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"Will to Improve" Governance in the Gambia

A research on the governance of the Gambia and the perception of citizens towards the various actors involved in governance, with specific emphasis on the government.

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Acknowledgment

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Abstract

This study focused on examining the governance of the Gambia, with a specific emphasis on Gambian citizens' perception of the government as the primary service provider in terms of accountability. To achieve this, it examined governance theory, which emphasizes the importance of non-state actors such as NGOs in providing public services. The findings of the study revealed a stark contrast in ratings between NGOs and the government, with NGOs being highly regarded for their services while the government received poor ratings due to significant deficiencies in public services. Despite this, citizens still held higher expectations of the government compared to other actors. Notably, the government played a role as a mediator in integrating non-state actors into decision-making processes, fostering collaboration and potentially strengthening accountability. In line with their commitment to democratic processes, citizens exhibited a strong determination to hold the government accountable. The interactions among the diverse actors involved in governance created tension; however, this tension also led to positive outcomes such as regime changes, expanded services, and enhanced capacity, effectively addressing various challenges.

Keywords:

Governance, Good Governance, Global Governance, Societal Governance, Government, NGO, CSO, Accountability

Word count: 14,867

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Full description
AKI	Acute Kidney Injury
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECD	Early Childhood Development
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NAWEC	National Water and Electricity Company
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VDC	Village Development Committee
WDC	Ward Development Committee
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Introduction

In 2022, there was a tragic medical incident that caused the death of as many as approximately 70 children in the Gambia. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), in late July, medical authorities in the Gambia detected an increase in cases of acute kidney injury (AKI) among children under the age of five (WHO, 2022b). The government later stated that around 69 children had died from these injuries (ibid). In October, the WHO announced that these deaths might be linked to the four cough syrups made by Maiden Pharmaceuticals, an Indian company (ibid). International NGOs such as the Red Cross and ChildFund actively engaged in collecting those syrups and disseminating the information and guidance among the population after the possible link between those cough syrups and deaths of children was suggested[1].

The public health tragedy in the Gambia described above highlights the involvement of multiple parties, such as WHO, the RedCross, ChildFund, in safeguarding the well-being of the citizens, rather than relying solely on the government of the country. This may raise some questions pertaining to the collaboration mechanism between the Gambian government and non-state organizations in the realm of public health. Furthermore, it prompts a discussion on whether the incident can be classified as a domestic problem or international issue, given the involvement of various transnational entities including WHO, the RedCross, ChildFund and Indian pharmaceuticals. Finally, it also raises questions about how the citizens of the Gambia would perceive accountability of the government in this case, given that public health is generally considered a primary responsibility of the state (Rosen, 2015).

Before delving into potential answers to the aforementioned questions, it is necessary to define the actors involved in the incident, which can be broadly categorized into two groups: the state and non-state entities. Firstly, the Gambian government is considered a sovereign state, which can be defined as a political community that holds a legitimate monopoly on the use of physical force within a defined territory (Torres and Anderson, 2004). The core functions of a state rely on two essential structural components: the government's ability to effectively exercise

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[1] Later on, WHO urged action to protect children from contaminated medicines in other countries such as Indonesia and Uzbekistan after reports of several similar incidents from those countries (WHO, 2023).

authority over its sovereign territory, and the possession of sufficient administrative capacity, including skilled personnel, systems, and infrastructure, to carry out its functions (ibid). Secondly, the Gambian context experiences a significant influence from non-state actors, including international organizations such as WHO, ChildFund, and RedCross. International organizations can be defined as institutions that adhere to a formal set of rules and objectives, employing a rationalized administrative structure (Archer, 2014). They possess a formal technical and material organization comprising constitutions, local branches, physical equipment, emblems, letterhead stationery, staff, and administrative hierarchies (ibid). These entities typically engage in intergovernmental, transnational, and transgovernmental relationships, primarily focusing on areas such as trade, finance, arms control, or the environment (ibid). Additional discussion about non-governmental organizations would proceed further in Chapter 3.

States and international organizations collaborate to achieve their political and policy objectives. As an example, the WHO, being a United Nations agency, is funded through contributions from UN member countries and donors. In 2021, the WHO's total revenue amounted to USD 4,066 million, with expenses of USD 3,718 million dedicated to activities such as supporting health emergencies and providing public health consultations (WHO, 2022a). These activities can be carried out through direct grants to governments or indirect support by hiring experts or implementing projects in collaboration with governments and other NGOs (ibid). Through such collaboration, states can protect public health while WHO can work towards its objective of promoting global health.

In terms of the Gambian government's approach to public health, it can be observed that the government plays a prominent role as the primary provider of health services (USAID, 2019). It dedicates a higher proportion of its overall government expenditure to healthcare compared to the average among African nations (ibid). However, considering the country's status as one of the lowest-income countries in Africa, the per capita spending on health is approximately half of the average expenditure across the continent (ibid). Consequently, the country heavily relies on external funding sources to support its healthcare expenditures (ibid). Notably, around half of the reported total health expenditures and over two-thirds of the government's health spending are derived from donors (ibid). Moreover, due to the limited availability of resources for healthcare facilities, expertise, and training programs for healthcare professionals, non-state

entities such as private organizations and NGOs have also made significant contributions to these sectors (WHO, 2009).

While the collaboration between the Gambian government and non-state actors can contribute to the objective of improving public health for the population, it raises further questions. As the government is traditionally assumed to be responsible for protecting and promoting public health and other public services (Tobey, 1927; Gostin and Gostin, 2000), involving non-state organizations in these sectors may create issues of government accountability (Rhodes, 1997). The state has been given the power to govern non-state actors, including individuals, in return for providing services to citizens (Pierre, 2000). In addition to that, unlike the government, non-state actors may not be bound by the same accountability measures, such as being subject to elections and legislative oversight (ibid). This could lead to confusion among citizens when services are provided by non-state actors in terms of responsibility and accountability of the state. The democratic accountability of the state has been argued to be weakened as other actors are doing its job for the citizens (ibid).

The theory of governance explores the changes in the government's role and associated issues. Governance can be broadly defined as the control and direction of activities to achieve socially acceptable outcomes (Roe, 2013). In the past, it was often used interchangeably with government, referring to the means of achieving desirable results. However, modern governance theory emphasizes the transformation of the government's role from the sole service provider to one among many, working alongside diverse actors. Therefore, examining the current situation in the Gambia through the lens of governance theory would provide a deeper understanding of the country's socio-political condition. To gain insights into its future trajectory, it is essential to analyze the socio-political history of the country and its impact on people's lives. Moreover, considering the population's perception of governance is crucial, particularly given the relatively short history of state building in the Gambia. Ultimately, the perspective of the population would significantly influence the future direction of the country's governance.

1.1. Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this paper is not only to add to the existing empirical research on governance with the case of the Gambia, but also to examine how the citizens perceive the governance practices in the country. Through the research, this paper sought for valuable insights that could be utilized to reshape the governance and make it more responsive to the needs and wants of the country's population. As such, the aim of this paper is to analyze how Gambian citizens perceive and assess various governance actors and in particular, the government in terms of accountability. To achieve this, three sub-questions would be examined:

1. How different political bodies of the state and non-state participated in the governance in the Gambia
2. How citizens of the Gambia evaluate and interact with different actors of governance in the Gambia
3. How citizens of the Gambia evaluate the state as actor in governance in terms of accountability

This paper proceeds with an examination of the governance in the Gambia by providing a contextual overview of the country's current economic and political conditions, as well as its development trajectory in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 would then discuss the theory of governance, including its primary arguments and its various applications such as good governance and global governance, serving as a theoretical foundation to explain the current state of governance in the Gambia. Chapter 4 introduces the framework of societal governance as the analytical lens for the subsequent analysis. The chosen methodology for data collection and analysis would be followed in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 would apply the societal governance framework to the empirical data, drawing meaningful insights and conclusions. Finally, Chapter 7 would summarize the findings on governance in the Gambia and suggest future research directions.

2. Country Background

This chapter delves into the socio-political trajectory of the Gambia, offering an exploration of key aspects such as the overall political history, the diverse foreign policies pursued by different regimes, and the current socio-economic and political landscape of the country. By examining these factors, a comprehensive understanding of the governance context and the livelihoods of Gambian citizens can be attained.

2.1. Overview

The Gambia is a small country with a population of 2.5 million located in West Africa stretching along the Gambia River and surrounded by Senegal. As the river was accessible to the Atlantic Ocean, the country was sought to be controlled by different countries during the colonial period (World Bank Group, 2020). From 1783 the country was under the power of Britain until its independence in 1965 following a prolonged struggle for independence (ibid). Hence, when western countries were developing the concept of the government and democracy in their own ways and pace through revolution and civil war, the Gambia, like other colonized countries, was deprived of opportunity and time to develop its own social-political ideology.

