Governance targets and indicators for post 2015

An initial assessment

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1 Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are recognised as having significantly shaped the global policy debate and resource allocations for development cooperation, through raising the profile of key aspects of development. At national level, they have generated new data and helped build greater commitment to tackling core development challenges. A defining feature of the goals has been that they provide clear, concrete and measurable objectives, with a range of targets and indicators for areas like health, education and poverty reduction. Overall, however, the silence of the MDGs on governance has been seen as a weakness that should be corrected in a future set of goals.

Indeed, while governance concerns were debated in the formulation of the MDGs (and are mentioned in the preamble and Millennium Declaration), they were not included as specific targets and indicators. Yet experience suggests that governance issues can be crucial drivers of development progress and MDG attainment (Bergh et al. 2012), although the evidence base for how governance factors have shaped attainment of specific MDG goals remains relatively limited. For example, a review of 24 countries which have made significant development progress highlighted the role of political leadership and 'smart' institutions (ODI 2011). Moreover, others have argued that the lack of attention to governance in the MDG framework has translated into a lack of focus on issues of inequality and power, undermining some of the spirit of the initial MDG discussions (Watkins 2013; Darrow 2012).

As well as being important for other development outcomes, better governance is an aspiration in its own right. The option 'an honest and responsive government' is currently fourth worldwide in the MY World survey[1] of what people feel is most important for themselves and their families. Among poor people in low-Human Development Index countries, the option comes third, with only health and education ranked as more important. In recognition of these issues, the High Level Panel's report on a post 2015 framework argued that improved governance was a core element of well-being and proposed standalone goals for governance and for justice and security[2]. This represents important progress in taking seriously the importance of governance for development.

Moreover, despite the limited evidence on MDG attainment and governance, there has been a longstanding debate on the nature of the relationship between development and different forms of governance, including democracy[3]. There continue to be different schools of thought and opinions about the nature of this relationship (Rocha Menocal 2013a), and in practice, "there is widespread agreement that political, economic and social institutions matter for development, even if it is less clear which institutions matter most, when and why" (Ibid.). This is reflected in current debates about how to translate governance into a post 2015 framework.

There is on-going debate as to whether all countries should aspire to particular kinds of institutions (such as an independent judiciary and parliament) and processes (such as competitive multi-party elections), or whether there is no one 'form' of governance preferable for all and rather, each country needs to develops institutions which reflect their own contexts and political settlements (see Wild and Foresti 2013 for further discussion on this debate).

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[1] http://www.myworld2015.org/

[2] Governance, justice and security issues are recognised as being closely inter-related, but for the purposes of this paper, security issues are not examined in depth, and potential options for security in the post 2015 framework are discussed in other recent ODI publications, such as Denney 2013.

[3] There is a growing body of literature that analyses whether and how different governance factors have contributed to development, in particular sectors (e.g. health, education) or in terms of broader economic growth - such as North et al 2009; JPAL 2011; McGee and Gaventa 2012; Acemoglu and Robinson 2013. In the main, this does not look at specific MDG attainment and governance drivers, but it does usefully provide broader evidence of potential linkages, while also drawing attention to the importance of context and challenges of blanket assumptions that governance factors will always shape development outcomes in particular ways.

Increasingly, there is stronger evidence for specific ways in which particular types of governance factors can contribute to development. This usefully drills down into particular forms and functions within a range of political systems, and illustrates the wide range of analysis and evidence that can now be drawn upon. For example:

- There is some evidence that greater transparency, access to and use of information can help support improved socio-economic processes and outcomes, although this is often context specific and depends on the incentives of relevant stakeholders (McGee and Gaventa 2012; JPAL 2011).
- Some have argued that more inclusive institutions can contribute to greater development (Acemoglu and Robinson 2013) while others note that the extent to which institutions are personalised or non-personalised can be a key 'tipping point' (North et al 2009).
- The role of state capacity and effectiveness has been recognised, in terms of ensuring that states' have the capacity and capabilities to deliver effectively to citizens (Andrews 2013), and that there are coherent policy environments and sanctions for performance between the government and service providers (Booth 2013).
- Other evidence points to the importance of collective action, collaboration and participation of multiple stakeholders, including from the government, providers, citizens and others to deliver public goods (Booth 2013).
- The existence of the rule of law, and basic protections for citizens including human rights protections, to ensure sustainable development for all, has been emphasised too (Darrow 2012).

This evidence is starting to point to those elements of governance that may matter most, and for what. It suggests that breaking down governance as a concept into different dimensions and themes is likely to be useful in developing measurable, and actionable, proposals

2 On measuring governance

That governance is such a complex and debated concept can lead to conclusions that it 'cannot be measured'. However, while a catch-all 'governance' measure is unlikely to be very meaningful, it is important to recognise that in relation to specific dimensions of governance (such as the rule of law, transparency, inclusion or state capacity and effectiveness), progress has been made in recent years in developing a range of relevant and useful indicators and measures, especially at the national level. In addition, there is growing agreement that indicators based on assessments of specific governance issues can play a useful role in policy and resource allocation processes. However, developing and measuring governance indicators, especially at global level, it is not without its challenges and lessons should be learnt from past experience to help guide a constructive process for agreeing a post 2015 framework. In particular, the MDG framework of targets and indicators offers useful lessons in relation to both the opportunities created, as well as some of the potential tensions, for measurement.

