

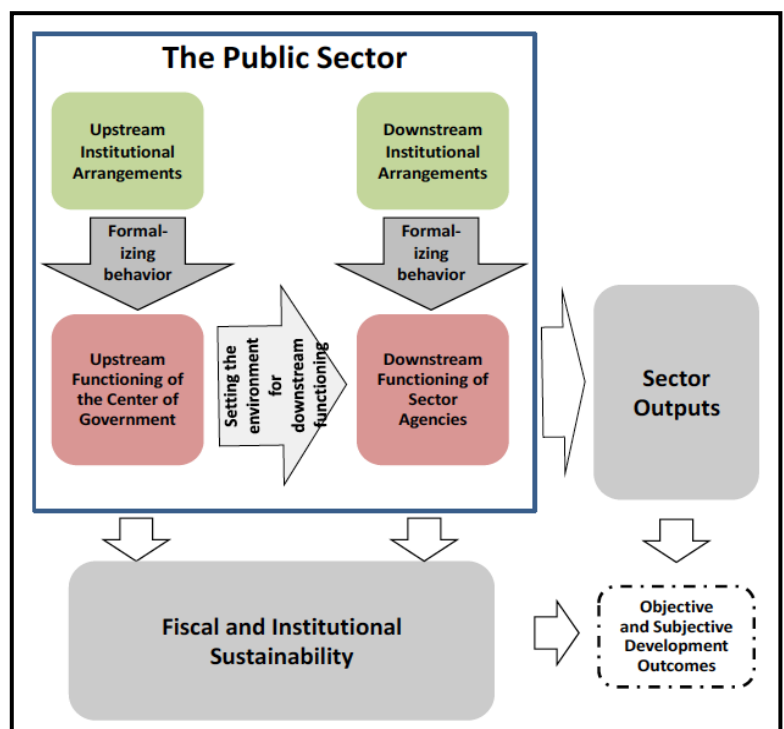
On the Power of ‘the Single Figure’

- Exploring UNDP & WB’s Approaches to Governance Assessments

Master’s thesis:
Copenhagen Business School
25. October, 2013

Anna Sofie Kryger-Rump
MSc in International Business & Politics

Supervisor:
Søren Villadsen
Department of Business and Politics
Copenhagen Business School



The Public Sector Results Chain (World Bank 2012: 3)

What we choose to count, what we choose not to count, who does the counting, and the categories and values we choose to apply when counting are matters that matter (Sætnan et al. 2011: 1).

Abstract

This study explores the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and World Bank's (WB) approaches to governance assessment (GA) by indicators through the perspective of governmentality. It becomes clear that the two organisations, in line with the traditional donors, in general, have many purposes with their approaches to GA that is not only employed as a means of power in itself, it is also authoritatively supported by the (still) powerful tool of aid. Yet, by exploring the problematizations, representations and interventions of these organisations, some overall trends appear. Hence, not only do the approaches follow two dominating black-boxed assumptions within this field; viz. '(good) governance matters crucially for development outcomes' and 'evidence in the form of statistical and numerical indicators matter for governance', they are also framed within a rights-based discourse, loaded with positive concepts that has dominated the international development policies since the millennium. However, the latter exist together with another dominating discourse about results-based management, effectiveness and cost-efficiency, which has become strengthened since the latest financial crisis. Thus, not only are the discursive approaches of UNDP and WB strongly influenced by these trends, they also frame the scope of action of the GAs. As will be shown, this not only create paradoxes and dilemmas, both within and between their approaches, it also transform the GAs into symbolic kinds of 'signalling devices'.

Keywords: Governance assessments (GAs), indicators, UNDP (GAP OGC, OGF), WB (GPSM, ISPMS, AGIs), EBP, NPM, scientific knowledge, democratic- & good governance, governmentality, problematization, black-boxed assumption, uncertainty absorption, expectations gap, discourses, power, freedom

Acknowledgements

There are some persons in particular, I feel obliged to acknowledge with gratitude for the accomplishment of this thesis, which completely outweighs my own shyness.

Commencing chronologically with my mom (and dad), who have helped so much by taking care of my little daughter, so I could get time to study, my husband for being not only the prime breadwinner, but also housekeeper with support in general, for quite a time, Louise Meisner-Jensen for not only lending me a book and her thesis, but also for spending so much time reading through my main chapters and giving me such a valuable and constructive feedback that I wish I could acknowledge her more officially than only as my invaluable 'co-supervisor'. Furthermore, my dearest friend Lærke Sass for always giving me the best support in all general and particular matters and for, especially in the end, helping me immensely, keeping an eye on my deadlines as well as holding up my spirit. Moreover my family in-laws for helping so much, not only with a lot of printing, but also with general support in terms of child-(husband) care, providing 'thesis-ice-cream', food, 'vacation house' etc. Other partners in crime; sweet Louise Capion Hansen as well as Mia Mone Johansen, my dear friends Anne Fledelius and Lisbet Crone Jensen also for being helpful, my former bachelor group-mates that I have missed in so many stages of this process and finally, my supervisor for good feedback, being patient and always replying rapidly.

Dedicating this thesis for Esther – since she is the best excuse to get it over with and she has been the best distraction I could ever wish for.

Abbreviations

AGI	Actionable Governance Indicator
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DG	Democratic Governance
DGA	Democratic Governance Assessment
EBP	Evidence-Based Policymaking
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GA	Governance Assessment
GAP	Governance Assessment Portal
GPSM	Governance and Public Sector Management
HLF	High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
ISPMS	Indicators on the Strength of Public Management Systems
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NIE	New Institutional Economics
NPM	New Public Management
ODI	Overseas Development Institute (UK)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (Indicators)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VfM	Value for Money
WB	World Bank
WC	Washington Consensus
WGI	World Governance Indicators

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 <i>Research question</i>	3
1.2 <i>Outline of the Thesis</i>	4
1.3 <i>Objectives</i>	4
2. METHODOLOGY	6
2.1 <i>Governmentality & Social Constructionism</i>	6
2.2 <i>The Analytical Perspective of Governmentality</i>	7
2.3 <i>Governmentality, Critique & its Weaknesses</i>	10
2.4 <i>Research Design & Data Selection</i>	11
2.5 <i>Scope & (De)limitations</i>	15
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	16
3.1 <i>A Multidimensional field of Power Relations</i>	16
3.2 <i>Different Variations & Implications of Liberal Government</i>	18
3.3 <i>The Cartographic Elements of Liberal Governance</i>	22
4. EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK	27
4.1 <i>The Organizational Context of UNDP's Programme</i>	27
4.2 <i>The Organizational Context of WB's Approach 2011-2020</i>	28
5. ANALYSIS	30
5.1 <i>UNDP's PROBLEMATIZATIONS, REPRESENTATIONS & INTERVENTIONS</i>	30
5.1.1 <i>UNDP's Problematizations</i>	30
5.1.2 <i>UNDP's Rationalities & Representations</i>	32
5.1.3 <i>Intervention: The Global Programme on DGAs</i>	34
5.1.4 <i>UNDP: Part Conclusion</i>	44
5.2. <i>WB's PROBLEMATIZATIONS, REPRESENTATIONS & INTERVENTIONS</i>	44
5.2.1 <i>WB's Problematizations</i>	45
5.2.2 <i>Rationalities & Representations</i>	48
5.2.3 <i>Intervention: WB's Approach to PSM (2011-2020)</i>	49
5.2.4 <i>WB: Part Conclusion</i>	57
5.3 <i>COMPARATIVE ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION</i>	57
5.3.1 <i>Who's Who?</i>	57
5.3.2 <i>Cautious Tendencies</i>	60
5.3.3 <i>Tensions Between a Rights- & Results-Based Approach</i>	61
5.3.4 <i>More Or Less Political?</i>	62
5.3.5 <i>The Balance Between Constraints & Aspirations</i>	63
5.3.6 <i>Who can Speak – According to What Criteria?</i>	64
5.3.7 <i>Quasi-Autonomous Ownership</i>	65
5.3.8 <i>Comparative Analysis: Part Conclusion</i>	67
6. THEMATIC DISCUSSION	68
6.1 <i>Questioning Black-boxed Assumptions</i>	68
7. CONCLUSION	74
8. APPENDIX	76
8.1 <i>Table: Approximately Thematic Divided Development Eras</i>	76
9. BIBLIOGRAPHY	77

1. Introduction

Some say that only “what’s counted counts” (...). Others (...) say the opposite: “Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted” (Sætnan et al. 2011: 1).

This study’s focus is covering two different, but parallel currents within the politics of international development, which have more or less arisen and at least evolved heavily within the last two decades (Arndt 2008; Buduru & Pal 2010; Rakner & Wang 2007). The first current, which is the primary focus of this study, concerns a so-called “increasing pressure to measure” (AidWatch 2010; Hauser Center 2010; NGO Performance 2011). This has taken numerous practical forms and has been verbalized in various ways (e.g. evidence-based policy making (EBP), results-oriented-, impact- and Value for Money (VfM) measurements etc.).

The other current represents an increased focus on the role of governance or rather the somewhat ambiguous term; ‘good governance’ or a bit more straightforward; democratic governance, which came to the fore fuelled by the so-called Post Washington Consensus (PWC) a successor to the conservative neoliberal kind of political and economic agenda, which was named the Washington Consensus. Hence, the role of governance in developing countries has increasingly become important both for international investors and for western official development assistance agencies (Oman and Arndt: 2006). Moreover, it is now being discussed that ‘democratic governance’ should be one of the forthcoming post-2015 goals (UNDP 2012a; Devex 2013).

Accordingly, the focus of this thesis is on the convergence of these two above-mentioned currents into the measurement initiative of (democratic) governance assessments (GA) by indicators of the two transnational establishments; the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank (WB).

Though the focus of this study is not historical, some historical references will briefly be drawn, to place it in context¹; of what the two currents are a part of, how they arose, why there was and is an anticipated need for them and what they were and are made a solution to.

¹ E.g. see table in the Appendix.

Therefore, an outline of the context of this study can at least be traced back till the 1970s, in which the dominating Keynesian paradigm of an active interfering government was seriously questioned (Larbi 1999). This occurred both due to deepening fiscal crises in many western countries at that time and due to an increasing criticism of the central role of the government. Though this criticism for very different reasons was broad-based (Dean 2007), it was especially dominant within the new right or neoliberals at the time. Thus, with the growing economic, social and political pressures for a reorganisation of the public sector, a campaign for a 'new managerialism' or new public management (NPM) approach was initiated (Larbi 1999). This caused a movement from public administration to public management in most of the Anglo-Saxon world in the 1980s (Ibid.). By promising more efficiency and effectiveness, the NPM approach transfers the management techniques of the for-profit private sector on the public sector and exposes it as much as possible to the market forces (Ibid.). This has had two notable implications; viz. an increasing decentralised or privatized management and an increased focus on performance and outputs. These are factors that still have their effect on the cases of this study, where GAs and indicators are means of a liberal and decentralised management with a strong focus on results. Moreover, it is also important to note, how an improved information technology paved the way for the NPM reforms that made it possible to keep the confidence in decentralized activities through different kind of measurement initiatives (Larbi 1999).

Following the NPM reforms in many developed countries a second wave of reforms were applied on crisis-ridden² developing countries, which were mainly applied through the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) by WB and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the 1980s-90s. Throughout the 1990s this neoliberal, almost blind, faith in uncontrolled markets with as minimal as possible of state interference began to meet a growing scepticism and criticism, that was only reinforced due to a series of international economic collapses, among others; the 1997-1998 Asian crisis (Craig & Porter 2006). Yet, it became evident that especially the recipient countries of the SAPs not only suffered from zero net growth, but deepening fiscal crisis, increasing inequality and poverty (Ibid.: 2; Whitfield 2008). Yet, the escalating multifaceted political-, economic- and not least social problems were mainly excused with the failure of 'bad governance' by leading IFIs. Where WB came to acknowledge the need for what it termed; 'a capable state' to support mar-

² Crises have generally been the main trigger for NPM reforms (Larbi 1999).

kets (Craig & Porter 2006; Abrahamsen 2000). This 'new' recognition brought the concepts of 'good governance', 'poverty reduction' and 'national ownership' on the international agenda and likewise a shift was made towards a softer, more 'inclusive' liberal institutionalism or 'advanced liberalism' (Craig & Porter: 2006; Rose: 1999).

Around the millennium, international collective efforts lead to an unprecedented consensus with a focus on harmonizing and aligning the international support for poverty reducing development. Yet, the substance of this consensus was not as new as the consensus itself, though "captured in a seductive mix of buzzwords" (Cornwall & Brock 2005: 1), it merely relocated the former neoliberal ideas of market-led growth through the integration of poor countries within global capitalism (Craig & Porter 2006). The millennium development goals (MDGs) within the UN and the following high level forums (HLFs) within OECD all are materializations of this consensus. However, this consensus was also linked with a notable, yet little noticed technical dimension, as Craig and Porter (2006: 5) state; "[t]he strength of the new consensus was evident in the fact that these high level forums barely discussed the efficacy of its underpinning neoliberal market orthodoxy. Rather, the focus was from 2000 largely on its organizing rubrics and technical means".

Hence, the new consensus to a large extent continues with many of the conceptualisations and practices of former liberal development policies (Ibid.; Whitfield 2008). These are framed within an all-embracing positive discourse (Cornwall & Brock 2005) and not least employed by the little noticed, however powerful means of assessments and indicators etc. (Buduru & Pal: 2010). Yet, when such kinds of measurement initiatives become powerful tools of international governance, questions of what counts and how this counting counts become highly relevant (Sætnan et al. 2011).

1.1 Research question

What are UNDP and WB's main purposes with their two parallel approaches to governance assessments (GAs), what do these imply; do they differ; and why are these purposes sought resolved by the tool of GA to better on the state of governance?

In order to answer these overall questions, the following four sub-questions will help guide this study:

1. How do UNDP and WB problematize the field of governance, which their approaches are sought a solution to?
2. What are UNDP and WB's rationalities, representations and interventions to these 'problematizations'?
3. How do UNDP and WB's two approaches fit within a wider 'paradigmatic shift' within international development policies?
4. What may be potential implications of the employment of GAs through indicators that are promoted by the two approaches?

1.2 Outline of the Thesis

Chapter two and three elaborate on how the focus of this study is approached through the perspective of governmentality. Chapter two further explains the methodological stance that this implies and how the analytical concepts of problematizations, representations and interventions help guide the analysis through the sub-questions together with six paradigmatic shifts within international development discourses. Chapter four, briefly outline the organisational context of the two cases. Chapter five analyses the cases through the analytical concepts elaborated in chapter two and three. The sixth chapter discusses the main underlying assumptions, which the two cases both draw on and chapter seven concludes.

1.3 Objectives

This study focuses on the processes, where UNDP and WB with their two specific approaches try to improve on their recipient countries' state of governance with the help of GAs by indicators. Thus, it is not the field of governance that is the main focus, but the way that this issue is approached. This kind of attempt to govern the 'actions of others' actions' through statistical metrics has been increasing within the last decades, where I, in particular find it interesting when it is applied on the governance field, as it is really put on the head here.

That numbers and measurements have achieved a special status in our societies only reinforce this tendency, as they constitute that which the power have become centred on (Sætnan et al. 2011;

Du Toit 2012). This then increase the employment of various numerical measurement techniques and metrics as indicators onto a variety of fields, where these form the grounds of decisions. It is therefore necessary to study, discuss and analyse this tendency to become aware of its strength and weaknesses. Hence, this study aims at de-naturalizing and questioning this tendency, yet it is not an objective to reject it, but to illustrate some of its weaknesses, so that it hopefully will be used with more care. Likewise, with this study I hope to contribute to increasing the focus not only on the weaknesses, but also on how processes and transformations are framed, when phenomena are recreated into numerical categories.

2. Methodology

This chapter will elaborate on the methodological implications of using the perspective of governmentality when analysing the two chosen cases of UNDP and WB.

2.1 Governmentality & Social Constructionism

In accordance with Rose (1999) and other post-Foucauldians, I use governmentality as an analytical perspective. This implies a reading of Foucault's governmentality analyses, not as a "theory in the strong sense of the word" (Walters 2012: 2), but instead "as a set of methodological and conceptual guidelines, [and] as a provocation towards doing a different kind of analysis of politics and government" (Ibid.: 40). Hence, since governmentality both encompasses methodological and theoretical aspects, these are also interlinked in this thesis. Moreover, the non-essentialist and non-universalist approach of governmentality makes it a bit hard to place it unequivocally within a conventional theory of science.

Yet, there are of course a number of presuppositions that characterises this particular perspective that places it within the broad theoretical orientation of constructionism, which to a greater or lesser extent encompasses many post-modern, -structural and critical approaches (Burr 2003: 1). Nonetheless, this category is neither that easy to delineate, since as Burr (Ibid.: 81) states, "[t]here is no one feature, which could be said to identify a social constructionist position", still, as she later writes, "the absence of an ultimate truth seems to be the foundation upon which the theoretical framework of social constructionism is built" (Ibid.). Burr (Ibid.) also mentions that constructionism is 'loosely' connected by some key assumptions, viz. a critical approach towards 'taken-for-granted' or conventional knowledge as well as an anti-fundamentalist questioning of categorisations due to the acknowledgement that these are conditioned on contingent, non-essential and non-universalist historical and cultural circumstances. Additionally, social processes and practices become central in relation to the power relations that are formed and forms our constructions of the world, which have implications for what it is permissible for different people to do and say (Ibid.: 5). So, even though constructionism is not based on some 'universals', it does not mean that everything is in flux, which is only a valid critique that applies to some very few constructionist theorists. This is therefore a too caricatured portrait of constructionism as a whole (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999: 14). Accordingly, this study critically engages with the practices, processes and discursive rationalities that are formed by the two cases of UNDP and WB; but it also attempts to

question, what have become the ‘unsurpassable horizon’ of our age, the now quite hegemonic “conservative and social-democratic versions of liberalism and liberal democracy” (Dean 2007: 199), which not only shapes the two cases, but is also enforced by them, as will be shown.

2.2 The Analytical Perspective of Governmentality

The perspective of governmentality was developed, yet briefly, within the latest work of Foucault, mainly in the two series of lectures at Collège de France in Paris in 1978 and 1979 (Burchell et al. 1991; Walters 2012). Nevertheless, after the death of Foucault it has grown to become a research field in its own right. Although it is still embedded within his thoughts, it has also moved beyond his agenda (Walters 2012). There are many conceptions of governmentality³, yet in this thesis it will, as mentioned, be applied as “a particular style of analysis” (Ibid.: 39).

Furthermore, according to the two prominent post-Foucauldian theorists of governmentality, Miller and Rose (2008: 15) two distinct interdependent aspects can be derived from what they term, “Foucault’s rather awkward neologism”; ‘governmentality’, namely ‘rationalities or programmes’ and ‘technologies’ of government. It is deliberately that Miller and Rose (2008) use the aspects in plural, to illustrate the heterogeneity of the many kinds of assemblages covering different kinds of rationalities or technologies, that function as ways of representing reality and thereby ‘rendering it thinkable’ (ibid.). Hence, language is not only “regarded as an epiphenomenon, a gloss on the practices of rule” (Rose et al. 2006: 88), it is also providing “a mechanism for rendering reality amenable to certain kinds of action” (Miller & Rose 2008: 32). These actions and interventions through different technologies cover a variety of “devices, tools techniques, personnel, materials and apparatuses” (ibid.: 16). As follows, this is a perspective that is not only contrary to a Marxist ‘critique of ideology’, ‘structure versus agent’ approaches, but as well ‘discourse analyses’⁴, since it according to the latter, rejects the notion “that discourses themselves create realities and identities” (Rose et al. 2006: 89). Instead it regards language as one element in conjunction with others to render reality governable. So, through this perspective, this study is concerned with how a phenomenon becomes known and represented; but, as well how it is acted upon through prescriptive practices and interventions aiming at transforming and governing it (Miller & Rose 2008). It is in

³ Importantly; ‘governance theory’ and the governmentality perspective are not be confused (Dean 2007; Walters 2012).

⁴ This is undeniable roughly stated.

this regard that the rationalities of UNDP and WB will be explored in conjunction with how their devices of governance assessments (GAs) and indicators try to render the 'reality governable'. Hence their "specific *work of thought*" (Foucault 1997, emphasis in original: 118) will be analysed.

Additionally, the term '*techné* of governance' does not differentiate between "a 'material' realm distinct from 'ideas' where ideas are put into practice. Rather, it is to suggest a particular kind of inquiry, one that draws our attention to the myriad devices, artefacts and objects that mediate power relations and populate our world" (Walters 2012: 62). Hence, it is how these mediating devices are applied by UNDP and WB that will be investigated further. This perspective does not conceive its subject of analysis to represent an all-encompassing, homogeneous logic. Rather, when the governmental 'blueprints or programs' are analysed, these are not regarded as 'ideal types', but instead as constituting heterogeneous attempts "to imagine ways of improving the state of affairs, and to devise ways of achieving these ends" (Rose et al. 2006: 99). This also means that this study, in accordance with governmentality analyses in general, focus on "an empirical mapping of governmental rationalities and techniques" (Ibid.) without an assumption that "the mere existence of a diagram of government implies either its generalized acceptance or implementation" (Ibid.). Rather, as Rose et al. (Ibid.: 98) emphasise, "governmentality may be eternally optimistic, but government is a congenitally failing operation".

