

A Modern Theory in Economic and Political Governance

by

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Dedication

To my father, Fahed Abulethem Nsour, a man in whom virtue was neither proclaimed nor performed, but quietly lived. Over the course of a long and exacting service as a judge, his moral life was governed by an unyielding devotion to truth, an incorruptible integrity, and a disciplined sense of justice rooted in conscience rather than expedience. Ethics, for him, were not abstractions but obligations, faithfully observed even when unseen and sustained over time.

In his character were joined qualities rarely reconciled: firmness tempered by mercy, authority restrained by humility, and discernment guided by moral clarity. These virtues conferred upon his judicial work both legitimacy and humanity, and upon his private life a quiet nobility. They shaped my moral horizon, formed my understanding of right and wrong, and influenced my life in its deepest and most enduring dimensions.

This work is dedicated in filial reverence, as a tribute to a life ordered by virtue, and to an ethical example whose influence transcends office, circumstance, and time.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

What is the historical context and current situation prompting the need for a new framework of state governance?

State governance, primarily defined as the way states exercise authority and manage public affairs, has become a decisive factor in shaping a nation's success or failure. It encompasses both political and economic dimensions, reflecting the growing expectation that states must manage these areas effectively to foster development, increase collective prosperity, and support inclusive growth and social well-being. In recent decades, discussions on governance have shifted away from rigid, highly centralised government models toward more decentralised and network-based forms of public management. These evolving approaches bring together a wider range of public and private actors, mirroring the increasing complexity of modern societies and responding to the need for governance systems that can deliver efficiency, legitimacy, and stability in an environment of rapid global and domestic change.¹

The main idea of state governance focuses on administering a nation's public affairs through institutional arrangements that mobilise and allocate resources to support national security, economic development, and social welfare. Governments employ a wide array of tools to achieve these aims, including legislative

¹ Fuar, L. (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*. Oxford University Press.

frameworks, monetary and fiscal policies, public-sector management systems, and mechanisms for stakeholder engagement.² Contemporary scholarship commonly conceptualises state governance as comprising four interrelated dimensions, as depicted in Figure 1.

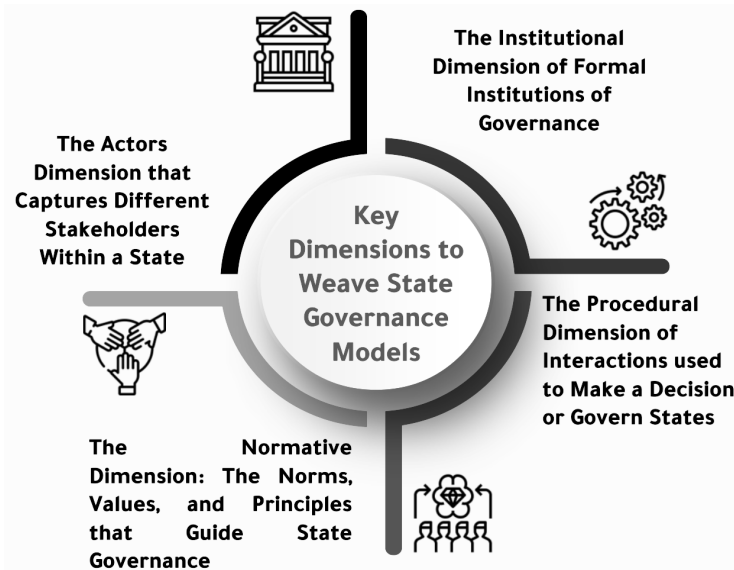


Figure 1: Key Dimensions to Weave State Governance Models

According to the *Oxford Handbook of Governance*, governance models are determined by an institutional dimension, encapsulating formal bodies, including legislature, executive, and judiciary; a procedural dimension, which highlights the processes and interactions through which decision-making occurs; an actor dimension, which captures the range of stakeholders involved in

² Abdel Hamid, A. (2003). *Economic Policies at the National Economic Level: A Macro Analysis*. Arab Nile Group.

governance; and a normative dimension, addressing the values, norms, and principles that guide how authority is exercised.³

Combining these dimensions helps align governance structures with national goals while maintaining responsiveness to societal ambitions. They also expose the technical mechanisms of governance and the foundational values that underpin a country's political and economic systems.⁴

