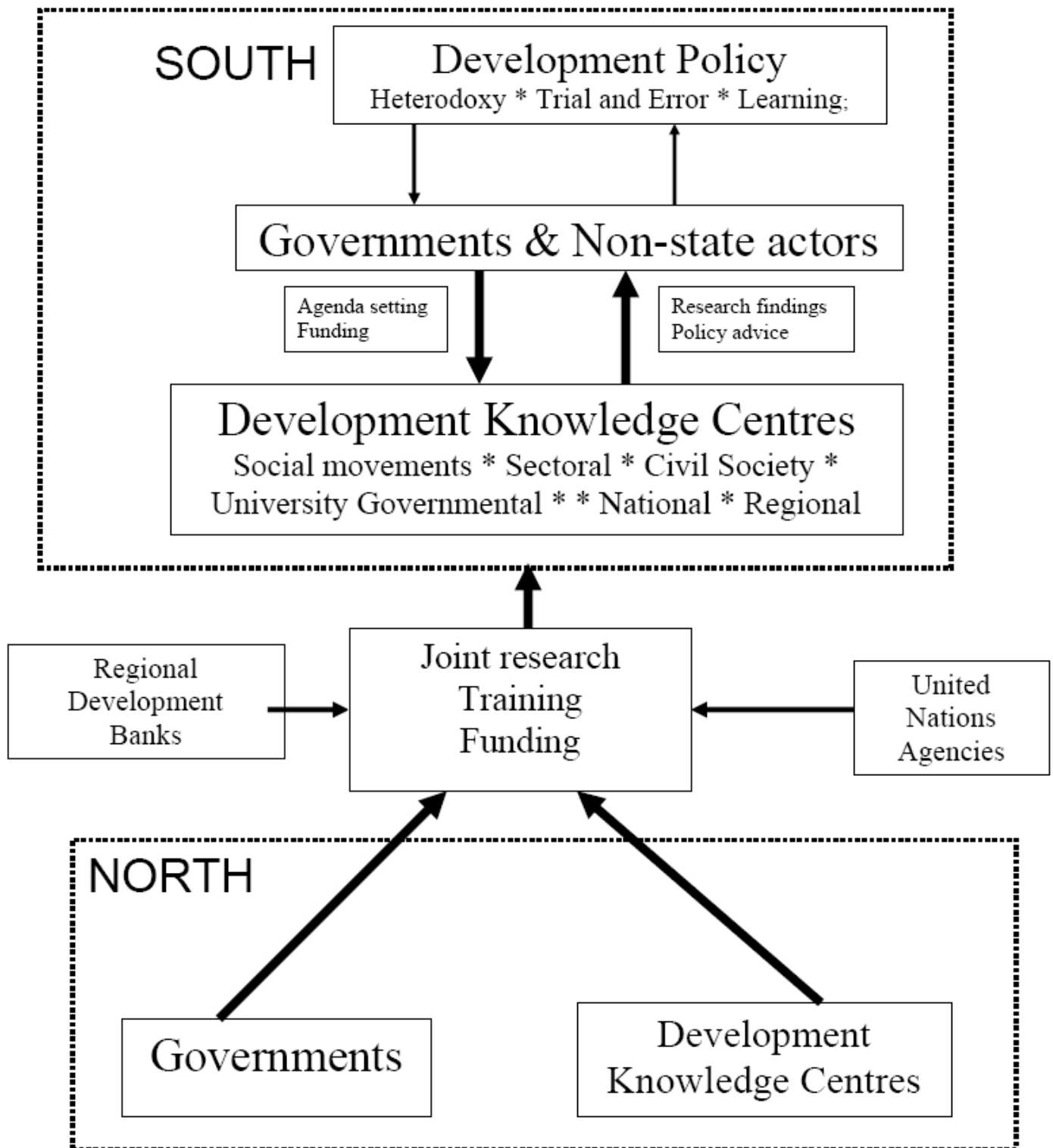
³ The World Bank, the leading producer of development knowledge, spends some \$600 million per year on 'analytical and advisory activities'. Its research department alone (which accounts for less than 5 percent of this figure) has a staff of over 120. Data from Kapur, Devesh (2006) "The 'Knowledge' Bank". In *Rescuing the World Bank*. CGD0502_0527_Engl_6x9.indd 159-170; http://www.cgdev.org/doc/books/rescuing/Kapur_Knowledge.pdf; Accessed 29/05/07; and Banerjee, Abhijit; Angus Deaton; Nora Lustig; and Ken Rogoff (with Edward Hsu) (2006) *An Evaluation of World Bank Research, 1998 – 2005*. www.worldbank.org/data&research/evaluationofbankresearch/htm). Accessed 29/05/07.