Likewise, this perspective breaks with a strict notion of 'temporal epochs', instead regarding terms as e.g. liberalism with its many governmental modes as constituting "resemblances in ways of thinking and acting" (Miller & Rose 2008: 17). This study acknowledges the contingent nature of governmentalities that "change by entering into periods of criticism and crisis, where multiple perceptions of failure coalesce, and where alternatives are proposed" (Ibid.). These are therefore applied as 'historical-ontological' (Walters 2012) conceptions to denote the 'resemblances' they produce and are produced by. This study does not dispense with the objects that the "political science uses to theorize the state, such as sovereignty, the people, the public, civil society etc." (Walters 2012: 17). Rather it denies that these should have a status as universals or 'ready-made' concepts, these are instead approached as 'transactional realities'; contingent figures, that nonetheless are real (ibid., quoting Foucault: 17). Following, this study disperses the analyses of 'power

and politics' beyond a narrow focus of "the state as locus, origin or outcome" (ibid.: 20). Instead, it seeks to shed light on how UNDP and WB's "modes of managing, intervening and administering become modes of power" (Miller and Rose 2008: 21), when these are generalized and linked to centres "or at least linked up with other comparable or similar modes" (Ibid.). This should not be belittled, since, "making issues legible is hard work" as Walters (2012: 62) notes, in which an entire regime of 'metrology' (Ibid., referring Barry: 63) is required to administer problems that are to be governed. However, again this 'entire regime' is not regarded as necessarily coherent within the governmentality perspective, nor do the different allegories with technology refer to that we live in an overly technologized and totally programmed society, instead it is meant to "unsettle humanist binaries that juxtapose the human and the technological" (Ibid., referring Gordon: 63).

Problematizations, Representations and Interventions

Within the perspective of governmentality the self-evidence of 'problems' is de-naturalized, in that these are not conceived as "pre-given, lying there waiting to be revealed" (Miller & Rose 2008: 14). Instead 'problems' are regarded as constructions through the "transformation of a group of obstacles and difficulties" (Foucault 1997: 118). This turns the focus on the relation between the objects that are problematized and what Foucault has termed, "the process of "problematization"" (Foucault 2001a: 171). The processes of problematizations are coupled with other kind of agendas (Foucault 1997) that makes these analytically interesting to problematize as well, since;

A problematization is always a kind of creation; but a creation in the sense that, given a certain situation, you cannot infer that this kind of problematization will follow. Given a certain problematization, you can only understand why this kind of answer appears as a reply to some concrete and specific aspect of the world (Foucault 2001a: 172-3).

Inherent in the act of problematizing lies a call for a solution that needs some kind of government, which thereby makes it possible through a certain way of problematizing to establish certain representations and interventions as answers to this (Dreyfus 1997; Miller & Rose 2008). Hence, these concepts become central in this study, where UNDP and WB's problematizations will be investigated further, to understand why their particular representations and interventions are presented as solutions to the former. Thus, their problematizations of 'bad governance' lay the

ground for answers that seek to establish 'good or democratic governance'. However within these problematizations lie numerous of historical as present factors that play a role for their definitions, which also regards the following representations and interventions concerning good- or democratic governance. Although it may seem more and less simple when something is defined as bad governance that brings forth a solution of good governance, as this study will show, and which is rather obvious, it is not as simple at all. Likewise, Rose (1999: 20) states;

To analyse political power through the analytics of governmentality is not to start from the apparently obvious historical or sociological question: what happened and why? It is to start by asking what authorities of various sorts wanted to happen, in relation to problems defined how, in pursuit of what objectives, through what strategies and techniques.

Hence, this study questions UNDP and WB's particular representations and interventions with their implied presuppositions and according to their specific ways of problematizing. Yet, this also makes it a kind of ethical enquiry, since a questioning too opens up for different kinds of solutions and ways of thinking (Rose 1999).

2.3 Governmentality, Critique & its Weaknesses

Walters (2012) mentions two general strands of criticism in regard to the perspective of governmentality. First, the problematical in applying this "as a fully formed perspective" (Ibid.: 5) instead of a more adaptable 'critical encounter' with the subject of analysis. In relation to the double meaning of the word 'encounter', both as "an unexpected meeting" (Ibid.) and as a struggle, in regard to the latter, Walters refers to how the political has been neglected in many analyses of governmentalities. I only think that these two strands of critique apply to some extent in this thesis.

Another critique that this thesis is hit by, however mainly due to its limited scope, is directed at the 'presentist' kinds of governmentality analyses, which are detached from, what Walters (Ibid.: 114) terms a "genealogical dimension". However, there is no exact way to conduct a governmentality analysis, as have been emphasised throughout this chapter. A genealogical approach is therefore first of all not a requirement, nor a straightforward practice, for that matter. Nevertheless, in relation to the three 'styles' of genealogical approaches that Walters (Ibid.) identifies, this

thesis comes closest to the last, viz. genealogy as ‘a struggle’, with its focus on problematizations and the specific, situated answers to these.

Moreover, many governmentality studies, including at times Foucault himself, are criticised for conflating liberalism with the governmentality perspective (Ibid.; Dean 2007). Instead of conceiving ‘governmentalities’ as encompassing heterogeneous forms of logics and practices of power that intersects time and space, which this thesis correspondingly aims at. Additionally, such studies have as well been criticised “for making governance appear overly coherent, univocal and rational” (Walters referring O’Malley, 2012: 74), which this study attempts to avoid. Furthermore, especially Foucault has been accused of being very ‘Eurocentric’ in his contextualized concern with the ‘microphysics of power’ (Ibid.: 68). However, subsequent governmentality studies have expanded this. Hence, the subject of this thesis is also placed within a global governmentality perspective, where states are not the only ones regulating, but are also sought regulated against their own populations with a variety of techniques and practices by different kinds of international organisations and institutions.

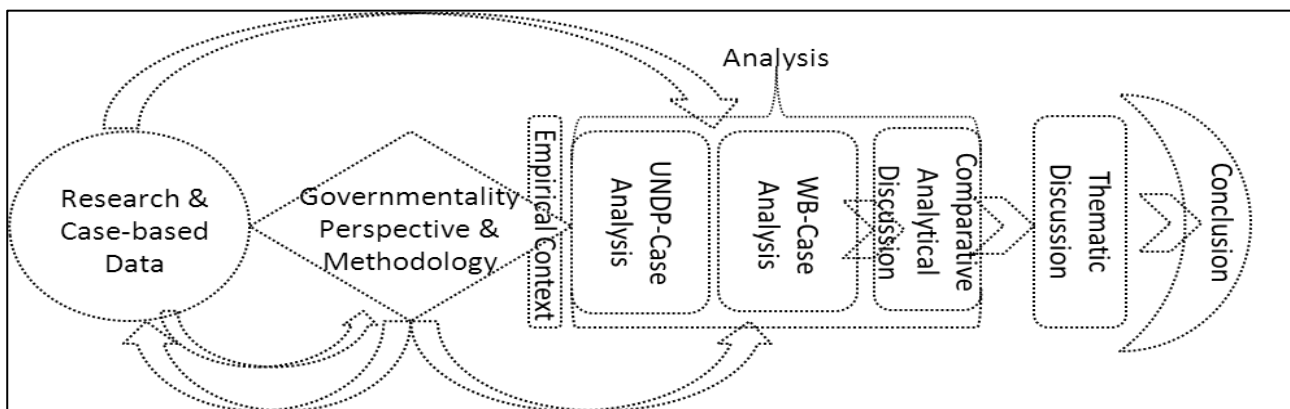
Finally, no matter how much the perspective of governmentality would like to break with realist and normative prescriptions, it cannot escape this entirely, in that it is also descriptive, not of the real socio-political relations, but of how these are conceived governed. And as Dean (2007: 50) notes, “the injunction to shake up the ways in which we think about governing is itself a normative one”. So, in line with the de-naturalizing aim of governmentality, users of this perspective should of course be aware of the kind of descriptive and normative implications that this perspective neither, however to a lesser extent, can avoid in its analytical approach. This unavoidably implication, of course, as well applies in this thesis.

2.4 Research Design & Data Selection

The aim of this thesis is as mentioned, to examine how UNDP and WB establish their problematizations that provide the basis for their following representations and not least interventions, which furthermore explains some of the reasons for the existence of these two specific approaches. A case study approach has been chosen for this purpose, since this provides an opportunity for a more detailed examination of the chosen documents and reports of the two approaches.

Through such an approach this study will investigate the different aspects in the cases of UNDP

and WB, analysing these and holding them up against each other as well as against their context, which they are formed by and as well help form (Meyer 2001). Moreover, a case study approach differs from other qualitative designs in that it is guided by theoretical concepts, when it researches and analyses the empirical data (Ibid.: 331). Correspondingly, this study has followed an ‘iterative strategy’, where the theory and data have been consulted within a dialectical movement (Bryman 2008).



Research Design: Iterative Strategy.

Two cases have been chosen for a number of reasons, viz. multiple cases “help guard against observer biases. Moreover, multi-case sampling adds confidence to findings” (Meyer quoting Miles & Huberman, 2001: 333). Yet, only two cases have been chosen in an attempt to balance the aim of depth with a pluralist perspective. Although, two cases does not support generalizability any more than one, however it “allows for comparison and contrast between the cases as well as a deeper and richer look at each case” (Ibid.) as Meyer emphasises. Hopefully, this comparative dimension can help “sharpen further the capacity to denaturalize and render unfamiliar that which has otherwise appeared too obvious” as Walters (2012: 124) notes.

By focusing on two cases, which in different ways can be termed both extreme-, critical and paradigmatic in relation to the categories of Flyvbjerg (2004), the analysis of this thesis is anchored within a ‘meso-level’ (Best 2013). Hence, neither is the big general picture, nor the single, particular story the primary focus in this study. A meso-level analysis is instead placed in the middle of these two extremes, where it works “from the middle, through the middle” (Walters, quoting Barry quoting Deleuze & Guattari, 2012: 99). Thus, by placing the analysis in the middle-ground, I hope to be able both to capture some general trends, yet without the threat of over-generalizing

these by concentrating on the particular practices ‘through which governance occurs’ within the two approaches.

Case Choice & Examination

I have chosen two cases to investigate some of the particular practices ‘through which governance occur’ within the field of GAs. UNDP and WB have been chosen since they represent two different strategies of governing within this field, besides that they are powerful agenda-setting organisations, where they are, as much as they strive to continue being, reference points for other multi-lateral and bilateral constructors of assessments and the like. I hope to capture, by choosing these major players, how “the ways in which policies pursued at one institution are connected to and dependent on processes at others and within a broader community of practice” (Ibid.: 7).

Accordingly, WB is agenda-setting in the sense that several sources refer to it as being the primary cause of the now completely dominating tendency to look at governance as essential for most other parameters in a country (Agere 2000; Abrahamsen 2000). In addition, and in continuation of this WB was also the originator of the ‘Good Governance’ term (Ibid.; Landman et al. 2007: 1; Nanda : 272), which has been and still is much utilized, despite it seems that its use has been declining recently. WB has been a standard-bearer for the tendency to form a knowledge base on monitoring through statistical and numerical measurement and assessments together with promoting a discourse on the importance of robust evidence and results. This came out in the perhaps most extreme and certainly most criticised form through the SAPs. In relation to WB’s strong position within this field, it has numerous of units as well as subunits and centres with various programmes and staff that deal with different ways of measuring and monitoring governance related issues.

Yet, I have purportedly chosen WB’s new approach that have been underway for the last couple of years, but only recently has come into practice, as it best reflects its current approach. Moreover, it would in some ways be too easy with the risk of making the analysis a bit too simplistic and one-sided, had I chosen the WGIs⁵, as these belong to a completely different time, which Hydén et al. (2011: 30) categorise as ‘the second wave’ of GAs, that concerned a governing through ‘ranking and shaming’.

⁵ According to Hydén et al. (2011: 17) it seems that WGI has “outlived its utility for policy”.

Although WB historically has been the most influential within this field, the programme of UNDP is definitely the leading within the latest 'third wave' (Ibid.: 15). Within this, the focus is turned on national ownership, a closer involvement of more stakeholders with an increased focus on vulnerable- as marginalized groups and additionally with a focus on gender equality. This is the reason why the analysis commences with the case of UNDP followed by WB with some cross-references back and forth.

Thus, I have chosen two approaches that are both located within 'the third wave', since I find it a better starting point to compare and discuss them. Throughout the analysis, I hold these up against six shifts that Hydén et al. (2011: 16) has identified "in the global discourse on governance" (Ibid.) to explore how they follow or divert from these, which further emphasises how the two approaches are anchored in the same discursive field, though there seems to be a huge difference between their discourses and practices. Hence, Hydén et al. (Ibid.) categorize the shifts "from: (i) technical/managerial to political aspects, (ii) global to country level, (iii) numerical indicators to narrative trajectories, (iv) quantitative to qualitative methods, (v) top-down to bottom-up approaches, and (vi) representative to monitory aspects of democracy".

It should further be noted that UNDP and WB not only is historically linked, but also formally connected, in that WB is "an independent specialized agency of the UN as well as a member and observer in many UN bodies" (UN 2013). Yet, this linkage too reflects the general discursive alignment, though mainly in the western world that has slowly increased with the end of the cold war. Additionally, for the purpose of clarity are the overall terms of UNDP and WB employed as collective, representative designations instead of a differentiation between their different units. However, unfortunately, this is a bit awkward some places in the WB case, since its new approach is internally positioned towards the rest of the organisation. Nevertheless I still regard this as the lesser of two evils.

Besides structuring the two cases within three analytical themes, I have tried to make their distinctive pattern emerge before the push to "generalise patterns across cases" (Meyer 2001: 342). Finally, this study makes use of the strength of its methodological position to study secondary data, in the form of official documents by the two organisations.

2.5 Scope & (De)limitations

It is beyond the scope of this thesis and also not the most relevant in relation to its methodological stance and way of analysing to 'assess' if the defined problems of UNDP and WB are 'real' or the most problematic (Rose 1999). This study does not conduct a mathematical analysis in an attempt to verify the validity of the different indicators in conformity with the rationale of the two approaches, nor does it conduct an analysis of possible alternative methods. What is instead found the most analytically relevant in this study is to examine the defined problematizations by UNDP and WB and not least to analyse and discuss these in relation to their representations and proposed interventions. It would of course be interesting to investigate further some of the other aspects mentioned, in another study.

Finally, in accordance with the methodological framework, it should be mentioned, that I am aware of that I, as the writer of this thesis, of course function as a kind of co-creator of the kind of truth that this thesis builds up. However this is a condition, which in general is inescapable, at least perceived from the methodological angle, in this study. It should perhaps also be mentioned that besides an academic, critical approach, I have not worked with the empirical neither methodological nor theoretical perspectives before, which of course both is a weakness and strength, accordingly.

3. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the research question will be approached from the angle of the governmentality perspective, which is suitable for grasping the complexity of this thesis' subject. The subject is based in the interface of material as ideational modes of power that cannot be strictly separated, but are intertwined, within this perspective. Thus, by transecting a traditional and dichotomising perception of power as only concerning domination⁶ and subordination (coercion versus liberation) (Rose 1999; Miller 1987), it becomes possible to capture the possibility of power involved in a governance by assessments and measuring techniques, even though direct domination is not blatant.

3.1 A Multidimensional field of Power Relations

Within the perspective of governmentality, power is conceived as a complex and dispersed process that operates through "an open set of practical and ethical possibilities" (Burchell et al. 1991: 5), which Foucault defines as "actions on others' actions" to achieve certain ends (ibid.). In this way, power exists only within a relational process and cannot be possessed as such (Foucault 1982). Government is a practice of exercising power in a deliberate way to shape conduct according to certain norms and values, it comprises "all endeavours to shape, guide, direct the conduct of others [including the government of oneself]" (Rose, referring Foucault, 1999: 3). Power actually presupposes and exists in the making of free subjects; however, this happens as well in concordance with, what Foucault has termed, discursive⁷, disciplinary⁸ and bio-political⁹ forms of practices and technologies (Ibid., Miller 1987; Burchell et al. 1991) together with more traditional means of direct domination. Additionally, though power is a dispersed activity it is still asymmetrical, which make some actors, institutions and agents more powerful than others at a given time and space (Rose & Miller 2010).

This perspective is therefore especially suitable for grasping the discourses and practices of power which are involved in the approaches of governance assessments (GAs) by UNDP and WB. Togeth-

⁶ Domination is a "particular mode of operation of power" (Miller 1987: 2) that acts against the aspirations and wants of the subject, with (the threat of) death as its ultimate sanction.

⁷ Briefly put; discourses belong within the linguistic system, hold together by the identity of their subject, encompassing 'discursive fields with discoursing subjects' (Foucault 1991: 58).

⁸ Discipline designates "the ways in which Western societies since the early nineteenth century have sought to produce a knowledge of the individual which was also to provide the basis for an ethics of personal conduct" (Miller 1987: 200).

⁹ Understood as "[t]he 'calculated' management of life" (Ibid.: 14, 206).

er with a questioning of the neutrality of their otherwise seemingly neutral mechanisms and practices of “more and less rationalized schemes, programmes, techniques and devices which seek to shape conduct so as to achieve certain ends” (Rose 1999: 20). Additionally, the micro and macro subjects and objects of government cannot be strictly separated, within this perspective, where these are sought governed in the UNDP and WB cases too, with solutions for ‘their own best’ and for ‘the best of society’ through a multiplicity of techniques, rationalities and discourses representing a certain kind of truth (Ibid.; Miller 1987).

Practical & Discursive Regimes of Truth

The role of ‘truth’ is implicitly interwoven with governance, or as Rose (1999: 27) puts it; “[t]o govern, one could say, is to be condemned to seek an authority for one’s authority”. Furthermore, “to govern is to act under a certain description” (Ibid.: 28) that makes language constitutive of government. In this way, by seeking authorities for one’s authority through different kinds of ‘intellectual technologies’, by using concepts with particular values, as, ‘democracy’ or ‘machinery of government’ etc., language becomes constitutive of government. Where it sets the stage for government, in which a special kind of regime of truth is created. However, such a regime comprises fields of battles “over who can speak, according to what criteria of truth, from what places (...) utilizing what forms of rhetoric, symbolism, persuasion, sanction or seduction” (Ibid.: 29). Where the GAs of UNDP and WB help enforce their regimes of truth according to particular criteria shrouded in the alluring symbolic rhetoric of objectivity through scientific evidence. What is more, as Foucault (2001: 13) points out, these regimes of truth are not just representations of battles, but constitute that which is fought over, that, where the battle is fought in and that power, which is sought usurped.

Thus, particular concepts function as strategies not only to intervene either through ideational or practical procedures, but also as attempts to minimize complexity and thereby legitimise a certain kind of rationality with a certain kind of intrinsic ‘telos’ or logic (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009; Davis et. al. 2010). Moreover, the particular and often debated meaning of these concepts is not that important as the functionality of them and not least how they interact with other kinds of concepts, rationalities, technologies, practices and discourses (Rose 1999; Foucault 2001b). Hence, language and discourses are intrinsically connected with government and power. In the cases of UNDP and WB, the concepts of objectivity and accountability etc. function in relation to concepts

of effectiveness and costs, where the latter form the functioning of the former. Moreover, as with power, discourses cannot be lead back to a single source or individual, but reversely, it is through them that different kinds of subjects and objects are sought constructed. Almost needless to say, discourses as such do not represent a particular ideology neither (Ibid.).

Nonetheless, it is not only language that constitutes ethical, epistemic as political modes of government. A political practice is also connected with discourses reversely, in that it influences not the meaning and form of the discourses, but the system of their formation and thereby the conditions of, emergence and functioning of these (Foucault 1991: 67). Hence UNDP and WB influence the formation of a particular scientific discourse through GAs that nonetheless differs significantly from the discourses used within academia. Discourses are also influenced by especially three kinds of procedures of exclusion; the forbidden word or taboo, the differentiation between the normal (sensible) and pathological (mad) and the 'will to truth', in which the latter is the most significant, as it too influences the former (Foucault 2001b; Miller 1987). These procedures are related to how governable entities and spaces are created (Miller 1987, Rose 1999) that make them play a role for the subject of this study.

Furthermore, this thesis' subject, is placed within the kind of governmental regime that has been termed neoliberalism or as Rose (1999) terms its successor, 'advanced liberalism', which covers a multiplicity of heterogeneous assemblages, but which nonetheless are structured according to a certain kind of truth.

3.2 Different Variations & Implications of Liberal Government

Political rationalities are discursive fields, characterised of regularities with a distinctive moral form (Ibid.). This section, will explore some of the rationalities that structure the governmental regime of liberalism or advanced liberalism¹⁰ with its strategies of ethics that not only seek to govern us collectively, but as well how an individual or a state, in this case, become governed to govern itself. As mentioned, the space of government is always shaped and intersected by language in the form of scientific discourses, changing moral rhetoric and ethical viewpoints (Ibid.: 22). Likewise, the concept of freedom has become a structuring concept of the neoliberal way of governing. However as abstract as it can appear in the general paroles of liberty, nonetheless it is a cer-

¹⁰ Henceforth, the term (neo)liberal refers to its contemporary 'advanced' form.

tain kind of freedom which is valued that again presupposes particular ideas of the individual and collective. This understanding of freedom has heavily influenced the ethical systems, on which most western societies are based and thereby also the rationalities and practices of UNDP and WB. However, it is not that coercion has ceased to exist, which too will be illustrated in the cases of this study, but its programmatic legitimisation has come to be grounded *in* freedom instead of against it. Subtly, making this the prime argument for maintaining liberalism as an ethical regime of government (Ibid.: 10-11).