These dimensions are most clearly reflected in dominant political and economic ideologies, whose practical implementation often reveals deep internal contradictions. While many of these economic and political frameworks can produce beneficial outcomes in particular contexts, they often produce major drawbacks when generalised or rigidly enforced. Communism, for example, is based on egalitarian access to resources, despite being frequently criticised for suppressing individual creativity, restricting personal freedoms, and constraining international cooperation. Although it may reduce overt inequality, it sometimes fails to create equitable opportunities for personal development. On the contrary, capitalism aims to achieve wealth accumulation in proportion to individual effort, but in reality, it tends to concentrate power and resources among a small elite, exacerbating social and economic disparities. This concentration fosters cycles of wealth reinforcement and power consolidation,⁵ while encouraging excessive individualism and short-term profit-seeking at the expense of long-term sustainability. Likewise, the

³ Fuar, L. (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*. Oxford University Press.

⁴ Wieland, J. (2014). *Governance Ethics: Global Value Creation, Economic Organisation, and Normativity*. Springer International Publishing.

⁵ Harvey, D. (2005). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.

social market economy aspires to balance state intervention with market freedom, yet its implementation is frequently criticised for inconsistencies resulting from shifting policy priorities, political compromises, or selective enforcement. Critics argue that regulatory interventions intended to preserve competition can undermine genuine market dynamics and, in certain cases, constrain productive efficiency, the central objective of liberal economic policy. Other political-economic models, such as socialist and mixed economies, have also shown systemic weaknesses in their underlying values and incentives. Collectively, these flaws lead to cascading effects, visible today in rising global economic instability, persistent inflationary pressures, and exacerbating inequalities within and between states.

The limitations of contemporary governance theories usually stem from their foundational values. In many cases, the principles associated with capitalism, such as the prioritisation of individual success and market dominance, undermine social cohesion and equality by shifting emphasis from collective welfare to private gain.⁶ When values are misinterpreted or instrumentalised, they lose their integrative function and instead become sources of division within society. This means that a critical re-evaluation of the values rooted in existing political and economic regimes provides an opportunity for substantive reform within state governance.

⁶ Wieland, J. (2014). *Governance Ethics: Global Value Creation, Economic Organisation, and Normativity*. Springer International Publishing.

Today's societies demand greater inclusiveness, accountability, and transparency, necessitating a reconfiguration of governance frameworks.⁷ Such frameworks must address current challenges with solutions that are both adaptable and sustainable.⁸ This context gives rise to The Balanced Governance Framework, a novel governance paradigm. At its core, this framework posits that effective governance depends on the deliberate identification, articulation, and continuous balancing of unifying ethical values. These values—integral to national identity—must be consistently embedded and harmonised across political, economic, and social domains. The Balanced Governance Framework is, therefore, designed to navigate the complexity of modern state leadership by reconciling diverse interests and aligning individual and collective aspirations across varying national contexts.

1.2 Objectives and Benefits

What are the main objectives and benefits of The Balanced Governance Framework?

Designed as a basis for theoretical construction, the framework this book introduces has been developed in response to the deep-rooted gaps found in widely adopted political and economic models of governance. It begins by reviewing the underlying values of these models, then attempts to optimally balance applications of these values to reduce the distortions that emerge when any single principle is prioritised over the others. In doing

⁷ Buchanan, J. M., & Tullock, G. (1999). *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy*. Liberty Fund

⁸ Lavoie, D. (1985). *National Economic Planning: What Is Left?* Ballinger Publishing Company.

so, the framework outlines leadership and governance frameworks that put this balance into practice, with the broader aim of fostering a society in which individuals are protected, have fair access to opportunities for well-being, and are encouraged to develop their capacities in ways that contribute to the collective good. A core element of this vision is the ethical circulation and distribution of wealth among individuals and communities.

By establishing clear normative foundations, the suggested framework supports the development of a society that upholds high ethical standards in governance while maintaining strong social cohesion and economic vitality. It also introduces well-defined rules that regulate the interaction within diverse populations, protecting freedom of thought and expression while recognising the need for reasonable constraints to preserve public order and social stability. These constraints are not designed to limit diversity or suppress difference, but rather to sustain social harmony, reduce internal tensions, and lower the risk of conflict.

Within this model, institutions occupy a central role. More precisely, the framework calls for creating and reforming institutions that are anchored in coherent ethical values and equipped with effective governance instruments. Such institutions are intended to enable meaningful participation in national development and to support decision-making processes informed by reliable data and evidence. The incorporation of advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, further strengthens institutional capacity, contributing to governance that is more transparent, responsive, and adaptive.