2.1 Lessons from MDG experience

Indeed, the MDGs are recognised as effective in part because they offered clear and measurable targets and indicators. Nonetheless, including something as a target or indicator does not automatically lead to its improvement and the prize is not just to find governance targets and indicators that can be 'measured'. Rather, it may be important to reflect on the pathways through which set targets and indicators are thought to lead to better outcomes and on the incentives that might be generated by different measurement approaches. For the MDGs, the common 'pathway' has been that greater specification of progress measures helped to focus attention and awareness, and to mobilise resources, that these were monitored globally, giving an overall 'score' and allowing countries to be compared across time and with each other, and that this helped to realise improved outcomes, by increasing momentum for reform.

For governance in particular, the debate on the inclusion of targets and indicators may therefore need to focus less on the full range of issues which are – and will remain – important to debates on governance and rather on those areas where greater measurement, monitoring and specified targets are likely to make a difference, if we are likely to follow a similar model to the MDGs – albeit an adapted and improved version.

Indeed, it is perhaps not surprising that those areas where achieving progress is more complex, requires multiple inputs and change processes, and often involves deep behaviour and mind-set change as well as power imbalances – such as maternal health or sanitation – have been those which have lagged behind in MDG progress. Arguably this reflects, in part, that they may not respond to the pathway set out above as well as other areas. This reinforces a focus not on aiming to put as many issues onto the agenda as possible, but rather thinking strategically about which aspects of governance are most likely to benefit from an MDG-style approach.

Moreover, how the MDGs have been measured also has implications. For example, MDG targets focused on global attainment, regardless of where progress had taken place. In practice, this meant that they ignored the need to build incentives to ensure that progress was evenly distributed across societies. ODI's recent briefing on measurement under the MDGs is instructive here (see Box 1).

There are risks with all indicators that they create incentives to meet those targets rather than the attainment of deeper functions. More broadly, others have pointed to the risks of 'isomorphic mimicry' or of creating signals of governance reform without changes to underlying incentives, power dynamics and core governance functions (Pritchett et all 2010; see Box 2). The political pressures to 'signal' attainment of governance indicators rather than their substantive realisation may be particularly high. In practice, this means that governance targets and indicators need to be carefully constructed, with consideration of their intended and unintended consequences.

2.2 Building a nationally led process

Building further on this, MDG experience suggests that many of the potential governance targets and indicators are likely to require greater assessment with national level data, including national accounts, surveys and other administrative data. In many developing countries, the capacity of national statistical offices to collect and analyse such data remains very mixed and this may be one of the most important gaps to be considered in relation to governance targets and indicators for a post 2015 framework, as it will require significant financial and human resources to be addressed.

Certainly, the MDGs themselves created significant pressures to develop high quality, internationally-comparable data where often data previously did not exist or was patchy at best. As a result, data availability for the majority of indicators has improved and there has been greater investment in statistical capacity, especially at the country level (Chen et al 2013). However, significant data gaps remain and the quality and reliability of data continues to be questioned, particularly in regions like sub-Saharan Africa which faces what has been termed a 'statistical tragedy' (Devarajan 2013).

Key sources of data at the national level include household surveys and censuses, as well as different forms of administrative data (e.g. of birth registration, school enrolment, deliveries in health facilities and so on). Recent analysis argues that one remaining challenge has been a misalignment between goals and aspirations set at the global level and a country's statistical capacity and systems (Chen et al 2013). Linked to this, donors have tended to support surveys, with inadequate investment and assistance given to other data sources (Ibid.). A lack of uniform definitions across countries has also posed challenges for aggregating national level administrative data and comparing progress globally.

In recognition of these challenges, there have been some recent attempts to develop greater national level measures of governance, involving national statistical offices from the start. One prominent initiative is the 'Strategy for the harmonisation of statistics in Africa', established in 2011 with support from African Heads of State, and leading to the creation of a number of thematic technical groups including one on governance, peace and security statistics. This group has a mandate to develop a set of indicators for monitoring governance, peace and security by national statistical offices, which are currently being developed and will be piloted[4]. Individual countries have also shown national leadership and built capacity to measure different aspects of governance. The Government of Mongolia, for instance, adopted a 'Millennium Development Goal Nine' specifically to measure democratic governance and human rights, which draws on nationally developed Democratic Governance Indicators (customised from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) Democracy Assessment Framework) and from a national plan of action.

The post 2015 framework, therefore, could offer opportunities to address a previous misalignment between globally set goals and national capacities, to strengthen national country systems and statistical capacity, so that "data produced at the national level could be more efficiently translated into reliable and relevant data for global monitoring while gaps in global monitoring data could lead to national statistical capacity building activities rather than ad hoc and parallel data collection mechanisms" (Chen et al 2013). This may be particularly important for any governance goals or targets, given the likely levels of political sensitivities and to ensure sufficient buy-in and compliance.

To date, the process for developing targets and indicators, however, does not seem to have sufficiently consulted with national statistical communities, nor with other important domestic stakeholders (within government, civil society, the private sector, and with citizens themselves). There are growing calls for a much more open process in defining the post 2015 framework itself as a result; something which may be particularly important in ensuring that what is measured globally corresponds to what people want nationally for governance progress.