Yet, it is important to stress once and for all that freedom is not a state of being nor something constitutional, but “a politics of life” (Ibid.: 94). Thus, freedom is not arising from the absence of power in a vacuum, instead it is also a human constructed concept that varies in relation to time and space and which thereby comprises relations of power. Hence the liberal values and presuppositions in the name of freedom or with freedom as a telos create new modes of practices of government and governmental spaces, in which the freedom of the ‘governed’¹¹ is not only presupposed, but utilised as a capacity to act for certain objectives (Ibid.). Yet, as Dean (2007, emphasis in original: 109) stresses; “governing liberally does not necessarily entail governing *through* freedom or even governing in a manner that respects individual liberty. It might mean, in ways quite compatible with a liberal rationality of government, overriding the exercise of specific freedoms in order to enforce obligations”. Likewise, though UNDP and WB do not employ their GAs using direct domination, they definitely enforce their conceptions of freedom through a variety of quite forceful obligations together with the threat of confiscating aid. Following this, the liberal idea of freedom demands a whole range of technical devices to be realised. Where the government of the kind of freedom presented in this study, works through new kinds of technologies of numerical and economic calculi, spaces and gazes that govern the social through GAs and numerical indicators (Rose 1999). This then create new openings and cross-cutting zones, with new control techniques that help strengthening the power of centres of calculation (Ibid.).

Accordingly, a discursive movement has been made, within the liberal regime of government. From freedom conceived within the traditional dichotomy of ‘freedom from coercion’ to a much

¹¹ In reality, there is no such things as ‘the governed’, instead there exist ‘multiple objectifications’ of the subjects and objects that are made governable through different direct and/or indirect means (Rose 1999: 40).

more complex kind, that just so enable a neoliberal government of different entities¹² of freedom. Where these become responsible for their own actions and choices, as lack of these (in terms of past and future consequences) (Ibid.). Yet, in conjunction with this;

At the symbolic or spatial edges or boundaries of the liberal-democratic world, its security is pursued with ruthlessness and violence. Deep in its heartland, however, we witness the drift to a law-and-order state and find the instruments of punishment being applied not simply to criminals [but a variety of new kinds of ‘suspects’]” (Dean 2007: 5).

In relation to this, Dean (Ibid.: 129) suggests the term, ‘authoritarian liberalism’ to cover those many modes of liberal governing that goes beyond a governing ‘through freedom’. Hence, authoritarian measures are also a necessary component of liberal attempts “to govern free individuals” (Ibid.: 110). Thus, these kinds of ‘authoritarian folds’ (Ibid.) are also supporting UNDP and WB’s attempts of governing through GAs. This is accentuated by the liberal portrait of the market as the place, where every entity is free to choose and responsible for its own actions that enables a kind of governing without governing society, but a governing through the self-government of responsible or rather ‘responsibilized’ entities (Rose 1999: 88). Likewise, UNDP and WB try to ‘responsibilize’ the users of the GAs to be governed by the norms of these through a ‘self-government’. As a result, this mechanism of self-governing and ‘entrepreneurialized’ entities that are responsible for their own enterprise, in some ways, requires less bureaucracy, turning the focus against the ‘abnormal’ and deviating behaviour, which then is sought governed often with quite authoritatively means (Dean 2007). However, ironically the abnormal then becomes the disciplining factor of the norm and not vice versa (Ibid.: 200). Where, the very idea of the norm as a new way of identifying, measuring and governing the conduct of conduct against, was made technical by the increased use of statistics throughout the 19th century (Rose 1999). Thus, a linkage has been established between the private or national responsibility of individuals and states and the guidance of these by a variety of experts according to certain norms, which then turns normality into a governing discipline within liberalism. Hence, UNDP and WB’s GAs are supposed to ensure this normality both by internal and external comparisons, made by a variety of experts.

¹² ‘Entities’ both cover individuals, groups and states etc.

Processes of Translation as ‘Control of Control’

Accordingly, the government of individuals and states through their own aspiration is attached to a certain idea of freedom in relation to a ‘polity of normality’ where conduct is shaped through a differentiation between desired and undesired behaviour (Ibid.). As a consequence, entities become individualized and subjectified within a dialectic relation between themselves and a collectivized identity of the normal that too exist in a relational, differentiating dialectic between itself and other collective identifications of the normal. And it is in this space between the part and the whole that liberal governmental practices are employed to influence or govern both. Hence, the ‘diagram of rule’ of liberalism seeks at one and the same time; “to limit the scope of political authority, and to exercise vigilance over it” (Ibid.: 49), by “delimiting certain ‘natural’ spheres” (Ibid.). Whose ‘self-organizing capacities’ nevertheless become absolutely vital for this type of government.

Within this relation of ‘autonomous’ or often only quasi-autonomous entities¹³ a complex process exists of what Rose (Ibid., referring Latour: 48) terms ‘translation’. Hence, processes of translation are especially imperative within liberal modes of government, which also enforce the role of assessments, in general. As follows, together with the rise of neoliberalism a new kind of ‘rationality of governance’ has occurred, which Power has termed an ‘audit society’. This “exemplifies both literally and metaphorically a number of monitoring and control practices” (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009: 256) that has moved from being fairly sector-specific instruments into critical tools for ‘governing at a distance’ (Rose 1999). And, it is as well by the means of the audit practices implied in the GAs that UNDP and WB seek to ‘govern at a distance’.

Hence with the possibility of various forms of audits as “control of control” (Ibid., referring Power: 154), the somewhat opposing liberal value of so-called ‘independent actors and authorities’ that need to be governed, is not necessarily a paradox, since a more indirect government is made possible through processes of ‘translation’. So, in this way, audit rather creates ‘patterns of accountability’ than “hold persons to account” (Ibid.: 154). Likewise, accountability is instead created to a certain set of norms, which the GAs by UNDP and WB are part of, namely “transparency, observability, standardization and the like” (Ibid.: 154). Moreover, it is implicit in the term ‘translation’

¹³ E.g. experts, individuals and organizations etc. interact and influence each other.

that it is a disjointed process or an “imperfect mechanism” (Ibid.: 51), which inherit both the force, but as well the potential and biggest risk of a liberalistic governance, accordingly;

Liberal government, dependent as it is upon the orchestration of the actions of independent entities, is inherently risky – and no more so than in its reliance upon those who are able to mobilize around the power to speak the truth and the capacity to act knowledgeably upon conduct (Ibid.).

Likewise, the various techniques of audit become all the more important for UNDP and WB to control ‘who can speak and according to what criteria’.

3.3 The Cartographic Elements of Liberal Governance

As emphasised, neoliberalism constitutes a ‘spatialization of power’ within new dimensions, where the construction of calculable spaces leads to new kinds of calculable spaces. As mentioned above, the role of statistics has attained a growing value from the 19th century and onwards, and has become one of the most important features in the equation between knowledge and government within liberalism. To govern, it is necessary to render the object of government visible, where Rose (Ibid.) makes a metaphor with cartography, where certain things are illuminated and others not. This is particularly relevant for the present study because GAs, as well due to time- and costs constraints, only can ‘illuminate’ certain aspects, whereas other aspects that may be more substantial recede into the background.

Moreover, by rendering as many aspects technical, as possible, these also become governmental (Ibid.: 51), where a technology ‘inculcate a form of life’ (Ibid.: 52) by shaping either certain practical or mental forms of human conduct through heterogeneous assemblages. Hence, Rose (Ibid.) terms the technologies of government, human technologies. These are not realizations of a single or simple programme or intention, but reversely they are traversed by the will to govern (Ibid.: 52-53).

However, cf. chapter two, it is important again to mention that a technology not necessarily should be deemed the opposite of freedom rather “what we have come to understand as our freedom is the mobile outcome of a multitude of human technologies” (Ibid.: 55).

Consequently, a special kind of knowledge and expertise is produced with the kinds of numerical

and statistical examination, illumination and technicization proposed by UNDP and WB, which likewise are part of an increased international “scientization of social activity” (Rosga & Satterthwaite, referring Schofer, 2009: 283). Where a technical know-how has come to be regarded as the most central value¹⁴ of professional expertise, which can be seen as a symptom of “the universalising principles of the neoliberal agenda” (Kothari 2005: 430).

Representations through Statistics & Inscription Devices

So, by means of statistics, the role of numbers has become central when representing and thereby governing societies within liberalism. Where a variety of decisions in general are based on this representation with its special form of accompanying legitimization. In this way, numbers actually constitute the reality which they represent, making them interdependent to politics (Rose 1999; Sætnan et al. 2011). However, as much as numbers constitute political decisions, they also depoliticise them through spirals “of ‘technicization of politics’” (Rose 1999: 199). This double function of numbers also applies in the cases of this study, where numerical indicators as much as they constitute the political also depoliticise it.

Yet, obviously a governance by numbers, and in general, is not only a process which disables certain things, but as well enables these, since particular objectifications are made possible that then produces new kinds of perceptions. Thus, the term ‘technical irrationalism’ describes how worlds become constructed by the means of ideas together with material procedures (Ibid.). Hence, “[t]hought, that is to say, becomes real by harnessing itself to a practice of inscription¹⁵, calculation and action” (Ibid.: 32). Where the concept of ‘inscription’ or ‘inscription devices’ cover both physical objects as papers (political, technical etc.), techniques or procedures and processes to capture the various ‘objects’ that function as kinds of ‘representations’ (Ibid.: 49). As follows, inscriptions are both material and ideational and these are often used to validate particular conceptions in that they help ‘symbolising’ otherwise messy phenomena that are inescapably, based as much on subjective judgements as on so-called ‘hard facts’. Hence, UNDP and WB’s depictions of GAs can be seen as producing a ‘technical irrationalism’ enforced by the ‘inscription devices’ of indicators.

Black-boxing & Uncertainty Absorption

Nonetheless, through inscription devices, the often ambiguous judgements and conclusions that

¹⁴ Instead of other values as in-depth geographical, cultural and linguistic etc. knowledge (Kothari 2005).

¹⁵ ‘Inscription’ is a concept Rose borrows, but applies differently, from Latour (Rose 1999: 36).

went before their constructions become veiled. Where, 'governance at a distance' becomes possible through these numerous kinds of inscriptions of various types of dispersed data and information that can be more and less easily collected, compared and archived within centres of government (Ibid.; Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009; Davis et al. 2010). However, by applying inscription devices and numbers as representations of complex phenomena, where UNDP and WB's indicators are aimed at covering a wide array of complex topics, a transformation and editing occurs that as well alters the phenomenon being measured, in which its complexity is reduced when it is converted into an indicator. Hence by detaching the "assumptions, discretion and ambiguity" (Davis et al. 2010: 10) that went before this transformation, there is a risk of an 'uncertainty absorption' taking place, in which "inferences are drawn from a body of evidence, and the inferences instead of the evidence itself, are then communicated" (Ibid., quoting Espeland & Stevens: 10), which also make inscriptions as indicators appear more robust than these actually are.

This uncertainty absorption often takes place within 'hierarchical chains of command' with that side effect of increasing the authority of the inscriptions the more that these move up the ladder and more critically, potentially distort the basis on which important decisions are made (Ibid.). Hence the power of the 'single figure' shall not be understated (Rose: 1999). Furthermore, once inscription devices such as indicators have existed for some time, these can gain a wider public acceptance, even though they are still contested within e.g. academia (Davis et al. 2010). If these are used and dispersed within e.g. the media and between organisations this further increase their "credibility and legitimacy" (Ibid.: 26). As will be shown in this study, this can lead to that they become new standards for the evaluation of other inscription devices.

Thus, over time and if it becomes "integrated into institutional life" (Best 2013: 18) an idea or practice can attain such a status that it becomes 'black-boxed' (Ibid.; Rose 1999), meaning that it is regarded as an almost incontestable kind of universal truth or norm. In this study, it will be shown how the connection between evidence-based data and governance has become a 'black-boxed' idea. Yet, it is possible to challenge the truth and legitimacy of black-boxed inscriptions, but this demands "a more fundamental debate about the metrics of success and failure - to unsettle them" (Best 2013: 18). Subsequently, then expertise repeatedly become reduced to being merely

about technical issues, the risk arises of what should be, essential political disputes become overshadowed by technical disputes about methods (Rose 1999). Hence, this risk also becomes accentuated in the cases of this study, with UNDP and WB's strong reliance on the results of the GAs. Yet, this editing capacity of description devices as indicators indeed also make them "attractive to decision makers and designers of decision making processes because processes that rely on indicators can be presented as efficient, consistent, transparent, scientific, and impartial" (Davis et al. 2010, referring Porter: 21). This also applies to UNDP and its target audience and not least WB, where it in general and in these cases, is assumed that the data and methods used to construct indicators is easy to communicate and accessible, and even if confidential data is disregarded, "users may well not delve into the complexities and limitations" of the underlying data (Ibid.: 23). In this way standards¹⁶ are created through mechanisms and technologies that are manufactured as neutral, however inscription devices such as indicators are first of all not neutral and what is more they tend to "have embedded within them, or are placeholders for, a much more far-reaching theory—which some might call an 'ideology'" as Davis et al. (Ibid.: 11) stress.

However, for that very reason, as "inscriptions (...) are often used to support a specific conception of appropriate practice. Such inscriptions are therefore the subject of contestation and negotiation among key actors both while they are being developed and as they are being put into practice" (Best 2013: 18). Nonetheless, this may divert the focus of contestation to concentrate more on the validity of the inscriptions than the political problematizations which these cover. Of course it is important to discuss the validity of the grounds on which decisions are being made and not least governance is exerted, but it is as important to distinguish between the different foci; of discussions of methods and of discussions of the implicit political assumptions and narratives. As follows, if standards constructed by experts are used more and less uncritical in governance there is the threat of a depoliticization and technicalization taken place, which can lead to governance without responsibility (Rosga & Satterthwaite referring Jacobsson, 2009: 302).

Moreover, Power points out, in relation to the (e.g. political) advantages of inscription devices of audits, that this kind of practice enables the possibility of making general conclusions based on a

¹⁶ Indicators function as standard-setting instruments (Davis et al. 2010: 4).

limited examination. Thus, the auditor can rely on second order 'chains of opinions', with a distance to the judgments of 'first order' by one expert. However audits are as well limited by the possible quantifiability of the phenomena sought audited together with restraining economic pressures, which both attracts and constrains the application of these (Ibid., quoting Power: 282).

When thoughts are made technical, limits are also made in relation to "the conceptual and practical tools" (Rose 1999: 22) derived. As, not only rankings, but the results of measurements in general, have come to gain an increasing significance both within the internal and external communities of states, 'tunnelling views' may be created, where what was initially meant as objects of measurements transfer into targets of e.g. governments that seek to achieve better results of the measurements by concentrating on approving actively on these as targets (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009: 285-86). This may cause distorted and unwarranted as unsuitable outcomes as well as discrepancies between what is measured on and what i.a. target populations affected by the measurements consider valuable and not least substantial improvements. Hence, 'expectations gaps' may occur between the results of measurements and the actual difference made (Ibid.). Additionally, Rosga and Satterthwaite (Ibid., emphasis in original: 285) draw attention to the tendency of how the value of measurements by indicators decreases proportionally with the length of their existence, which concern "all measurement mechanisms that are tied to the goal of *improvement*". This applies, precisely because of the reciprocal relation between audits and what is audited, in which silent battles take place over the balance between compliance and autonomy (Ibid., quoting Power).

4. Empirical Framework

In this short chapter the organisational context of the two programmes by UNDP and WB will be briefly outlined before these will be put into closer scrutiny in the analysis. The two programmes are highly prioritised within the two organisations. In relation to this, they are also a part of a greater, all-encompassing discursive field within, across and outside of the organisations that supports the substantive and practical elements of them.

4.1 The Organizational Context of UNDP's Programme

UNDP is an independent programme under the umbrella of the United Nations (UN), officially established in 1965 by the UN's General Assembly. As the largest development organisation of the UN, it is at the heart of its development system, where it functions as UN's global development network (UNDP 2013e; DFID 2011). It is governed by an Executive Board of 36 UN member states that serve on a rotational three-year basis. Its Administrator, an Under Secretary General (USG) that reports to the UN Secretary General is currently, Helen Clark (DFID 2011). According to DFID (Ibid.: 1) UNDP spends over \$5 billion a year (\$1.1 billion in core and \$3.9 billion in non-core funding) through 5 regional and 166 country offices. It is funded entirely from voluntary contributions, which puts UNDP under pressure to deliver 'tangible results', as it states;

UNDP considers efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency as key for trusted development partnerships. Governments rightly emphasize their responsibility to make sure that the money of tax payers is well spent, adds real value and contributes to tangible results (Ibid.: 1-2).

UNDP's work is focused on four main areas. This study's subject falls within the second area; Democratic Governance, which is a 'cornerstone' of UNDP's work (UNDP 2012c). Where "UNDP is the only UN development agency with a specific mandate to promote democratic governance" (UNDP 2012b). This area categorizes as its largest single area of investment with a total spending of \$1.50 billion in 2011 (UNDP 2012c). Accordingly, UNDP is one of the world's largest providers of governance assistance.

Its 'Global Programme on Governance Assessments' is managed by the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre (OGC), which was established in 2002 with the aim of positioning UNDP "as a champion of

democratic governance, both as an end in itself, and as a means to achieve the Millennium Development Goals” (UNDP 2013d). OGC is an “integral part of the Democratic Governance Group in UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy (BDP)” (Ibid.). It is funded by the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (UNDP 2013b). OGC supports countries in conducting their own democratic governance assessments and “provides support to the practical and operational work of UNDP in assisting developing countries in creating more effective forms of governance” (OGF 2013). It works within two main areas, which as well divides the centre in two units, the Governance Assessment (GA) unit and the Analysis and Learning unit (Ibid.). Hence the Global Programme of Governance Assessments is one of the main priorities of UNDP OGC.

4.2 The Organizational Context of WB's Approach 2011-2020

WB was originally a single institution, namely the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), founded at the Bretton Woods summit in 1944, today it is comprised of a closely associated group of five development institutions. Together with IBRD the International Development Association constitute the main institutions of the bank (WB 2013h; WB 2013a; WB 2013e). The remaining three autonomous members are the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. The WB group is “like a cooperative, made up of 188 member countries” (WB 2013b), in which these ‘shareholders’ are represented by a Board of Governors. Moreover, the President of WB has the overall management responsibility, which is presently, Jim Yong Kim.

The WB Group has two goals that are aligned with the MDGs and the ‘Post-2015 Agenda’, which shall guide its strategy and its aim of being a “Solutions Bank” (WB 2013: 9). The first goal is to ‘end extreme poverty’¹⁷, which according to WB “will not be possible without long-term structural changes in many low-income countries” (Ibid.: 14). Following this, the second goal of WB is to ‘promote shared prosperity’¹⁸. Where, WB stresses, “[t]he government has a key role in creating the overall environment for economic growth and shared prosperity, including by improving com-

¹⁷ With the extreme poverty rate of no more than 3 percent in 2030 (WB 2013: 11).

¹⁸ To achieve this, WB will monitor progress “using the income growth of the bottom 40 percent of a nation’s population” (Ibid.: 20).

petitiveness, promoting a favorable investment climate, and encouraging innovation” (Ibid.: 26). Making it clear that it is a special kind of ‘shared prosperity’ that WB encourages.

WB emphasises, that it is ‘a major player’ (WB 2012a) and “by far, the largest traditional donor provider of funds to support public sector management (...). Since 1995, the World Bank has approved over 1,500 lending projects with significant public sector components” (WB 2012d: 5). PSM reforms are “integral to all its work” (WB 2012a: 4) and WB commits “some US\$3,5 Billion to this area of work each year” (Ibid.).

It is in this context that the new PSM approach for 2011-2020 “has emerged from consultations with a broad range of [stakeholders]” (WB 2011: 3). The approach has been agreed by the Public Sector & Governance Board and it is anchored in the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management network (WB 2013f; WB 2013g).

5. Analysis

The following analysis consists of three parts; two individual analyses of UNDP and WB's cases, together with a final comparative analytical discussion of the two cases held against each other and against the context they form part of and also represent.

5.1 UNDP's Problematizations, Representations & Interventions

In this section, UNDP's 'Global Programme on Capacity Development for Democratic Governance Assessments and Measurements' will be analysed. Initially, an extract of UNDP's problematizations of the context of its programme will be outlined and analysed, followed by its general rationalities and representations, which altogether lay the ground for its programme of intervention that is presented as a solution to its problematizations.

5.1.1 UNDP's Problematizations

In the following it will appear; how UNDP is concerned about an increasing competition within the field of international development that influences the 'states of domination' (Dean 2007: 9) of the until recently quite fixed power relations between the traditional donors and aid recipients. This has enabled the former to govern the latter through a variety of liberal means of power.