As outlined in Figure 2, The Balanced Governance Framework emphasises the coordination of governmental, commercial, and non-profit institutions within a single, integrated governance scheme. This arrangement seeks to ensure broad representation and active engagement across all sectors of society. Through structured collaboration and clearly defined institutional roles, The Balanced Governance Framework intends to promote ethical, balanced, and harmonious state development.

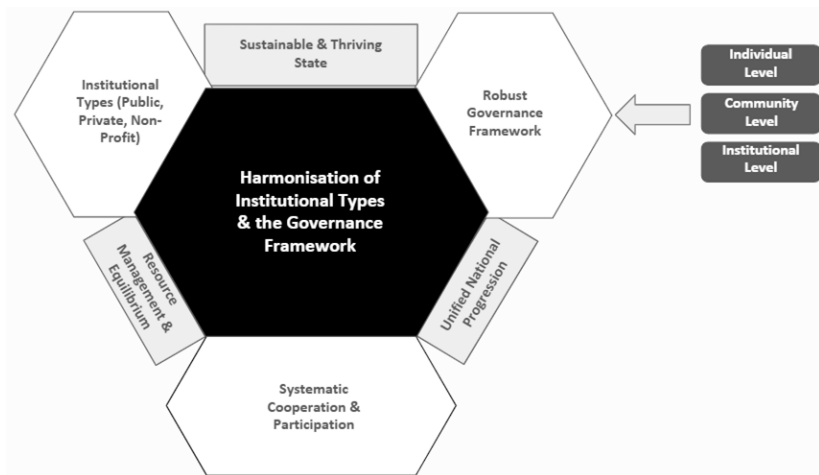


Figure 2: Harmonisation of Institutional Types and the Governance Framework

By promoting effective governance at the individual, social, and institutional levels, a state adopting the framework outlined in this book can excel politically, socially, and economically. The framework presented here, therefore, offers a model that highlights careful and prudent management and arrangement of national resources, pushing countries toward a state of sustainable

equilibrium, a phase where balanced growth, shared prosperity, and resilient governance are reached.

1.3 Methodological Foundations of The Balanced Governance Framework

What methodology was followed to devise the new framework?

The work behind The Balanced Governance Framework started with a close examination of existing literature on state governance, alongside political and economic models commonly used at both the state and institutional levels. This part of the methodology was intentionally critical in nature. The goal was not simply to describe these theories, but to understand how they operate when applied in real governance contexts and to consider the practical consequences of the values on which they are based.⁹ During this process, a number of recurring structural weaknesses became evident, many of which could be traced back to the way specific values are prioritised within each model.

To better understand these patterns, various political, economic, and governance theories were compared. Looking at them side by side made it easier to identify both shared assumptions and important differences, particularly in how authority is exercised, how economic activity is organised, and how social responsibility is defined. This comparative approach helped explain why some models are effective in certain settings but produce undesirable results in other political or economic contexts.

⁹ Fuar, L. (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*. Oxford University Press.

The analysis then focused more directly on the values that underpin these governance approaches. These values were examined in terms of how coherent they are, where tensions or contradictions arise, and what happens when they are translated into actual policies and institutional practices. This segment of the analysis highlighted the close connections between governance structures, institutional behaviour, and broader social outcomes.¹⁰ It also drew attention to the historical development of governance ideas, showing how models have evolved over time,¹¹ responded to changing circumstances, and affected one another, as well as how they have contributed to changes in social norms and collective behaviour.

Based on these findings, a set of cohesive values is developed for states seeking to apply principles of The Balanced Governance Framework. These values are connected to leadership and governance arrangements intended to support implementation and maintain consistency across institutions. To ensure that the framework can be applied in practice, these arrangements are designed to be flexible, allowing for gradual adoption and continued adjustment as political and economic conditions change. Figure 3 shows the main methodological steps and analytical reasoning that highlight the development of The Balanced Governance Framework.

¹⁰ Weingast, B. R., & Wittman, D. (2008). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*. Oxford Handbooks Online.

¹¹ Fuar, L. (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*. Oxford University Press.