2.3 How to measure governance indicators?

While lessons can be learnt from the MDG process itself, there are important lessons from recent experience in measuring and monitoring governance too. Indeed, debates on how to develop effective and meaningful measures to better define and assess governance progress in different contexts have persisted for some time, both in academic and policy circles (Fukuyama 2013; De Renzio 2013; Court and Fritz, 2007; Hayden et al 2008,). The post 2015 process offers an important opportunity to revive this debate. Three considerations are important.

Firstly, as discussed above, **what we mean by governance matters for how we assess progress**. It is beyond the scope of this paper to review or assess all possible definitions of governance and their implications. Currently, there is no single agreed definition of governance and the term continues to provide different meanings for different people. This means any effort to better assess progress is unlikely to be straightforward, and some have argued, this may be a very messy process indeed (Andrews 11/19/13).

Interpretations of governance may focus more on the form that governance should take (such as the existence of certain legislation, whether there is a formal separation of power, or the ratification of conventions) while others may emphasise the gap between the form that governance takes and the functions that it performs, including its relationship with different types of outcomes. These functions may include: the capacity to collect tax, the implementation of policy, the delivery of quality services, or the execution of budgets. While these interpretations are not mutually exclusive, recent experience has highlighted the risks of emphasising the centrality of 'forms' and underestimating how these work in practice i.e. their 'functions' (Andrews 2013s, Pritchett et al 2010). Moreover, there may be differing perspectives as to which 'forms' matter most, depending on the normative perspective taken (for example some argue that the international human rights framework should be used as a basis to define forms).

Increasingly, there appears to be agreement that rather than identifying one single measure or system of governance, there is a need to measure different elements of governance processes and systems, from levels of

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[4] http://afrigap.gaportal.org/news/detail/support-to-the-harmonization-of-governance-peace-security-statistics-in-africa

openness or participation of citizens, to state capacity and effectiveness. The relative strengths and the level of prioritisation which should be given to these different measures continue to be debated. Any criteria for selecting meaningful indicators will need to take these differences into account and will need to be clear about what is being measured and why. Moreover, each of the areas identified (both for forms and functions) are themselves deeply 'political' and may be contested within and across societies.

Secondly, it is important to **balance ambition with what works in practice**. The 'good governance' agenda which has dominated development thinking and practice on governance since the 1990s has come under intensive scrutiny, and today many practitioners, academic and policy makers recognise that it has its limits (Rocha Menocal 2013b, Grindle 2004). In particular, the combination of desirable institutional reforms, formal rules and ideal public sector arrangements that good governance entails is often not seen as realistic or as offering the best option for reform in many development contexts (Pritchett et al 2010). Others have advocated forms of 'good enough' governance, defined in terms of the recognition that institutions and, most importantly, the rules of the game underpinning them, adapt to different contexts rather than a fixed template for governance (Grindle 2004). Such realism and 'grounded ambition' may be important to inform choices of indicators that can meaningfully assess governance progress too.

Finally, **different types of indicators for specific dimensions of governance do not necessarily provide an overall assessment of governance progress**, whether at country or global level. This may be a challenge for all potential goal areas, but may be especially prominent for governance, as it may be particularly difficult to identify a small selection of indicators that can act as sufficient proxies for the types of improvements it would be hoped to see.

Here, lessons should be learned from past experience of aggregating different kinds of governance indicators into composite indexes aimed at 'measuring' governance'. Critics of the World Governance Indicators (WGI), for instance, have highlighted how problematic this is, from a technical and statistical as well as a substantial perspective: the standard errors of the estimates that the index produces are very large, each category of governance measures is built on a wide variety of indicators and data sources (often mixing subjective and objective data), and finally the validity of the proposed measures is difficult to test in practice (De Renzio 2013; Kaufmann et al 2007, Thomas 2009).

In short, different aspects of governance matter in different contexts, hence an aggregate score is not likely to be very meaningful and can be misleading (Andrews 2008). Moreover, cross-country comparisons may not be very insightful for indicators which say more about progress at the national level. This has a number of implications. It suggests that individual indicators may be best applied to specify different aspects of governance, and that the level of application of any indicator matters: not all are likely to be suitable or useful for cross country comparisons, as only some can be considered universal, while others are likely to be most useful when applied only at national and subnational level.

Finally, and most importantly, inevitably not all issues deemed to be central to governance progress can be captured through a selection of targets and indicators, highlighting the need to reflect critically on which aspects of governance might be most suitable for inclusion in a post 2015 framework.

3 Existing data sources and identified gaps

In the next section we map some of the options that have been put forward for a governance goal, with a focus on some of the main targets and indicators identified thus far.

These categories or groups of targets and indicators can include a range of possible data sources and point to some areas where gaps still remain. In this section, we briefly summarise some of the existing data sources, and explain some of the categorisation we make of these sources. Assessing the extent to which these sources are suitable and reliable goes beyond the scope of this paper and further analysis is needed of potential indicators, including testing their measurability with existing data, and identifying where data gaps remain and how they might be addressed.

In practice, different kinds of data sources can be useful to assess specific features of governance. In addition, a range of data sources might be more useful to assess some types of indicators but not others: for instance, compliance with international norms and standards for example are useful measures of 'forms' of governance, while measures of institutional performance are better suited to assess governance functions.