In 1962, the Gambia elected its first prime minister, who later became the president when the country became a republic. Under a strong and centralized presidential system, this individual governed for 24 years, restricting the role of civil society and exerting tight control over opposition parties (World Bank Group, 2020). However, in 1994, the first president was overthrown in a bloodless military coup led by Yahya Jammeh (ibid). Jammeh maintained his power by employing political patronage, which led to an inflated civil service, making payments to supportive elites, and implementing a highly centralized allocation of resources that deprived locally elected leaders of financial means to address the needs of their constituents (ibid). As time went on, the regime grew increasingly authoritarian and autocratic, targeting political opponents and subjecting them to torture, execution, and arbitrary detention (ibid).

After a long autocratic regime period, in late 2016, Adama Barrow was elected as the president of the Gambia, based on a broad coalition of seven political parties and with support from the elite, youth non-governmental organizations, community-level women's groups and the diaspora (World Bank Group, 2020). Since the peaceful transition, now people have freedom of speech that they can discuss politics and criticize their government (ibid). However, there have been arguments regarding if the new regime has come up with expectations of the citizens in terms of social services and protection (ibid). As a result, the state remains divided along political lines depending on their opinions of the government (ibid), which would be discussed more in Chapter 6, of findings and analysis.

2.2. Development and Foreign Policy of Regimes

During the tenure of the first president, Jawara, from 1965 to 1994, the country's foreign policy objectives focused on preserving territorial sovereignty and attracting external economic resources (Saine, 2000). The regime successfully garnered economic and political support from Western and Arab/Gulf states by maintaining a pro-Western stance, opposing communism, and upholding a strong human rights record (ibid). Under this regime, a significant portion of the national development budget, up to 80 percent, was financed by the EU, Japan, the UK, and international financial institutions such as a World Bank affiliate (ibid). As a result, foreign aid had a substantial impact on the socio-economic conditions of the country (ibid). However, despite these efforts, the Gambia continued to have one of the lowest standards of living, with approximately 63 percent of the population living below the poverty line (ibid). This was primarily attributed to the underperformance of public institutions, compounded by human deficiencies and corruption among the elite (ibid). The article suggests that the Gambia, under Jawara's leadership, faced a paradox: while it managed to establish a relatively open economy and a functioning democracy, it struggled to achieve significant development (ibid).

During the second regime of Yahya Jammeh (1994-2016), which was started by military coup, there had been various economic sanctions and suspension of aid and payments assistance (Saine, 2000). The sanctions had the immediate effect of potentially affecting the projects outlined in the development programs of the transition period (ibid). Jamme expressed his criticism towards the aid provided by the IMF and World Bank, stating that the structural adjustment policies under 'good governance' agenda had adverse effects on the poor of the

Gambia (ibid). However, later the president had changed his attitudes to become more conciliatory, committing to democracy and human rights, in order to gain Western support and financial assistance because the country had to pay an enormous toll on the economy of the country due to sanctions and reduced development aid (ibid). The changed behavior of the regime succeeded in attracting external financial assistance, but it only marginally improved the lives of the Gambia's people as indicated below (ibid).

2.3. Outcomes of Development of the Government

One of the main indicators of the poor performance of the state of the Gambia is its unimproved poverty over the long term. According to the UNDP, the latest available data on poverty from 2015 indicated that poverty remains a major challenge for the country with the proportion of the population living in poverty has been maintained from 48.4% in 2010 to 48.6% in 2015/16 (UNDP, 2022). The poverty rate has been similar in 2019 at 45.8% due to low and variable economic growth caused by the recent COVID crisis (World Bank Group, 2022). In addition to that, high unemployment rate of 32.5% (2018) and low literacy rate of 42% (2016) (ibid), along with high corruption perception index (score: 37/100/ the lower the score the more corrupted, ranking: 102/180) (Transparency International, 2022) shed lights on challenges of the governance of the state and the struggle of the population accordingly.

The Gambian government's unsuccessful governing as evidenced by high levels of poverty, low education rates, and widespread corruption, has led to numerous non-state organizations such as NGOs and CSOs stepping in to fill the gap since the country gained independence. Especially Africa has seen explosive growth of both western and local NGOs in the late 20th century (Hearn, 2007).

2.4. Public Service Delivery of the Government

As previously mentioned, the Gambia's development efforts have yielded unfavorable outcomes, leading to the assumption that the government's poor performance has caused difficulties for its citizens. In order to gain a better understanding of the population's living

conditions, this paper would examine the public service sector in each specific area, utilizing data from the World Bank Report (2020).

(Public Sector) The public sector in the state has grown rapidly, with a 70 percent increase in public servants over the past decade, but this has not led to improved development outcomes, rather it has caused overlap (World Bank Group, 2020). For example, state enterprises and agencies have taken over the roles of policy making and regulation, which should ideally be the responsibility of government ministries (ibid). On the other hand, ministries are still responsible for implementation functions even though they would be better handled by delegation to agencies and local governments, or through outsourcing and privatization (ibid). The government needs to allocate resources more efficiently by delegating tasks to appropriate agencies and local governments (ibid). However, the lack of qualified personnel, especially in senior positions, is a challenge due to limited fiscal space for competitive salaries (ibid). To address these issues, the government has launched a staff audit to eliminate ghost workers and payroll malpractices and has conducted a job evaluation and grading exercise for all civil service positions in 2017 (ibid).

(Labor Market) Around 30% of working-age youth in the Gambia are not in education, employment, or training (NEET), particularly in urban areas where half of young females are categorized as NEET (World Bank Group, 2020). Underemployment is also prevalent, with 36% of workers estimated to be underemployed, more so in rural areas than in urban areas (ibid). The lack of skills reduces productivity and earnings from labor markets (Arias, Evans and Santos, 2019). Political instability, economic stagnation, and a shortage of domestic jobs have led to significant labor migration, with remittances accounting for 15.3% of GDP in 2017, and skilled emigration rate reaching 63% in 2000, with most skilled emigrants going to the US and UK (Kebbeh, 2013).

(Health) The focus on tertiary care and the lack of resources are hindering universal health coverage in the Gambia (World Bank Group, 2020). The government's health policies aim to achieve universal health coverage, but the government only spends 1.1 percent of GDP on health, which is below the recommended 15 percent in the 2001 Abuja Declaration (ibid). The health system is heavily focused on tertiary (24 percent) and secondary (23 percent) care, neglecting primary health care (0.01 percent), which is more cost-effective (ibid). Although most Gambians have access to health facilities, hospitals are unevenly distributed, with more access for urban residents than rural residents (ibid). Government funds 47 percent of total

health expenditures, while 39 percent is financed through development assistance, and the rest through out-of-pocket expenditures (ibid).

(Education) The Gambia's government has successfully achieved full gender parity through basic and secondary education levels, but total spending on education only represents 3.2 percent of GDP, which is lower than the Sub Saharan African average (4.6 percent) (ibid). Therefore, the cost of education places more burden on households as private households contribute 58 percent of total spending on education, compared to public funding which accounts for 34 percent (ibid). Addition to that, most teachers lack content knowledge and pedagogical skills, hindering literacy rates (ibid). The average years of schooling among the Gambia's working-age population is only 3.7 years, constraining productivity and citizen engagement (ibid).

(Social Service) The persistently high poverty rate indicates that the safety net for impoverished and vulnerable households in the Gambia is insufficient (ibid). Current social safety net programs are accessible to less than 1 percent of the population, positioning the Gambia among the Sub Saharan African nations with the lowest social safety net coverage (ibid). While protective social protection schemes exist, they have limited coverage and primarily rely on donor funding (ibid). The most prevalent forms of social protection interventions are non-contributory social assistance programs that target poor or vulnerable individuals or households through project-based and donor-financed cash and in-kind social transfer projects (ibid). Preventive social protection programs mostly cater to a more affluent segment of the population (ibid). Only a minority of formal sector employees (10 percent) have access to social insurance, which excludes unemployment insurance. Additionally, there is no national minimum wage in place (ibid). Lastly, although agriculture is the main source of livelihood for most households and poses a high level of weather-related risks, there is no state-sponsored crop insurance program for farmers, despite its importance to the economy and government priorities (ibid).

3. Theoretical Background

In this chapter, it would discuss the primary arguments of governance theory as well as major players in the governance including the state, CSO and NGO. Furthermore, it would then explore different perspectives of governance theory that could offer a socio-political context and a basis for analyzing the current governance situation in the Gambia.

3.1. Government in Governance

While the concepts of governance can be traced back throughout history, the focus on governance increased in the 1990s and has continued to expand since (Ansell and Torfing, 2022). As governance could be defined as the control and direction of activities to achieve socially acceptable outcomes, traditionally, it was synonymous with government (Roe, 2013). But the theory of governance emerged by problematizing the role and function of the state. In Britain, this theory gained prominence as the government implemented robust policies aimed at reducing public services and introducing market-based principles to the public sector (Rhodes, 1997). This response was driven by the economic crisis and the substantial burden of public services following the expansion of the state sector after World War II (ibid). Given the relationship between the state and governance theory, it becomes necessary to discuss the definition of government in order to gain deeper insights into governance.