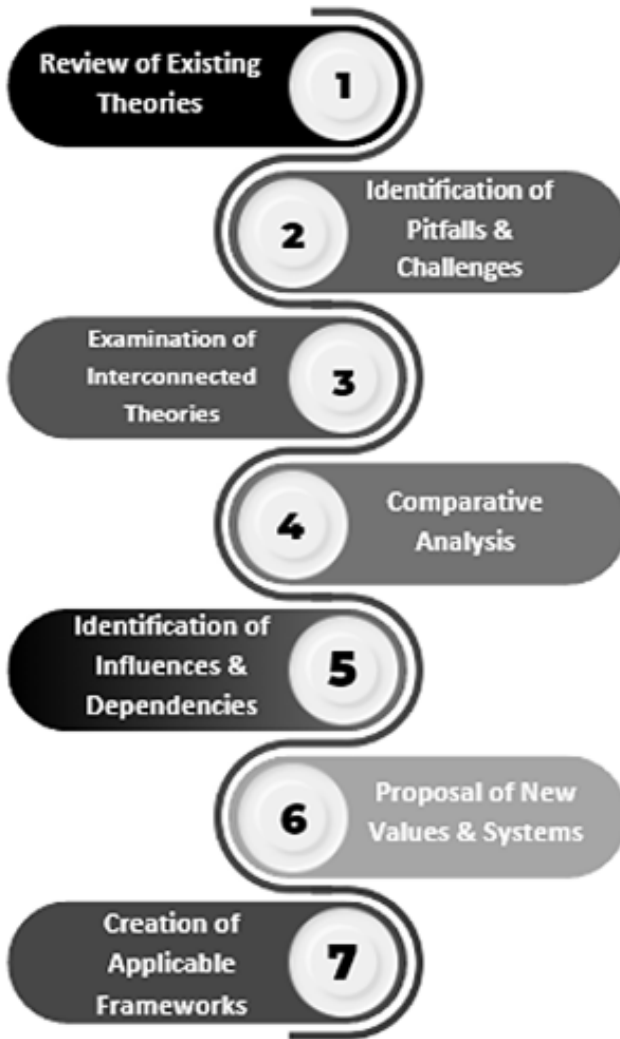


Figure 3: Methodology and Approach of The Balanced Governance Framework

2. Scope of the Framework

2.1 Defining the Framework's Landscape

What key aspects does this framework cover within its scope?

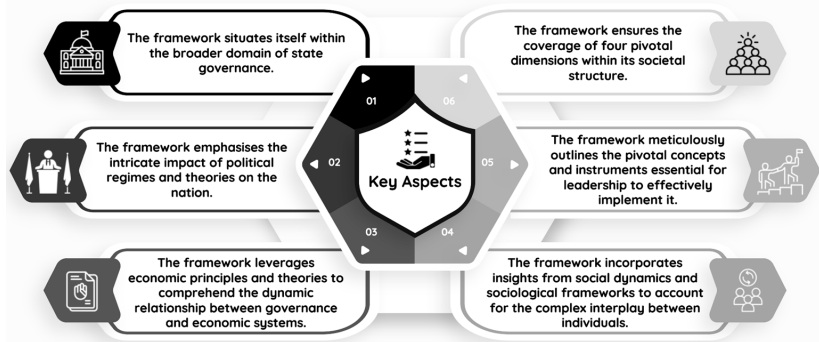


Figure 4: Key Aspects of The Balanced Governance Framework

The Balanced Governance Framework is grounded in a simple premise: leadership, governance, social relations, politics, and the economy do not operate independently. In practice, these domains are deeply interconnected and continuously shape one another. Because of this interdependence, the framework cannot be fully understood without first clarifying its scope and the assumptions on which it rests. As illustrated in Figure 4, the framework is situated within the field of state governance and focuses primarily on how power is exercised and how authority is shared. Figure 5 complements this by showing the framework's coverage of pivotal dimensions within the societal structure, clarifying how the

individual, community, institutional, and state levels are incorporated. While this field includes well-established approaches associated with liberal democracy and capitalism, it also encompasses perspectives that challenge prevailing governance norms and question how governance should function in practice.

Building on this foundation, the framework does not rely on a single discipline or perspective. Instead, it adopts an integrative approach that brings together insights from multiple fields and places social values at the centre of governance. Political institutions, economic systems, and social life are therefore treated as interconnected in real-world conditions, rather than as separate analytical domains. From this viewpoint, governance extends beyond formal state institutions alone. It also depends on cooperation among governments, social organisations, and private actors, particularly in contexts where public problems are complex, contested, or resistant to top-down solutions.

