Governance as an SDG accelerator at national and subnational levels

Prof Lichia Saner-Yiu

Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development (CSEND)
www.csend.org
Key Points

- The context of “Building Back Better” – negative impact of COVID-19 Pandemic
- Governance as an instrument to accelerate the attainment of SDGs & to safeguard LNOB
- The essential role of monitoring & data for SDG implementation
- Standardisation as tool for empowerment and engagement at subnational level and for alignment at national level
Point 1

CONTEXT OF BUILD BACK BETTER
Outlook Optimistic, but Unevenly Distributed

Many countries face difficult policy tradeoffs as they confront:

- Unemployment
- Educational losses
- Climate change
- Inflation and food insecurity
- Rising debt
The new geography of jobs, skills, incomes
(Source: Michael Storper, 2016, Talk at HEID, Geneva)

• New Economic Geography (NEG) predicted:
  • agglomeration of innovative industries of the New Economy;
  • The advantages of city size and city density for waves of innovative activity.
• Economy pre-1980 was a maturing phase of 20th century industries, based mostly on mechanical engineering. Favored suburban areas, smaller cities and more recently, emerging economies – a de-agglomeration phase with weakening premium on density
• Since then, the New Economy has changed all that and it is likely to last for quite some time. Cities and big, dense cities, are centers of concentrated job, income and population growth because they are hotbeds of fast-moving and innovative forms of economic activity, which are the ones that are the comparative advantage of wealthy countries in the global economy. (e.g. Singapore, Boston, San Jose)
Point 2

GOVERNANCE FOR ACCELERATING SDGS AND SAFEGUARD LNOB
Reimagining

“For the first time in history, more people live in urban settlements than outside of them. The concentration of people, power, and wealth in cities creates many possibilities for tackling some of the world’s most pressing problems.

At the same time, urban areas are on the frontline of challenges that range from climate change and extreme poverty to multiple layers of violence and pandemics.”

Definition of Governance

Governance as the processes by which public decisions are made, the mobilization of public and private resources to implement them, and the evaluation of their substantive outcomes.

Local governance is centred on local government institutions, which .... encompass municipalities and their dependent special-purpose bodies. (Zack Taylor, 2016)

https://www.academia.edu/26224052/Good_Governance_at_the_Local_Level_Meaning_and_Measurement
On Track to Achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

If .......
REFRAMING THE FOCUS
Post COVID-19:
Prioritising “Leaving No One Behind”
at City Level with participation and
transparency through “Standards”

Governance and Process Data as Pathway to
Accelerate SDG Attainment within the Smart
Cities

(Source: https://icon-library.com/icon/accelerate-icon-10.html.html#Accelerate Icon # 174839)
Disruption could also be great opportunities.....

Source: https://www.flaticon.com/premium-icon/opportunity_1610611
Point 3

ROLE OF MONITORING & DATA
Principles of Local Governance
(Source: Council of Europe, 2018)

The *European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE)*

1. Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation and Participation
2. Responsiveness
3. Efficiency and Effectiveness
4. Openness and Transparency
5. Rule of Law
6. Ethical Conduct
7. Competence and Capacity
8. Innovation and Openness to Change
9. Sustainability and Long-term Orientation
10. Sound Financial Management
11. Human rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion
12. Accountability

(https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/eloge)
Policy Making Process

1. Policy Initiation
2. Policy Formulation
3. Policy Implementation
4. Policy Evaluation

Ownership + Coherence + Relevance = Quality + Good Governance

(Adopted from Yiu & Saner, 2010)
Smart & Sustainable Cities

Technology
(Connectivity: things, services, people, ideas and data)

Sustainability
(Economic Growth, Inclusion & Environmental Health)

Smart City
(Shared & Sustained Prosperity in a sound ecosystem)

Trust and Good Governance

Transparency, Participation, Feedback

Infrastructure & Mechanism
Now is the time to accelerate technology adoption in PA&G (macro & micro)

- Digital technology: Deployed to all aspects of day-to-day life to improve wellbeing for all
- Mobile devices: A force for equity & participation
- Common platforms for stakeholder engagements & comparability
- Artificial intelligence: Making sense of exploding data & data mining
“The new paradigm is not displacement and replacement but connectivity and recombination. Transactions are being digitized, data is being generated and analysed in new ways, and previously discrete objects, people, and activities are being connected.”
Point 4

STANDARDISATION AS TOOL FOR EMPOWERMENT AND ENGAGEMENT
Urban Centres as an Eco-System for Creativity & Innovation

- Diversity
- Open system
- High connectivity (within and without)
- Fair competition of ideas, goods, services,
- Data rich environment
- Creative class and competent makers
Stakeholder Conflict
(Saner, 2002)

Judiciary/Constitution

Executive/Government

Legislative/Parliament

Citizens/Communities

("Quality Assurance for Public Administration: A Consensus Building Vehicle."
QMS as Tool for Consensus
(Saner, 2002)

Standardisation as Consensus Making within Public Sector

- **SDG Goal 11**: “Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”
  - (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org)

- 2030 Development Agenda, includes economic, social and environmental sustainability
  (5Ps: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership)
ISO 18091:2018

“ISO 18091:2014 is a general standard that aims to help local government organizations relate the concepts of quality management as described in the ISO 9000 family of standards with the practice and terminology commonly employed in the local government context.”
The 39 indicators can be verified with a questionnaire that identifies sub-indicators based on examples and evidence of results. These sub-indicators can vary in scope, evidence, number or quality, depending on the type of municipality or city.
Conclusion

- Trust and satisfaction are soft indicators of “good governance”, not sufficient but necessary (Bourkaert & Van de Walle, 2004)

- Standardised, traceable and transparent operational procedures at the city level lead to space for participation, dialogue, joint problem solving and better policies (experiences from application of Quality Management Systems)

- Accumulation of data supports meta analysis and institutional memory and impetus for improvement and change/ transformation

- Resulting in accelerating the SDG implementation & attainment (S&S cities)
Reference

- Monitoring the SDGs: digital and social technologies to ensure citizen participation, inclusiveness and transparency, Saner, Yiu and Nguyen. Dev Policy Rev. 00:1–18, 2020