In the table below we summarise some of the key existing data sources to assess and measure governance.

Table 1: Measuring Governance: selected data sources

General Governance: Global	General Governance: regional/selected countries	Thematic/issue specific: global or multiple countries	Thematic/issue specific: regional
Gallup World Poll	Afrobarometer	Transparency and Corruption Index	Judicial Reform Index
http://www.gallup.com/strategicconsulting/en-us/worldpoll.aspx	http://www.afrobarometer.org/	http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview	http://gateway.transparency.org/tools/detail/197
Subjective/Perception based	*Subjective/Perception based*	*Subjective/Perception based*	*Mix: objective and subjective data*
World Values Survey	Latinobarometer	World Justice project (Rule of Law)	
http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/	http://www.latinobarometro.org/latino/latinobarometro.jsp	http://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index	
Subjective/Perception based	*Subjective/Perception based*	*Expert driven and perception based*	
World Governance Indicators (WB)	Mo Ibrahim Index for African Governance	Global Right to Information Index	
http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home	http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/iiag/	http://www.rti-rating.org/methodology.php	

Mix: objective and subjective data	Mix: objective and subjective data	Mix: objective and subjective data
Polity 4	Africa Peer Review Mechanism	Resource Governance Index
http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm	http://aprm-au.org/	http://www.revenuewatch.org/rgi
Objective	*Self reporting/country based*	*Expert Driven*
Bertlesmann Transformation Index		Open Budget Index
http://www.bti-project.org/home/index.nc		http://internationalbudget.org/what-we-do/open-budget-survey/research-resources/methodology/
Mix: objective data and expert driven analysis		*Mix: objective data and expert driven analysis*

Although much more detailed analysis of each of these data sources would be needed to fully assess their validity and usability, some preliminary reflections include the following:

- Existing indices are based on both 'objective' and 'subjective' data, as well as expert driven analysis. While some are based on one type of data source only (e.g. the barometers), most are based on a combination of subjective and objective data, especially when the indices are based on composite indicators (like the WGI for example). In many cases, this is complemented by some form of expert analysis or peer review mechanism. In practice the notion of 'objective data source' is therefore not particularly helpful, at least in relation to cross national indexes.
- Although some issue specific and thematic indexes exist (included on issues of justice and rule of law, although they often rely on subjective and single organisation based indexes), not all the main governance categories identified in the next section are well covered. More investment, resources and capacity will be needed to be able to develop additional data sources in key thematic areas (for example on state capacity, freedom of expression and so on).
- The country coverage of the regional and global data sources is very mixed. Hence few of these indexes are useful to perform meaningful global or even regional assessment. Furthermore, the frequency of data collection and analysis is varied (even though some more recent indexes such as the Mo Ibrahim Index for African Governance are assessed in a regular and consistent manner).

Box 3 below provides an overview of the subjective and perception based data sources that can be usefully applied to measure governance progress in a post 2015 framework.

Box 3: Subjective and perception based data sources

The distinction between objective and subjective data is related to the original source of the data. Subjective data refers to opinions/perceptions of people, either individuals or groups, on a particular topic. Experts' valuations would be then classified as 'subjective', insofar as they refer to their opinions/perceptions, however well informed that may be.

There are two main global sources of citizen based perception data. One the one hand, the World Value Survey (WVS) and the Gallup World Poll (GWP) are global perception surveys conducted in a wide number of countries around the world following a standard methodology and questionnaire. They ask a representative sample of citizens on their perceptions on topics ranging from government and politics, to family, religion,

ethics and wellbeing. On the other hand, the barometers are regional perception surveys. The topics are similar to those in the global surveys but, although they constitute a network, the specific topics and questions asked as well as their framing, may vary across surveys. This is an important issue, especially when thinking about comparability across surveys and using these types of sources for global reporting.

Nonetheless, this is not an exclusive issue for perception surveys. The way in which questions are presented may have implications for the information that is obtained from them. For example, van Widenfelt et al. (2005) explain how the translation of the questionnaires to local languages can be a source of response differences in psychological research. Similarly, Bardasi et al. (2010) showed that having a direct or a proxy respondent can bias labour statistics.

The above analysis serves to demonstrate the importance of a diversity of approaches and methods to measuring governance. It reinforces that both quantitative and qualitative data, and objective and subjective measures, have their relative strengths and weaknesses. Subjective measures, including expert driven measures, have been dominant to date. This is important, as perceptions of governance clearly matter. But further attention needs to be paid to options for more objective measures as well. Indeed, some have argued for the creation of 'proxies' for governance, that could better measure underlying functions and outcomes rather than particular forms of processes; hence, Matt Andrews, for example, has proposed options such as level of birth registrations as a proxy for state capacity (11/19/13). This would be closer to the current MDG model – targets focus on reducing maternal mortality or improving access to clean water, for instance, rather than particular forms of service delivery. In practice, however, separating governance outcomes and processes remains challenging and suggests that some mix of subjective and objective indicators, and measures of governance forms and functions, is likely to remain.

The box below presents an overview of different approaches taken to measuring the rule of law. It further highlights the extent to which there is no single, superior set of indicators and rather, that each approach brings its own opportunities and challenges. This is widely applicable to other areas of governance too.