According to Hirst (2000, p.26), the state government has four main roles. First, they have "defined the powers and responsibilities they and other institutions and actors possess within their legal territory" (ibid). Through sovereignty, they claim the capacity to regulate subordinate governmental institutions and to make state laws superior over other rules (ibid). Since the rise of liberal constitutionalism, the rule of law has been central to the definition of limited government (ibid). Government actions are limited to their constitutional powers and must comply with their own laws (ibid). Second, governments have been "regulators of extra governmental social activities and also providers of services to citizens" (ibid). Thus, they have been concerned with substantive social policy and affecting the well-being of the population (ibid). Third, governments have been "orchestrators of social consensus" as the leading partners in forms of negotiated governance with major organized social interests (ibid). As a coordinator and as a source of constraint, it is necessary to keep partners at the table to achieve

social agreement and collaboration among partners and different interests (ibid). Lastly, governments have served as the means of defense of the national territory and as the exclusive representative of that territory abroad (ibid).

Among five usages presented above, traditionally the role of government was valued more in areas related to the first and second usages in terms of democracy (Hirst, 2000). Those two definitions of the government explain that citizens have granted power to the state to govern over non-state actors, including individual citizens, in exchange for social services that are provided to them (ibid). Here, the services for the population have to be provided in a way the citizens expected or demanded from the government and this implies of democratic relationship between two sides of citizens and the state system (ibid). This democratic relationship between citizens and the state places the accountability of these services on the government rather than any other entities.

On the other hand, the governance theory raises doubts about the traditional role of the state and its capacity to provide services to its citizens for their well-being (Rhodes, 1997). One source of this problematization can be traced back to the Trilateral Commission[2] (Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki, 1975, p.161), which brought attention to a global issue of the "overload on government". This issue is said to be caused by increasing citizen expectations, limited public resources, and low productivity growth in the public sector (ibid). The overload of public welfare systems coincides with a perceived decline in public-spirited values and growing individualism that undermines social and political cohesion, leading to an "ungovernability of society" (Ansell and Torfing, 2022, p.5). Consequently, the theory acknowledges the possibility of other actors to be involved with providing services placing the state in the role of mediator among those actors rather than sole public service provider. Therefore, it emphasizes the role of the state in the third area as an orchestrator of social consensus (Hirst, 2000).

The theory represents a shift in the meaning of government, referring to a "new process of governing, a changed condition of ordered rule, or the new method by which society is governed" (Rhodes, 2000, p.55). However, the changed role of the state from service provider to mediator among providers (either it is called shrinkage or transformation) raises issues of

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[2] The Trilateral Commission was established in 1973 by private citizens from Western Europe, Japan, and North America with the aim of promoting closer collaboration among these regions to address common issues. The commission works towards enhancing public awareness of these problems, advocating for joint solutions, and cultivating a culture of cooperation among the regions. (Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki, 1975).

democracy and accountability. Because now rather than the sole government, various actors deliver services to its citizens, it could be argued that how the expectation of citizens would be applied to the way of delivering service and moreover, between the government and non-state actors, which one would take responsibility for services. Rhodes (1997, 21p) also argued as below regarding changed the role of the state and its accountability;

> The recent changes in the British government have led to a chorus of complaints about the loss of democratic accountability, whether through the alleged emasculation of local authorities, the erosion of ministerial accountability by agencies, or the growth of non-elected, special-purpose bodies and patronage appointments.

On the flip side, an alternative interpretation suggests that citizens could be regaining control of government through their participation in networks as users and governors create a "postmodern public administration" (Rhodes, 1997, p. 58). This idea provided a feasible model for public administration and nascent forms of the model consisted of think tank experts, legislative staff, policy analysts, public administrators, interested citizens, process generalists, even elected officials participating together to work out possibilities for what to do next (ibid). In a similar vein, governance empowers citizens in a world where governance operates without government and lines of authority are informal, citizens can hold their own through collective action (ibid). However, in order to enable citizens to take collective action and have their voices heard in public services, there must be multiple channels available to communicate among citizens and the government.

3.2. Different Meanings of Governance

This section aims to introduce the main usages of governance among various theories in different areas, providing a theoretical context for the research topic. Specifically, the paper would adopt the perspective of Hirst (2000, p. 14-19). Firstly, in the realm of economic development, the World Bank has advocated for 'good governance' as a necessary element of "effective economic modernization", with the expectation that it would create a stable regime, rule of law, and efficient state administration (ibid). Secondly, the concept of global governance is used "in the field of international institutions and regimes" to address problems such as global warming and poverty that cannot be managed by states alone (ibid). Thirdly, new public management strategies developed since the early 1980s have led to the privatization of the public sector and the introduction of commercial practices and management styles to the

public sector (ibid). Lastly, "the new practice of coordinating activities through networks, partnerships, and deliberative forums by diverse actors such as labor unions, trade associations, firms, NGOs, local authority representatives, social entrepreneurs, and community groups is also related to governance" (ibid).

Among those usages described above, the first one of "good governance" and second one of "global governance" could shed light on how the theory originated in Western Europe might be relevant to the socio-political governance situation in the Gambia. Firstly, the concept of "good governance" has been promoted by donors including Western countries and international institutes such as the United Nations and the World Bank as a crucial element of development projects. Hence, those international organizations assess and measure the quality of governing institutions in aid recipient countries since the 1960s (Ansell and Torfing, 2022) (Smith, 2007). Accordingly, governments in recipient countries have long been influenced by the presence of aid, which can have effects on public policy (Smith, 2007). "Good governance" entails a democratically organized government within a democratic political culture as well as efficient administrative organizations and the right policies, particularly in the economic sphere such as trade liberalization, free enterprise, a minimalist state and free markets (ibid). Achieving good governance thus requires not only policy reform but also the reform of governmental organizations in recipient countries to meet the standard of Western countries (ibid). However, these efforts have not always had much practical impact as it is argued that failing to consider a country's unique social, cultural, economic, and political context when applying policies from one to another country could lead to unfavorable outcomes (ibid). Despite any potential limitations in its effectiveness, the promotion of good governance was prioritized in recipient countries that sought for external aid resources. The Gambia was among those recipient countries as previously mentioned in Chapter 2, the country's context that Gambian governments have made efforts to adhere to good governance principles in order to align with the expectations of Western donor nations and international institutions.

Secondly, the idea of global governance has gained attention as the central orienting themes in the practice and study of international affairs of the post-Cold War Period (Barnett and Duvall, 2004). Understanding of global governance has evolved in conjunction with increasing awareness of "globalization" Gaskarth (2015), and Guzzini (2012, p. 4) identified two "takes" on global governance, one is "the different players beyond sovereign state government" and the other "multitude of actors for granted and explores the ensuing rules of the game". The global governance arena involves various actors such as international organizations,

transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and networks (Barnett and Duvall, 2004). These actors have played significant roles in shaping the dynamics of global justice, as well as contributing to the development and institutionalization of norms (ibid). In this usage of governance, it becomes clear that private actors (market parties and NGOs) often play a much more important informal role than states, nationally and internationally (Kooiman *et al.*, 2005). However, Barnett and Duvall (2004) argued that discussion about the emergence and roles of CSOs and NGOs in global governance does not fully consider the power dynamics involved. The power of governments to work with transnational and transgovernmental coalitions is vital in fostering civil society growth, however, existing NGOs and CSOs tend to favor Western states and societies due to their main funding source (ibid). Consequently, their attempts to expand their influence would further amplify the power of the already powerful (ibid). In addition, transnational social action can affect weaker societies, potentially undermining democracy's authenticity, making it essential to scrutinize claims of authenticity and representation made by social movements and NGOs, as powerful actors can manipulate outcomes (ibid). Some of the strain on national governments has been the result of the increased importance of the international environment and of an arguably diminished capacity of those governments to insulate their economies and societies from the global pressures (Peters and Pierre, 1998). Those pressures on national governments come about through international capital markets (Hirst and Thompson, 1996).

The final application of governance, involving coordination through networks and partnerships, is referred to as societal governance. As discussed in previous chapters, the Gambian government collaborates with non-state organizations to tackle public health issues due to resource and expertise limitations. This collaborative approach aligns with governance theory, which recognizes that interactions between the state and non-state organizations are indispensable for addressing complex problems in contemporary, diverse, and dynamic societies (Kooiman, 2003). In the Gambia, this collaboration extends beyond public health and encompasses various other public services such as education, energy, and environment. Consequently, Chapter 4 would employ the framework of societal governance to analyze the socio-political governance of the Gambia.

3-3. Civil Society Organization and Non-Governmental Organization in Governance

With the emergence of governance theory, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become significant actors alongside the state. These non-state actors have assumed major roles as service providers in the public sector. This section would further explore the activities and impact of CSOs and NGOs on governance, considering their prominent position in the realm of governance.