Political systems and ideologies occupy a central place in the framework, as they influence how states develop and how authority is maintained over time; accordingly, the framework highlights the role of institutions and public policy in supporting the rule of law and democratic participation, while recognising that institutions are not fixed but evolve in response to pressure, reform efforts, and shifting public expectations.

In addition, the framework looks at the everyday effects of political systems. Political decisions shape social relations, economic behaviour, and leadership practices, often in ways that are not immediately visible. By examining how different forms of

government have developed, The Balanced Governance Framework demonstrates how political structures influence both social conditions and economic outcomes. This perspective becomes especially relevant when considering current developments such as populism, digital governance, and global political interaction.

Furthermore, economic issues are not treated as separate from governance. Instead, they are a major part of The Balanced Governance Framework, since governance is linked to economic stability, growth, and the prudent distribution and management of resources. Issues such as inequality, regulation, and fiscal policy are discussed in terms of their broader social impact. From this view, planned economic decisions matter not only for their efficiency but also for the social outcomes they shape.

Social dynamics receive similar attention. For instance, trust, shared values, social networks, and civic engagement influence how governance operates in practice. Moreover, institutional social factors, such as the education system, public discussion, and social institutions, play a vital role in shaping participation and the bond between citizens and the state. Additionally, leadership ties many of these elements together.

Leaders operate within social, political, and institutional constraints, but they also influence values, priorities, and cooperation. Their ability to work across diversity and complexity has direct consequences for governance. In light of these considerations, the underlying framework points to four main concerns: public well-being, shared social norms, institutional

performance, and the integration of these elements into a sustainable state.

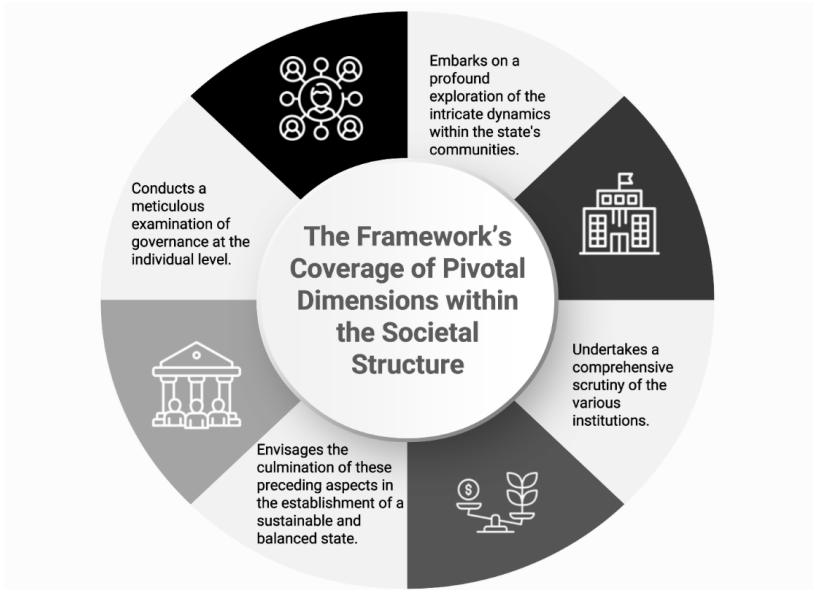


Figure 5: The Framework's Coverage of Pivotal Dimensions within the Societal Structure

2.2 Establishing the Framework's Boundaries

Because The Balanced Governance Framework integrates governance, leadership, and social organisation in fairly broad terms, it is important to clarify what the framework actually deals with and where its boundaries sit. Without doing this, there is a

risk that the framework could be misread or applied in ways it was never meant to support.¹

The framework focuses on present-day political and economic systems and the governance arrangements connected to them. It approaches these systems mainly through the values that underpin them. The intention is not to compare political models, rank economic systems, or design new institutions. Instead, the aim is to identify the values embedded in existing arrangements and to evaluate the extent to which their practical implementation produces beneficial outcomes at the national level. For this reason, the framework avoids detailed technical discussions of administrative structures or institutional design.

The Balanced Governance Framework also does not begin by rejecting existing systems. Many governance models have worked well in particular contexts, even if they later revealed weaknesses or limits. Rather than discarding them or proposing a completely new ideology, the framework draws on their useful elements. In many cases, governance failures result not from flawed principles but from how those principles are applied, interpreted, or distorted over time.² The approach taken here is therefore gradual and adaptive, focusing on learning from what has worked rather than on replacing everything.