Box 4: Approaches and options for measuring rule of law

Berg and Desai (2013, forthcoming) usefully highlight the range of measurement approaches for rule of law, illustrating how wide the range is in just one area of governance. Below we include their commentary on the relative utility of these approaches:

- **Broad indices of rule of law at the country level.** These include a range of composite measures that combine several dimensions to produce an overall rule of law measure; this may combine several existing indicators (e.g. World Bank's Governance Indicators); or expert and public surveys (e.g. the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index). Berg and Desai note "The broader the concept, however, the less specific and sensitive to changes. Broad measures have also been critiqued for emphasizing certain elements of the rule of law over others, or for favouring Western conceptions of the rule of law. Combining multiple indicators can also lead to methodological problems in the aggregation of the data, and how to interpret such aggregation."

- **Indicators of elements of the rule of law:** Such as security of property and individuals (e.g. World Economic Forum, Index of Economic Freedom, World Bank's CPIA); contract rights and enforcement (World Bank's CPIA and Doing Business); compliance with human rights and civil liberties (e.g. Cingranelli-Richards CIRI Human Rights Dataset, Freedom House); judicial independence (e.g. Judicial Independence Index); or corruption (e.g. Global Corruption Barometer, Global Integrity Index). "These indices often rely on perception as measured by expert surveys. As a result, they are sensitive to the sample of respondents and may be biased."

- **Measures of institutional performance:** This might include administrative statistics on elements of government performance, such as court efficiency, although the reliability and availability of data can vary widely. "More fundamentally, focusing on institutional performance, such as the efficiency of court proceedings, often reveals little about the broader rule of law (in particular the constellation

of institutions that citizens turn to) or how it is experienced by citizens."

- **Compliance with international norms:** This includes international conventions and related processes which review whether a country has adopted and implemented legal and policy provisions required. "However focusing on compliance often leaves out the crucial elements of implementation and the policy trade-offs that result from competing norms, which can be much harder to assess. "
- **Measures of user experience and citizen perception:** This would include cross-country surveys focusing on people's perceptions and attitudes toward various aspects of the rule of law, including the regional Barometers. However "perceptions can be highly imprecise and reveal contradictory findings. For instance, a government's efforts to combat corruption can results in greater exposure of cases, resulting in an increase in citizen perception of corruption. They also depend on the definition of the concept to be measured, and the framing of the problem."
- **"Baskets" of indicators tailored to country needs:** This could aim to aggregate indicators into "baskets" of measures from various sources, tailored to country needs, such as the UN Rule of Law Index. "…the more country specific the indicator, the less they are comparable across countries. Moreover, using multiple indicators and data source increases the cost of collecting the data."

These categories are:

- Openness, transparency and access to information;
- State capacity and institutional effectiveness;
- Freedom of expression, association and participation;
- Justice and the rule of law;
- Equity and inclusion.

In developing this categorisation, we have tried to develop groups which are sufficiently distinct from each other, although some overlap remains inevitable. For 'equity and inclusion' it could be argued that this should be a component of all the other governance categories identified, however we have kept it distinct because we feel there may be particular measures of equity which may not otherwise be captured. We have not included a stand-alone category of 'accountability' as we felt it would be an outcome of several of the other categories, and was too difficult to distinguish in its own right for these purposes.

Some of the proposed targets and indicators set out below reflect sectoral as well as governance issues (e.g. gender, delivery of basic services) and as such they could be relevant for sectoral goals too: however, we have included them in these tables as they potential represent useful opportunities to broaden the potential of meaningfully incorporate governance issues throughout the post 2015 framework.

For each category, we try to include a range of proposed targets and indicators, and the individuals or organisations that have put them forward. We have then attempted an initial categorisation of these targets and indicators. To do this, we have tried to assess:

- Whether an indicator measures a particular 'form' of governance or an underlying function or outcome; or both. For this exercise, we have made our own assessment of this; some of these categorisations are arguable and in some cases, a case could be made either way.
- A range of possible data sets – either identifying specific indices that might be used (e.g. Open Budget Index) or broader sources such as household surveys or administrative data. Some of this data may already be collected; some data could be collected, if appropriate systems and methods were determined.
- We then try to classify the nature of these likely data sources, including whether the indicator would be globally comparable or more suitable for national level assessment. This again can be difficult to assess without further analysis, and would depend on the methodologies and systems of data collection decided, but we have tried to indicate whether a given indicator would be a useful global measure i.e. to compare progress in one country against progress in another or whether it

would be most useful as a national measure i.e. to compare progress within one country, for instance in 'closing the gap' between form and function, or against particular measures. Some indicators may well do both.

- Finally, we provisionally indicate the likely level of political acceptability or sensitivity. This provides a preliminary and indicative assessment of likely political sensitivity, based on likely views of a range of member states; this will obviously vary significantly across different member states and our assessment should not be treated as definitive. Much more in-depth mapping of this is needed and for the purposes of this paper, we merely aim to provide a snap-shot view of what is likely to be more or less sensitive to different groups.

In reflecting on whether targets may sit at the global or national level, we are building on ongoing debates in relation to the next framework of global goals – including on what kind of subsidiarity should be built in, particularly to allow countries to select their own targets and indicators under agreed global 'goal' language. In both the High Level Panel report and the European Report on Development (2012) this debate is referenced by the phrase 'Global Goals, National Targets'.