Firstly, examining civil society organizations (CSOs), contemporary descriptions position civil society as "located somewhere between the state, the market, and the family. Here people come together in projects of all kinds to make their collective histories" (Chandhoke et al., 2002, p. 45). Similarly, Edwards (2000, p. 7) defines civil society as "the arena in which people come together to advance the interests they hold in common, not for profit or political power, but because they care enough about something to take collective action. Civil society includes all associations and networks between the family and the state except firms". CSOs often emerge when "market mechanisms ignore these (human) needs and governmental regimes are deemed too repressive, too weak, or too resource-trapped to serve them" (Teegen, Doh, and Vachani, 2004, p. 467). The organizational forms within civil society exhibit diversity in terms of their formalities, sizes, geographic scopes of activities, motives for formation and operation, and connections to the market, state, and family realms (Gray, Bebbington, and Collison, 2006). One specific organizational form that has thrived within this context is the non-governmental organization (NGO) (ibid).

Secondly, focusing on non-governmental organizations (NGOs), their proliferation on the international stage is evident as the number of NGOs registered with the UN Economic and Social Council surged from 41 to 700 between 1994 and 1992 (United Nations ECOSOC, 2018).[3] Various factors account for this growth, including the externalization of state functions to civic sector organizations in the global North, driven by liberal states or neoliberal politics inspired by figures like Thatcher and Reagan, which incentivized the formation of NGOs (Lang, 2013). NGOs are typically characterized as organizations focused on promoting social or environmental goals such as human rights and global warming, rather than economic or

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[3] ECOSOC has been main entry point into the UN system for NGOs and as of 31 December 2022, 6,343 NGOs enjoy consultative status with ECOSOC(United Nations ECOSOC, 2022)

political power (Gray, Bebbington, and Collison, 2006). They are often regarded as more effective than governments in achieving tangible outcomes and have shown resilience by stepping in when governments have failed or withdrawn (Lang, 2013). Numerous studies provide evidence that NGOs have stepped in where governments are unwilling to act, have withdrawn, or have failed (ibid). Moreover, international organizations have found value in involving NGOs in their work, as it is believed that NGOs contribute to democratizing the system by engaging civil society in decision-making processes, thereby ensuring governance participation (Murray, 2010). As a result, "both governments and UN organizations increasingly rely on NGOs to deliver services" (ibid, p.343). Nevertheless, there are criticisms that, despite their facilitation of more inclusive, participatory, and sustainable development, NGOs have also played a role in perpetuating systemic inequalities and have been influenced by neoliberalism, promoting privatization and reducing government intervention (Klees, 1998). The increasing number and influence of NGOs are also subjects of debate, with some arguing that it undermines representative democracy, while others view it as a symbol of global democratization (Lang, 2013).

3.4. Summary

This chapter examined the theory of governance, including its origins and the relationship between state and non-state actors. It discussed the transformation of the government's role from being the sole service provider to acting as a mediator between non-state entities, and how this shift affected democratic accountability and citizen empowerment. Good governance and global governance were also examined to assess their impact on the state in the context of international development. Furthermore, the concept of societal governance, which suggests collaboration between the state and non-state actors, was presented as an analytical framework to better comprehend the socio-political governance of the Gambia. Finally, the chapter explored the activities of CSOs and NGOs, the main non-state actors in governance, examining their advantages and disadvantages.

4. Theoretical Framework- Societal Governance

This chapter adopts societal governance as an analytical framework to scrutinize governance in the Gambia. Societal governance is based on the realization that governance has a basis in societal development, and constitutes a reflection thereof (Kooiman *et al.*, 2005). The state of contemporary governance reflects in particular growth of social, economic and political interdependencies, and trends such as differentiation, integration, globalization and localization (ibid). These processes result in lengthening chains of interaction, stretching across different scale levels and sectors (ibid). In addition to other effects, the lengthening of chains increases the number of parties participating in them, while interactions among these parties also multiply (ibid). Kooiman (Kooiman, 2003, p. 3) asserted about the theory as below:

> The essence of the argument is that governance of and in modern societies is a mix of all kinds of governing efforts by all manner of social-political actors, public as well as private. These mixes are societal "responses" to persistent and changing governing 'demands' set against ever growing societal diversity, dynamics and complexity. However, the changed role of the state has been shifted rather than shrinked based on a growing awareness of the limitations of traditional governance by the state on its own.

Main concepts addressed trait of society as well as governance could be discussed as follow,

4.1. Diversity, Complexity, Dynamics as traits of Society as well as governance

'Diversity', 'Complexity', 'Dynamics' refer to the fact that social conditions in modern societies are perceived as multi-layered and complicated (Türke, 2008, p.1). Three concepts are characteristics of social conditions, situations and developments (Kooiman, 2003). They cannot be considered only as basic governing challenges, but instead as central features of governance itself (ibid). In analytical terms, they can be seen as main variables in societal governance analysis (ibid).

First, diversity is a characteristic of the entities that form the system and points to the nature and degree in which they differ and calls attention to the actors in the social-political system (Kooiman, 2000). Governing diversity means influencing diverse social or natural entities by protecting, maintaining, creating, promoting, or limiting the similarities or similarities of their qualities (Kooiman, 2003).

Secondly, complexity is an indicator for the architecture of the relations among the parts of a system, among the parts and the whole and between the system and its environment, which is used to examine structures, interdependencies and interrelations at and between different levels (Kooiman, 2000). As various actors involved with politics from the state to non-state actors such as international organizations and NGOs, it is very difficult to trace patterns of relationships and influence of them (Wilkinson, 2005).

Lastly, dynamics applies to the tensions within a system and between systems. This concept explains the irregularity with which developments within and around such systems take place and how to deal with them (Pierre, 2000). Diversity and complexity are reinforced by dynamics (Kooiman *et al.*, 2005). It is argued that dynamics are increasing because of the vigor of modern society, in combination with a lengthening of the chains of interaction (ibid). When chains are extended and include more actors, changes in any one aspect have a broad series of consequences (ibid). Dynamics of societal sectors is considered to be an important factor as to why governing is so difficult (Kooiman and Van Vliet, 2000).

Those three characteristics explain not only attributes of modern societies but also imply that they should be applied to governance. Kooiman (2003, p. 8) asserted as below about it.

> The governance perspective starts from those three attributes of the societies to be governed- and the governing themselves. These societies need order, but nothing can change without dynamics. They require similarity to enable communication, but diversity to gain new insights. They need standards to reduce uncertainty and risk, but complexity to solve problems and create opportunities

Now, based on those social political conditions, it should be discussed about means to govern and the theory focuses on a process of interaction between different social and political actors to produce opportunities for problem solving.

4.2. Interaction as a Central Concept

The concept of interaction is essential in understanding societal governance, as it involves the mutual relationships and interactions between those who govern and those who are governed (Türke, 2008), (Kooiman, 2000). Hence, interaction provides insight in the mutual relationships within and between social-political problems and opportunities (Kooiman, 2000). It points at movements of tension, at the dynamics among entities (ibid). The interaction concept includes intentional, structural, and process aspects, and it helps to observe social-political reality in terms of its differentiations and integration (ibid).

The dynamics of the motives of the participants often result in conflicts that become uncontrollable (Kooiman and Van Vliet, 2000). However, interaction is the key to breaking through the complexity, dynamics, and diversity of the social system (ibid). Because it creates and recreates messages and induces actors to add or subtract from the system they can adopt towards a system issue (Türke, 2008). Change takes place when actors adapt their varieties in regard to a system notion (ibid). Making use of interactions is essential to understanding societal governance and overcoming the complexity of the field related to the interactions within and between the system and its environment (ibid).

Interactions can adequately be used as key analytic elements of social systems. (Kooiman and Van Vliet, 2000). The interaction concept, with its intentional and structural aspects, can help express the three dimensions of society (ibid). When examining governing interactions, diversity can be seen through the variety of actors involved, dynamics can be seen through the tensions present within and around those interactions, and complexity can be seen through the interconnectedness inherent in governing interactions (ibid).

4.3. Interaction for Accountability of the Government

Accountability does not belong to the framework of societal governance, however, it is a critical concept to shape the perception of citizens toward their government. Hence, it would be analyzed along with other major concepts of the theory as part of the framework.

As discussed in the previous section, governance theorists argue that the traditional relationship of accountability between the state and citizens has changed as the position of the state as sole provider of services has been replaced by several different actors. That having said, it seems

clear that accountability remains a weak spot in the governance literature (Peters and Pierre, 1998). However, the assessment of accountability of government in governance must vary based on the distinctive economic and socio-political conditions of various countries. Because governance, like any other model of public service, is influenced by the political culture of the region it operates in (ibid). Therefore, governance as well accountability of the state should take different socio-political conditions depending on the national context in which it develops.

Accountability is a social relationship between an actor A and a forum B (Bovens, 2007). A is accountable to B if A is obligated to inform B about A's decisions and actions, to justify them, and to face different consequences depending on whether or not B is satisfied with A's performance or A's justification (ibid). In political terms, accountability is a requirement of those in power to explain and take responsibility for their choices and actions (Ackerman, 2005). Barnett and Finnemore (2006, p.171) suggested, "accountability matters because of the presumption that its absence means that those in power have the capacity to act without regard for those who authorize their actions and for those whose lives are affected by those actions". Democratic accountability is the accountability of decision-makers to the electoral forum: if voters are satisfied with governmental performance, they will renew their mandate to the incumbents (positive consequence); if not, they will 'throw the rascals out' (negative consequence) (Papadopoulos, 2010).

