



Introduction

Organisational governance is the system of roles/positions, rules/policies and processes used to control and lead an organization for the short and long term. It is the responsibility of the organisation's board to make sure the organisation is following **good governance** and able to handle possible challenges. Good governance requires the right mix of board members who can provide leadership and accountability and having governance policies in place, as well as transparency in the organisation's work and practices. Check with your local ministry or federation of organisations for principles, practices, or standards that your organisation can follow to ensure good governance.

Good governance comprises of various components. Most important of them being, having defined goals, transparency in decision making, sound framework of procedures and policies, defining roles and responsibilities, strategic planning, risk management, legal and statutory responsibilities, review and monitoring of performance, ethical standards, and codes of conduct. Good governance requires both efficiency and effectiveness. Effective means doing the right things. Efficiency means doing things the right way.

Good governance requires setting goals and achieving them. Those are short and long-term objectives, work to achieve association's vision and mission, find solutions to problems, and use different strategies. Thus, good management and governance helps association to work towards those goals.

Basic good governance practices include documenting information shared during meetings and financial information to be shared with members and the public. It is encouraged to: Maintain minutes of all board meetings and committee meetings for committees that are authorized to act on behalf of the board, such as an executive committee.

- **Have written policies** and review annually to take action if needed.
 - Conflict of Interest
 - Gift Acceptance
 - Compensation
 - Communication
- **Approve any compensation** (such as executive director or CEO).
- Follow your local requirements for **certification and tax forms**; make them public.

Conflict management

Be prepared and know what to do if a conflict of interest happens in your organisation. Take out the policy and talk with the entire board (and staff) about the types of situations where a conflict can arise. You could role play what would happen if one of the board members disclosed that s/he had a conflict of interest. Be sure to also review all policies that your organisation is expected to follow so everyone understands and are on the same page. One way of doing this is to provide an orientation to help new members so that they are aware



of good governance practices from the start. It is encouraged to be inclusive and promote diversity of staff and board members to ensure that there is a balanced and diverse perspective.

Every year, it is helpful to do a self-assessment of the board and each person's role. One way to start is to ask each board member to think about their own role and responsibilities and if they can carry them out. The members can all discuss together to make sure that they all have the same expectations and agree how the board works in the organisation. The results of this assessment will identify issues that need to be cleared up, the skills or people missing from the organisation, and other needs for the organisation.

Sample questions that the board can discuss together include:

1. Does your board and organisation operate under a set of policies, procedures and guidelines with which all members are familiar?
2. Do your committees meet regularly?
3. Are board meetings well attended? How many members are interested and attend meetings?
4. Do your newly elected board members receive orientation and understand what is expected of their role?
5. Do your board members receive an agenda and other materials before meeting?
6. And more.

Good governance

Organisational governance and implementing organisational change (if needed) require a technical or adaptive approach, or more often, a blend of the two:

Technical solutions

An expert knows the answer and the solution

Example 1: Your organization has received a letter from the Government which says that you are required to have an audit. You must hire an expert auditor to do this.

Example 2: Your organization is blamed for a crime. You must hire a lawyer to defend you. How to change your organisation with Technical methods: Find a volunteer or hire a person who is an expert in the topic you need. They can provide a service, compile an analysis, write a report, or deliver a product.

Adaptive solutions

Humans must change beliefs, values and behaviours

Example 1: Your organization's financial receipts are not well-organized. Your Board and members must change their behaviour and organize things better.



Example 2: Your organization's board members always show up late to meetings and do not follow through with their appointed tasks. To change this, they must improve themselves.

How to change your organisation with Adaptive methods:

- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Set policies and make sure all understand how to follow policies
- Clear communication
- Recruitment and training
- Make clear action plans

Decision-making

Democratic Rules

All organisations are expected to follow democratic rules where the decision makers can be held responsible for their decisions and actions. They are also expected to follow the organisation bylaws or constitution, as well as specific roles and responsibilities. A democratic organisation also does not exclude participation by people on account of their sex, or their ethnic or religious affiliation. Also, there should be gender equity and equal ethnicity representation. The organisation is expected to make its meetings, project work and services available to anyone in the community and provide access to information to everyone.