It seems to us that the range of areas where achievement of sufficiently broad-based consensus on governance indicators and targets is likely to be, in principle, feasible for a unified global approach is probably quite narrow – and, as the tables below show, not evenly applicable to all governance categories. In practice, it may make more sense to allow countries that wish to set targets and indicators of progress to select from a menu for achieving progress in that area. Over time, it could be expected that countries which do not 'opt in' to these areas of commitment to measuring progress might come under both reputational and domestic pressures to re-think their position (though the degree to which this will be effective would obviously be highly variable).

The indicative mapping of targets and indicators[5] set out below require further testing and validation, but we hope they can help to usefully inform the current debate. It draws from a range of proposals, from different organisations and groups and where possible, we have tried to include a range of different types and options for indicators (rather than listing all those which seem to cover similar ground). The list below is not meant to be an endorsement, but rather we aim to survey a range of options put forward thus far.

Table 2: Openness, transparency and access to information

Proposed targets and indicators	Proposed by:	Governance form or function	Possible data sources	Type of data	Globally comparable or national level	Likely level of sensitivity
Target: Increase access to information *Indicators*: Right to information legislation in place; National Open Data Policy in place; increase in score on Open Budget Index; Government budget data publicly available; National Open Access mandate implements	Joint proposal: Article 19/Beyond Access/IFLA/Development Initiatives/Civics	Both	Open Budget Index	Mix (objective & subjective/peer review)	National or global	Low

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[5] In many proposals it is not possible to distinguish between the targets and indicators being proposed, as often they overlap and may not be clearly defined. Where possible, we have indicated the demarcation between the two.

Target: All national and local governments publish and make available information on taxation and revenues, budgeting, expenditures and contracts	Charles Kenny CGD; CAFOD; Brookings; CIGI; Post 2015 HLP	Function	Revenue Watch Index (resource rich countries) Open Budget Index National data	Mix (objective & subjective/peer review)	Global	Medium
Target/Indicator: Adoption of a global open data standard/Chart	Based on G8 communique	Form	Partial: OGP	Objective	Global	Low
Target: Improve the use of information *Indicators:* Improved skills and literacy of citizens; Increased public participation and commitment to open government	Joint proposal: Article 19/Beyond Access/IFLA/Development Initiatives/Civicus	Function	UNESCO media and information literacy indicators WSIS ICT Indicators Open Government membership, action plans CIVICUS Civil Society Enabling Environment Index E-Participation Index	Subjective and objective	National	Low-Medium
Target: Openness in both the formulation and execution of budgets	Matt Andrews, Harvard	Function	Some: Open Budget index	Mix (objective & subjective/peer review)	National	Medium
Indicator: Public advertising of all government procurement	UN Global Compact	Both	National data	Objective	National	Medium
Target: Ensure all countries have transparent governance, with open budgeting, freedom of information and comprehensive corporate reporting *Indicators*: Increase in Open Budget Index score; Existence of Freedom of Information Act; Existence of legislation on corporate reporting that requires companies to report on social and environmental impacts	Save the Children	Form	National records	Objective	National	Low-Medium

Table 3: State capacity and institutional effectiveness

Proposed targets and indicators	Proposed by:	Governance form or function	Possible data sources	Type of data	Globally comparable or national level?	Likely level of sensitivity?
Target and Indicator: By 2030, all children worldwide are registered at birth and legally identified	Matt Andrews, Harvard, Charles Kenny CGD, Post 2015 HLP	Function	Administrative records, surveys	Objective	Global	Low
Target: Increase in government 'bill paying' (e.g. to staff, external contractors)	Matt Andrews, Harvard	Function		Objective	National	Medium
Target: Increase in implementation of regulations	Matt Andrews, Harvard	Function	Some: Doing Business and Business Enterprise data	Mix	National	Medium
Target and Indicator : Reduction in the gap between proposed and executed budgets (aggregate spending and to particular functions/areas)	Matt Andrews, Harvard	Function	Some: PEFA indicators PI1 and PI2	Objective	National or possibly global	Medium-High
Indicator: Population figures used as a basis for political representation and budget allocation are updated annually on the basis of best available information – under-pinned by regular periodic population census'	ODI (not published)	Function	Census and national accounts	Objective	Global	Medium
Target: Increased use of e-governance at national and local levels	UN Global Compact	Form	Unsure	Mix	National	Low
Target: Increased satisfaction with government performance (possibly by sector/area)		Function	Some: Regional Barometers, World Values Surveys	Subjective or Expert driven	National	Medium
Target: Increase in levels of domestic resource mobilisation	Brookings;	Function	Some national data	Objective	National	Medium
Target and Indicator: Increase in tax levels as a proportion of GDP	ODI (not published)	Function	National accounts, tax records	Objective	National	Medium