Increasing Competition

In one of its recent discussion papers UNDP (2011b) outlines a variety of diverse trends and challenges as it conceives it in relation to democratic governance (DG). Hence, the first section on "Key Trends in the external environment" commences with the paragraph; "1.1 Growing power of the 'South' and new constellations of power-holders" (Ibid.: 4). Even though UNDP acknowledges that the full development impacts of the international shifts in power relations are yet not clear, it is however quite clear for UNDP that the competition has increased within this field. Where the relative new powerful players, primarily China and India together with Brazil, Russia and South Africa (the BRICS countries) want to participate more actively in the arena of global governance. UNDP supports this observation by referring to the prediction by OECD that the GDP of non-OECD economies probably will exceed that of OECD countries by 2015 (Ibid.). This concerns UNDP both in relation to the un-conditional growing aid by these countries and also in relation to the possibility that the now benefitting low-income countries may "become the battleground in a fight for resources and political influence between the old powers and the new" (Ibid.). Yet, this illustrates two important things; first of all that aid is an important authoritarian instrument of the traditional

donors, and moreover that this is not only provided just for the sake of the aid-recipients, but also for the sake of the providers. Likewise, UNDP recognises that the new constellations of global powers will decrease the influence of the otherwise formerly powerful instrument of aid by the traditional donors to “pursue economic and political conditionality, promote human rights and democracy issues” (Ibid.). Again, illustrating how power is deployed in quite an authoritarian manner by these actors. Additionally, UNDP notices that this scenario combined with other factors will “enable many governments to deflect pressure for reform from the international community and from their own citizens” (Ibid.: 5). Though UNDP acknowledges that it is a debated issue, it nevertheless becomes clear what a central role aid plays in concordance with an external pressure for national reforms, that assists the softer liberal modes of power through governance assessments (GAs).

Traditional Donor’s Tightened Budgets

In the next paragraph; “1.2 Financial volatility in the context of continued economic globalization”, UNDP points out, “[w]hile ‘emerging donors’ are growing in influence, many traditional donors are recoiling from the global financial crisis” (Ibid.). UNDP further predicts that since the traditional donors were hit hard by the financial crisis, “in the immediate future there will inevitably be an even greater emphasis on measuring and demonstrating results, especially as donors tighten their belts and seek to fund proven interventions under pressure from their own taxpayers in difficult economic circumstances” (Ibid.: 20). This illustrates the double-edged function of measurements that are used both as signaling devices in relation to showing how costs are reduced and effective results are created; however, simultaneously these are supposed to enhance the quality of governance, which may not necessarily coincide. Hence, UNDP notes, that this increasing need by the traditional donors for managerial results create some contradictions both between the time-horizon of the results in the often quite long processes of DG and in terms of the potential discrepancy between external and internal pressures for reforms.

Moreover, UNDP mentions that in relation to the HLFs the traditional donors “are trying to strengthen their metrics, results measurement and impact evaluation systems” (Ibid.). Thus, within the international donor community, there exists a connection between aid effectiveness in terms of increased use of ‘metrics’ and ‘results measurement’ (ibid.) and on the other hand national ownership, which also calls the actual role of the latter into question. Subsequently,

according to UNDP, the tightened budgets of the OECD-DAC countries have also led to an increased demand for ‘mid-range theories of change’ that shall point out “what types of interventions might be successful in what types of environment” (ibid.). This also illustrates the increased cautiousness of the traditional donors.

Complex Challenges

The paragraph; “2.2 Challenges to the broad DG agenda” (ibid.: 18) concerns the challenge of, “[d]emocratic form without function” (ibid.), where UNDP states; “is now commonplace to acknowledge the widespread ‘democratic deficits’ in many countries, despite the spread of democratic institutions” (ibid.). This shows the complexity involved with these ‘obstacles and difficulties’ that lay the ground for UNDP’s problematizations, which calls the solution of GAs into question.

It becomes clear, through this extract of UNDP’s problematizations that the ‘metrics and measurements’ within the field of development policies comprise a double-role. Where these are not only portrayed as genuinely needed by the traditional donors as developing countries, though for very different reasons, they are also supported by more authoritarian means of power by the former. It also becomes clear that there is an increasing competition within this field that threatens the power of the traditional donors, which may play a role for their increasing use of GAs.

5.1.2 UNDP’s Rationalities & Representations

This part concerns UNDP’s rationalities and representations, which lay the ground for its programme of democratic governance assessments (DGAs) that responds to its problematizations.

Black-boxed Assumption

Although UNDP (ibid.: 20) acknowledges that “there remain significant challenges in measuring and demonstrating results”, it states; “[g]ood governance needs good data” (UNDP 2011a: 1). This statement corresponds well with current international discourses (cf. the aim of making governance one of the post-2015 goals with associated metrics; OECD 2005/2008, 2011 etc.) and it has become ‘black-boxed’ in the manner that it is neither questioned openly nor discussed within the respective dominating international forums. Likewise, UNDP emphasises that GAs “are a mechanism to strengthen democracy” (UNDP 2011a: 1), where this purpose illustrates its faith in the ‘mechanism’ of GA.

Political Aspects

Cf. the first shift (i) of Hydén et al. (2011), UNDP acknowledges; “that democratic governance work is fundamentally political, as well as technical” (2011b: 24) in which its technical part shall be regarded simply as a tool “to be used as part of broader country-specific programs to affect the type of change that we wish to see” (Ibid.).

Hence, UNDP regards GA as “an essential tool in diagnosing governance deficits, and as such, governments, CSO’s and donors have invested in developing and executing governance assessments in nearly all countries that receive development aid” (UNDP 2013a). Again, it is essential noticing that GA accordingly, is a tool for UNDP to further its own democratic agenda, which is utilised in connection with aid.

National Ownership

In accordance with the second shift (ii) of Hydén et al. (2011), UNDP stresses the need for DG to be internally driven “in order to be successful and sustainable over time” (UNDP 2011b: 19). And as it further states; “[a] country’s engagement in the data collection process, analysis of results and ongoing monitoring add value to the assessment far beyond its findings” (UNDP 2011a: 1). In regard to the ‘demand for country-level data’, UNDP further emphasises;

Interest has grown dramatically in the past five years among donors, international organizations and national governments. Some governments desire to serve their citizens or to respond with accurate data to indexes that rank and ‘shame’ countries. Changes in donor policies are increasing the need for country-level data to evaluate governance performance (Ibid.).

Making it clear, that a great part of what could be seen as a ‘tightened control’ with calls for more data to measure and evaluate governance performance is external, coming from donors and international organisations. Where the demand from developing countries for country-level data, also is about seizing a possibility to respond to and correct external indexes. This pattern will also be illustrated in the WB analysis.

All in all, it becomes clear, that GAs are supposed to cover some quite different purposes, viz. measurable results for purposes of justification by donors, UNDP’s political agendas and finally the

purpose of national ownership, which according to UNDP is more important than the findings of the GA. Though these different purposes may seem potentially contradictory, cf. chapter three, this kind of contradiction can be traced back to the liberal kind of 'governance at a distance', where a certain kind of freedom is emphasised according to certain norms of observability, accountability and transparency etc. (Rose 1999) and where processes of translation, which GA is a tool for, function as a 'neutral' way of 'control of control'.

5.1.3 Intervention: The Global Programme on DGAs

In this part, the main components of UNDP's programme will be analysed. UNDP is supporting 16 nationally owned assessment projects with financial and technical assistance; however, this study will only focus on the programme as a whole, what it aims at achieving and how it recommends applying GA.

Main Purposes of the Programme

UNDP emphasises that GA "serves many purposes" (UNDP 2011a: 1). While, it is primarily employed to enhance a country's measuring and monitoring capacity towards democratic governance, UNDP further stresses that it also increases the understanding of "the quality of governance" (Ibid.).

However, this study questions this black-boxed assumption that assessments necessarily enhances the understanding of governance, in which the calls for cost-efficiency and effectiveness as 'tangible results' along with an enhanced understanding not necessarily are solved by the means of the same assessments, but can pull in opposite directions as mentioned in the theoretical framework, cf. uncertainty absorptions. In other words, effectiveness can be an outcome of a more 'reduced' understanding and likewise, a more in-depth and complex understanding, can lead to less, at least measurable, effectiveness.

Furthermore, UNDP claims, that "[n]ational indicators developed by the country reveal, through statistical analysis, where problems may need to be addressed (...). The process also can provide opportunities for the poor to voice their concerns" (Ibid.). However, as mentioned in chapter three, assessments may also conceal a variety of measureable as well as non-measurable factors as 'revealing' these, not to mention the possibility of 'expectations gaps' that may occur between the results of the audits and the audited. This also concerns the latter point, in regard to the actual

opportunities of the poor ‘to voice their concerns’.

Three Principles

Three strategic principles underlie UNDP’s programme, viz. national ownership, capacity development and harmonization (in concordance with OECD 2005/2008; 2011). Accordingly, UNDP emphasises that it is “important to support multi-stakeholder approaches, political settlements and consensus-building in order to broaden ownership of democratic reform” (Danielsen & Woodhatch 2012: 18). However, noteworthy it also acknowledges, “it should be recognized that such broad ownership cannot be assumed in advance, but may be considered a positive outcome of a governance assessment process” (Ibid.). An interesting point, in that ‘broad national ownership’, other places, is put forward as a main purpose of the programme. In regard to the second principle; capacity development, it is notable that it is the development of the capacities of a special view that is promoted, which represents one kind of truth encompassing particular representations and rationalities, which nevertheless limits the scope of other rationalities. The last principle, harmonization “addresses alignment with national development plans and related instruments such as the PRSPs¹⁹, MDG progress reports, local development plans or other political commitments” (UNDP 2011a: 2). However, this principle also limits the room for manoeuvre considerably by the actors involved in the DGA.

Finally, it should be mentioned that UNDP does not offer any new or particular assessment tools as WB, but instead assistance to how existing tools can be utilized and new developed (OGC 2007; GAP 2013a).

The ‘How to’ for DGAs

The following will present a more detailed analysis, with a focus on potential contradictions within UNDP’s programme, where the information is drawn primarily from the ‘how to’ pages of GAP. A portal with the ‘black-boxed’ slogan; “If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it” (UNDP 2011a), which indeed presents GA as a straightforward issue.

The GAP ‘how to’ pages commence with answering two highly relevant questions concerning UNDP’s programme. The first; “Why conduct a country-led governance assessment?” (GAP 2013o) is answered by referring to DGA as providing “a critical accountability mechanism” (Ibid.), which is

¹⁹ PRSPs by IMF and WB have been criticised by L. Whitfield (2008: 84-87) and Hydén et al. (2011: 76) among others.

one of UNDP's main purposes, where the produced data is supposed to both "reflect and address citizens' concerns" (ibid.). As will be shown, this may sound easier than it is, likewise it is important to remember that 'broad national ownership' is regarded only as a potential outcome and finally, cf. chapter three, the mechanism of DGAs rather create 'patterns of accountability' (Rose 1999) than hold anybody to account. Furthermore, UNDP mentions the possibility that DGAs may "offer a superior evidence base for national decision making" (GAP 2013o). However, this kind of inscription device may also create uncertainty absorptions as expectations gaps. Additionally, as a response to its problematizations, UNDP states;

Although the number of global and regional databases on governance is growing, at country level the need is acute to develop national governance indicators and databases. These would enable citizens and organizations, state and non-state actors, and external development partners to have access to and use nationally generated data that reflect the country's specific governance priorities and challenges (ibid.).

As has already been mentioned, this 'acute need' might also signify the likewise 'increasing need' for the traditional donors to demonstrate results, which the developing countries consequently are pleasing, which will be mentioned even more directly in the WB case.

Secondly, UNDP asks; "What is a country-led governance assessment?" (ibid.). In answering this, UNDP assumes that the national actors "are invested in the assessment, believe in its legitimacy and hold it to be relevant" (ibid.). However, this can also be seen as an attempt of UNDP to discipline these actors through a normalisation towards certain objectives, where it is important to remember the role of aid in relation to the employment of GAs. Additionally, though UNDP recommends a multi-stakeholder approach, claiming that "[n]o single actor can be said to represent 'the country'" (ibid.). Nevertheless, it also stresses the importance of the engagement of some key stakeholders, arguing that it is "crucial that the questions and assumptions behind the measurement reflect, to the greatest extent possible, those of major stakeholders, the people and policy-makers (GAP 2013q). Where 'the people' indeed is the most vaguely defined part. In regard to the 'crucial' inclusion of 'major stakeholders', UNDP recommends using a 'stakeholder analysis' to "form a useful basis for strategizing about how to obtain buy-in from key actors" (GAP 2013aa).

This makes it clear that the role of strategy plays quite an important role in UNDP's approach to GA even though GAs are represented as much needed and genuinely wanted by developing countries.

UNDP emphasises the importance of making GA results locally owned otherwise "they will likely be shelved and will not feed into policymaking processes" (GAP 2013o), which is an interesting point, especially when held against WB's donor driven GAs. Likewise, in contrast to WB, UNDP also stresses the importance of a "[l]ocal engagement in all stages of the assessment" (Ibid.).

However, it is noticeable then that while UNDP strongly emphasises the importance of nationally owned and nationally processed GA frameworks and indicators, it nevertheless points out many advantages of using or adapting a pre-fabricated external framework, which will be illustrated in the following.

Dilemma between the Particular & General

In regard to developing or choosing a national 'self-assessment framework', UNDP mentions three options. The first concerns utilising a framework that has been applied in other countries (GAP 2013ad). According to UNDP, a prefabricated framework has the advantage of having "been piloted and tested" (Ibid.) with the "appeal of governance indicators that are already recognized and viewed as legitimate in an international context" (GAP 2013h). Yet, cf. chapter three, this can also be seen as being part of a normalising dialectic. Furthermore, UNDP regards national studies or international frameworks as benefitting from time or space comparisons, which make these more effective at a lower cost. Notable, this is a very different rationale than UNDP's argument for GAs as creating an enhanced national understanding and ownership. However, despite its advantages in terms of effectiveness and costs, a prefabricated framework indeed also limits the operational space immensely, where an actual national ownership can be seriously questioned.

Hence, UNDP acknowledges that the generalizability of existing frameworks with no particularity to specific contexts may be a disadvantage, where the most serious consequence accordingly, is that "the framework may not be based on concepts and attributes of governance shared by national stakeholders" (GAP 2013ad) which can lead to "disengaged stakeholders and assessment findings that are too generic to be useful for designing reforms" (GAP 2013h). Following this, the GAs may "not reflect the most pressing governance challenges and governance deficits in a partic-

ular country; and may not be viewed as legitimate by the wider public” (GAP 2013ad). In other words, uncertainty absorptions and expectations gaps may occur, cf. chapter three, issues that also relate to the WB case.

As a solution to these potential disadvantages, UNDP’s second option, involves the contextualisation of a framework to a particular country. Yet, it is noticeable that it does not point out any disadvantages to this option, which may suffer from the same issues mentioned above, since creating genuine ownership probably demands more than a ‘contextualisation’.

Following this, the third option regards developing a framework; “tailor-made for a country” (GAP 2013h). In this relation, UNDP has some rather contradictory points in regard to its overall statements. As it states;

[T]he disadvantage with a tailor-made framework is that cross-country comparison or discernment of trends may be difficult. This can be modified by including some key comparative indicators. Developing a new framework also may be more resource-intensive in order to arrive at an operational framework that can be effectively applied, especially in terms of reaching agreement on the key dimensions of governance and its attributes by national stakeholder groups (GAP 2013ad).

Hence, even though UNDP emphasises numerous of places that it supports the development of nationally-owned DGAs; however, it still adheres to cross-country comparisons and prefabricated frameworks. And even more critically, it is noticeable that UNDP regards the potential conflicts of ‘reaching agreement’ involved in this process of DGAs, as a disadvantage.

Operationalizing Normative Principles of DG

As UNDP states, “[o]nce a decision has been made to assess democratic governance, operationalizing normative principles of democratic governance in a deductive or top-down manner is a three-step process” (GAP 2013ac). However, this may not be so clear, as it sounds, where the terms; ‘deductive and top-down’ seem odd in relation to UNDP’s overall representation of DGAs. Furthermore this ‘top-down’ approach also diverges UNDP from the fifth shift (v) of Hydén et al. (2011).

According to UNDP, the first task is to “[d]efine the concept of “democratic governance”” (GAP 2013ac), this should be done through the overall framework chosen, as it “constitute the norma-

tive basis against which governance performance will be measured. Ideally, the framework will be straightforward” (Ibid.). Yet, if the framework is not ‘straightforward’, UNDP recommends to ‘unpack’ its principles “to secure transparency” (Ibid.). Following this, UNDP advises to choose principles and attributes that are “based on conventional understandings of the meaning of democratic governance” (Ibid.), suggesting the frameworks of ‘International IDEA Citizen Assessment of Democracy’ and the ‘World Governance Assessment’ by the UK think tank, ODI. However, it is noticeable that UNDP suggests the usage of ‘western liberal-democratic’ understandings of DG as constituting the grounds for national guidelines, which can be seen as an attempt to normalize a particular ‘regime of truth’, and also as a mechanism for establishing what Rose (1999) terms, ‘the control of control’ rather than a genuine opportunity for self-government and autonomy.

The second task regards selecting the principles and attributes that often “form the basis for aggregate indicators” (GAP 2013ac). Where UNDP states “[t]he task of defining principles of democratic governance amounts to specifying the meaning of the concept. The result will affect the entire process of data generation and provide the anchor for all subsequent decisions” (Ibid.). However, though UNDP emphasises the importance of ‘specifying the meaning of the concept’ (Ibid.) it offers some very broad examples, accordingly; “Inclusive participation, Responsiveness, Representativeness, Accountability, Transparency, Equity, Efficiency, Integrity, Solidarity, Fairness, Decency, Human rights” (Ibid.). These do not necessarily bring much clarity to the matters, as they are all concepts that in themselves need to be specified.

Finally, the third step regards selecting indicators to operationalise the attributes, which UNDP acknowledges is a ‘challenging task’ with ‘many difficulties’ (Ibid.).

Governance Indicators as Guidelines

UNDP notes that the line between “what constitutes a governance indicator and what constitutes governance data is often fluid” (GAP 2013e). However, opposite to the broad concept of data which, “may include individual facts, narratives, statistics, visual or audio materials, or items of information that do not readily point to conditions or trends” (Ibid.), governance indicators do this together with providing “descriptive or analytical information” (GAP 2013f). UNDP further describes these as measures to point out; “small, manageable and tangible” (Ibid.) aspects of the state of governance “to provide a sense of the bigger picture” (Ibid.), and as it states, these do not

have “to be numeric, although this certainly makes it easier to monitor progress or deterioration” (Ibid.). Hence, UNDP’s preference for numerical indicators and quantitative methods again diverges its approach specifically from the third (iii) and fourth (iv) shifts of Hydén et al. (2011).

According to UNDP, governance indicators “need to fulfil a certain number of criteria to be useful and usable” (GAP 2013ae). Where, the first criterion is about their validity, in that these “measure what they purport to measure” (Ibid.). However, this is not as straightforward as it sounds, since as UNDP acknowledges, even though it recommends choosing; “the most direct indicator that measures exactly the attribute desired, and at the correct level” (Ibid.) it admit that a proxy in many cases is necessary. Clarity is a second criteria, especially relevant for data collectors in regard to measuring definitions and how data are to be identified in actual practice, as UNDP states; “[w]e need to specify exactly what should count and how it should be counted, with the exception of existing standards that are commonly known” (Ibid.). Hence, a special kind of view is proposed, where the act of statistical counting belong within a certain regime of truth; moreover, it is noticeable that the standards that are ‘commonly known’ are not put into question.

Other criteria concern the sensitivity and motivational aspects of the indicators. In regard to the latter criteria indicators shall avoid creating “perverse incentives that can undermine aims” (Ibid.); however, this otherwise quite important point is not elaborated further. Due to a criterion of practicality, indicators should be “affordable, accurate and available” (Ibid.). Where UNDP stresses that those indicators not yet available should be included “only if it is realistic to set up a sustainable mechanism to collect and analyze data on them. Indicators also should be cost-effective in that the costs of measurement should be proportional to the benefits” (Ibid.). However, this criterion of costs, which also dominates the WB case, definitely also limits the scope and outreach of the GA and may create expectations gaps.

UNDP further states; “rarely will just one indicator be sufficient to measure an attribute of governance” (Ibid.), it therefore recommends using ‘multiple outcome indicators’ together with constructing simple causal chains of between input, output and outcome in a basket of indicators. However, besides being difficult to look through, it reminds strikingly much of a ‘logical framework’ thinking, which according to Hydén et al. (2011) is unsuitable when measuring aspects of

governance. The last criterion concerns the ‘objectiveness’ of the indicators, as UNDP points out “anyone reviewing the indicator should reach the same conclusion about progress” (Ibid.). However, as Abrahamsen (2000) stresses, this is if not impossible, then very difficult to ensure.

Though UNDP mentions that outcome- often are preferred to output indicators, since these relate more closely to development goals, it nevertheless recommends selecting the latter, opposite to WB, for three reasons. First, UNDP states, “[o]utcomes are not always fully under the control of the agency that provides them” (GAP 2013ae). Secondly, output, or input- opposite to outcome indicators, “change more rapidly, which provides a more complete snapshot of the current situation” (Ibid.) and finally, “[o]utcome/impact indicators can be more difficult and more costly to collect” (Ibid.). Hence, due to limitations of time and costs, UNDP promotes a more ‘cautious approach’ (Best 2013).