Leadership

A strong organisation requires effective leadership. That means: 1) leadership is providing the vision and guidance in the organisation, and 2) leading people to where they are supposed to be 3) focuses on using strengths of organisation and staff, and manages weaknesses, 4) approaches problems or a situation the best way possible and finds a solution 5) clear communication and 6) uses good values and ethics. Two types of leadership include democratic as elected by the people, and a dictatorship where the leader is forced on the people. Leadership are selected in different ways:

- Elections (e.g. Association President)
- Appointment (e.g. Director, Minister)
- Inheritance (e.g. King)
- By Force (impose themselves)
- Events (if there is a crisis, one person may emerge to try to solve the problem)

Leader	Dictator
Inspires confidence	Does not care
Respects others	Wants others to respect him/her
Listens to others	Does things on his/her own
Shows example	Gives orders
Shares work with other members	Does not delegate work



Cooperative	Is not cooperative with others
Transparent	Hides information

Successful leadership requires focusing on using strengths and managing around weaknesses. Strength is not necessarily the same as ability: An ability is a strength only if you want to do it repeatedly, happily, and successfully. Strength requires:

- Talents – naturally recurring patterns of thought, feeling, or behaviour
- Knowledge – facts and lessons learned
- Skills – the steps of an activity

Developing strength requires you to identify your talents and improve them with knowledge and new skills. But do not feel like you need to have strength in every part of a role to be successful – focus on your strengths and try to identify and then improve your weaknesses.

Ethics is also required for strong leadership – that helps leaders balance truth, loyalty and be able to work with individuals, groups and the community. An ethical leader will also be able to approach problems or a situation the best way possible and be able to find solutions with others involved. Communication is also a tool for them to interact and work with everyone involved. Leaders need to understand how to communicate with others that focus on areas of agreement and effectively listen to the message of all sides.

When your organisation needs to develop leadership, you can focus on strategic leadership development. Begin by asking and discussing the following questions:

- How will you plan to grow more leaders for the future? Will you train and encourage youth? Volunteers?
- How will you make sure that your organisation will not collapse, but stay strong for 10, 20, 30+ years?
- Do you need to plan to grow more leaders?

For example, you will have to look for the members who can assume leadership roles before the election. You can train the members to be familiar with your organisation system and philosophy. Provide your youth with opportunities for development such as Youth Leadership Camp so they are involved in organisation work and become future leaders. It is very important that you think about how you will identify potential leaders and how you will support them in their growth.

It is important to know organisational governance, the change cycle, technical/adaptive solutions, and leadership succession. Without these things, people in your organisation will not have clear roles and they will waste time blaming each other. If you have good organisational governance, you will improve as a leader, and become a role model for other people to copy. Organisational governance will help you to realize and apply the skills that you have.



Organisational Management

Plan

As a president or director of your association you should plan what needs to be done and followed. You should design strategies to be achieve the objectives of your association. You should schedule the activities of the organisation by making a timetable of when to start and finish an activity. Here, it is important to forecast and estimate what will happen by a certain time: when do you need to apply for funds or projects? When is the deadline for a project report? When is International Day of Sign Languages or International Week of the Deaf and when start to plan for this activity? Budget is also an important part of planning; what needs to be spent for what, and how much can you spend for each activity. It is important to develop policies and procedures for your organisation, such as general guidelines, laws, and regulations that everyone should follow; and explain how to follow the policies.

Organise

You should organise your organisation. Decide how to organise. Develop structures (eg. identify and group activities), delegate and assign work, responsibility, and authority, so staff and board members can make full use of their abilities and establish relationships with your staff and board members. Encourage cooperative efforts.

Direct and manage your staff

Direct your organisation. It means making sure that all actions work towards the goal. Recruit qualified people for each position. Provide trainings and teach people how to fulfil their duties and responsibilities. Supervise your staff and board members. Give them day-to-day instructions, guidance and discipline as required for them to fulfil duties assigned to them. Motivate you staff and board members to perform by fulfilling or appealing to their needs. You should listen to them, and keep in mind that they are important for the organisation to keep going. If you do not have your staffs and board members, how can an association keep up? Counsel your staff by holding private discussion with each of them about how they can do better, solve a personnel problem, and ask them how you can help them. Communicate with them. Exchange information staff and board about plans, progress, and problems. Take decisions and act on them.

Evaluation

When implementing the activities and working towards the objectives and goals of your organisation, measure progress towards set objectives. Set standards, where you decide acceptable levels of individual or group performance. Measure the performance by checking progress towards objectives through formal and informal reports. Correct an unfavourable trend or mistake by taking control actions.



Time management

A good governance includes time management: you should be effective, have goals and implement tasks. Being effective means identifying ways to control your time, prioritizing your activities, recognise who and what wastes your time, doing the right thing at the right time and control interruptions. Have goals and manage your tasks. You should decide what is important by setting goals. Prioritize your goals and set deadlines when to finish them. Breakdown each goal into subtasks. Schedule your tasks into your calendar, e.g., time/month. You should write to-do-lists for yourself and your board members, or staff. Decide how much time you can spend on one task.