Figure 1. North-South Development Knowledge Hierarchies



Note: Unbroken arrows denote strong links, broken arrows denote weak links
 Source: author.

Figure 2. Hierarchies Up-ended



African Governance: The Importance of More and Better Data

This commentary, written by Nathalie Delapalme ([Mo Ibrahim Ibrahim Foundation](#)), has been first published in the journal "Governance". We reproduce here the article with the kind authorization of the autor, publisher and editor.

Five years ago, when the Mo Ibrahim Foundation was launched, most observers wondered about its specific focus: "governance and leadership in Africa." For most of them, governance was, at best, a heavy conditionality of donors' aid and, at worst, naturally "bad" in African countries. Today, as everybody is bent on assessing the Millennium Development Goals, 10 years after they have been set by world leaders convening at the United Nations, and five short years before these targets are due to be met, governance has suddenly become the alpha and omega of all prominent meetings. Whether in New York at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2010 or in ongoing preparations in various capitals for the upcoming G20 Summit, governance has become the buzzword of development circles.

This new awareness owes much to two major shifts in this new century. First is the financial crisis that maimed the developed world and underlined, if anything, a severe lack of governance, mostly among those who were always so quick to point fingers and preach. Second is the huge potential of the African continent: an average

growth rate now five times higher than its immediate neighbor, the euro zone; a growing population of which two-thirds are under 25; abundant and yet mostly unexploited natural resources and space; and consequently numerous "emerging" partners and growing competition between all of them.

That governance is a crucial factor of any development policy— domestic and donor alike—has become an undisputed fact. Harnessing Africa's huge potential requires wise and excellent leadership that can entrench good governance at an institutional level. But these two crucial elements—excellent leadership and good governance—are in short supply. That is why they have been chosen as the main focus of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation's work.

The Foundation has adopted a broader conception of good governance that shifts from moral judgment to factual assessment and moves beyond the traditional emphasis on elections and legitimacy to an understanding of what the components of a well-governed society are. This is where the Ibrahim Index comes in. Looking at effective outcomes rather than at claims, intentions, or even spending alone, the Ibrahim Index presently aggregates 88 indicators, assessing citizens' experiences across the fullest range of public goods and services, from human development (poverty, health, education) to rule of law; from economic opportunity to security. This, then, is the Foundation's definition of good governance: the successful delivery of those public goods and services that citizens have a right to expect.

Choosing this results-based approach immediately leads to a core issue: the paucity of data. Therein lies the most immediate challenge linked to the strengthening of governance: the ability, for governments, citizens, partners, and media alike, to effectively define measurable goals and then assess results. If governance is crucial for achieving better and quicker development, data are crucial for building and achieving good governance. Probably most striking of all is the lack of sufficient data about, and even of a shared definition of, "poverty level." In Niger, currently seen as one of the "poorest" countries, the most recent data on the national poverty level date all the way back to 1993. Although there has been widespread adoption of the more common "\$1 a day" measure, even these data date back to 2005. Issues are similar across a range of key areas, from maternal mortality to physical infrastructure—railways, bridges, internal air traffic, regional roads. Data are limited in terms of time series availability and country coverage.