Altogether, there are many criteria, which certainly are not that easy to achieve, as UNDP also acknowledges. Where all these issues may confuse and obscure as much as illuminating matters. Moreover it is clear that it is ‘the art of the possible’ that is aimed at, which is also apparent in the WB case, where a strong focus on costs and time constraints influence the results too.

Data Considerations & Challenges

As UNDP points out, “[d]ata collection is a central activity in assessing governance” (GAP 2013d). Though there are general challenges implied in this, it becomes even “more difficult when measuring sensitive areas like democracy and human rights” (Ibid.), where “specific interests of clients or constituents of the measuring organizations” (Ibid.) may distort the results. It can therefore be questioned if GA is the right tool, at all, to solve UNDP’s purposes for improving on DG.

In regard to making information ‘actionable’, UNDP stresses the importance of disaggregated data (Ibid.), which shall make it possible “to identify vulnerable and marginalized groups” (GAP 2013j). Besides that this is a very resource-demanding task (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009), disaggregated data shall also provide a “greater clarity on the steps that governments can take to improve their scores on an indicator” (GAP 2013j); however, this may instead lead to a ‘tunnelling view’ and expectations gaps, likewise as Strathern stresses, measures that become targets ceases to be good measures (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009).

Evidence-Based Policymaking

One of UNDP's main purposes with its approach to GA is to encourage a culture of EBP, as it declares it in the eight 'Oslo Principle' (Danielsen & Woodhatch 2012: 19) and several places within the 'how to' pages (GAP 2013b; g; i; m; r; t; x; y). According to UNDP, this is "essential for guaranteeing that policies are designed and actions taken to respond to the needs and demands of society, and that they are not based on assumptions or beliefs" (GAP 2013r). However, this is a particular regime of truth that UNDP supports, which is backed by the black-boxed assumption, mentioned above, that dominates the current international discourses, where statistical evidence is used as the 'authority of authority' for all kinds of governance, cf. chapter six.

As UNDP states, "[a] reliable set of governance indicators can help shape more informed decisions, increase awareness on the quality of democratic governance in the country and foster constructive national debate" (GAP 2013b). This exemplifies the importance of statistics in the neoliberal equation between knowledge and government that UNDP promotes and how a particular cartography takes place, when inscription devices as indicators are used to render those objects visible, which are amenable to quantification. UNDP considers GAs to be "relevant to almost all policy-making processes" (GAP 2013q), yet it finds it in particular relevant in "the budget formulation process", which it considers "one of the strongest policymaking tools" (Ibid.). This illustrates the powerful purposes of the tool of GA to shape conduct according to certain norms and values (Rose 1999), though presented as, at least officially, a voluntary option. Furthermore, cf. chapter three, the value of the GA may decrease with the length of its existence.

To foster a culture of EBP, UNDP emphasises the need to strengthen, what it terms; "[c]ountry-specific drivers of demand and supply of governance evidence" (GAP 2013l). In relation to the demand side, UNDP states that this "may include raising basic statistical literacy, raising understanding of issues, making information accessible and allowing for genuine participation in decision making" (GAP 2013y). Besides that these are broad aims, it can be questioned; if the tool of GA with the inscription devices of indicators is the most suitable for this. On the supply-side, UNDP stresses the importance to recognise both non-official as official kinds of data with a robust methodology (Ibid.). However, UNDP also mentions that it is necessary that the indicators and data

sources are “politically acceptable to all key stakeholders” (GAP 2013q), which may limit the supply of these.

UNDP recommends “having a strategic approach to policy development” (ibid.), which involves a joint training of policymakers and analysts in an attempt to match demand with supply, to get these to ‘own’ the GA and to establish a “shared notion of evidence” (ibid.). However, in emphasising collaboration between these two groups, in an attempt to create a stronger buy-in, the GAs also risks losing some of the neutrality, which UNDP also strives for (Du Toit 2012). All in all there seems to be a dilemma between the need for consensus or agreement to generate a national commitment and contestation. Furthermore, UNDP notes that incentives to use GA are necessary for practitioners that need this, as it states; “to use evidence and to do things shown to be effective. This also means not doing things shown to be ineffective or harmful” (ibid.). Again, this illustrates what a central role strategy has in UNDP’s approach to GA and that this tool is supposed to function as a signalling device for effectiveness in different political circumstances.

Finally, UNDP mentions some competing factors to EBP; viz. “[l]obbyists, pressure groups and consultants” (GAP 2013r) as well as “[t]hink tanks, opinion leaders and the media” (ibid.). As it notably states, “[i]t is not that these groups fail to use evidence to promote particular policies, programmes or projects; rather, it is that such evidence is often less systematic and more selective than that used by supporters of evidence-based policy and practice” (ibid.). Hence, it is noticeable that UNDP not only distinguishes between different ranks of evidence, but also ranks the groups dealing with this, which Du Toit (2012: i) terms a “naïve empiricist understanding of the role of evidence”. Nonetheless, external pressures for costs and effectiveness must be said to be dominating factors, which also unavoidably makes UNDP’s understanding of evidence ‘less systematic and more selective’.

A Governance Database

UNDP considers a governance database important to institutionalise a culture of EBP (GAP 2013h), as it believes that it will enhance “transparency and accountability” (ibid.). Yet, this builds on the assumption that a transparent kind of governance automatically will lead to accountable practices (Sætnan et al. 2011: 10); however, as Rose (1999) notes, this may rather lead to ‘patterns of accountability’ (ibid.), where accountability becomes a ‘symbolic technique’ (Best 2013).

A governance database ‘may’ also “strengthen the national evidence base for informing donor assessments and governance analysis” (GAP 2013g) as well as an increased “ability to respond to national, regional and international data requests” (ibid.). Yet, cf. chapter two and three, storing information centrally implies relations of power that enables ‘governance at a distance’ (Rose 1999) between the ‘periphery’ and the ‘center of calculation’, where it is “the flow of information itself which (re)creates this division of the world into center and periphery and gives the center power over the periphery” (Sætnan et al. 2011: 8).

Following this, UNDP acknowledges that there exist some challenges, when developing a governance database; both in relation to the sensitive information of “political and power aspects of governance” (GAP 2013c), which the governance indicators contain and in relation to the challenges of protecting this data as well as “securing the integrity and neutrality of any organization that hosts the database” (ibid.). Hence, though a governance database may function as a good signalling device, it can be questioned if this is suitable for raising the general level of transparency and accountability.

5.1.4 UNDP: Part Conclusion

This analysis of UNDP’s approach has shown that its promotion of GAs indeed serves many purposes. Hence, GA is both used as a signalling device to demonstrate measurable results for UNDP and the traditional donors. Moreover, it is used to further UNDP’s normative and political agendas, which are authoritatively enforced by aid. It is used to promote national ownership, as it is supposed not only to enhance the measuring and monitoring capabilities of developing states, but also their understanding of the quality of governance. Where the latter purpose corresponds with the black-boxed assumption; of the connection between ‘good governance and good data’, which EBP is meant to ensure. All these purposes also respond to UNDP’s problematizations. UNDP’s approach further both confirms and disproves the six shifts of Hydén et al. (2011).

5.2. WB’s Problematizations, Representations & Interventions

In this section, WB’s approach will be analysed. WB discusses many kinds of challenges to Public Sector Management (PSM) reforms, both in general and in particular, which is also reflected in the following. Where the first part, its problematizations mainly concerns general challenges and the

subsequent parts relate to more particular ‘challenges and opportunities’ in relation to WB’s new PSM Approach.

5.2.1 WB’s Problematizations

In the following it will be shown how WB emphasises what a challenging task measuring and assessing PSM is, in contrast to UNDP, which barely mentions this.

A Key Development Challenge

By referring to the latest HLF-4, WB stresses that it is not the only one facing some difficulties with measuring the area of PSM, since, it was “widely recognized that progress in measuring public sector and governance institutions is a key development challenge” (WB 2013e). Hence, it is important noticing that the black-boxed assumption of the importance of measuring governance is not questioned, though WB emphasises that this is a challenge several places (WB 2011: 11). Additionally, WB stresses; “[y]et, how to make the machinery of government work to deliver is a question without an easy answer in many of the World Bank’s client countries” (Blum et al. 2012: 1). Where the term, the ‘machinery of government’ indeed gives a neutral impression that goes well with the bank’s mandate of being technical and a ‘solutions bank’ driven by results. However, this term not only minimizes the complexity it covers, it also functions within a particular regime of truth that comprises a whole normative framework, which will be illustrated.

WB mentions, what it perceives as a ‘significant limitation’ concerning the difficulties of choosing appropriately between the “increasing supply of complex and often high profile indicators” (WB 2013e) that further, according to WB, makes it “difficult to determine which indicators offer the focus and quality necessary to guide reforming governments and donors” (Ibid.). Hence, the liberal mode of governing through audits and inscription devices also function as an obstacle in itself, cf. the HLF’s calls for alignment and harmonization (OECD 2005/2008; 2011). However, in line with these calls, WB’s perceived difficulties are not about, if indicators are the most appropriate means whatsoever, but of how to select and apply these.

Five General Challenges

WB considers PSM as “a distinctively difficult policy area because it must overcome five challenges” (WB 2012d: 4).

Lack of Hard Evidence

WB mentions the first challenge several places, which concerns the insufficient explicit or hard evidence about what matters most or what works in relation to improving public sector performance (ibid.; WB 2012a: 4; Blum et al. 2012: 2). Hence, WB apparently inquires another kind of data than the third and fourth shifts (iii-iv) of Hydén et al. (2011) indicate. Additionally, WB states quite a few places that the “connection between strong PSM and social and economic development is evident to any experienced government official or practitioner—but hard to pin down empirically”²⁰ (Blum et al. 2012: 2-3; WB 2012d: 4; WB 2012a: 4). Illustrating how WB supports the black-boxed assumption between governance and development outcomes. Following this, WB is certain that it holds an “extensive implicit knowledge on GPSM reform, but explicit research is lagging” (WB 2012a: 4). Hence, the assumption of a strong connection between explicit knowledge and governance is illustrated, where it again becomes clear that WB does not follow the presumed third and fourth shifts (iii-iv) of Hydén et al. (2011), instead WB seeks ‘explicit quantifiable theory’ as its ‘authority for authority’.

Uncertainty of Institutional Forms

The second challenge is related to the first, where WB emphasises “that there is significant uncertainty about the institutional forms that are suited for improving public sector performance in a given context” (WB 2012d: 4). Additionally, WB distances itself from what it terms, “simplistic mantras” concerning both the relevance of the private sector and the power of performance-based rewards for the public sector (Ibid.). Likewise WB states that the creation of “best practices and selling them is a business” (Blum et al. 2012: 5; WB 2012d: 6), noting that ‘an entire industry’ transmit the ideas of NPM to developing countries, albeit these have not even been implemented consistently in many OECD countries (Ibid.). Nevertheless, contrary to this, WB remarks elsewhere that the “institutions that have been shown to matter for economic development are largely those that protect the returns to private investment [etc.]” (WB 2012a: 4; Blum et al. 2012: 3). Hence, as will be shown in the following, WB’s new approach is pervaded by different discursive strategies of the second and third wave of GAs, cf. chapter two, which makes its discursive messages quite contradictory.

²⁰ Yet, in a footnote WB notes that the reverse causality might be the case too (Blum et al.: 8).

Changing Behaviours

Thirdly, WB states; “PSM reforms are ultimately about changing the de facto behaviors of agents within the public sector” (Blum et al. 2012: 2), which it considers “challenging” (WB 2012d: 4).

Where it indeed seems as quite a challenge to change the actual behaviours of this huge group with the help of numerical indicators (Sætnan et al. 2011). As Brown et al. (2009: 10) notes “there will be a tendency for those providing the information either to set the target low or to inflate the measure so that performance appears better than it is”. Hence, expectations gaps will most likely occur.

Fundamental Obstacles

Fourthly WB notes; “[e]ven if PSM reforms are implemented in practice, there is no performance gain if other weak links in the chain are more fundamental obstacles” (Blum et al. 2012: 3). Again, WB’s approach is presented as incontestable in that a potential failure is excused with other causes than its PSM reforms (Gisselquist 2012). Additionally, WB acknowledges that though its “project outcome ratings need to be regarded with caution as a measure of reform success” (Blum et al. 2012: 3) these nevertheless confirm the uncertainty connected with PSM reforms (Ibid.). As Blum et al. (Ibid.: 3) stress, this uncertainty by no means belongs to developing countries only, since “a very significant number of PSM reforms introduced in the European Union fail, or at least fail to improve results”. However, though this fact makes it hard to believe that these reforms will succeed in developing countries, when they cannot even succeed in countries with strong administrative capacities (Du Toit 2012), nonetheless this does not lead WB to a questioning of its approach, rather this seems instead to be used as an explanation why future reforms might fail.

Conflicting Interests

Finally, WB’s fifth challenge concerns the potential conflicting interests between demand and supply of governance reforms. Where it mentions several problems; viz. that reforms may meet reluctance from politicians, since these constrain their chances for re-election (Blum et al. 2012), a matter UNDP does not mention. Together with the power imbalance between the beneficiaries and opponents of these, where WB claims that “the “winners” from civil service reforms are typically dispersed citizens, whereas the opponents who fear losing from the reforms may be well-organized public sector unions” (Ibid.). However, this is clearly a very normative interpretation. Following this, WB notes that the “[a]bundant potential rents (...) that political and administrative

elites can directly control make the public sector particularly vulnerable to rent-seeking behavior” (WB 2012d: 5), again a matter, which UNDP does not mention, WB also acknowledges that donors’ assistance for PSM reforms can distort reform incentives, where “reform “championing” may owe more to the need to keep aid flowing and relationships with donors positive, than to any deeper determination to drive change” (ibid.). However, this important point is not further commented, though it questions if GAs by indicators can solve these kinds of problems.

5.2.2 Rationalities & Representations

This part concerns WB’s rationalities and representations, which lay the grounds for its new approach that responds to its problematizations.

Governance Matters for Development Outcomes

WB states several places (ibid.; WB 2012c) that institutional arrangements and the broader governance environment “matter fundamentally for development outcomes” (WB 2013e), which again illustrates how this assumption has become black-boxed.

In answering its own question in relation to PSM, “Why does it matter?” (WB 2012d: 3) WB emphasises that both the size of and economic significance make the public sector “a major contributor to growth and social welfare” (ibid.). Accordingly, WB stresses the importance of understanding, and furthermore improving “the quality and nature of the services it provides” (ibid.). Likewise, it answers its second question, “What is PSM reform?” (ibid.) by describing this as “the art and science of making the public sector machinery work. It is about deliberately changing the interlocking structures and processes within the public sector that define how financial and physical resources and people are deployed and accounted for” (ibid.) Indeed a comprehensive task, within relations of power, though it is presented as being quite technical.

Moreover, with a reference to its widely quoted (ibid.: 3; Blum et al. 2012; WB 2012a) figure²¹ that illustrates ‘the public sector results chain’, in a way that minimizes its complexity, WB writes; “[t]he key questions for PSM reform are: “In order to improve public sector results, how do we need to change the results chain? How do we assess where in the chain efforts should usefully be

²¹ Cf. the front page.

placed and how might those changes best be effected?” (WB 2012d: 4). Hence, again the difficulties are presented as technical and managerial.

Three Strategic Key Roles

WB outlines three strategic key roles it aspires to fulfill in relation to its PSM approach. Where it will “use its large and influential portfolio to obtain the greatest impact” (Ibid.: 5) as ‘a development actor’, with the “overall drive to deliver measurable results” (Ibid.). Secondly, it will as ‘a thought leader and knowledge generator’ produce knowledge “that helps improve the impact of its work and development efforts more generally” (Ibid.). Finally, it aims at being an internal ‘disciplinary integrator’ encouraging ‘integrated solutions’ (Ibid.). Yet, it is still very unclear how WB will solve its ultimate aim of changing the behaviour of public agents with these strategic roles that indeed seem to be more internal than external oriented. WB claims that these roles are connected with several of the challenges that limit its “effectiveness in supporting PSM results through lending in client countries” (Ibid.). Making it clear that not only is its lending used as an authoritative instrument of deploying power, cf. the UNDP analysis, WB is also very internal oriented, that does not fit well fit the second shift (ii) of Hydén et al. (2011).

5.2.3 Intervention: WB’s Approach to PSM (2011-2020)

In this part, the main components of WB’s new approach will be analysed.

Main Purposes of the New Approach

Initially, WB notes that “[p]ublic sector management (PSM) reform is concerned with improving public sector results by changing the way governments work” (WB 2012d: 1), which indeed cannot be stated much clearer, illustrating the quite authoritarian governmental approach of WB. Where, WB stresses that it should “hold itself accountable for delivering more, and better, results” (Ibid.), which over time should be possible to measure in practice (Ibid.). All in all, it is now clear that WB’s focus is, if not equally, then maybe even primarily internal rather than external, where the need to show tangible results and thereby being able to measure and control these plays quite a significant role, which clearly distinguishes it from at least the first, second, third, fourth and fifth shifts (i-v) outlined by Hydén et al. (2011).

WB mentions that its approach is a response to three sets of particular challenges and opportunities that will be outlined below. These are placed within WB's general problematizations outlined above as well as being related to its envisaged new strategic roles.

Three Challenges concerning External & Internal Pressures

WB's first challenge concerns its changing external environment, both in relation to new demands by its clients for "more flexible problem-solving and just-in-time advice" (WB 2012d: 7), and in regard to, what it conceives a "healthy and increasing competitive pressure" (Ibid.: 8). Accordingly, WB notes; though it still "remains the largest single development actor in key PSM areas, donor support for PSM reform has grown dramatically" (Ibid.). In regard to this support WB notes that "the concessional lending from China, enable clients to choose from new sources of finance and, often, less prescriptive approaches to public sector management" (Ibid.: 8-9). Hence, again it becomes clear, how lending has been used as an authoritative means of governance by WB and the traditional donors.

The second challenge is internal and relates both to WB's 'flat budget', which 'dictates' that its approach "is a plan for trade-offs, not for growth. It cannot plan to do more with more – but it has to offer a way forward for doing more with the same" (Ibid.: 9), which is a 'major challenge', as WB acknowledges;

as the "results agenda" permeates the Bank's corporate reporting, pressures for demonstrating results are growing. As PSM institution-building is a long-term agenda it may have less resonance in this results-hungry environment. Part of the challenge for the PSM Approach is therefore to develop medium-term metrics of progress for PSM reform that credibly demonstrate progress towards longer-term institution-building (ibid.).

Hence, it becomes clear that the new approach is constrained both in relation to pressures of time and costs, which definitely limits its scope, though it is supposed to deliver 'more with the same'. Where the proposed 'cautious' solution of 'medium-term metrics' seems to be related more to internal than external pressures (Best 2013).

The third challenge regards the transformation of WB's approach into practice, through a balancing between the external pressures of competition together with the internal pressures for results at no extra costs (ibid.: 7).

Three New Guidelines

The following will present WB's three guidelines that respond to WB's perceived challenges, anticipated opportunities, as well as corresponding to its new strategic roles in addition to being 'resource neutral' (Ibid.: 14).

Agility & Best Fit

As a first solution, WB wants to increase its 'agility' in its operational and analytical work (Ibid.), which is related to its anticipated role as a 'development actor'. WB stresses that agility means a reshaping of its engagement to adjust to its client's needs both in the selection and implementation of PSM projects, which then shall improve the results (Ibid.). Hence, in contrast to the above, this anticipated role illustrates how WB attempts to adjust to the discourses of the third wave that better fits with the second shift (ii) of Hydén et al. (2011). Yet, though WB, in line with the field of development policy in general, has changed its discursive stance, this does not necessarily imply radical changes (Cornwall & Brock 2005), as will be illustrated.

Control of Control

WB regards a continued engagement with its clients as one of its most important responses with agility to the increased competition outlined above. So, through regular reviews e.g. by the 'indicators of the strength of public management systems' (ISPMS), a continued dialogue shall take stock of progress and helping WB to position itself as a "long-term trusted partner" (WB 2012d: 14); however, this could also be seen as a 'control of control'. Yet, WB acknowledges that this "can be costly" (Ibid.) so again it stresses the need for visible results that shall encourage other donors to engage in shared funding.

A Diagnostic Approach

Additionally, WB conceives a 'diagnostic approach' or more specifically, 'a results-focused diagnostic protocol' as an opportunity to respond with agility to its clients need for more flexible solutions. Since it is supposed to discover "where the shoe pinches most in a given context" (WB 2012d: 15; WB 2013d) and then 'pragmatically fix it' (Ibid.), as well as building "agreement with client governments around a convincing diagnostic story and suggested solution, based on empirics" (WB 2013d). This corresponds with UNDP's conception of EBP, which Du Toit (2012) regards as 'naïve empiricism'. In line with this special way of viewing the world, WB suggests using "comparative data, often using indicators (...) and situation-specific information (...) to identify the

most promising entry-points to reform in a specific context” (WB 2012d: 12). Again, cf. the UNDP analysis, it seems contradictory that WB on the one hand emphasises an adjustment to its clients needs and on the other hand employ comparative data.