A similar logic is applied in this book to existing state governance and social theories. Precisely, the construction of The Balanced

¹ Abdel Wahab El-Messiri (2005). *My Intellectual Journey: Seeds, Roots, and Fruits*. Dar Al Shorouk.

² Fukuyama, F. (2004). *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*. Cornell University Press.

Governance Framework recognises their influence on social norms and patterns of behaviour, but it does not attempt to revisit their theoretical foundations in detail. Instead, it selectively adopts elements that align with its value orientation, particularly those that support balance, inclusion, and prudent governance. This strategy allows the developed model to remain focused while still drawing from a wide range of literature.

Regarding leadership, The Balanced Governance Framework does not claim to introduce a new leadership model or to replace existing ones. Its contribution lies in bringing together established ideas to clarify which skills and orientations are needed to manage competing values within governance systems. Building on this perspective, leadership is treated as contextual and responsive, shaped by social conditions, institutional capacity, and governance outcomes, rather than as a fixed or universally applicable formula.

Nonetheless, the framework has clear limits in terms of where it can be applied. Figure 6 summarises these challenges and the conditions required for effective implementation of the framework. It highlights the key constraints and enabling factors, ranging from technological capacity and stability to institutional readiness and social conditions, that shape whether the framework can function in practice. Its relevance depends heavily on context, including cultural norms, belief systems, political structures, and the distribution of power. In societies characterised by prolonged conflict, deep political division, weak institutions, authoritarian control, or unstable power relations, the framework has limited practical value. In such environments, participation, accountability, and shared responsibility are difficult to sustain, thereby

constraining the applicability of The Balanced Governance Framework's principles.

Technology and infrastructure impose additional constraints. The framework assumes a basic level of state capacity, particularly the ability to manage governance processes using digital systems. When access to technology or digital infrastructure is limited, implementation becomes more challenging. Weak physical infrastructure, such as transportation, energy, or communication systems, creates additional barriers to coordination and effective service delivery.

Cultural conditions also matter. The framework depends on a social environment that values participation, respect for the rule of law, and basic rights. Societies that support education, critical thinking, and open public discussion are more equipped to engage with complex governance issues. Openness to change and innovation also matters, as the framework works best in settings that support adaptability.

Institutional strength is essential as well. Independent courts, capable public administrations, and credible regulatory bodies provide the grounding needed for a balanced governance system. Without such institutional foundations, efforts to balance competing interests and values are likely to remain fragile or uneven.

Finally, much depends on leadership. For The Balanced Governance Framework's principles to function well in practice, leadership must emerge from within society and reflect the values the framework promotes. Leaders need to be able to navigate

complex relationships across institutions and social groups, communicate a clear sense of purpose, and respond to changing national conditions. Ethical judgment, adaptability, and concern for public well-being are, therefore, central, as leadership under this framework is expected to evolve alongside society itself.

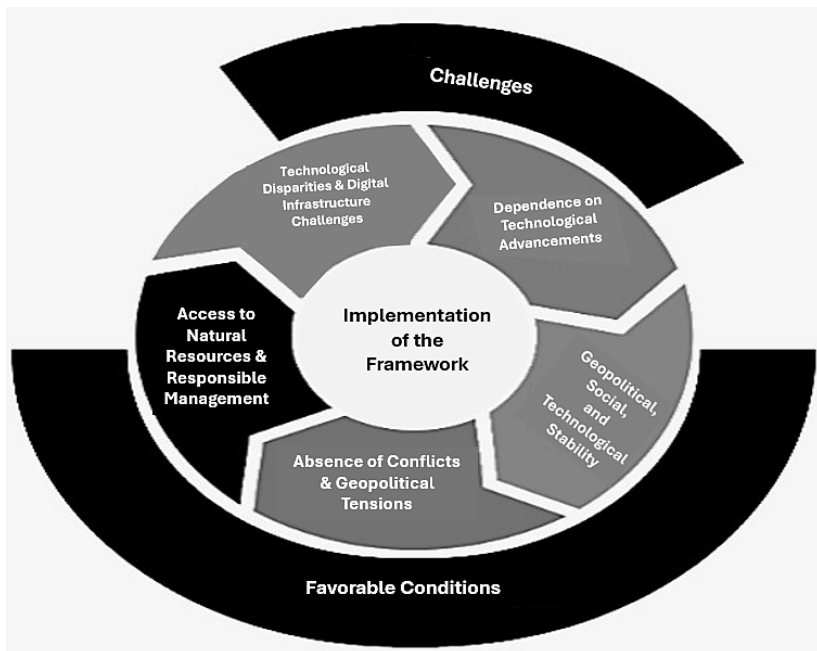


Figure 6: Challenges and Conditions for Implementing the Framework

2.3 Key Components of the Framework

What does the framework include?