Accountability is seen as a tool to make and keep governments, agencies and individual officials effective in delivering on their promises (Papadopoulos, 2010). However, in a broad sense it is basically an evaluative, not an analytical, concept. It is used to qualify positively a state of affairs or the performance of an actor. It comes close to 'responsiveness' and 'a sense of responsibility'—a willingness to act in a transparent, fair and equitable way (Bovens, 2007). Accountability is an essentially contested and contestable concept because there is no general consensus about the standards for accountable behavior, and because they differ from role to role, time to time, place to place and from speaker to speaker (ibid).

Elections serve as important accountability mechanisms in democracies (Hong, 2017). Political accountability concerns whether a bureaucracy becomes more responsible and responsive to citizens' needs, whereas administrative accountability concerns whether a bureaucracy becomes more effective at meeting the performance targets determined through hierarchical government processes (ibid). The hierarchical chain of accountability cascades from citizens

who hold politicians accountable through frequent elections down to street-level bureaucrats who interact with the public on a daily basis and are responsible for delivering public services to citizens (ibid). Furthermore, it could emphasize the connection between accountability and social structures and institutions, where accountability is a social relationship in which an actor feels an obligation to explain and justify their conduct to some significant other (Yang, 2012).

4.4. Summary

In this chapter, the concept of societal governance was introduced, which suggests that the diverse, complex, and dynamic traits of modern society require a corresponding approach to governance in order to effectively address problems and enhance opportunities. The primary focus for addressing the difficulties arising from the socio-political traits of diversity, complexity, and dynamics is to encourage interaction between diverse actors within a multilayered structure, despite any tensions that may exist, in order to achieve transformative outcomes. Additionally, accountability was highlighted as a key factor to analyze how socio-political governance would impact citizens' perception of their government in terms of accountability.

5. Methodology

This chapter would present the methodological choices including research design, interview plan, sampling and data collection methods. Additionally, consideration of positionality and ethics as well as credibility and limitation would be followed.

5.1. Research Design

The research was designed as a qualitative method with a combination of various documents and interviews. As Easton (2010) suggests that a combination of specific and general explanations can be used to explain most phenomena. To follow this approach, the research employed a qualitative method that involved a combination of various documents and interviews. For the general explanations, official documents from the Ministries of the Gambia, government-NGO communications, and local newspapers were collected to examine the current socio-political situation of the country. To identify specific explanations, different types of interviews were conducted with various groups of citizens. Specifically, 24 citizens were selected based on different categories such as residential setting or education level and were interviewed using a semi-structured approach to identify their experiences and perceptions toward the government and non-state actors. Additionally, focus group discussions were held with community mobilizers who had worked in the community for service delivery, and in-depth interviews were conducted with two experts: one with experience in the NGO sector and one with experience in the government as well as NGO. These discussions and interviews provided a deeper understanding of the topic and offered different stories from different perspectives. Detailed information about each method can be found below.

5.2. Sampling for interviews

The purposive sampling method suggests a strategic selection of participants or groups should be aligned with the overarching aims of study (Campbell *et al.*, 2020). Also it is a way of identifying and selecting cases that would use limited research resources effectively (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015). As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) explained in-depth exploration from multiple

perspectives of the complexity and policies in real-life context generate in-depth understanding, different backgrounds of citizens and experts were interviewed. Semi-structured interviews were done with citizens and international NGO officers as well as focal group discussion with community mobilizers.

Firstly, 24 citizens were interviewed depending on different categories such as residential setting, education level and gender including the university students group. These group categorizations were made to investigate if citizens have different ideas or experience regarding the governance in the Gambia depending on their livelihoods and education level. Two NGO officers with different experience in the NGO sector and government were interviewed in depth as well to identify the broadened context of relation between the state and NGOs.

Secondly, in addition to the interviews with different groups of citizens, four community mobilizers were invited for the focus group discussion. They have a different range of experience of working in the community from three years to more than twenty years. As community mobilizers, they have been working between organizations and community residents which make them valuable key informants to provide explanations of changes in the governance as well as, citizens' perception about it over the years.

5.3. Data Collection

This section would explain what kinds of data were collected in which way so that it provides credibility of research. Data from documents including official papers from government and NGOs, also local newspapers provide socio-political context in the Gambia. Also, interviews from different groups of the population presented specific perspectives.

5.3.1. Documents

The Gambia National Development Plan (2018-2021) (UNDP, 2020) was reviewed to identify governance of the state government as a service provider. Also, various documents between ChildFund The Gambia and the Gambian government were analyzed in terms of governance. Additionally, local newspapers were collected which presented incidents where the state interacted with different non-state organizations and citizens to examine general socio-political conditions of the country.

5.3.2. Interviews

Interviews were conducted to collect specific data of individual perspectives of citizens regarding the governance in the Gambia. Different groups of citizens depending on their socio-political background were interviewed in ways such as semi-structured interview and focus group discussion to identify different perspectives. Also, observation through internship activity and everyday life on the site, as well as informal interviews through conversation with colleagues and taxi drivers were conducted to gain general ideas about current socio political context in the Gambia.

Semi-structured Interviews

To collect specific data based on individual experience and opinion from interviews with citizens and experts, semi-structured interviews were employed. The flexibility of the method provided respondents an opportunity to talk freely about their ideas. For the local citizens, depending on their level of English speaking, mediators played the role as interpreters while university students and two experts were directly interviewed in English.

Focus Groups Discussions

The focus group discussion creates a 'synergistic effect' because through interaction between members, it allows the participants to respond and build on the reactions of other members in the group (Liamputtong, 2011). This kind of interaction could provide deeper understanding which other research methods cannot do (Kitzinger, 1994, p. 109).

The four people participated in the focus group discussion. They have been working as community mobilizers who are closely related to both community citizens and ChildFund The Gambia. They have participated in different kinds of civil society and groups. As they helped the research as mediators they had a deep understanding of the purpose and questions of the research. However, as there was a possibility of them being biased by the opinions of citizens, different questions and their own analysis of answers from community citizens were shared during discussion.

Observations and Informal Interviews

The case study started from the observation in the meeting about this cough syrup incident which ChildFund organized to provide training to the community mobilisers and volunteers to collect syrup bottles and give guidance to citizens in the community. In the meeting, public

officials from the Ministry of Health and Agency of Controlling medicines as well as officials from the Red Cross participated. How officials from different entities react to the questions and demand of mobilizers and volunteers who are closer to average citizens became the motivation of the research. In this regard, various activities in the internship organization including interacting with the state and non-state entities and conversation with different groups of people were utilized to verify the current governance situation in the Gambia.

5.4. Ethical Consideration and Positionality

Throughout the entire process, Lund University's ethical guidelines and cultural norms were carefully examined and taken into account. While the Gambia is not officially an Islamic state, the majority of the population follows Islam and adheres to its customs, and it is a patriarchal society. Regarding cultural norms, I consulted with my colleagues at the internship organization, ChildFund Gambia, as well as mediators. The mediators were male community mobilizers who acted as both translators and facilitators in the local areas of the Gambia, where multiple local languages are spoken. Due to my gender and being from outside the country, it was suggested that I conduct interviews with local mediators to speak with citizens.

Significant emphasis was placed on ensuring that respondents felt at ease to express themselves freely without any feelings of regret or threat. The consent of the interview, which outlines the rights of the interviewees, was provided to all interviewees. Participation in the research was entirely voluntary, and interviewees had the option to withdraw their statements or the entire interview at any time. Furthermore, interviewees were offered the choice to remain anonymous and to decline voice recording. For local citizens, the interviews were usually conducted at their residence to create a comfortable environment. For university students, interviews took place in university classrooms or on campus.

5.5. Credibility and Limitations

This section would discuss how the research ensured the credibility of data collection and its limitations. To ensure the credibility of the data, the concept of triangulation was applied. Triangulation is based on the idea that every method has its limitations, and multiple methods must be compared and combined to improve credibility (Patton, 2015). This was achieved

through methods such as interviews with observations or documents, observation with documents, and interviews from multiple sources with observations of diverse events and various types of documents. Therefore, the data collection of this paper was triangulated using different methods and resources, such as interviews, documents including local newspapers, and observations with informal interviews.

In terms of analysis, this research utilized widely discussed and publicly recognized theories and frameworks to ensure that the interpretations of the data were guided by theoretical perspectives. Moreover, various literature and case studies were reviewed and compared to the Gambian case to enhance the credibility of the research findings.

Despite efforts to improve the credibility of the research, various limitations have made it difficult to ensure thorough credibility. Most importantly, the language and cultural barriers made it impossible for me to directly contact interviewees, which limited the direct interpretation of their responses. To address this issue, informal mediators were hired, as discussed previously, but they were not trained interpreters or researchers, and as a result, they may have influenced biased answers based on their own bias. To mitigate the mediator's bias, a short training session was conducted before the interviews, and if interviewees spoke some English, I actively participated in the interview to confirm their answers and ensure they understood the questions correctly. Additionally, I reviewed the answers together with the mediators, and if the answers were not based on a correct understanding of the questions, the interviews were redone.