Best Fit versus Best Practices

WB also claims that it has made a “shift in thinking towards “best fit” in PSM reform” (Ibid.: 6), where it explicitly distances itself from its previous ‘Washington Consensus-style’ of theorizing (Ibid.; Blum et al. 2012). Claiming that, what it terms the ‘historical criticism’ that it should be invested in ‘best practices’ “is much less justified” (WB 2012d: 6). Through its ‘best fit’ approach WB seeks a local engagement to take advantage of this knowledge and to enlarge the “‘reform space’ strategically by engaging closely with a broad array of government, businesses and civil society stakeholders, and other donors” (Ibid.: 16) through ‘evidence-based discussions’. Hence, cf. the UNDP case, WB advocates a special way of framing reality, where local engagement is presented as a strategic means. Yet, in accordance with UNDP, WB cautiously notes; processes of local engagement “are often politically sensitive because they may surface underlying conflicts that have prevented the problem from being solved in the past—and thus require courage and skill to navigate” (Blum et al. 2012: 6). Again, this illustrates WB’s rather semidetached relation to the second shift (ii) of Hydén et al. (2011).

WB further mentions that it aims at focusing on the context instead of the content, where processes shall “uncover the real incentives and interests of the actors involved in conducting PSM reform” (Ibid.: 10; Blum et al.: 5) as well as ensuring “ownership of the reform agenda” (WB 2012d: 10). Yet, again this seems as a contradictory aim, especially in regard to WB’s corporate pressures for results at low costs. Likewise, WB aims at focusing on a ‘functional problem’ rather than a solution; yet, this seems to oppose its overall aim of being a ‘solutions bank’. Moreover, WB notes that identifying a functional problem is an inherently political process, cf. UNDP, that should be ‘carefully managed’ (Ibid.). Therefore, WB recommends its staff to use “available evidence and accepted theory to make the case that a given reform will fix the functional problem” (Ibid.); However, in accordance with the first shift (i) of Hydén et al. (2011), WB again seems rather semidetached, probably because it lacks a clear political mandate, though acting in a highly political field.

However, WB admits that there remains some significant gaps within its 'best fit' approach; yet, it states that it is its client's governments that request 'best practice' solutions as a source of legitimacy, then recognizing; "that they risk losing support, including sometimes from the World Bank, if they do not make their public administrations "look like" [viz. expectations gap] broadly recognized "best practice" standards" (Ibid.: 6). Yet the causality seems a bit odd here; where WB claims that its best practices are requested by its client's governments, despite its rationale reads that the reason why the former requests this is to please the latter. Moreover, WB acknowledges that the assumption that its staff should "start from scratch on every occasion" (ibid.) is unrealistic and finally, it notes that the "lack of a well-developed explicit body of knowledge on "what works" in PSM makes it hard to debunk "best practice" claims"" (ibid.; Blum et al. 2012). So apparently its 'best practice' approach is still alive and kicking, which again diverts it from the second shift (ii) of Hydén et al. (2011).

Scientific Knowledge & Robust Data

As a second solution, in accordance with WB's new role as a 'knowledge generator', it aims at balancing its perceived tacit understanding with "scientific knowledge" (Ibid.: 13), as well as utilizing "its global presence, its established role as a data custodian and its engagement in PSM reform" (Ibid.: 17) as a "unique responsibility and a comparative advantage for providing better data on PSM" (Ibid.). Again it becomes clear that WB's approach is more related to its own strategic objectives than external needs.

According to WB, this requires a deepening and broadening of the 'metrics of the strength of country systems' (cf. ISPMS). Nevertheless, though WB acknowledges the need for context-specific data it still has difficulties devoting itself fully to this, as it states, "[b]eyond the broad trend towards recognizing that "context" and "process" matter, explicit theory about "what works" in PSM reform in developing countries and supporting evidence remains scarce compared with other policy fields" (Ibid.: 12). Hence, WB certainly has some difficulties with really letting go of its entrenched mindset.

Following this WB identifies the need of two types of data. Where the first kind shall provide evidence "about probabilities in the average case – what types of reforms are most likely to work in the average country [Cf. ISPMS]" (Ibid.), together with data that is more case-based and qualitative. Yet, WB admits in regard to the former that collecting "comparative data on public

sector institutions and their effectiveness is not an easy task” (Ibid.: 17). Nonetheless, WB conceives this as necessary since, “looking into the “black box” of the results-chain is crucial for understanding where the causal links are broken” (Ibid.). Again, the need for comparative data seems contradictory to WB’s other statements, as already mentioned. Furthermore, its terminology of a ‘results-chain’ and notions of ‘causal links being broken’ illustrate its rather mechanistic perception of reality.

A Common Disciplinary Background

With a reference to its role as an ‘integrator’, WB warns in a footnote, that “there is a widespread perception that the Bank is losing its leadership in global expertise through a confluence of factors” (Ibid., note 35). WB conceives a ‘whole bank’ approach as a solution to this perception, stressing the need for shared understandings and competencies that shall ensure “a common disciplinary background of staff working on PSM issues, enshrined in robust technical competencies” (Ibid.: 19). Again, this illustrates the somewhat very different purposes of WB’s approach, which both responds to needs for internal alignment and requests for measurable results as well as an increased external competition in addition to demands of national ownership (OECD 2005/2008; 2011).

Conclusively, WB answers its own question; “What unites these three principles? They all call on us to be ready to adapt on the basis of evidence” (Blum et al. 2012: 7). Thus, the next paragraph will elaborate further on how WB will pursue this purpose, with a focus on potential contradictions.

Governance & Public Sector Management Indicators

Attempting to create ‘scientific knowledge’ within PSM, WB is “leading an effort to develop a set of Indicators of the Strength of Public Management Systems (ISPMS) and Actionable Governance Indicators (AGIs)” (WB 2012a: 7). These mainly consist of already existing indicators and are inspired by, what WB repeatedly terms, the ‘success story’ of the multi-donor ‘PEFA tool’, where the ISPMS and AGIs likewise shall be driven by a shared donor initiative (Ibid.). However, cf. chapter three, as PEFA is presented as a ‘success story’, this amplifies its ‘credibility and legitimacy’ as well as making it a model for the new inscription devices, where it may become overly trusted and ultimately ‘black-boxed’ without attention being paid to its criticism raised by e.g. Brown et al. (2009).

The ISPMS are supposed to measure the public sector and governance institutions by centering on the “intermediate results in the middle of the public sector results chain” (WB 2012a). WB regards this as a “crucial data source for comparative learning about what works and why in PSM reform” (Blum et al. 2012: 8). The AGIs are supposed to capture the “actual improvements in the strength of non-executive institutions of accountability” (Ibid.) or what WB terms ‘the governance environment’. Accordingly, potential indicators of these inscription devices shall capture “changes in the performance of the system or in the behavior of the public agents working within it” (WB 2012a.: 7). However, though it sounds straightforward, to put this into practice seems like quite a task, cf. the many potential challenges, which UNDP outlines.

In regard to, what WB terms their ‘action-worthiness’, the ISPMS shall “[m]ake a difference for development outcomes, and/or inform donor decision-making” (Ibid.), where the AGIs in addition to accounting for the same two criteria, may constitute “an intrinsically valuable outcome” (Ibid.) in themselves. Two points need to be mentioned here, first ‘to make a difference for development outcomes’ is a very ambitious aim, as was also illustrated in the UNDP case. Secondly, as these inscription devices are supposed to ‘inform donor’s decisions’ they may not only create ‘uncertainty absorptions’, but also ‘tunneling views’ and ‘expectations gaps’ due to developing countries possible fear of reprisals. WB further states that AGIs “may identify important areas for work” (WB 2012a) as ‘transparency’, yet without explaining this, besides noting a bit unclearly that “there is wide agreement that it [transparency] has an intrinsic value and so its [AGIs] utility outweighs any limitations to the evidence available concerning its instrumental value” (Ibid.: 7-8). In relation to the utility of the ISPMS, WB vaguely notes, “the assumed link to development outcome is always critical (Ibid.: 8). Illustrating, how WB maintains the black-boxed assumption of governance and development and how a liberal notion of transparency is depicted as a value in itself.

Together the inscription devices shall live up to certain criteria, as already mentioned, they shall be ‘action-worthy’, as WB writes “[w]e know (or strongly believe) that they contribute to results” (WB 2011: 17), as well as ‘actionable’ meaning that they should be “specific enough to point governments towards policy actions that they can take to achieve an improvement and monitoring reform progress” (WB 2012a: 7). Followed by criteria of ‘behavior’ and ‘replicability’ (Ibid.). Illus-

trating how these inscriptions ‘shall shape conduct to achieve certain ends’ (Burchell et al. 1991). Hence, these criteria remind much of the ones of UNDP with the same weaknesses, accordingly. They should be collected repeatedly, “providing evidence that the data can be collected at an affordable cost” (WB 2013e), as WB cautiously affirms, which definitely limits the scope of these. In regard to the utilization of these inscription devices, WB notes; “[i]n line with the Busan Aid Effectiveness Agenda, ISPMS and AGIs, at the country levels, can be used by governments, donors and researchers wishing to support a dialogue based around the question “what tends to work in general?” (WB 2012a: 8), which WB paradoxically in accordance with its ‘best fit’ approach, conceives as a ‘powerful’ entry point. Yet, the inscription devices do not answer the next question “will it work here?” (Ibid.). This seems to oppose the above mentioned ‘actionable criterion’. WB calls for more detailed diagnostics with finer-grained measures to answer the latter question. Nonetheless, introducing more metrics may obscure matters as much as illuminating these. In relation to WB’s aim of agility in adjusting to its client’s needs, ISPMS and AGIs seem to be conflicting with this too.

WB stresses that ISPMS and AGIs are meant to “assist governments and donors in tracking reform progress over time and against “targets”” (Ibid.), which it considers to be “an important vehicle for strengthening government ownership and for improving project effectiveness” (Ibid.). Where this kind of ‘ownership’ indeed is ‘quasi-autonomous’. WB acknowledges in line with UNDP that it is one of the ‘most difficult’ hurdles, since “[o]verly ambitious or short-term targets may bias reform efforts towards the readily achievable, and away from tougher reforms needed for sustainable change” (WB 2012d: 21). Illustrating how the inscriptions are used by WB as a means of power, which it nevertheless has difficulties of controlling.

Moreover, WB cautiously states; “while using ISPMS and AGI for these ends can often enhance public sector performance, using indicators can also weaken performance if they create unhelpful incentives” (WB 2012a, referring Hood: 9). Yet WB does not comment further on, how it will ensure that this drawback will not occur. WB further acknowledges that though it emphasises a ‘scientific knowledge’ approach “this is not to say that all knowledge comes in the form of statistically valid metrics” (Ibid.). Yet, it states; “the challenge always is to ensure rigor in such analyses and to provide safeguards against incentives for over-claiming” (Ibid.). As with UNDP, WB is much more

concerned with the potential problems connected to qualitative- than quantitative and numerical evidence.

5.2.4 WB: Part Conclusion

This analysis of WB's approach to GA, illustrates that its PSM through the inscription devices of ISPMS and AGIs is supposed to serve many purposes, in concordance with UNDP's approach. Hence, it is supposed to change the ways governments work; by 'fixing where the shoe pinches most' and not least changing the behaviours of the agents working within it. In line with UNDP, it also supports the black-boxed assumptions of the linkage between governance and development and 'scientific knowledge' and governance as it is also authoritatively enforced by WB's lending. It is further used as primarily an internal signalling device to demonstrate costs-efficient and measurable results, yet also externally, in relation to other donors. Finally, it is supposed to strengthen governments' ownership and inform donors' decisions, where the particular and general purposes of the inscriptions seem somewhat contradictory. Opposite to UNDP, WB also has an overall purpose of downplaying expectations to PSM in general.

5.3 Comparative Analytical Discussion

This section will analyse and discuss the two cases of UNDP and WB by comparing and contrasting them to each other, but also in relation to that context they form part of.

5.3.1 Who's Who?

As mentioned in the introduction, roughly since year 2000 there has been an increasing awareness, especially among OECD DAC-countries, on alignment, harmonization, national ownership and not least effectiveness in the form of measureable results. It is therefore no surprise that UNDP and WB are much embedded within this type of discourses, in which their two approaches clearly reflect the aspirations, values and prescriptions stated especially in the HLFs documents (OECD 2005/2008; 2011).

Six Discursive shifts

The six shifts of Hydén et al. (2011) follow this tendency; however, they seem to be based entirely on the discourses of the traditional dominating development actors, without paying much atten-

tion to the actual practices of these. Hence, the cases of UNDP and WB appear to be following these shift only in a discursive manner; nevertheless, their practices, due to constraining pressures for results costs- and time savings indeed divert them from the very optimistic six shifts.

Two Black-Boxed Assumptions

Besides that the two cases in different ways both follow and break with these shifts, they are also heavily influenced by the two 'black-boxed' assumptions that dominate the current international discourses; respectively that 'governance matters fundamentally for development outcomes' and that mainly 'statistical evidence in the form of GAs and indicators matter for (good) governance'. Yet, though it is acknowledged in both cases, that *how* governance in particular matters, is a debated and questioned issue (especially by academics) together with the solutions presented to improve on this; nevertheless, they represent this as quite straightforward. Hence, none of the cases regard governance as a too complex phenomenon for numerical measurements in the form of indicators. Instead they both represent this as *a measurement problem*, which need to be solved by 'deepening and broadening' the statistical evidence in the GA.

UNDP & WB's Problematizations

Though UNDP and WB's problematizations to a large degree are rather similar, their weighting of the issues differs quite a lot. Hence, WB is not that concerned with the external challenges in the form of increasing competition by non-OECD-DAC actors, in contrast to UNDP. Instead, WB is much more concerned with its internal challenges where it is busy showing how uncertain a field PSM is, what seems as an attempt to downplay the expectations from its corporate's 'results agenda'. This is in stark contrast to UNDP that has an entirely different errand; namely to convince a variety of stakeholders, though especially the governments in developing countries of all the benefits of GAs. Hence, UNDP is striving to create certainty around GAs to develop necessary, no less than crucial, 'buy-in' from national stakeholders; whereas WB seems to be concerned with not being held accountable for the uncertainty implied in this. In other words, WB operates in defiance of the uncertainty involved, where UNDP seems to be largely ignoring this.

Likewise, UNDP presents the 'national multi-stakeholder approach' implied in its programme as a solution to overcome WB's general challenges. However, as UNDP also recognises, if a strong buy-in from key stakeholders is not created, the whole exercise will not really matter; a dilemma,

which WB does not share in the same way; yet, it struggles with the dilemmas of the outsider. Nevertheless, Hydén et al. (2011: 58) stress; “[c]ountry-led assessments are not a panacea. They come with many risks, sensitivities, and inefficiencies, including the risk of government co-option. They can also be time consuming and expensive processes”. So though UNDP’s approach may overcome some of the challenges raised by WB, it still contains many challenges. Finally, it seems like both UNDP and WB have the reverse causality; in relation to their representations of why developing countries demand GAs through indicators. Though they acknowledge that this demand has as much to do with an attempt to satisfy donors as investors’ demands, as much as a defence against external potentially distorting GAs, instead of being something genuinely demanded, they nevertheless both mention these issues, without commenting further on the complexities they inherit.

UNDP & WB’s Representations & Interventions

These differences in their two agendas bring some valuable insights in a comparative analysis. Hence, it is noticeable that WB as the otherwise ‘standard-bearer’ in this field is much more critically oriented towards the limits of GA than UNDP, where UNDP in many respects goes much further than WB in regard to the governing potentials of this. Thus, UNDP considers DGAs by indicators as guideline tools that shall lead the different policy processes of developing countries’ national governance in quite a detailed manner; whereas WB mainly has an overall approach, where its inscriptions primarily shall guide donors’ decisions, though they a bit paradoxically also shall be specific enough to guide the recipient’s governments.

UNDP further opens up for the many particular factors to be aware of when employing GAs and WB likewise outlines the many general constraints implied in this. What becomes clear in their two approaches, at least from the perspective of governmentality, is that though UNDP in contrast to WB devotes a lot of space to cover the many implications to be aware of as a user of GA; nevertheless, it calls for a practice of ‘self-discipline’ rather than ‘self-governance’ within ‘patterns of accountability’ rather than holding anybody to account. Instead, WB employs more authoritative means of disciplining, where its inscription devices not only shall provide the basis for donors’ decisions, but also ‘make a difference for development outcomes as well as being an outcome in themselves’ (WB 2012a), which seems to be opposing the second shift (ii) of Hydén et al. (2011).

5.3.2 Cautious Tendencies

As illustrated in the two previous sections, there is definitely many different elements of power involved in the GAs promoted by UNDP and WB. Where the cautious kind of power through expertise is dominating (Best 2013: 20). This cautiousness has occurred both in relation to the lessons learned from the historical failures of the 'structural adjustment era' etc., but also due to a general, international "growth of risk- and results-based management" (Best 2013: 8), which also influence UNDP and WB. Best (2013: 2) further emphasises that "[a]bove all, those engaged in these new practices of governance are more preoccupied with the problem of failure: its ever-present possibility (...), and the need to avoid it at all costs". This is reflected in how both cases strongly emphasise 'evidence-based' or 'scientific knowledge'. However, this makes them differ from the third and fourth shift (iii-iv) of Hydén et al. (2011). Since, this is "a style of governance that relies increasingly on a kind of expertise that can always be revised after the fact" (Best 2013: 8). Moreover, Best (ibid.: 9-10) states;

practical, small "i" ideas such as new public management and new institutionalist economics have become the drivers of institutional change, replacing the more ambitious big "I" Ideas like the Keynesian and Neoclassical paradigms. The techniques have also shifted accordingly, relying on new forms of participation and the production of different kinds of documents, or inscriptions, to coordinate action.

This is reflected in UNDP and WB's emphasis on 'mid-range theories of change' that shall 'diagnose' if an intervention is worth the effort, bluntly stated, together with a strong reliance on the inscription devices of indicators. Likewise, cf. the first section, there has been established a connection between aid effectiveness in the form of numerical facts and national ownership. Yet, the increasing focus on local governance through self-assessments can be seen as serving two other kinds of purposes, viz. as a means of employing 'control of control', which, cf. the financial crisis, sends a signal to the taxpayers in the donor countries of effectiveness and reduced costs, as well as an attempt to make GA seem neutral and thereby more palatable for developing countries (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009: 311-12), cf. the increasing competition in this field. Yet, 'in practice' international institutions "have been gradually informalizing and obscuring power relations" (Best 2013: 22) rather than eliminating these.

5.3.3 Tensions Between a Rights- & Results-Based Approach

Hydén et al. (2011: 14) mention that “[t]he current situation in the governance field may be characterized as one of tension between a rights-based and a results-based approach. Donors lean toward the latter” as the previous sections illustrate. Moreover, since “institutionalizing universal human rights and building democracy takes time in societies where they are weak, the expectation of results within set timelines” (Ibid.: 14-15) may not only cause disappointment, but as shown in the previous sections, also distort the generated results. Where, the dilemma between ready results and time-consuming changes together with a preoccupation of ‘credibility’ has led to more ‘symbolic and indirect approaches’ (Ibid.).

Different Discursive Currents

These two kinds of approaches also pervade the two cases in this study; yet the rights-based, positive approach “is often trumped by, a much more risk-averse one that responds to those same uncertainties by relying on the security of more traditional forms of expertise, trying to reduce everything to numbers” (Best 2013: 11). However, this create some paradoxes, in that the discursive aims of the cases, at certain times can be said to follow all the shifts (i-vi) of Hydén et al. (2011); yet their ‘costs- and time-constrained’ practices equally make them divert from the same shifts. Hence, some problems are definitely created, when these ‘different approaches’ are sought combined, which at least officially is the aim of UNDP and WB. Nonetheless, though WB through its new approach strives to position itself within the inclusive discourses of the third wave; nevertheless, it has found it too costly to include its clients in the preceding stakeholder consultations of this (WB 2011: 3).

What further become clear in the two cases; is that both UNDP and WB have quite an ambiguous relation to the potential conflicts involved in more inclusive GAs. Yet, this makes sense, in regard to the different tensions implied in their approaches, where the, if realised time-consuming ‘inclusive’ discourses (Cornwall & Brock 2005) are placed within pressures of results-based management that is time- and costs-bound (Hydén et al. 2011). Following this there is a risk, of decisions being made more easily than they might otherwise have been, had they included the contextual complexity of issues being transformed into inscriptions (Rose 1999).

5.3.4 More Or Less Political?

Although the whole premise of shift (i), outlined above, seems a bit odd, as though the political has ever been away from this field, it has definitely been depicted as such, cf. the ‘technical’ doctrines of the Washington Consensus (WC). Hence, in line with this shift (i), both cases try to let go of simplistic ‘technical and managerial’ discourses, distancing themselves explicitly from WC (UNDP 2011b; WB 2012d). Admitting, yet WB only to a certain extent, the unavoidable political dimension implied in their aims of changing not only modes of government, but whole societies ‘for the better’. Where the authority that represent ‘the better’ is made through ‘evidence-based, scientific knowledge’; reminding of a resurgent ‘enlightenment rationale’, cf. chapter six.