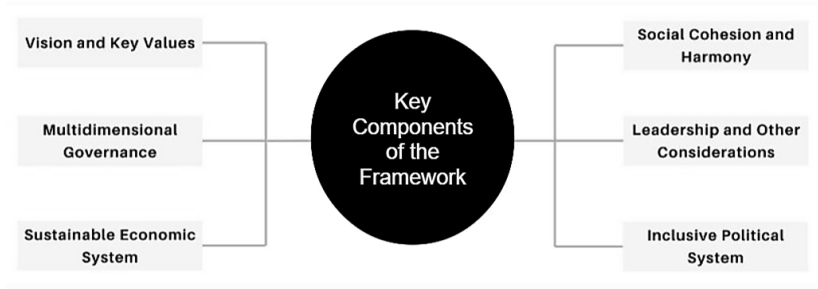


Figure 7: Key Components of the Framework

The ideas behind the framework come together through practice rather than through abstract design. The Balanced Governance Framework is shaped by recurring issues in modern public administration, especially in systems that operate under pressure and constant change. Because of this, the framework places clear emphasis on governance that is inclusive, accountable, and able to shift direction when existing approaches no longer work.

The framework itself develops through six broad elements, as shown in Figure 7. These elements influence each other and are not intended to operate separately. Everything starts with vision and core values, since these tend to shape both priorities and everyday decisions across governance systems. A basic idea running through The Balanced Governance Framework is that institutions alone rarely guarantee long-term stability. States tend to be more resilient when they are guided by shared values that matter in practice, not just in formal language or policy statements. From

this point of view, governance is shaped as much by principles as by formal structures.

Vision and Key Values

Four values appear repeatedly in this context: equity, justice, accountability, and sustainability. Firstly, equity, at its simplest level, is about fairness. It concerns who has access to resources, services, and opportunities, and who does not. When social and economic barriers are reduced, some of the pressure created by inequality begins to ease. Over time, this helps avoid obstacles that often weaken both governance and social cohesion.

Secondly, justice is closely connected to everyday encounters with authority. Fair treatment, respect for legal processes, and the protection of basic rights all influence how government action is perceived. When decisions are seen as fair, and people feel that their views matter, trust in public institutions tends to grow. This trust increases participation and supports cooperation within society.

Thirdly, accountability plays a different role, but it is just as important. For governance to remain credible, power must be exercised responsibly. Those who hold authority need to justify their actions, and practical mechanisms must exist to review decisions and respond when policies fail. In reality, accountability depends not only on formal oversight, but also on the willingness to recognise mistakes and change course.

Finally, sustainability introduces a longer time horizon into governance. It draws attention to how present decisions shape future conditions. This requires balancing social needs, economic

pressures, and environmental limits so that short-term gains do not result in long-term harm.

Within the framework, values only matter when they appear in practice. They are expected to shape institutions, everyday decisions, and routine behaviour rather than remain abstract goals. When individuals, communities, and state institutions work from similar value assumptions, responsibility tends to be shared more widely, and collective efforts become easier to sustain.

The framework also assumes that values do not remain unchanged. Social expectations shift, technology develops, and economic conditions evolve. Governance systems, therefore, need room to reflect and adjust. Regular review and feedback help prevent values from becoming symbolic or disconnected from lived realities.

Balance sits at the centre of this process. Values often pull in different directions, and tension is unavoidable. Rather than removing these tensions, the framework treats them as part of governance itself. Justice, for example, has to be considered alongside sustainability, while participation must remain meaningful without weakening effectiveness. Working through these tensions is part of maintaining governance that is both inclusive and functional.

Taken together, these values serve as reference points throughout governance, from policy design to implementation and review. They help keep attention on long-term social well-being while allowing governance to adapt without losing its overall direction.