6. Findings and Analysis

This chapter aims to analyze governance in the Gambia, addressing the first research question, as well as citizens' perceptions of different actors and governmental accountability, which relates to the second and third research questions. The main concepts of societal governance, such as interaction in diversity, complexity, and dynamics, would be employed to describe the socio-political governance in the country.

According to Kooiman (2000, p. 144), interactions in socio-political systems involve three characteristics where actors, including individuals and organizations, are continuously formed by their interactions and are not independent. In order to involve diverse participants in these interactions, they must be engaged in the governing process, allowing them to express their identities (ibid). The complexity of socio-political systems is primarily expressed through numerous interactions in various forms and intensities, which can only be influenced if the complexity aspects are properly understood (ibid). Finally, the development of the interaction concept for governing purposes can be considered the main source of dynamics, which involves tension between the action and structural level of each interaction (ibid).

Furthermore, an analysis of governmental accountability would be carried out, utilizing the interaction concept to investigate how interactions impact the accountability of the state and influence citizens' perceptions of their government.

6.1. Interaction in Diversity of the Governance in the Gambia

This section focuses on addressing the first research question related to the various actors involved in the governance of the Gambia. Additionally, it provides relevant context for the second and third research questions, which explore citizens' evaluation of actors in governance, with a specific emphasis on the government's role as service providers.

The interviews revealed that the citizens of the Gambia have had interactions with various actors both from the government and non-state actors such as NGOs in the public service. They have experienced contacting NGOs directly and indirectly in areas such as health, education, water, electricity, and more. All respondents were familiar with NGOs and CSOs working in

their communities, and interacting with them in everyday life was a common experience. In some cases, citizens approached non-state organizations to seek assistance, such as education fees, while in other cases, these organizations approached citizens for community projects.

To address the question of what types of services were offered by the government, all 24 interviewees reported having received services from the government in various public sectors, including education, healthcare, electricity, water, roads, job training, and fertilizers for farming. However, the majority of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of these services, as even if citizens had access to them, the associated costs were prohibitively expensive. Additionally, the provision of electricity and water was often unreliable, with service interruptions occurring without prior notice, causing difficulties for respondents in terms of washing, cleaning, and cooking. Moreover, healthcare centers lacked essential medication and facilities required to adequately treat patients, as reported by some respondents.

> Education is free, but books, transport expenses students should provide and they are expensive. When sometimes electricity is out, food in the fridge goes bad, and I can't work. There was a case where there was no water from morning to evening and I could not wash the whole day (Citizen 2). Although we have a health center, there is no medicine in the center so we have to buy expensive medicine out at the pharmacy (Citizen 5).

In rural areas, one female farmer respondent was very frustrated with the government

> The government is failing to adequately and promptly provide essential services. There have been delays in delivering services, such as the late and expensive supply of fertilizer, which has become unaffordable for farmers. These services, including affordable access to fertilizers, should be provided by the government. However, in this context, all government services are excessively expensive, making it challenging for farmers to afford essential items like seeds, fertilizers, and tools (Citizen 21).

The concerns raised by the interviewees regarding the quality of public services provided by the government align with the findings of the 2020 report from the World Bank Group. According to the report, education imposes a significant financial burden on households, with education expenses accounting for 58 percent of total spending, while government spending only contributes 34 percent (World Bank Group, 2020). Furthermore, the health system exhibits a disproportionate emphasis on tertiary (24 percent) and secondary (23 percent) care,

neglecting primary health care (0.01 percent), which is more cost-effective (ibid). The government funds 47 percent of total health expenditures, with 39 percent being financed through development assistance, while the remainder is covered by out-of-pocket expenses (ibid). Additionally, there is a lack of support for the primary sector, agriculture, despite its critical role in the Gambian economy resulting in low productivity (ibid).

On the other hand, interviewees reported that NGOs have been delivering services such as education, water, healthcare, electricity, and job training that are similar to those provided by the government. Citizens who have utilized these services offered by NGOs expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their quality, as indicated below.

> They provide Nursery and Primary education to my Community. They provide sponsorship to the people of my community from Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and University education. NGOs provided water supply to my community which operates 24 hrs. (Citizen 15). NGOs always try to provide services to people adequately, they support and continue to monitor and evaluate with people they support to measure the impact which the government hardly does (Citizen 19). They are responding to the need on time and adequately, however, the location of some of their projects doesn't favor the users. For example, the Nursery School is too far from the majority of the people and accessibility is the problem but yet still parents are enrolling their children due to the quality of service they provide for children. NGOs here would support young people as well (Citizen 22).

As it was described in interviews above, non-state actors, including organizations like the UNDP, actively engage in various public service sectors, as demonstrated by their involvement in supported initiatives within the Gambia. As outlined in the UNDP report for 2019-2021, the organization provided assistance to women-led gardens, equipping them with tools and knowledge to address the challenges of climate change (UNDP, 2022). Additionally, the UNDP implemented projects focused on job creation, business development, support for women, renewable energy technology, and public health measures related to COVID-19 (ibid). Another notable NGO, ChildFund The Gambia, contributed significantly by offering services such as child protection, education, job training for youth, and poverty reduction (ChildFund The Gambia, 2020).

From answers of respondents, it was observed that both the government and NGOs played a role in delivering similar public services. Consequently, citizens compared the quality of

services provided by these two entities and generally viewed the services offered by NGOs more favorably, while expressing dissatisfaction with those provided by the government. However, considering that both actors are involved in similar sectors, non-state organizations could practically complement the government's efforts in these areas.

Nevertheless, the perception of NGOs as actors in governance varied among the respondents. The majority argued that the primary responsibility for service provision lies with the government, although they expressed doubts about the government's capacity to adequately meet the needs of its citizens in the future.

> Providing those services is supposed to be the responsibility of the government. Now lots of NGOs are providing them but in the future the government should take accountability for providing them (Citizen 1). Government should provide services to the community as the community pays taxes to the government to provide them with their needs and they should be responsible to provide our needs not NGOs (Citizen 2). NGOs will come and go but the government will stay so it has to provide services eventually (Citizen 3). Even if it is governmental responsibility to provide services to us, it won't be able to do it in the future as it does not have capacity (Citizen 11) and resources (Citizen 12).

Conversely, some believed that non-state actors such as NGOs should continue to play a role in the provision of public services.

> There have been many NGOs providing public services to citizens for such a long time and they are expected to be there supplementing the government in the future as well. It will be difficult for a country to provide services to every citizen in the country as it is expanding services so NGOs should supplement the government in the future (Citizen 8, 9).

From the interviews, it was evident that the respondents believed that the primary responsibility of providing public services lies with the government since citizens pay taxes to the government, not NGOs. Although respondents expected the government to provide services currently offered by NGOs, they were concerned about the government's ability and limited resources. Hence, if the government continues to fail to provide services, respondents believe that NGOs should continue to complement the government in the future.

As one of players in governance in the Gambia, it was discovered that the community was managing the "Village Development Committee" as a political entity.

> We have this "Village Development Committee (VDC)" and it has subcommittees to run specific areas such as health centers, Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers, shops, apartments, and markets in the community. It maintains schools by paying teachers, and the health center by purchasing medicines which are used for revolving funds. It makes decisions about what services are needed in the community and collaborates with different NGOs or international organizations (Community Mobilizer 2).

The government introduced the village development committee in the 1970s as a local management institution at the grass-roots level (Davis, Hulme and Woodhouse, 1994). The Department of Community Development was charged with their general introduction as a local management institution throughout the 1980s (ibid). A VDC typically consists of 10-12 members who are representative of the entire village, with each member having a specific role such as auditor, cashier, president, or social secretary (ibid). The village assembly, which includes most of the village, elects this executive body and gives it the responsibility of managing and mobilizing the resources of the village (ibid). According to Davis, Hulme and Woodhouse(1994, p.260), village development committee is a "politically neutral and democratically elected committee, initiated and either drawn up by the Department of Community Development, or alternatively, initiated and consolidated by an NGO. In most villages the committee lies somewhere within those two extremes". UNDP recently supported 160 VDC members in 20 communities with orientation on governance and group management approaches as a response to the COVID -19 (UNDP, 2022).

This section focused on addressing all three research questions, which identified the diverse actors involved in the governance of the Gambia and how citizens assess them within the framework of societal governance in diversity. The involvement of different entities, such as the national government, NGOs, and civil society (VDC), is emphasized in the governance of the country, working together to deliver services to citizens. Furthermore, this section provided contextual information that contributes to answering the second and third research questions, which aims to understand citizens' perceptions of both state and non-state actors. The findings indicated that citizens evaluate the services provided by NGOs very positively, while expressing a negative view of services offered by the government. However, an interesting

discovery is that despite recognizing NGOs as effective service providers and preferring them, respondents still believe that the responsibility for service provision should lie with the government. The majority of citizens expect the government to fulfill this role in the future.