Politicizing and/or Depoliticizing

Yet, the ‘political’ in itself escapes one definition, as Foucault notes ‘nothing is necessarily political, everything can be politicized’ (Dean 2007: 11-12; Walters 2012: 80), where he, referring Schmitt (Dean 2007: 4), determines ‘the political’ “as the domain of antagonistic relations”, which as mentioned above is a rather precarious matter for UNDP and WB. Nonetheless, ‘the political’ or a ‘depoliticization’ for that matter, not just happens, but demands ‘hard work’ (Walters 2012).

Thus, in accordance with the Post-WC, UNDP expresses openly its value-laden errand, viz. democracy that corresponds with its mandate, which might be one of the reasons why it depicts GA as playing a much more active role in national political matters than WB. Although WB does not have a clear political mandate, its two new ‘political’ goals though economically justified, cf. chapter four; nevertheless support its work in the political field. Hence, democracy is not mentioned much in the WB case, where the more technocratic terms ‘PSM’ and ‘machinery of government’ not only offer some whole other associations than e.g. democracy, but these also have other implications (Brown et al. 2009: 4).

However, though admitting they have a ‘political’ errand, UNDP and WB are using this in quite a depoliticizing manner. As Best (2013: 12) state “[t]he repoliticization of these governance processes paradoxically turns into a kind of depoliticization, as various forms of political action are read through the lens of economic expertise and then reduced to quantitative indicators”. Hence, this combination is particularly precarious, since what would otherwise be highly judgment-laden thereby often contested, viz. political matters are being repositioned as discussions of merely technicalities (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009). Nevertheless, as illustrated in the previous sections,

implicit in all types of measurements lie normative standards, which is a premise of measuring (Ibid.). Likewise, Hydén et al. (2011: 71) state GAs “are effective only to the extent that the process, indicators, and results of the assessment are used to achieve something”. Yet, this is as much their weakness as strength, cf. Strathern’s point about measures as targets in the UNDP case, ‘tunnelling views’ and the decreasing value of measures aiming at improvement (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009). Likewise, not only in relation to their increasing use; but especially in relation to how indicators are used to accomplish political goals that form new modalities of governance “implies that actors who promulgate indicators ought to be counted among the governors” (Davis et al. 2010: 16).

5.3.5 The Balance Between Constraints & Aspirations

In regard to the discursive aspirations of the two cases that are embedded within the positive discourses of the third wave with liberal notions of ‘freedom’, these indeed sound all good. However, as the two previous sections have illustrated there are certainly many potential problems, large margins of error and not least costs connected with GAs. Moreover, the element of strategy seems to play quite an important role in the cases of UNDP and WB, which at first seems a little strange in relation to their depictions of GA as being genuinely coveted and needed by the developing countries. Yet, cf. UNDP and WB’s prolematizations, if the purpose of GA is just as much to satisfy internal organisational pressures as external pressures of VfM by the taxpayers of donors together with a more palatable, neutral kind of ‘control of control’ due to increasing competition, then the element of strategy makes sense in a whole other way.

Signalling Devices

GAs may in many ways be regarded as much as a means of signalling devices (Best 2013: 2) as, or rather in addition to, devices of measurement and pressure, which also is mentioned more or less explicitly by the two cases, besides being neatly connected within the liberalistic diagram of governance (Rose 1999). Moreover, the element of ‘signalling’ serves many purposes, besides being a means of exerting pressure on developing countries, it is also aimed at WB’s internal environment, the external environment of donors in general, and the external environment of the national governments (where the latter too strives to be regarded as effective, both internally and externally). All these purposes indeed constitute potentially obstructing factors for the results of the GAs.

Results as a Category of Knowledge

When it comes to ‘results’, which Best (2013: 23) describes as ‘a new category of knowledge’ defined by the traditional donors in an attempt to regain some of their lost authority, the “often-heroic assumptions that make such claims about results possible leave considerable room for expert hedging” (Ibid.). Where, the increasing international scientization of social activity, which UNDP and WB’s cases form part of and ‘that they in turn help to produce’ with their attempts to translate more and more aspects into ‘quantifacts’ have made numbers “become the bedrock of systematic knowledge because they seem neutral and descriptive” (Davis et al. 2010, note 2: 11).

Efficiency & Limited Resources

Difficulties of measurement is one thing, but considerations of costs may also constrain or even distort the results. The former is i.a. reflected in how UNDP and WB both emphasise only to include new indicators in GAs if these are ‘cost-effective’. Hence, ‘availability of resources’ and ‘economic efficiency’ have become over-arching governing principles (Dean 2007: 126). Concerning the latter, the different foci of measurements also have different pitfalls; where it is noticeable that UNDP and WB chose two different foci equally attempting to avoid distortions. Hence UNDP recommends focusing on output instead of outcome indicators and WB the opposite. Nonetheless outcomes are not only difficult, but also resource-demanding to measure (Brown et al. 2009). Instead, a focus on outputs may ‘bias reforms efforts towards the most easily or consistently achievable’ (Ibid.), which not necessarily bring forth the most required nor adequate results (Ibid.). Thus, both types of foci may produce false conditions to make judgements on as well as simplifying the subject matter, which may cause uncertainty absorptions and expectations gaps.

5.3.6 Who can Speak – According to What Criteria?

Since language and government are inextricably connected within the perspective of governmentality, this implies continuing ‘battles of truth’. Hence GA too represents a means of power in a battle of truth, where the question of knowledge becomes vital. In an attempt to set the agenda, UNDP and WB try to influence ‘who can speak, according to what criteria of truth and from what places’ by employing the rhetoric of ‘evidence-based decisions’ and ‘scientific knowledge’ as their ‘authority of authority’ (Rose 1999). Hence, UNDP and WB both strongly encourage discussions framed within this special kind of truth with its particular scope, though it becomes clear, cf. the

UNDP case, that there are better and worse ways of conducting evidence-based discussions. In line with the fifth and sixth shifts (v-vi) of Hydén et al. (2011), UNDP promotes the role of 'capacity development' to raise the general statistical literacy that shall equip more stakeholders 'to dig beneath the surface' of the GAs; yet, a profound discussion of the applied methodology and numerical calculi in the GAs will most likely demand much more than raising the basic statistical literacy in developing countries. Nor does this remove the risk of what are essential political discussions become converted into discussions of technicalities (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009).

Three Procedures of Exclusion

In regard to the three kinds of 'procedures of exclusion', cf. chapter two, the forbidden word or taboo appear throughout UNDP and WB's problematizations, representations and interventions to concern everything that cannot be presented as being 'objective' or countable. Hence subjective judgements and experiences are presented as absolute taboos, at least if these are not 'covered up' in one or another form of 'objective representation'. Secondly, a 'control' or 'control of control' by measurements, not only determines and legitimizes, but also disciplines what is counted within the normal sphere and what is counted as pathology to that, with its implied dangers and risks through strategies of generalizability and normalization. Thirdly, in the collection of as detailed accumulated knowledge of the society as possible, a scientific discourse is created that produces a certain kind of truth that attempts to minimize complexity and legitimises a certain kind of rationality, which then becomes difficult to contest in relation to the generated taboos (Foucault 2001b). Hence, UNDP and WB's particular sought solutions are set forth as more and less incontestable (Gisselquist 2012). Yet, when statistics and numerical statements are leading the agenda, it becomes worrying if more substantive and complex considerations thereby become over-ruled (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009: 282).

5.3.7 Quasi-Autonomous Ownership

The role of national ownership has come to be important in the HLF-papers and within the new positive discourses of the third wave, cf. the second shift (ii) of Hydén et al. (2011). This is also manifest in the UNDP and WB case. Yet, what ownership exactly implies is indeed ambiguous. Where GAs are part of a variety of tools, cf. the metrics of the HLF-agreements etc., which are pre-

sented as neutral and evidence-based, though it definitely can be discussed how much these metrics secure ownership and who is really demanding this kind of ownership.

Instead, it is a special kind of ownership that is presented, cf. chapter three, according to a particular conception of liberal freedom, which to a certain extent limits the scope of political authorities at least the scopes of the ones that lack the power of statistical resources. Nevertheless, in accordance with the fifth and sixth shifts (v-vi) of Hydén et al. (2011) this ownership is presented as being 'monitory' with a 'bottom-up' approach that shall ensure standardization and transparency through possibilities of supervision and observability, which the GAs are supposed to provide. However, though transparency and accountability are positive-loaded terms, it can be discussed how transparent and accountable statistical, numerical inscription devices are, cf. chapter six. This ambiguity also divert the GAs from shifts (v-vi), as these also function as 'representative and top-down' audit tools of translation, that urge 'voluntary' conformity to a set of liberalistic norms and values, which shall discipline the audited to behave 'correctly' through a responsabilizing self-government (Rose 1999). Additionally, the possibility of not only collecting, but as well storing more minute knowledge of individuals as states, cf. governance databases etc. makes it easier to control and govern the conduct of conduct of these.

Besides that GAs create patterns of accountability that also makes it possible to calculate deviations from the norm of performance, the inclusion of the civil society, cf. shifts (v-vi), also ensure a form of accountability. This is facilitated through the liberal mode of governing that operates "through the forms of regulation that exist outside itself" (Dean 2007: 110). However, this kind of 'state-civil society doubles' makes the liberal kind of government 'boundless' (Ibid.). Hence, as Dean (Ibid.: 110) stresses, this "is as much a governing through society as a governing of society", where two kinds of 'folds' happen; an 'unfolding' of the political sphere upon the civil society, illustrated by the parole; "more governance, less government" (Ibid.: 116) and an 'enfolding' of the latter into the former in an attempt to create more legitimacy and buy-in (Craig & Porter 2006). These two kinds of folds also take place in the UNDP and WB cases, where the civil society is much included in the former and to a lesser extent in the latter; nevertheless, it is a particular kind of

inclusion that is envisaged with specific criteria of who can speak according to certain evidence-based and scientific criteria of objectivity.

5.3.8 Comparative Analysis: Part Conclusion

In this analysis, it has become clear that though the purposes of UNDP and WB's approaches differ to some extent their reasons for presenting GA as a solution to better on the state of governance are quite similar. Where they not only both share the black-boxed assumption of the central role of governance, they also both represent the complexities of 'bad governance' as a problem of measurement, corresponding with the other black-boxed assumption. Yet, through both of their problematizations, representations and interventions, it also becomes clear that their approaches to GA likewise reflect increasing internal as external pressures for measurable results and the need to demonstrate cost-efficiency, which their GAs then become signalling devices for. However, this also make both cases suffer from the same dilemmas of how to deliver 'tangible results' at low costs that shall demonstrate improvements on the state of 'a national owned governance', indeed comprising complex issues with long time-frames.

6. Thematic Discussion

In this chapter, some of the crosscutting themes, which appeared in the analysis will be discussed, as these do not only dominate the two cases in this study, but also the current international discourses.

Signalling Devices

From the 1990s on and onward, not only has the use of technology been increasing, but also its sophistication and accessibility, which has most likely had a strong influence on the pace of decision-making processes and likewise expectations of efficiency and effectiveness (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009; Davis et al. 2010: 22). As Davis et al. (Ibid.) states, “[i]t seems plausible that reducing the costs of decision-making becomes more attractive (sometimes even imperative) as the amount of decision-making and the need for rapid decisions increases”. This has led to a mushrooming of a range of assessments tools, measurement techniques and indicators within the last decades (Ibid.). Where these, besides being an affordable way to inform decision-makers, function as ‘symbolic techniques’ to signal “political commitment and economic soundness” (Best 2013: 2). Indeed, this has increased the power of these tools; however, this has happened “without accompanying attention to their limitations” (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009: 256). Instead, especially within international development policies, this way of exercising global governance, has been framed within positive discourses, filled with alluring buzzwords that give these “a sense of purposefulness and optimism” (Cornwall & Brock 2005: iii).

6.1 Questioning Black-boxed Assumptions

Especially two kinds of black-boxed assumptions dominate the cases of this study and the wider development discourses; viz. ‘that governance matters for development outcomes’ and ‘that evidence-based (statistical) data matters for governance’. Hence, both of these assumptions will be discussed in the following sections.

Governance & Development

The tool of GA by indicators inherits a double role of governance, in that it is both supposed to measure governance; however, as has been shown throughout this study, it is also used as an instrument for governance. In regard to the former role, Davis et al. (2010: 4) stress that governance indicators unavoidably “embody theories about both the appropriate standards against which to

measure societies (or institutions) and the appropriate ways in which to measure compliance with those standards". However, these standards and theories of governance are often not created through traditional political processes.

Governance is increasingly used as a key concept in the distribution of aid by the traditional donors (Landman et al. 2007), which is manifest in the cases of UNDP and WB and also reflected in the HLF documents. Accordingly, donors and partner countries are encouraged to carry out "'reliable assessments' and 'diagnostic reviews' on the extent to which countries "adhere to broadly accepted good practices" (Ibid.: 2).

Yet, these good practices are not that clearly defined, where a study by Essex University (Ibid.) has found "that there is not yet a harmonised definition of governance in use across donors as envisaged in the 2005 Paris Declaration". Hence, definitions of governance vary between technocratic to value-oriented, good- as/or (liberal) democratic conceptions associated with different economic and political dimensions. Likewise, the Essex study neither found a common standardized practice "for the use of indicators across donor governance assessments" (Ibid.: iii). What it nonetheless found was that there exist a common tendency among donors "to elide these dimensions in defining and operationalising the concept for governance assessments". Equally, Gisselquist (2012: 9) points out that governance and good governance often are used interchangeably, and that much confusion exists within the debates over the definition of governance (Ibid.). This is also reflected in the cases of this study, where UNDP uses good- as democratic governance and WB uses good- and a narrow technocratic conception of governance. However, though confusion over this concept "may sound like a purely academic critique" (Ibid.: i) it has "real world relevance to development policy" (Ibid.). Since donors, as has been shown in this study, "seek to design evidence-based policies, and justify their focus on good governance partly on the basis of claims that better governance promotes economic development" (Ibid.).

Hence, on the one hand, there exists a general confusion over the concept of governance, which in itself makes it difficult to realize the black-boxed assumption of the importance of (what kind of?) governance for (economic) development. On the other hand, this causal relation has been questioned, especially within academia (Holmberg et al. 2009; Abrahamsen 2000). In general, it is becoming apparent that the neoliberal institutionalist development has been a mixed success, where Craig and Porter (2006: 14) note that there seems to be an over-expectation about efficiency and

accountability as well as an overestimation of the leverage that a market-liberal democratic governance can achieve (UNDP 2011b: 14; Nanda 2006). Likewise, then donors are applying their own conceptualisations of governance, without showing sensitivity to “the history and culture of the recipient country” (Nanda 2006: 276) the idea that this will cure the pathologies of bad governance is not convincing, since this does not reach into the deeper levels of the political culture in societies that are dominated by clientelism and endemic corruption etc. (Ibid.; Abrahamsen 2000; Holmberg et al. 2009; Craig & Porter 2006).

Hence, Abrahamsen (2000) and Diamond (Holmberg et al. 2009) call for ‘revolutionary changes’ instead of ‘stopgap measures’ that take existing structures and conditions for granted. Abrahamsen (2000) also stresses that it is problematic that donors are basing their conceptions of governance on their own kind of ‘western liberal democracy’ model, as if this form of governance is without problems, where other forms of democratic governance are silenced completely. Additionally, Gisselquist (2012: 18) notes that the assumption that ‘good governance’ leads to development is difficult to oppose, cf. the two cases, due to the logic “if a measure of good governance is not empirically related to development, it must not be a good measure”.

Evidence-Based Policymaking

In regard to the black-boxed assumption; ‘good governance needs good data’ (UNDP 2011a: 1), its “apparent ‘common-sense’ appeal belies underlying complexities” (Du Toit 2012: 2). As Du Toit (Ibid.) mentions evidence-based policy (EBP) “is a normative discourse” that the cases in this study too admit. However, this feature also makes it “a meta-political project; a policy about policy” (Ibid.) that unavoidably imply battles of power of ‘what shall count’ etc.

Cf. chapter one, the tendency, which EBP forms part of can be traced back to NPM (Ibid.). However, the whole understanding of change implied in this, is highly linear and optimistic; as if the complexities of a political reality could be compared with a laboratorial experiment with controlled variables (Ibid.: 3; Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009: 296-7). Accordingly, by relying on a narrow ‘technicist’ worldview “EBP offers a poor guide to what policymaking is about, and what questions policy makers must decide” (Du Toit 2012: 3). Since questions of what works well “may not have a clear, decisive, unequivocal or useful answer” (Ibid.: 4), as is assumed in this worldview. Hence, one thing is a knowing of something worked or did not work, another thing is comprehending why

it exactly turned out as it did, which often is a complex and not least contested issue (Ibid.; Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009). Within this view, it is especially the conceptualisation of the role of evidence that is problematic, as Du Toit (2012: 4) states;

EBP appeals ultimately to an understanding of evidence that can perhaps best be described as naïve empiricism. It assumes that understanding social reality is in the first place a matter of understanding the evidence; that (...) depends primarily on having enough (or the right) evidence; that valid findings are primarily guaranteed by objective, value free analysis.

Hence, EBP is presented as only a technocratic matter of ‘instrumental rationality’, where the main emphasis is on ‘what works’, as has been shown in the UNDP and WB cases. However, there are especially two connotations of this view that are problematic, first the idea that there always is a/or one ‘right answer’ (Ibid.), secondly that evidence ensures impartiality and objectiveness and that it is always possible to obtain. These assumptions are debatable, as has been shown in this study. EBP neither fits like a glove with the rules of science nor policymaking, in that “‘evidence’ never speaks for itself” (Ibid.: 4). As Du Toit (2012: 5) stresses, “evidence itself — what it is, and what it means — is often a complex and politically contested matter”.

Thus, clashes are created between the reserved character of science and the need for ‘tangible results’ in politics, where “knowledge and power, description and decision” (Sætnan et al. 2012: 10) are concerned with very different matters. Besides, being concerned about normative aims, political issues are also bound up with other factors as costs and legitimacy, cf. chapter five. Hence, often it is not that there is not enough evidence, but that this is ambiguous, not straightforward and it may furthermore not always be ‘suitably’ fitting with dominating political narratives and conceptions (Du Toit 2012).

In relation to this, statistics and numbers can be presented as providing ‘scientific concreteness’ that makes them a powerful tool, as Fukuda-Parr (2013) stresses;

Indeed, quantified targets impact governance and knowledge; they give incentives for policy makers to focus and move in a specific direction and self-regulate according to numbers and rankings. What’s more is that “quantified goals shape ideas.” They simplify and reduce com-

plex and contextually-specific concepts (...) to abstract and universally applicable measurements.

Hence, though UNDP and WB briefly mention other types of data; nevertheless, they primarily promote statistical and numerical data that is transformed into indicators. This corresponds well with the pledges made in the HLFs and MDGs. However, data through indicators represent a distinctive way “of producing knowledge about societies” (Davis et al.: 4). One particular feature of indicators is that these not only obscure the complexity of the phenomenon they represent, but also the interpretations and assumptions, which they are based on (Ibid.). By drawing on discourses of scientific knowledge and evidence-based, numerical data through indicators, UNDP and WB disregard “[t]he reality that numbers are not free of interpretation but instead embody theoretical assumptions about what should be counted, how to understand material reality, and how quantification contributes to systematic knowledge about the world” (Ibid.: 11).

This regime of truth reminds strikingly much of a post-enlightenment rationale of objectivity, where “certain forms of subjectivity, namely “interpretation, selectivity, artistry, and judgement itself”” (Megill 1994: 11) are rejected. Davis et al. (2010: 11) stress that it is a distinctive feature of modernity that numbers are presented “as an objective description of reality outside interpretation”. According to Megill (1994: 11), this meaning of objectivity can be traced back to the 19th century, with the notion of ‘absolute objectivity’. However, this notion inherits the paradox of the absolute, where it taken to its extreme “offers a view from nowhere” impossible to situate, since “it would need to view itself viewing, and so on *ad infinitum*” (Ibid.: 2). Hence, ‘absolute objectivity’ is impossible to attain, instead, Megill (Ibid.) distinguishes between four conceptual senses of objectivity with different criteria of approximations. Though these are of course intermeshed in practice, it is clear that UNDP and WB draw heavily on an ‘impersonal procedural’ notion of objectivity that works through standardization (Ibid.). In relation to this, Megill (Ibid., referring Porter: 11) notes; “[i]n a situation where values are in conflict and consensus elusive, such rules may well be the only thing that permits agreed-upon public action to continue at all”. This appears to be so in the cases of this study, cf. their problematizations; however, though EBP mainly through statistics can be presented as objective and neutral it is not so (Sætnan et al. 2011; Du Toit 2012).

Through statistical evidence, a special kind of transformation of ‘co-construction’ occurs, where statistics is not only constructed of the society, but also constructs society (Sætnan et al. 2011: 1). As Sætnan et al. (Ibid.) state; “in the act of counting we do not stand neutrally outside the “object” we count, but rather (to some extent) enter into it, redefine it, change the stakes that affect it, and thus even change the numbers we count to represent it”.