For the Foundation, this inhibits our ability to provide the kind of comprehensive assessment the Index is intended to be. Although we maintain reasonable, rather than unrealistically high, standards for inclusion, we are still left with numerous holes that must be plugged through statistical methodology. It also forces us to rely heavily on expert assessment for areas that should be covered by official data. For example, the levels of violent crime in a country or whether officials are prosecuted for abuses of power are both important areas for which it would be reasonable to expect some level of official data. However, because of incomplete country coverage and limited data series over time, we are left to rely solely on the assessment of externally based experts.

The implications of this extend beyond the assessment of governance. Decisions regarding allocation of resources and policymaking are obviously difficult, if not impossible, in the context of this vacuum. If decisions are not based on results, then accountability for these decisions and assessments of their success become hugely challenging.

Additionally, many of these areas for which there are no data fall under the umbrella of the international donor community. This raises many questions about the legitimacy of this sector as well. Where is the evidence for the success of development spending? In the absence of reliable data on the real outcomes of development spending, we are forced to rely on inputs—how much was spent. This does not allow for any cost-effectiveness analysis. In the context of an increasingly polarized debate about the value of aid, at least partially attributable to the global financial crisis, this becomes untenable. In short, the dearth of robust and comprehensive data is a major challenge to the governance reform arena. Uniquely, this issue cuts across the entire spectrum of governance, from assessment to implementation, from donors to national governments.

There are of course other major issues where specific research could be of tremendous interest. Among those, one is the link—and difference—between governance and leadership: To what extent, and at what risk, can we have governance without leadership, or leadership without governance? Another key issue is about the link between economic development and democratic progress—to what extent has it been, is it always, can it still be a sort of “trade-off”? Specific attention has also to be given to the core issue of regional integration: which goals, which tools, which strategies?

All these of course, do not cover all the many questions that arise around governance. But all will contribute to enable us, in a joint governance-focused way, to progress toward our common aim and shared interest of a prosperous and peaceful Africa.

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<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-0491.2010.01513.x/full>

The Quality of Democracy and Governance in Africa: New Results from Afrobarometer Round 4

In May 2009, [Afrobarometer](#) published the *Compendium of Public Opinion Findings from 19 African Countries in 2008*. We reproduce below an extract of this [working paper](#) n°108.

Afrobarometer Round 4

The Afrobarometer is an independent, non-partisan research project that measures the social, political and economic atmosphere in sub-Saharan Africa. Afrobarometer surveys are now conducted in 20 African countries, and are repeated on a regular cycle.

The Afrobarometer is dedicated to three main objectives:

- to produce scientifically reliable data on public opinion in Africa;
- to strengthen capacity for survey research in African institutions; and
- to broadly disseminate and apply survey results.

Afrobarometer results are used by decision-makers in government, non-governmental policy advocates, international donor agencies, journalists and academic researchers, as well as average Africans who wish to become informed and active citizens.

Since 1999, the Afrobarometer has conducted more than 105,000 interviews to collect data on the attitudes and behaviors of ordinary Africans in reforming polities and economies across the continent. One of the project's key goals has been to open a window onto how average citizens understand their political, social and economic milieu. While we have often had a great deal of information on the attitudes and behaviors of African elites, the orientations of the general public towards political and economic change have, to a considerable extent, been unknown, undervalued and ignored.

The Afrobarometer therefore seeks to reshape the debate on political and economic reform in Africa by giving voice to African citizens. Afrobarometer results enable Africans and interested outsiders to educate themselves about public opinion on the sub-Saharan sub-continent, and to influence policy makers accordingly. The project has devoted particular attention to exploring popular attitudes toward and assessments of the quality of democracy and governance.

Afrobarometer Round 1 explored these issues in 12 countries from 1999-2001 (Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe). Round 2 expanded the scope to four additional countries (Cape Verde, Kenya, Mozambique and Senegal) during 2002-2003. Round 3 of the Afrobarometer, conducted from March 2005 to March 2006, extended the reach of the project still further with the addition of Benin and Madagascar. Round 4 broadens the scope to 20 countries with the inclusion of Burkina Faso and Liberia.