Table 4: Freedom of expression, association and participation

Proposed targets and indicators	Proposed by:	Governance form or function	Possible data sources	Type of data	Globally comparable or national l level?	Likely level of sensitivity?
Target and Indicator: Improvements in Freedom of Assembly and Freedom of Association Index	CIGI	Function	Some: CIRI Human Rights Dataset	Subjective/Expert driven	National	Medium-High
Target: Improved press freedom *Indicators:* reduction in number of journalists killed, number of journalists who report sanctions	CIGI,	Function	Some: CIRI Human Rights Dataset, Freedom House, Reporters without Borders	Objective, Subjective and Expert driven	National	Medium
Target : Ensure people enjoy freedom of speech, association, peaceful protest and access to independent media and information *Indicators:* Increase in CIRI indicators of freedom of speech and press, freedom of political choice; Increase in Rule of Law index score on participation	Post 2015 HLP Save the Children	Function	Freedom House	Subjective/ Expert driven	National	Medium-High
Target: Ensure the participation of citizens in monitoring essential services, including healthcare, water and education *Indicators:* Existence of national and local oversight bodies; Number of people who report participation; Proportion of public who believe they can receive timely services without paying a bribe	OSF	Function	National surveys and administrative data	Objective, Subjective and Expert driven	National	Medium

Target: Increase in political participation: Indicators: % voter turn-out in national and local elections; % of voting age population registered to vote	CIGI	Form	Administrative records, electoral records	Objective	National	Low
Target: increase in women's political participation: Indicator: Increase in % of seats held by women in parliaments or national assemblies	UNCSD	Form	National data	Objective	National	Low
Target: Increase public participation in political processes and civic engagement at all levels	Post 2015 HLP		Surveys	Subjective	National	Medium High

Table 5: Justice and the rule of law

Proposed targets and indicators	Proposed by:	Governance form or function	Possible data sources	Type of data	Globally comparable or national level?	Likely level of sensitivity?
Target: Increased implementation of anti-corruption legislation	Matt Andrews, Harvard	Function	Global Integrity, TI Global Corruption Barometer	Subjective/ Expert	National	Medium-High
Target and Indicator: Reduction in number of people who report paying a bribe	CIGI	Function	TI Bribe Payers Index, World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment	Subjective/ Expert	National	High
Target: Reduce bribery and corruption Indicator: All officials can be held accountable	Post 2015 HLP	Function	TI Index, national data, World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment	Subjective/ Expert	National	High
Target: Reduction in suspension or arbitrary application of the rule of law and violations of human rights	Saferworld	Function	Fund for Peace	Subjective and objective	National	High

Target / Indicator	Source	Form/Function	Data source	Subjective/Objective	Scale	Feasibility
Target: Strengthening of rule of law *Indicator*: Increase in Rule of Law Index rating or criminal justice score	Save the Children	Form	Rule of Law Index World Justice Programme	Subjective/ Expert	Global	High
Target: Ensure justice institutions are accessible, independent, well-resourced and respect due-process rights *Indicator*: No of judicial sector personnel per 100,000 or distance from basic legal service providers; average time to resolve disputes; % of people reporting confidence in accessing effective legal aid services	Post 2015 HLP OSF	Form and function	National data and surveys	Subjective and objective	Global	Medium
Target: Enhance the capacity, professionalism and accountability of the security forces, police and judiciary	Post 2015 HLP	Function	Surveys and national/administrative data	Subjective and Objective	National	Medium – High
Target and indicator: Increase in perceived independence of and confidence in the judiciary	http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/Post-2015-4th-goals,targets-and-indicators-FINAL.pdf	Function	Regional Barometer surveys, perception surveys, Judicial Independence Index, WEF-GCR/Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI), Gallup World Poll, Freedom House, world Justice Project	Subjective/ Expert	National	Medium-High
Target and indicator: Increase in number of men, women and businesses with recognised proof of their rights to land and other assets		Function	Some: World Economic Forum, Index of Economic Freedom, World Bank's CPIA	Objective	National	Medium
Target and indicator: Reduction in rates of pre-sentence detention		Function	Some national data	Objective	National	Medium-High
Target Universal access to complaint mechanisms (e.g. ombudsman)	Civil Society Reflection Group	Form	Some national data	Objective	Both	Medium

Table 6: Equity and inclusion

Proposed targets and indicators	Proposed by:	Governance form or function	Possible data sets?	Type of data	Global comparable or national level?	Likely level of sensitivity?
Target: Monitor and end discrimination and inequalities in public service delivery, the rule of law, access to justice, and participation in political and economic life on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, national origin, social or other status. *Indicator*: Data disaggregated by region, gender, age, ethnicity and other key markers	Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Save the Children (similar proposal in UNICEF/ PBSO/UNDP)	Function	National level data, surveys	Objective	National	Medium-High
Target: Increased awareness and increased implementation of UN human rights conventions and instruments	UN Global Compact	Form	Human rights national reporting (including alternative reports by NGOs) UN records on HR convention (e.g. Special Rapporteurs)	Subjective/ Objective	National	Low/Medium
Target: Enhance equity and social cohesion, and ensure adequate formal and informal mechanisms to manage disputes peacefully	UNICEF/ PBSO/UNDP	Function		Subjective	National	Medium
Target : Reduce population disparities between boy and girl children aged 5	Charles Kenny, CGD	Function	Surveys, national records etc.		National	Medium
Target: Ensure more equitable public spending *Indicator*: Budget process allows for resources to be allocated on the basis of need (e.g. to address inequalities by region, ethnicity, gender and so on)	ODI, Saferworld	Function	National account, World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA)	Objective	National	Medium

Target: Achieve reductions in attainment and outcomes between the richest and poorest within a country	[ODI](#)	Function	Some national data	Objective	National	High
Indicators: Measures of child mortality, school attendance, learning outcomes and so on						

4 Conclusions: an initial assessment and criteria for selection

Based on this preliminary mapping, there is no doubt that the debate on governance and post 2015 has generated a range of new and innovative ideas about measuring governance progress, highlighting a number of opportunities as well as some challenges and gaps to be taken into account. Before we (and others) go further in testing and analysing the viability of different options, it is important to reflect on the core purpose of this exercise and to ensure that we can clearly articulate why and how to include governance in a post-2015 framework. This will also help to guide the most appropriate strategy in the negotiating process.

