Good Governance Framework

Diagram: Good governance at local, regional and national levels. Central themes — CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND VOICE, PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, ACCOUNTABLE DECISION-MAKING. Outer bands: Government Responsibility, Citizen and Community Engagement. Segments: Equity and Inclusiveness, Participation, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Responsiveness, Accountability, Transparency, Rule of Law.

Using the Good Governance Framework

By starting at the center, the framework can be read like a logframe and used for program design, planning capacity-building, or evaluating program impact.

Goal: Accountable and capable governance at local, sub-regional or national levels.

Objectives: Mercy Corps' governance efforts focus on three areas: citizen participation and voice, public service delivery and accountable decision-making.

Principles: The tenents of good governance are also sub-objectives of programming and can be program activities.

Actors: Interaction between citizens, with their communities and organizations, and government contributes to good governance.

Cross-cutting Sectors: Promoting good governance often requires integrated programming. For example, women or youth empowerment activities involve civic participation and accountable decision-making, whereas food security and climate change programs often require both public service delivery and accountable decision-makingprocesses.

The Good Governance Framework was developed by Mercy Corps team members for Mercy Corps team members. It is informed by our Vision for Change and commitment to relief and development programming that is community-led and market-driven.

Government is one of the actors that contributes to good governance along with the civil society and private sectors.

Government is made up of the structures and systems established for service delivery and ensuring security, voice and protection of all people in a country's borders who fall under authority of the state.

Governance is the process of decision-making and how those decisions are implemented. Governance is good when the systems and processes are accountable, transparent, just, responsive and participatory.

Individuals, institutions and organizations within these three sectors need to be strong, accountable and participatory and able to interact effectively with one another and with their communities and constituents for good governance. Mercy Corps often seeks to build the capacity of one or more of these sectors, while strengthening their capacity to work with one another through:

❭ Inclusive and accountable decision-making

❭ Equitable civic participation and voice

❭ Effective public service delivery and government responsibility

How can I use this framework?

The Good Governance Framework is a tool for considering possible governance approaches. It can help teams:

1. Identify whether a proposed program initiative relates more to government responsibility or individual and community engagement. This will help the team determine whether the program is more relevant to one side of the framework or a particular intersection.

2. Consider the cross-cutting sectors of the program (like women's empowerment) and look at where these are located on the framework. This exercise will help direct the team to a more specific sector of the framework, and indicate which of the three governance objectives (civic participation and voice, accountable decision-making and/or public service delivery) the program is targeted towards.

3. Identify the relevant sub-objectives of governance (e.g. for the public service delivery objective: efficiency, effectiveness and/or responsiveness) that the program might focus on.

The points of entry differ – sometimes we work with local civil society organizations (CSOs) to raise awareness or help build their capacity. Other times we focus on improving the capacity of local government officials and institutions. And sometimes we work simultaneously on both. Regardless, the main objectives are the same: providing support for those actors in society who believe in the core principles of accountability, peaceful change and participation in order to ensure healthy and vibrant communities that are governed responsibly and justly.

Where can I learn more about governance programming?

Mercy Corps' Guide to Good Governance Programming is a resource for designing, planning, implementing and evaluating governance programs and activities with governments. It presents the principles and approaches of the framework in the context of program examples from around the world. It also includes tools and resources for the whole program cycle, plus a capacity statement, menu of indicators and resources for further learning.

On Connect, find colleagues and ask questions at https://connect.mercycorps.org/group/governance-and-partnership

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