Because the instrument asks a standard set of questions, countries can be systematically compared. In addition, about two-thirds of the items remain the same from one round to the next, allowing us to track trends over time. These questions include core questions on attitudes toward democracy, evaluations of governance, institutional trust, economic standing, and a variety of other issues. The remaining one-third of the questionnaire is comprised of questions that investigate new topics or add depth to topics we have explored in the past. In Round 4, we have added new questions that examine attitudes toward and assessments of local government and traditional leaders in greater depth, expanded the section on government accountability, and incorporated the new topic of cosmopolitanism and international perspectives.

The Afrobarometer methodology is based on personal, face-to-face interviews, conducted in the language of the respondent's choice. The surveys are based on national probability samples, with random selection at all stages ensuring that every adult citizen has an equal and known chance of inclusion in the sample.

Full details of Afrobarometer sampling and survey methodology can be found in the Round 4 Survey Manual, available on the project website at <http://www.afrobarometer.org/methods.html>.

It is important to note that the 20 African countries included in the Afrobarometer are not fully representative of Africa as a whole. Most have undergone a measure of political and economic reform, and they are thus among the continent's more open regimes. However, the inclusion of countries with serious internal conflicts – like Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe – helps to make the country sample somewhat representative of the sub-continent. But considerable caution is nonetheless warranted when projecting Afrobarometer results to all “Africans.”

Because of its broad scope, the Afrobarometer is organized as an international collaborative enterprise. The Afrobarometer Network currently has three Core Partners who are jointly responsible for providing overall direction and management to the project. In Round 4, the Core Partners are: the Center for Democratic Development in Ghana (CDD-Ghana), the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa), and the Institute for Empirical Research in Political Economy (IREEP) in Benin. The Afrobarometer Network also includes National Partner institutions that conduct fieldwork, data entry, preliminary analysis, and the dissemination of survey results in each participating country. These include university research institutes, independent think tanks, or private polling firms. Finally, Support Units at Michigan State University and the University of Cape Town assist the project with capacity building, quality assurance for data and publications, and technical and advisory support services.

Full details on all Round 4 partner organizations can be found on the project website at <http://www.afrobarometer.org/network.html>.

Purpose of This Compendium

As detailed in the table below, 19 Round 4 surveys went to the field from March 4 to December 31, 2008. A survey could not be conducted in the twentieth country, Zimbabwe, during 2008 due to the statesponsored violence that was affecting the country at the time. However, after the formation of the Inclusive Government in early 2009, the calmer political situation will allow us to conduct a survey during 2009.

Of the other 19 countries, this compendium presents detailed results for all except Zambia, where the data is still considered provisional. But note that the Means shown in each table do include Zambia. **A revised version of this Compendium that includes final data for Zambia and the new results from Zimbabwe will be published later in 2009.**

The purpose of this compendium is to present “**just the facts**”. The tables that follow report simple descriptive statistics that summarize key public attitudes, both by country and for a mean of 19 Afrobarometer countries. As such, this handbook aims primarily to create a record of mass attitudes on the topic of citizen-state relations. We do not attempt to analyze these findings here, but rather leave that to the reader, to the many Afrobarometer Briefing Papers and Working Papers that have been and will continue to be produced utilizing this data, and to the work of other researchers. We do note several Afrobarometer Briefing Papers that are being released in conjunction with this compendium which seek to analyze the findings on some of the key indicators included here. These include:

No. 67 Neither Consolidating Nor Fully Democratic: The Evolution of African Political Regimes, 1999-2008

No. 68 Poverty Reduction, Economic Growth and Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa

No. 69 Citizens of the World? Africans, Media and Telecommunications

No. 70 Are Democratic Citizens Emerging in Africa? Evidence from the Afrobarometer

These and all other Afrobarometer publications are available at

<http://www.afrobarometer.org/publications.html>.