4.1 Proposed governance targets and indicators: emerging issues

The proposed targets and indicators cover a very wide range of issues across five different categories of governance. The analysis above should help to clarify which might be prioritised and why, along with some pragmatic considerations about capacity as well as availability and reliability of national data. Where data is not currently available, assessment is needed to identify what types of new data sources could be generated and how. Before we turn to possible criteria to select targets and indicators, however, it is useful to highlight some emerging themes based on the analysis this far.

Firstly, while much of the debate about governance in the post-2015 framework focuses on accountability - with an emphasis on transparency and participation - other issues have emerged, including equity and state capacity or institutional effectiveness. While these are not always associated with a mainstream governance agenda, they are increasingly seen as important gaps to be addressed, as commentary from academics such as Matt Andrews (11/19/2013) has highlighted, and as shown in the focus on state capability for the g7+ grouping. These elements may go hand-in-hand with other core governance issues – there is growing recognition that increases in citizens' voice and demand, for example, may not be very meaningful without support to increase elements of the 'supply' or the capacity of governments to deliver. Proxy indicators may be very useful to assess governance progress in these areas, as there may be multiple pathways to improving capacity or addressing equity. Many of these indicators therefore focus on functions alongside forms, which may be particularly helpful where it can help to 'close the gap' between plans and their implementation (Andrews 2013a).

Secondly, not all proposed targets and indicators are likely to be able to compare progress across countries and some may be better suited to measurement at national and subnational levels only. There is much debate about the opportunity of the post-2015 process and framework to strengthen national level capacity to collect data, so the role of these indicators is potentially very important.

Thirdly, it is important to note that the current focus in policy and advocacy circles is very much on promoting a stand-alone governance goal. Yet several of the 'function' indicators listed above could be helpfully integrated as part of a framework to measure progress in different sectors, emphasising an often missing governance dimension. For instance, targets to close the gap between budget plans and execution could be applied to areas like health and education, and not just as stand-alone, and various targets on equity or on open data could be applied at the sector level too. The importance of this should not be underestimated, as focusing all efforts on promoting a stand-alone governance goal alone may miss other important opportunities to advance the

governance agenda in key post-2015 sectors, including those critical to the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as core areas of service delivery and gender equality.

Finally, debate on the post-2015 framework – including on options for incorporating governance – still remain far too stuck at the global (and often Northern) level. This process now needs to shift to a much more concerted effort to engage and consult with national level stakeholders – from national statistical offices to high levels of government to civil society, the private sector and beyond. A particular gap identified is the need to assess current capacity at national level, and potential sources of data, as part of determining the feasibility of different approaches. The level of national 'actionability' also needs to be borne in mind – i.e. who (if anyone) can take action at the national level to realise the targets set out above. Assessing whether and how proposed target areas can be 'put into action', and who has the ability to take that action, is needed.

4.2 Criteria selecting targets and indicators

Having mapped some of the main proposals for governance targets and indicators thus far, there is now a need to identify how in practice these might be measured and monitored and which targets and indicators are likely to be better measures of progress.

The criteria for selecting these targets and indicators might include:

- First and foremost, there needs to be a **clear pathway of change** underpinning the proposed indicator, specifically considering how in practice it could lead to better monitoring and measurement, and hence greater action and resource mobilisation to improve governance outcomes. Thus, for each target, we will need to envisage what the likely pathway for change might be.
- The existence of at least some **reliable data sources or potential data sources** to be able to meaningfully test the applicability of the indicator is also a key determinant. This needs to take into account the level of capacity needed to collect and manage data and any practical constraints of national statistical offices and other key actors.
- There needs to be a balance between **forms and functions of governance**, recognising that much of the debate thus far has focused on the former and that there are significant knowledge gaps on the latter. When a form of governance is considered important (e.g. budget transparency), it will be useful to ensure that some related function (e.g. budget execution) is also taken into account.
- There needs to be a balance **between subjective and objective data sources**: while subjective data sources can be helpful and there is scope to use them more extensively for assessing governance progress, the number of reliable sources of subjective indicators are still limited (see Box 2). This will affect how in practice this data can be used to monitor governance progress effectively.
- The likely level of **sensitivity**: while at this stage it would be a mistake to completely rule out options, as not much is yet known about the political process and likely grounds for negotiation, it is important to take into account whether options are politically very sensitive. As Bergh and Couturier (2013) have recently highlighted, those areas which are perceived to touch 'too closely' to issues of domestic politics and sovereignty may prove particularly controversial.
- At this stage, we leave open the option to select **national as well as global targets and indicators**, although we note that UNDP and others are likely to do more in-depth testing of national level indicators in the near future and it would be important build on these efforts.

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