6.2. Interaction in Complexity of the Governance in the Gambia

This section aims to address the first research question regarding the actors involved in governance in the Gambia. Specifically, it would explore how governance in the Gambia incorporates diverse networks of actors by examining the decision-making process and collaboration structure. The concept of structure encompasses the frameworks within which actors operate and which they must consider, such as culture, laws, agreements, material and technical capabilities, and other dimensions (Kooiman et al., 2005).

Firstly, in the previous section, it was introduced the Village Development Committee (VDC) as a complex, multilayered political structure in the Gambia. According to Community Mobilizer 2, each VDC consists of the Ward Development Committee (WDC), and the president of the WDC who is elected among the VDC representatives, becomes local council members. Although the VDC itself does not belong to the government structure, as the representative of the VDC, if one is elected as representative of WDC, may belong to the government body as a local government council member. The VDC is responsible for identifying community needs and priorities in the formulation of village development plans (Davis, Hulme and Woodhouse, 1994). As a grassroots entity, the VDC has a voice within the government decision structure and as an independent body, it collaborates with other NGOs to implement projects in the community.

Secondly, the Gambia's national development plan (UNDP, 2020) committed to involving non-state actors in government decision-making. The plan recognized the marginalized role of civil society due to poor governance and aimed to strengthen their capacity through building, coordination, and information sharing (ibid). The plan also included enhancing social accountability, improving the legislative and policy environment, supporting effective services, and strengthening partnerships with stakeholders for national, regional, and global development initiatives (ibid). The government's commitment to partnership with non-state actors is reflected in their efforts to involve them in the decision-making process through various committees (ibid). These include the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, Multi-

Stakeholder National Coordinating Committee, Regional Governor's and Municipalities Forum, National Coordinating Committee, Government-Development Partners forum, and a Technical Advisory Committee for monitoring (ibid). The government has also established a functional NSS coordination/steering committee to facilitate linkages and synergies between the central government and regions (ibid).

ChildFund The Gambia is an example of an NGO that collaborates with national stakeholders to support the welfare of children in the areas of child protection and education. This includes working with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the National Disaster Management Agency, and the National Nutrition Agency, as well as being part of various networks and committees, such as the Network of Organization for the Development of Children and Youth and the National Coordinating Committee to end Child Marriage (ChildFund The Gambia, 2017). ChildFund has also established partnerships with other NGOs and civil society groups to promote the protection and welfare of children in the Gambia The government's commitment aligns with the views expressed by an NGO expert during an interview (ibid).

With a career spanning two decades in the NGO sector, the expert discussed the collaboration between NGOs and the government. In response to a question about the relationship between the state and NGOs, the expert's views can be summarized as follows,

> According to the UNCRC African Charter, the government is recognized as the primary duty bearer. However, considering the country's unique context, the convention recommends the participation of NGOs and civil society (CS) as well. NGOs and CS complement the government's efforts by aligning their operations with government blueprints and development agendas. For instance, NGOs address existing gaps by establishing Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers and health facilities. Furthermore, through participating in different committees with the government, while the government handles overall coordination, NGOs contribute technical and financial support. They provide expertise in areas such as child participation and assist the government in obtaining input from children. Financially, NGOs support the cost of committee meetings when the government faces financial challenges. Moreover, NGOs maintain close contact with the community, conveying citizen needs and providing on-the-ground information to assess the effectiveness of governmental policies. (N.D.).

As mentioned earlier, the government is willing to incorporate non-state actors into their decision-making process to benefit from their expertise and experience on the ground. Similarly, NGOs and international development organizations aim to involve the government throughout the project cycle, as they need assistance or approval from the government for implementation, as outlined below:

> In the Gambia, to be qualified as NGOs in the first place, we have to have an MOU with the ministry. For us when we came into the Gambia in the education field, we were required to make an MOU with the ministry of basic and secondary education that is where all the engagement started. As your activity expands, you are required to make agreements with different sectors. Furthermore, if we want to implement a project in a community, a certain ministry is in charge of the project in the region. You need to engage the ministry to implement a project, for example, if you want to build a library in a school, you have to first contact the ministry in charge and the ministry will communicate with school authority. From MOU, project steering committee meetings, subcommittee meetings, we engage with government bodies (N.D.).

The expert interview in the NGO sector demonstrated the collaborative partnership between the state and the NGO sector, which is reflected in the formal or informal decision-making structure. This partnership is also evident in various literature of non-state actors, such as the partnership between UNDP and the Gambian government for accelerated community development or renewable energy projects, which involved UNDP, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC), and the Ministry of Energy & Petroleum (UNDP, 2022).

This section has addressed the first research question on how actors construct governance in the Gambia by discussing the integration of various actors into the decision-making process structure. It is apparent that ongoing collaboration between the state and non-state actors is necessary to deliver services to citizens. The state required the expertise and financial support of non-state actors, while non-state actors require assistance from the government to identify community needs and implement projects. This collaboration was embedded in the decision-making process structure of both parties. Through this partnership, the government could provide services to its citizens using the resources and technology of non-state actors, while

NGOs could expand their vision and activities in the country, leading to mutually beneficial relationships.

6.3. Interaction in Dynamics of the Governance in the Gambia

This section would provide answers for the first research questions identifying tension and changes among different actors of governance in the Gambia including individual citizens. Furthermore, as it examines citizens' perception toward other actors, it would be expected to provide context to the second research question.

Firstly, to gain a better understanding of the relationship between states and international organizations, it's important to analyze their responses to different political regimes. As discussed in Chapter 2 of the country context, the autocratic regime faced challenges in obtaining financial aid from international partners due to concerns about human rights and development. With the peaceful transition from autocracy to democracy in 2016, the Gambia's tension with global aid partners was resolved. This case illustrates how external financial support may lead to pressure on recipient countries, advancing the political agenda of the donor, which can be viewed in both positive and negative lights. It may be positive when it applies pressure on regimes that violate human rights, but it may also raise concerns about sovereignty infringement of the recipient countries. It was also described how citizens of the Gambia had to suffer due to abrupt sanction and cease of aid. Doornbos (2010) suggests when evaluating the destruction of governance in weak state situations, it's important to take into account the broader context, since external non-state actors may complicate local governance dynamics by promoting their own agendas.

Secondly, in order to examine the evolving relationship between the state and citizens, it is important to consider how this dynamic has changed over time under different regimes. This can be achieved through interviews with citizens and discussions with community mobilizers, who can provide insights into the nature of this relationship.

> Under the autocratic regime, we could not talk about the government freely as there were secret spies everywhere and they would knock on your door the next morning if you criticized the government. But now people can talk about the government freely, and they actually talk a lot about politics these days (CM2). There are people

in particular, in the rural areas, who are still hesitant to criticize the government but slowly it has been changing and people talk about politics now and I believe this change can bring changes in the politics (Citizen 5).

Through a democratic election, the people of Gambia successfully put an end to the autocratic regime and transitioned to a democracy. The removal of the dictatorship alleviated tensions between the state and its citizens, leading to an environment where political discussions are freely exchanged in public under the protection of freedom of speech.

Thirdly, the dynamics between NGOs and the government have also evolved depending on the regime in place. Research has shown that under autocratic rule, a sense of insecurity and uncertainty permeated not only government employees but also individuals working for local and northern NGOs in the Gambia (Ager, 1999). This was evident in cautious responses given by Gambian citizens employed by local NGOs when asked about the NGO's role in relation to the government (ibid). However, according to the NGO expert, the value and active involvement of NGOs have increased over time, indicating a shift in the dynamics between NGOs and the government.

Fourthly, there have been dynamics among NGOs themselves, as researchers have highlighted the competition for funding from donors (Ager, 1999). This competition has impacted information-sharing between organizations, posing a significant constraint on innovative activities (ibid). Some NGOs have encouraged their local partners to take operational roles which were previously fulfilled by international NGOs, aiming to bridge the skills gap and build local capacity (ibid). This has led to the formation of partnerships between NGOs and their local counterparts, with a focus on enhancing innovative impact (ibid). ChildFund The Gambia was observed to have made significant efforts to train local partners to apply for funding from donor organizations directly, with the aim of expanding their services using the saved funds.

Finally, the paper would explore how the relationship between citizens and NGOs can impact the government-citizen dynamic. As previously discussed in section 6.1 on interaction in diversity, citizens often make comparisons between the government and NGOs, using the latter's level of service as a standard.

> I prefer to apply for a scholarship from an NGO rather than the government as the response is fast and the probability of getting one is high in an NGO (Citizen 5). Schools managed by the government provide a lower level of education with

unqualified teachers. Also, even if education is free, they do not provide uniforms and textbooks which are very expensive for us. On the other hand, schools managed by NGOs provide better quality of education along with other resources such as uniforms, textbooks and meals (Citizen 13).

Citizens' interactions with NGOs have raised their expectations for services beyond what the government can provide. As a result, citizens may feel disappointed or angry with their government and exert pressure on the state to improve service delivery. The high level of services provided by NGOs has also influenced the role of the government as a service provider, which would be explored further in the subsequent section on state accountability.