Round 4 Surveys: Sample Size and Fieldwork Dates

	Sample Size	Dates of Fieldwork
Benin	1200	June 23 - July 6, 2008
Botswana	1200	Sept. 29 - Oct. 16, 2008
Burkina Faso	1200	Oct. 6 - 21, 2008
Cape Verde	1264	May 20 - 29, 2008
Ghana	1200	March 4 - 27, 2008
Kenya	1104	Oct. 29 - Nov. 17, 2008
Lesotho	1200	Oct. 16 - Nov. 12, 2008
Liberia	1200	Dec. 9 - 31, 2008
Madagascar	1350	June 11 - July 11, 2008
Malawi	1200	Oct. 10 - Nov. 25, 2008
Mali	1232	Dec. 15 - 31, 2008
Mozambique	1200	Dec. 6 - 24, 2008
Namibia	1200	Oct. 24 - Dec. 3, 2008
Nigeria	2324	May. 13 - 25, 2008
Senegal	1200	May 19 - June 4, 2008
South Africa	2400	Oct. 27 - Nov. 23, 2008
Tanzania	1208	June 23 - July 12, 2008
Uganda	2431	July 27 - September 3, 2008
Zambia	1200	Oct. 13 - 28, 2008
Zimbabwe	--	2009
TOTAL	26,414	March 4 - December 31, 2008

Caveats

How valid and reliable are the subjective views of ordinary citizens? On a continent where most people continue to live in rural areas and where a good education is hard to find, people may not be well enough informed to offer dependable opinions. Or so goes the argument. While education clearly improves a respondent's comprehension of survey questions and adds sophistication to answers, we nevertheless resist concluding that non-literate or parochial respondents lack the capacity to form opinions about livelihood and well being. On the contrary, we have found that, as long as questions are stated plainly and concretely (all question wordings are provided in the text and tables that follow, and the full questionnaire can be found at <http://www.afrobarometer.org/questionnaires.html>), Africans can express clear opinions about economic survival and political authority.

The reader will notice that public opinion often confirms, but sometimes contradicts, empirical observations of a more objective sort. For example, both Botswana and South Africa earn a designation of "free" from Freedom House in 2008, with identical scores on indices of political rights and civil liberties¹. Yet when we ask respondents in the two countries to rate the extent of their own democracy, confident Botswana give themselves the highest ranking among the 19 countries, with 91% rating the country as either a full democracy or a democracy with only minor problems, compared to just 48% of South Africans who give their country a similarly positive review. Under these circumstances, how far can we trust public opinion?

We argue that, in the realms of society, politics and the economy, **perceptions matter just as much – if not more – than reality**. That which people think to be true – including judgments about present conditions or past performance and expectations for the future – is a central motivation for behavior. Perceptions are paramount in the interest-driven realm of the marketplace and the ideological realm of politics. Whether or not attitudes exactly mirror exterior circumstances, an individual's interior perspective forms the basis of any calculus for action. And, consistent with our instinct that all people, whatever their material circumstances, are capable of acute observation and rational thought, we find that, more often than not, public opinion findings reinforce, rather than undercut, the thrust of official aggregate statistics.

Survey data, however, have multiple advantages. They allow us to see where the general public is dissatisfied, thus calling into question the suitability of existing policies and suggesting alternatives. They offer opportunities to break down official aggregates in order to discover who supports the status quo and who does not. Moreover, survey data provide new openings for testing and explaining observed differences across countries and time periods.

Technical Notes

To comprehend and correctly interpret the text and tables of this report, the reader should bear in mind the following considerations:

Sampling

- In each country, the Afrobarometer covers a representative sample of the adult population (i.e., those over 18 years old and eligible to vote). Survey respondents are selected using a multistage, stratified, clustered area design that is randomized at every stage with probability proportional to population size. For fuller details see www.afrobarometer.org/sampling.html.
- The minimum sample size in any country is generally 1200, which is sufficient to yield a confidence interval of plus or minus 3 percentage points (actually 2.8 percentage points) at a confidence level of 95 percent. Because a small share of the Kenya sample was set aside for targeted interviews with residents of internally displaced camps, the random sample was reduced to 1104 respondents. In three countries with sample sizes of approximately 2400 – Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda – the margin of sampling error decreases to plus or minus 2 percentage points.