Multidimensional Governance

To integrate the economic, political, and social aspects of society around shared values, the framework promotes a governance style that emphasises cooperation rather than control. This orientation responds directly to the contemporary conditions in which states operate, where global interconnectedness, rapid technological change, and growing public demands for participation increasingly place strain on traditional governing methods. In response to these pressures, the framework does not adopt a single fixed model of governance; instead, it draws on international experience, emerging ideas in governance, and approaches that have proven effective in practice.

A central feature of this approach is a clear move away from highly centralised authority. Instead of concentrating decision-making at the top, governance is expected to operate in a more distributed, collaborative way. This shift reflects the reality that modern societies are complex and highly interconnected, making it difficult for governments to act effectively on their own. As a result, decision-making increasingly involves a wider group of participants, including civil society organisations, local communities, non-governmental actors, and both public and private sector contributors.

Governance that relies on cooperation and inclusion tends to perform better when dealing with cross-border and cross-sector challenges. Challenges such as climate change, inequality, or geopolitical instability cannot be managed by a single institution or level of government. They require coordination, shared responsibility, and open communication between many actors. In

this context, effectiveness matters, but so do legitimacy and transparency. Governance arrangements also need enough flexibility to cope with uncertainty, respond to change, and adjust as new risks and pressures emerge.³

The proposed governance model starts from the view that political, social, and economic aspects of society work best when they are connected. In reality, these areas constantly influence one another, and treating them separately often creates gaps in decision-making. The model therefore brings them together within a shared approach to coordination, with the aim of supporting decisions that remain consistent across different levels of governance, from local and national contexts to regional and global settings.

Governance is not understood as the task of government institutions alone. While the state remains central, it operates alongside a range of other actors. Civil society organisations, the media, international bodies, local communities, and the business sector all contribute in different ways. Through their involvement, priorities are shaped, and policies take form, particularly in areas related to social well-being and the public interest.

This cooperative approach becomes especially relevant when dealing with complex, closely interconnected issues. Challenges of social justice, human rights, digital change, and sustainable development rarely exist within clear institutional or sectoral boundaries. Instead, they overlap and interact, forming narrow or isolated responses difficult to sustain. So, addressing these issues

³ Fuar, L. (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*. Oxford University Press.

depends on coordination across institutions and continued collaboration among different actors and levels of governance.

Inclusive Political System

Because the state cannot avoid playing a political role, the framework treats the political system as something central rather than secondary. The system exists mainly to support shared values and keep them alive in practice, not just in principle. Ideas such as justice, equality, and freedom are important here, but they are not treated as fixed or untouchable. The expectation is that the system should be able to respond as society changes and as new pressures and challenges appear over time.

Representation is one of the key elements of this political system. Different parts of society need real ways to be involved in decision-making, not only formal or symbolic ones. When people are able to participate, even indirectly, it tends to build a sense of ownership and responsibility. Governance starts to feel like something people are part of, rather than something imposed from above. Alongside this, the rule of law remains essential. It provides stability and protects rights, but it also needs room to adapt. Laws have to be applied consistently while remaining open to revision as social expectations and new forms of conflict emerge.

How decisions are made is also a central concern. The effectiveness of the political system depends on institutions that are clear about their responsibilities and transparent in how authority is exercised, allowing citizens to understand how governments are formed and

who is accountable for specific decisions.⁴ Moreover, decision-making should not rely solely on political negotiation; it is more effective when it also draws on evidence, professional expertise, and meaningful public input, ensuring that decisions reflect long-term social interests rather than narrow or short-term considerations.

There is also the question of power and how it is exercised. Political authority needs limits, especially in systems that claim to act in the public interest. This is why checks and balances are necessary. Independent courts, an active press, and organised civil society all play a role in questioning decisions and exposing misuse of authority. Without these safeguards, power tends to concentrate and drift away from public accountability.

The framework intentionally leaves space for voices beyond government itself. Political parties, academic institutions, civil society organisations, and private sector actors all bring different perspectives. Not all of these perspectives align, and that is part of the point. Allowing them into the process improves debate, challenges assumptions, and often leads to better-informed decisions. It also helps reinforce the sense that governance reflects social diversity rather than a single dominant view.

Overall, an inclusive political system within this framework is defined by participation, transparency, and restraint in the exercise of power. It seeks to ensure that political authority remains connected to social values, responsive to changing conditions, and

⁴ Acemoglu, D. and Robinson, J.A. (2012) *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*. Crown Publishing Group-A Division of Random House, Inc., New York.