Different Distributions of Power

In spite of the traditional image of numerical evidence being both neutral and creating disinterested results, “mathematics is a language, no better or worse than any other language” (Sætnan et al. 2011: 4) and even if mathematics should be ‘exceptional’ to describe phenomena of the natural sciences “it does not automatically follow that it is equally exceptional in its suitability for describing human society” (Ibid.). Hence, when the assumption of mathematics as a particular objective language is ‘de-naturalised’ it not only becomes clear that numerical evidence neither can avoid being built on particular assumptions, but also that it is fraught with power battles. These battles over ‘quantifacts’ often lead to mutual mistrust and suspicion between auditors and auditees (Rosga & Satterthwaite 2009: 314).

Likewise, the language of quantification and audits is in particular applied when three conditions exist; viz. when there exists a complex relation of ‘accountability’ between auditors and auditees that are detached from one another within a condition of mutual mistrust (Ibid.). That these three conditions exist within the field of GA in the cases of this study is quite clear. Hence, cf. chapter three, there is a build-in risk of the neoliberal mode of governing that the ‘quasi-autonomous’ entities of auditees do not align with the injunctions of the auditors.

Nevertheless, as the act of counting has certain implications, not counting, of course has an effect too (Sætnan et al. 2011). So instead of rejecting the role of a numerical counting, calls have been made for ‘an ethics of numbers’ (Espeland & Stevens 2008: 401). Where [l]earning about statistics needs to be about more than simply mastering the techniques of using the tool; it needs to be also about learning the power – sometimes even danger – of that tool and learning to control it within social and ethical bounds, including learning when not to use it” (Sætnan et al. 2011: 2).

7. Conclusion

Throughout this study, it has been shown that UNDP and WB's purposes with their approaches to GAs indeed are many and varied as well as internally and mutually contradictory.

Yet, UNDP and WB's main purposes equally follow two kinds of assumptions that have become black-boxed within the international community of development; viz. the first assumes that 'governance matters crucially for development outcomes'; nevertheless this assumption has been questioned, cf. chapter six. The other assumes that 'evidence in the form of statistical and numerical indicators matter for governance'; yet this has been discussed and questioned throughout this study.

Moreover, UNDP and WB also follow the current trend within the international development discourses to employ a variety of positive-loaded concepts; accordingly purposes to enhance transparency, accountability, and a (broad and democratic in the case of UNDP) national ownership also dominate their approaches to GAs. This fits well with their problematizations and representations where it has been shown that they, in line with the traditional donors, have become threatened by an increasing competition within this field. However, as has been illustrated throughout this thesis, these positive terms not only represent particular liberal conceptualisations, they are also framed by some strong competing factors. Hence, not only is GA through indicators in itself a potentially obstructing factor for transparency, accountability and national ownership, cf. chapter three and five, it is also constrained by dominating pressures for effective, measurable results at low cost, cf. chapter five. In regard to the latter factor, it has become a purpose in itself for UNDP and WB to demonstrate 'results at a low cost' that transforms their GAs into symbolic kinds of signalling devices. Yet, as UNDP and WB both admit, it is indeed difficult to achieve these measurable results at a low cost within this field, since time-frames are long and causalities extremely complex.

Nevertheless, this purpose seems to be, not only the leading, but also the best fitting in regard to the prime quality of GAs by indicators; to minimize complexity at the lowest possible costs. Yet, as has been shown in this study, this does not imply that it is the best tool to solve each of the other purposes mentioned, where the quality of governance, as enhanced democracy and inclusiveness

together with national ownership seem to suffer from the external constraining pressures of time and costs.

This creates a paradox between the current positive discourses and the practical circumstance, which WB and UNDP form part of. Hence it has been shown in this study that though UNDP and WB both to a large extent seem to be following the six shifts in 'the global discourse on governance' (Hydén et al. 2011: 16) discursively, none of these are reflected in their practices. Thus, though UNDP and, to a certain extent WB, admit the political and normative aspects involved in GAs (i), they nevertheless underplay the role of national contestations completely, especially in relation to accepting discussions that move beyond evidence-based discussions of technicalities. Likewise, though they again in varying degrees emphasise national ownership (ii), they still promote external standards that are commonly known without discussing these, together with cross-country comparative data. Thirdly and fourthly (iii-iv), it has become clear that they primarily promote quantitative, numerical indicators, rather than 'qualitative and narrative trajectories' to guide national policies and not least donor's decisions, which in accordance with the data stored in national governance databases enables a 'governance at a distance' that divides the world into centre and periphery. Fifthly (v), though especially UNDP promotes a bottom-up and inclusive approach, which is more or less absent in the WB case, strategic elements to create a strong buy-in of key national actors nonetheless seems to be over-ruling this, besides that a governance by statistics with a central database in itself skews GAs in a top-down direction. Sixthly (vi), again though GAs are represented as monitory, especially in the UNDP case, this will demand more than raising the general statistical literacy, where the inscription devices of indicators in many ways seems to be obscuring matters more than illuminating these.

8. Appendix

8.1 Table: Approximately Thematic Divided Development Eras

The themes are roughly divided between the international paradigmatic shifts within development policies, yet of course overlapping in practice:

Approximately Thematic Divided Development Eras	Main Headlines	Characteristic Key Words
1945 – 1980	The cold war with security-embedded development	More or less unconditional support to allies
1980 – 1990	Conservative Neoliberalism, de-territorialisation, with market dis-embedded development, horizontal disaggregation ²² of government	Washington Consensus, Structural Adjustments Programme (SAP), New Public Management (NPM), New Institutional Economics (NIE) doctrines, marketization, decentralizing via privatisation
1990 –	Neoliberal Institutionalism, vertical ²³ disaggregation of government	Post-Washington Consensus, the Third Way, Comprehensive Development Framework ²⁴ (CDF), Programme-Based Approaches (PBAs), Good Governance, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)
2000 –	Advanced liberalism (Rose 1999). Unprecedented international consensus on inclusive neoliberal reforms of alignment and harmonisation, quasi-territorialisation via national 'ownership'.	Second-generation international governance reforms, International Technocratic Consensus – New disciplinary techniques – Measuring Initiatives; MDGs for Poverty Reduction, HLFs

Table based on Craig and Porter (2006).

²² The contracting out of government functions (Craig & Porter 2006).

²³ The delegation of power up (International treaties and organisations) and down (regional/local 'accountabilities') of government functions (Ibid.).

²⁴ CDF: Was presented to the World Bank Board of Governors in 1998. It encompasses four principles; 1) Long-term structural and social framework 2) Citizen participation 3) Stakeholder partnership 4) Impact measurement and evaluation.

9. Bibliography

Abrahamsen, R. (2000): *Disciplining Democracy: Development Discourse and Good Governance in Africa*. London and New York: Zed Books Ltd.

Agere, S. (2000): *Promoting Good Governance: Principles, Practices and Perspectives*. London, Commonwealth Secretariat.

Arndt, C. (2008): The Politics of Governance Ratings. *International Public Management Journal*, 11:3, pp. 275-297.

Arndt, C. and Oman, C. (2006): *OECD Development Centre Studies: Uses and Abuses of Governance Indicators*. OECD.

Best, J. (2013): *The Rise of Provisional Governance? The Politics of Failure and the Transformation of Global Development Finance*. Forthcoming with Cambridge University Press pp. 1-29

Blum, J., Manning, N. and Srivastava, V. (2012): *Public Sector Management Reform: Toward a Problem-Solving Approach*. Economic Premise December 2012 Number 100, The World Bank – Website: www.worldbank.org/economicpremise.

Brown, K. and Repucci, S. (2009): *A Users' Guide to Measuring Public Administration Performance*. UNDP

Buduru, B. and Pal, L. A. (2010): *The globalized state: Measuring and monitoring governance*. London: Sage Publications.

Burchell, G., Gordon, C. and Miller, P. (1991): *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Burr, V. (2003): *Social Constructionism: Second Edition*. Hove, East Sussex: Routledge.

Cornwall, A. and Brock, K. (2005): *Beyond Buzzwords: "Poverty Reduction", "Participation" and "Empowerment" in Development Policy*. UNRISD Overarching Concerns Programme Paper Number 10, November 2005.

Craig, D. and Porter, D. (2006): *Development Beyond Neoliberalism?: Governance, Poverty reduction and political economy*. London: Routledge.

Danielsen, G. and Woodhatch, T. (2012): *Outcome Report: The Oslo Governance Forum – UNDP Oslo Governance Centre 3-5 October 2011*: UNDP.

Davis, K. E., Kingsbury, B. and Merry, S. E. (2010): *Indicators as a Technology of Global Governance*. New York University Public Law and Legal Theory Working Papers. Paper 191.

Dean, M. (2007): *Governing Societies: Political perspectives on domestic and international rule*. Berkshire: Open University Press McGraw-Hill Education.

DFID (2011): *DFID Multilateral Aid Review 2011*. Website: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/137273/UNDP-response.pdf

- Du Toit, A. (2012): Making sense of 'evidence': Notes on the discursive politics of research and pro-poor policy making. Working Paper 21. PLAAS, UWC: Bellville.
- Espeland, W.N. and Stevens, M.L. (2008): A Sociology of Quantification. *European Journal of Sociology*, 49, pp 401-436
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2004): Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Sociologisk tidsskrift / årg. 12, nr. 2* pp. 117-142
- Foucault, M. (1982): Afterword: The Subject and Power in Dreyfus H.L. and Rabinow P.(eds.): Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics. Brighton, Harvester, pp. 208-226
- Foucault, M. (1991): Politics and the Study of Discourse in: Burchell, G., Gordon, C. and Miller, P.(eds.): The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, pp. 87-104.
- Foucault, M. (1997) Polemics, Politics and Problematizations in P. Rabinow (ed.) *Ethics: Essential works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984; Volume 1*: London, Penguin Books.
- Foucault, M. (2001a): *Fearless Speech* edited by Joseph Pearson. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).
- Foucault, M. (2001b): Talens forfatning: Forelæsningsrapport: Viljen til viden Nietzsche – genealogien, historien – På dansk ved Søren Gosvig Olesen. København: Hans Reitzels Forlag A/S.
- Gisselquist, R.M. (2012): Good Governance as a Concept, and Why This Matters for Development Policy. Working Paper No. 2012/30, UNU-WIDER.
- Grindle, M.S. (2007): Good Enough Governance Revisited. *DPR 25 (5)*, September 2007, pp. 533-574.
- Holmberg, S., Rothstein, B. and Nasiritousi, N. (2009): Quality of Government: What You Get. Annual review of political science 2009 12:1 pp.135-161 Annual Reviews, Inc.
- Hydén, G. and Samuel, J. (2011): *Making The State Responsive: Experience With Democratic Governance Assessments*. New York, UNDP.
- Jørgensen, M. W. and Phillips, L. (1999): *Diskursanalyse: Som teori og metode*. Frederiksberg C: Roskilde Universitetsforlag/Samfundslitteratur.
- Kothari, U. (2005): Authority and Expertise: The Professionalisation of International Development and the Ordering of Dissent. *Antipode*, Vol.37(3), pp.425-446
- Landman, T., Bewsher, J., and Carvalho, E. (2007): Preliminary Survey on Donor use of Governance Assessments. Essex: University Essex: Centre for Democratic Governance, UNDP.
- Larbi, G. A. (1999): The New Public Management Approach and Crisis States – UNRISD Discussion Paper No. 112, September 1999. Geneva, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.
- Megill, A. (1994): *Rethinking objectivity. Introduction: Four Senses of Objectivity*. Duke University Press
- Meyer, C. B. (2001): *Field Methods: A Case in Case Study Methodology*. London: Sage Publications.

- Miller, P. (1987): *Domination and Power*. London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd/Inc.
- Miller, P. and Rose, N. (2008): *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Nanda, P. (2006): *The “Good Governance” Concept Revisited*. London: Sage Publications.
- OECD (2005/2008): *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action*. OECD.
- OECD (2011): *Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation: Fourth high level forum on aid effectiveness, Busan, Republic of Korea 29 November- 1 December 2011*. OECD.
- OGC (2007): *Governance Indicators – A User’s Guide*. Second Edition. New York, UNDP.
- Rakner, L. and Wang V. (2007): *Governance Assessments and the Paris Declaration: A CMI Issues Paper Prepared for the UNDP Bergen Seminar September 2007*. Bergen: CMI Reports.
- Rose, N. (1999): *Powers of Freedom: Reframing political thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, N., O’Malley, P. and Valverde, M. (2006): *Governmentality*. *Annu. Rev. Law Soc. Sci.* 2006. 2:83–104
- Rose, N. and Miller, P. (2010): *Political power beyond the State: problematics of government*. *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol.61, pp.271-303
- Rosga, A. and Satterthwaite, M.L. (2009): *The Trust in Indicators: Measuring Human Rights*. *Berkley Journal of International Law*, Forthcoming NYU School of Law, Public Law Research Paper No.08-59
- Sætnan, A. R., Lomell, H. M., and Hammer, S. (2011): *The Mutual Construction of Statistics and Society*. New York: Routledge.
- UNDP (2011a): *Fast Facts: United Nations Development Programme: Democratic Governance Assessments*. New York, UNDP.
- UNDP (2011b): *Responding to Trends in Democratic Governance: Toward a New Strategic Vision for DGG*. New York, UNDP.
- UNDP (2012a): *Discussion Paper. Measuring Democracy and Democratic Governance in a post-2015 Development Framework*. New York, UNDP.
- UNDP (2012b): *UNDP at a Glance*. New York, UNDP. Website: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/about_us/_jcr_content/contentPar/developmentreport/file.res/w-undp_brochure_2012-Eng-final.pdf
- UNDP (2012c): *UNDP Results Democratic Governance*. New York, UNDP.
- Walters, W. (2012): *Governmentality: Critical encounters*. New York: Routledge.

Whitfield, L. (2008): Politics of Aid: African Strategies for Dealing with Donors. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

WB (2012a): Collaborating to improve the measurement of results from support for Governance and Public Sector Management reforms: A Discussion Note. World Bank

World Bank (2012b): Governance and Public Sector Management. The World Bank - Website: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/285741-1348676611027/PSGDataSheet.pdf>

WB (2012c): Strengthening Governance: Tackling corruption The World Bank Group's updated strategy and implementation plan. World Bank.

WB (2012d): The World Bank's Approach to Public Sector Management 2011-2020: Better Results from Public Sector Institutions. The World Bank – Website: www.worldbank.org

WB (2013): The World Bank Group Goals: End extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity. The World Bank – Website: <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/WB-goals2013.pdf>

Websites

Aidwatch (2010): Is Impact Measurement a Dead End? <http://aidwatchers.com/2010/07/is-impact-measurement-a-dead-end/> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

Big Push Forward (2013): The Politics of Evidence: Conference Report now available. <http://bigpushforward.net/> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

Devex (2013): Why good governance should be included in the post-2015 agenda. <https://www.devex.com/en/news/good-governance-post-2015/80834> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013a): UNDP: About the Governance Assessments Portal. <http://www.gaportal.org/about-the-governance-assessment-portal> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013b): UNDP: Achieve political impact. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/achieve-political-impact> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013c): UNDP: Challenges in developing a national governance database. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/develop-a-governance-database/challenges-in-developing-a-national-governance-database> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013d): UNDP: Collect governance data. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/collect-governance-data> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013e): UNDP: Decide on what to include in the mapping. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/map-existing-indicators/decide-on-what-to-include-in-the-mapping> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013f): UNDP: Define and select indicators. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/define-and-select-indicators> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013g): UNDP: Develop a governance database. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/develop-a-governance-database> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013h): UNDP: Develop an assessment framework. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/develop-an-assessment-framework> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013i): UNDP: Developing a communication strategy. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/communicate-indicators/developing-a-communication-strategy> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013j): UNDP: Disaggregated and country contextualized data. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/collect-governance-data/disaggregated-and-country-contextualized-data> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013k): UNDP: Donor Assessments. <http://gaportal.org/global-initiatives/donor-assessments> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013l): UNDP: Evaluate Country Preparedness. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/evaluate-country-preparedness> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013m): UNDP: Frameworks for looking at policymaking. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/achieve-political-impact/frameworks-for-looking-at-policymaking> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013n): UNDP: Fund Assessments activities. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/fund-assessment-activities> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013o): UNDP: How to. <http://www.gaportal.org/how-to> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP, UNDP (2013p): Initiatives supported by UNDP. <http://gaportal.org/undp-supported> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013q): UNDP: Key opportunities for governance assessments in policymaking. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/achieve-political-impact/key-opportunities-for-governance-assessments-in-policymaking> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013r): UNDP: Key recommendations. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/strengthen-evidence-based-policymaking/key-recommendations> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP, UNDP (2013s): Managing information on governance. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/develop-a-governance-database/managing-information-on-governance> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013t): UNDP: Mapping supply and demand. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/evaluate-country-preparedness/mapping-supply-and-demand> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013u): UNDP: Select indicators for monitoring of policy. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/define-and-select-indicators/select-indicators-for-monitoring-of-policy> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013v): UNDP: Selecting from different types of data. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/collect-governance-data/selecting-from-different-types-of-data> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013x): UNDP: Software solutions. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/develop-a-governance-database/software-solutions> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013y): UNDP: Strengthen evidence-based policymaking. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/strengthen-evidence-based-policymaking> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013z): UNDP: Types of indicators. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/define-and-select-indicators/types-of-indicators> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013aa): UNDP: Undertaking a stakeholder analysis. <http://gaportal.org/how-to/evaluate-country-preparedness/undertaking-a-stakeholder-analysis> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013ab): UNDP: UNDP Global Programme on Democratic Governance Assessments. <http://gaportal.org/resources/undp-global-programme-on-democratic-governance-assessments> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013ac): UNDP: What are the normative principles? <http://gaportal.org/how-to/develop-an-assessment-framework/what-are-the-normative-principles> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013ad): UNDP: What are the options? <http://gaportal.org/how-to/develop-an-assessment-framework/what-are-the-options> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

GAP (2013ae): UNDP: What makes a "good" governance indicator? <http://gaportal.org/how-to/define-and-select-indicators/what-makes-a-good-governance-indicator> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

NGO Performance (2011): Measuring results: The demand-side revolution. <http://ngoperformance.org/2011/03/02/measuring-results-the-demand-side-revolution/> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

OGF (2013): The UNDP Oslo Governance Forum. http://oslogovernanceforum.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=164&Itemid=224 (Latest accessed, July 2013)

ProgBlog (2013): The Power of Numbers. [http://theblogprogress.blogspot.dk/2013/07/the-power-of-numbers-how-much-or-little.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:+blogspot/theprogressblog+\(prog+blog\)\)](http://theblogprogress.blogspot.dk/2013/07/the-power-of-numbers-how-much-or-little.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:+blogspot/theprogressblog+(prog+blog))) (Latest accessed, July 2013)

Hauser Center (2010): The Hauser Center for Nonprofit organizations at Harvard University (Humanitarian & Development NGOs Domain, connecting scholars and practitioners. Catalyzing reflection and exchange): When Aid Bureaucracy and Development Clash: A Former USAID Administrator Speaks Out. <http://hausercenter.org/iha/2010/07/09/when-aid-bureaucracy-and-development-clash-a-former-usaid-administrator-speaks-out/> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

UN (2013): UN Elections.org: Appointments to UN Agencies - World Bank. <http://www.unelections.org/?q=/node/72> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

UNDP (2013a): Democratic Governance: Democratic Governance Experts Roster. http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/expert_rosters/ (Latest accessed, July 2013)

UNDP (2013b): Democratic Governance: Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund.
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/democratic_governancethematictrustfund/ (Latest accessed, July 2013)

UNDP (2013c): Democratic Governance: Focus Areas.
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/focus_areas/
(Latest accessed, July 2013)

UNDP (2013d): Democratic Governance: Oslo Governance Centre.
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/oslo_governance_centre/
(Latest accessed, July 2013)

UNDP (2013e): Frequently asked Questions.
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/about_us/frequently_askedquestions/#undp
(Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2011): Slideshare.net: The PSM Approach: The World Bank's Approach to Public Sector Management Reform 2011-2020: Better Results from Public Sector Institutions.
<http://www.slideshare.net/PRMPS/the-psm-approach> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2013a): About.
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/0,,pagePK:50004410~piPK:36602~theSitePK:29708,00.html> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2013b): About: Leadership.
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/ORGANIZATION/BODEXT/0,,contentMDK:22428930~menuPK:6676390~pagePK:64020054~piPK:64020408~theSitePK:278036,00.html> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

World Bank (2013c): About: What we do.
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/0,,contentMDK:20103838~menuPK:1696997~pagePK:51123644~piPK:329829~theSitePK:29708,00.html> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2013d): Governance & Public Sector Management, Implementing the Public Sector Management Approach: Diagnostics
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/0,,contentMDK:23318446~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:286305,00.html> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2013e): Governance & Public Sector Management: Implementing the Public Sector Management Approach: Indicators of the Strength of Public Management Systems.
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/0,,contentMDK:23304376~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:286305,00.html> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2013e): Interactive timeline.
<http://www.worldbank.org/wb/about/timeline.htm?iframe=true&width=1020&height=620> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2013f): News and Broadcast: Governance and Anti-corruption.
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20040922~menuPK:34480~pagePK:34370~theSitePK:4607,00.html> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2013g): PREM Network: Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network.
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/ORGANIZATION/EXTPREMNET/0,,menuPK:489967~pagePK:64158571~piPK:64158630~theSitePK:489961,00.html> (Latest accessed, July 2013)

WB (2013h): What is IDA? <http://www.worldbank.org/ida/what-is-ida.html> (Latest accessed, July 2013)