Fieldwork Methodology, Coverage, and Timing

- Round 4 surveys used an identical survey instrument in all countries. The base questionnaire was produced initially in English, and then translated into other national languages (French, Portuguese, and Swahili). The questionnaire is then “indigenized” in each country to adapt to local nomenclature and country-specific factors, after which it is translated according to strict protocols into the primary local languages. Respondents are then interviewed by trained interviewers in face-to-face sessions, in the language of the respondent’s choice.
- Several points about the coverage and timing of specific surveys are worth noting:
 - * In Zambia the survey was conducted very shortly before the 30 October 2008 national election to replace President Levy Mwanawasa following his death in office.
 - * In Mozambique, the fieldwork was conducted immediately after local government elections held on 19 November 2008.
 - * In Kenya, the fieldwork was conducted nine months after a period of severe post-election violence following the flawed December 2007 elections, and just six months after the formation of a coalition government that was intended to share power between the two main contenders in that election.
 - * In South Africa, the survey was conducted just one month after former President Thabo Mbeki resigned the presidency, and shortly before the formation of a new party, the Congress of the People (COPE), which appeared to be breaking away from the African National Congress.

Descriptive Statistics

- Percentages reported in the tables reflect valid responses. Unless otherwise noted, “don’t know” responses are included, even if they are not shown. But missing data, refusals to answer, and cases where a question was not applicable are excluded from the calculations. Except where noted, the share of missing data is small and does not significantly change the sample size or confidence interval.
- All percentages have been rounded to whole numbers. This occasionally introduces small anomalies in which the sum of total reported responses does not equal 100 percent. An empty cell signifies that a particular question was not asked in given country in a given year.

- In many cases, we have combined response categories. For example, “satisfied” and “very satisfied” responses are added together and reported as a single figure. Rounding was applied only after response categories were aggregated.
- Although Afrobarometer samples are approximately self-weighting, for most countries we calculate weights at the Enumeration Area (EA) level to account for the effects of clustering and actual versus ideal distribution of the sample. In addition, in some countries statistical weights are used to adjust for purposive over-sampling of minorities or to correct for inadvertent deviations from the planned sample during fieldwork. The frequency distributions reported in the tables reflect these within-country weights.
- The 19 country data sets are pooled into an overall Afrobarometer Round 4 data set (n=26,414). We report 19-country mean statistics in the last row of each table (as mentioned, these means include Zambia, although the Zambia results are not reported separately in the tables). These means include the within-country weights described above, plus an across-country weight to standardize the size of each national sample to n = 1200 respondents. That is, each country carries equal weight in the calculation of Afrobarometer means, regardless of its sample size or overall population.

The results that follow cover a selection of 168 variables out of a total of 228 items asked of respondents in Round 4. The respondent’s demographic characteristics are excluded, as are items about the interview and its context recorded by the interviewer (which increase the total number of Round 4 items to over 300). Similar Compendia are available for Rounds 1, 2 and 3:

Round 1 (1999-2001)

“Afrobarometer Round 1: Compendium of Comparative Data from a Twelve-Nation Survey”
(Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 11)

Round 2 (2002-2003)

“Afrobarometer Round 2: Compendium of Comparative Results from a 15-Country Survey”
(Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 34).

Round 3 (2005-2006)

“Where is Africa Going? Views from Below: A Compendium of Trends in Public Opinion in 12 African Countries, 1999-2006” (Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 60)

“Citizens and the State in Africa: New Results from Afrobarometer Round 3” (Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 61)

“The Status of Democracy, 2005-2006: Findings from Afrobarometer Round 3 for 18 Countries”
(Afrobarometer Briefing Paper No. 40)

**Afrobarometer Network
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[See all findings](#) (p.7-49)

¹ See <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2008>.

- **10 March 2011, Dakar**, The Africa Governance Institute held its second “quality control” [intern seminar](#) in the framework of its AGI's Fridays programme.
- **24-29 March 2011, Addis Ababa**, 4th Joint Annual Meetings of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. [More...](#)
- **27 March 2011, Addis Ababa**, Launch of the Africa Platform for Development Effectiveness (APDev). [More...](#)

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