
Aly Abou-Sabaa
Vice-President
Agriculture, Water, Human Development and Governance
Honorable Abderrahamane Ladgham, Minister of Governance and Anti-Corruption, Republic of Tunisia;

Honorable Lantoniaina Rasoloelison, Minister of Finance and Budget, Republic of Madagascar and the Governor of the Bank;

Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, Executive Director, African Governance Institute, member of the Board of Mo Ibrahim Foundation, and former Executive Secretary of UNECA;

Representatives of Development Partners;

Distinguished Participants.

On behalf of the African Development Bank and President Donald Kaberuka, I wish to welcome you, all of our distinguished participants, to this consultative meeting on the Bank Group’s draft Governance Strategy for 2014-2018, called “Governance Strategic Framework and Action Plan”, which we refer to as GAP II.

Let me thank you most sincerely for honoring our invitation.

I am particularly grateful to Honorable Abderrahamane Ladgham, Minister of Governance and Anti-Corruption, Republic of Tunisia, for gracing this occasion and for accepting to deliver the keynote address.

Honorable Minister, please extend the Bank’s gratitude and appreciation to your Government for the special protocol arrangements made for our ministerial participants and for facilitating the entry visas for all participants.

It is now generally acknowledged that Africa is on the move. Two weeks ago, the French President acknowledged this reality. “Africa’s time has come,” he said at the Elysée Summit for Peace and Security in Africa.

We also all know today that better governance is contributing to this development.

The evidence is quite strong that many African countries are now embracing good governance. Africa is experiencing significant transformation and robust recovery from the global recession.

Africa’s GDP growth rate has averaged 6.6% in 2012 compared with 3.1% in 2009.

With about one third of African economies growing at over 6% in 2012, Africa has become an important growth point for global recovery.
According to a report recently published by our institution in 2013: “The 2013 Annual Development Effectiveness Review”, about 70% of African countries have improved their overall quality of governance in recent years.

Most of the countries are increasing their capacity to deliver sustainable economic opportunities and human development.

Revenues from natural resources, inflows from remittances, and foreign direct investment now vastly dwarf external aid.

Also, more African countries are now experiencing peaceful transfer of power through democratic elections.

These are concrete evidences of improved governance on the continent.

This is, however, not to say that the job is done. Despite recent progress, significant challenges remain, even in the areas indicated above.

To enhance Africa’s transformation, the African Development Bank, in April 2013, launched its Long Term Strategy for 2013-2022, whose vision is Africa’s transformation.

The Strategy’s twin objectives of inclusive growth and transition to green growth aim to make Africa’s development both more inclusive and sustainable.

Governance and Accountability are one of the three “I”s required to achieve those two goals – Infrastructure, Integration and Institutions – as mentioned by President Donald Kaberuka at the Elysée Summit.

The African Development Bank therefore remains committed to assisting African countries to promote sound economic and financial governance, which is its core mandate in the area of governance.

The first Governance Strategic Direction and Action Plan (which we refer to as GAP I) 2008-2012, provided the overall direction for the Bank’s governance work in Africa since 2008 at the country, sector and regional level.

Our core focus areas were on public financial management and a business enabling environment. The volume of the Bank’s governance lending and grant operations during 2008-2012 amounted to about US $6.3 billion, of which Program Based Operations accounted for 95% and Institutional Support Projects for 5%.
These operations contributed to improvements in governance indicators at the outcome level such as Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Framework, Doing Business and other ratings.

Other indicators have also shown a steady improvement such as increased domestic revenues, social service delivery, and access to finance, in countries where the AfDB provided support.

For example, in Liberia, government revenues increased from 14.6% of GDP in 2005 to 26.8% in 2009.

In Ghana, the AfDB supported social service delivery resulting in 4,500 safe births, primary school attendance for 16,000 children, and measles vaccinations for 4,000 children.

In Morocco, our support for financial sector governance contributed to improved access to finance to the population.

GAP II will build on the achievements of GAP I in the two core areas of public financial management and business enabling environment.

It will also deepen our analytical work such as studies and reports, policy dialogue, and capacity building. It will also leverage donor collaboration to deliver results. Together we can make the difference.

Honorable ministers, distinguished participants,

I thank you in advance for your active participation and look forward to fruitful deliberations.