This section provided valuable context for addressing the first and second research questions by highlighting the dynamics and tensions among governance actors in the Gambia, as well as the perspectives of citizens regarding their government and NGOs. The discussion began by examining the varying dynamics between the state and external aid partners, which were influenced by the political characteristics of the regime and can impact financial support from global partners. Concerns were raised about the potential for aid partners to pursue their own political and economic agendas in recipient countries. Furthermore, the section examined the tensions between NGOs and the government, as well as the competition among NGOs themselves. Under liberal democratic regimes, NGOs were found to be more actively engaged in projects and partnerships with the government. To secure funds, organizations employed different strategies, including training local partners. Lastly, the section delved into the dynamics between citizens and the government, which were influenced by the political environment and the tendency to compare the level of service provided by the government to that offered by NGOs. Following the transition from an autocratic regime to democracy in the Gambia, citizens gained freedom of speech and have become critical of the government's service delivery, often using the higher standard set by NGOs as a benchmark. This benchmark was derived from the citizens' direct interactions with NGOs as service providers.

6.4. Interaction for Governmental Accountability

This section would address the third research question, which focuses on the citizens' perception of their government in terms of accountability. Specifically, governmental

accountability should play a crucial role in shaping governance in the Gambia, because as highlighted in section 6.1., all citizens acknowledged the state as the primary service provider, as opposed to non-state actors such as NGOs. Hence in this section, it would examine how governmental accountability has been affected by interaction with different actors of governance.

In the context of societal governance, policy-making involves cooperative relations between public and non-public actors, with networks involving public actors often formulating or implementing policies (Papadopoulos, 2010). In this governance, the state is seen as a mediator among these actors and the task of the government is to enable socio-political interactions; to encourage many and varied arrangements for coping with problems and to distribute services among the several actors (Rhodes, 1997). In interviews conducted, it was found that the state has taken on the role of mediator.

> The government plays as mediator, organizing committees of NGOs, representatives of various departments, and various communities to avoid overlapping or role conflict. These meetings take place in the governor's office so that the governor will know all the NGOs or all the governmental departments that are operating closely in your functional areas. So you cannot say the government is depending on NGOs. With or without NGOs you have to continue (to provide services to people) whether successful or not successful (Community Mobilizer 1).

As previously discussed, the state and non-state actors are working collaboratively in the decision-making structure, with the government attempting to mediate between these actors. However, this intermediary role of the government may not be apparent to the citizens who receive services. In a focal discussion, a community mobilizer who works between service providers, including both the state and non-state actors, and citizens provided comments on this issue.

In addition, several instances were observed where the government had to engage in development projects in collaboration with NGOs. In such collaborations, NGOs often initiate projects and the government follows up accordingly. For instance, if an NGO constructs a school, the government may provide teachers. Such collaborations were described as follows:

There were Early Childhood Development (ECD)[4] centers managed by ChildFund and they were handed over to the government in 2015 according to the plan of the organization. The government was very hesitant to take over those centers as they did not have enough budget, but they eventually agreed as they understood that centers were needed for children in communities (N.D.).

This school in our community was built by an NGO but it was handed over to the government. People complain about less support such as school materials and meals since it was handed over to the government. But the headmaster of the school understands the government is giving an effort with a lack of budget (Community Mobilizer 1)

The cases mentioned above suggest that the government has been influenced by its interactions with non-state actors as such to provide teachers for schools or manage early childhood development (ECD) centers. However, some citizens have raised concerns that after the government took over these schools or centers, the quality of education declined and necessary materials and meals were not provided for the children. This may be due to the government's limited budget which may not allow it to maintain the same high quality of services that NGOs provide.

Finally, given that elections are regarded as a critical accountability mechanism in democracies (Hong, 2017), it would be worth identifying whether citizens in the Gambia use them to hold their government accountable. In this regard, respondents were asked whether the quality of government services provided would affect their choice of party in the election. The majority of the respondents expressed that the level of government services would influence their voting behavior in elections as follows:

Yes, I always look for the right candidate who can provide basic services like health and education (Citizen 7). I will only vote for a government whom I expect to provide my social/utility services. I want a government which focuses on

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[4] Early Childhood Development (ECD) is a three-year program provided for children aged 3 to 6 years by the public and private sector, to help further stimulate development of their psycho-motor and mental faculties and to provide them with pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills. Until 1995, there were 125 registered preschool centres , mainly found in the Capital City, Banjul and the immediate surroundings. By 2016 there were 1141 centers located in all regions of the country mainly in urban and peri-urban areas (Ministries of Basic and Secondary Education and Higher education, 2017)

development orientation (Citizen 15). I will vote for a different party as high expectations and low services made me disappointed a lot (Citizen 18).

For the election to serve as an accountability mechanism, it is crucial that the electoral process is transparent. In this regard, the government of the Gambia worked in collaboration with the UNDP to ensure credible and transparent electoral processes (UNDP, 2022). UNDP provided support to key institutions and committees such as the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), Inter-party Committee, National Assembly, and Ministry of Interior (ibid). The objective of these collaborative efforts was to promote participatory democracy, establish mechanisms for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and enhance the capacity of national governance institutions and civil society (ibid). These initiatives aimed to address the lack of accountability and participation that characterized the previous 22-year period (ibid).

This section aimed to answer the last research question of citizens' perception toward their state in terms of accountability. Hence, it explored whether accountability of the government could be improved through engagement with various non-state actors. It was highlighted that the government plays a mediator role in various actor networks, and through interaction with non-state actors, it is compelled to expand its services in collaboration with them. Moreover, citizens demonstrated their understanding of the role of elections in holding the government accountable and expressed their willingness to choose their political representatives based on the level of services provided by the government.

7. Conclusion

This study began with a fundamental inquiry into how the Gambian citizens perceive governmental accountability, in light of the tragic incident involving cough syrup in 2022. To understand the relationship between the government, public services, and citizens, the paper examined governance theory, which suggested that the role of the state should evolve from being the sole service provider to one of the providers, and introduced non-state providers such as international development organizations, civil society organizations, and NGOs. The societal governance approach provided analytical tools to examine social-political governance in the Gambia, and the main concepts of diversity, complexity, dynamics through interaction, as well as added concept of accountability were analyzed.

The research revealed that in the Gambia, diverse actors such as NGOs, along with the government, were providing services to citizens. Significant deficiencies in public services have been identified and multiple non-state actors have engaged in the sector. As the service sectors were similar between the government and NGOs, respondents compared the two bodies in terms of service levels. The results showed that respondents rated the services provided by NGOs highly and those provided by the government poorly. It was evident that respondents were dissatisfied with their government in terms of the level of public services and expressed concerns about the government's ability to provide good service in the future due to a lack of resources and capacity. However, it was noteworthy that the majority of respondents still did not consider legitimate NGOs as service providers and did not expect them to provide services forever, but instead believed that the government should take more responsibility than any other actor.

The government played a mediator role in integrating non-state actors into the decision-making process to enhance its services and collaboration. This relationship was analyzed as mutually beneficial, as the government required the knowledge and funding of NGOs to provide services to citizens, and NGOs needed the government's support to implement services. Moreover, by engaging with NGOs, the government received encouragement to enhance its services through collaborative efforts, thereby potentially improving accountability. Additionally, citizens exhibited a firm determination to utilize the democratic process of holding the government accountable through elections.

Throughout their interactions, there has been a persistent tension between the various actors involved. The relationship between the state of the Gambia and global aid partners has evolved over time, with differing dynamics depending on the political characteristics of the ruling regime. Similarly, the dynamics between the state and its citizens have also changed depending on the regime in power, and the intervention of NGOs has influenced citizens' perceptions of the government, as their standard of services was often set by the level of service provided by NGOs. The tension among actors of governance has achieved problem solving as it changed the regime, encouraged each other to enhance their capacity, or expand services.

Within the context of societal governance, the Gambia's governance could be characterized as societal governance. It has been observed that multiple actors have been engaged in governing the Gambia and have actively participated in the decision-making process. Interactions among these actors have occasionally resulted in tensions, which have the potential to bring about positive societal changes. Non-state actors were deemed more effective in governance compared to the state, yet citizens still perceived their government as the primary duty bearer. As a result, the political will of citizens to hold the government accountable through elections is anticipated to promote government accountability in the future.

Some argue that the variation in economic levels among countries is primarily attributed to governance rather than resources, emphasizing the importance of public administration (Werlin, 2003). While this paper primarily focused on the perceptions of citizens in the Gambia, it is advisable to examine the role of the government due to its significant involvement in governance within the country. For future research, it is suggested to conduct interviews with officials from various government entities, ranging from ministries to local governments, in order to understand their perspectives on their role in governance. Exploring how different actors perceive one another, such as the evaluation of NGOs and CSOs by the state, as well as the evaluations among non-state actors and the state based on their collaborative experiences, would be an intriguing area of further research.

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9. Appendices

Appendix 1- Participants of the Interview

Num	Name (Initial)	Age	Gender	Education	Career	Residential setting
1	C. J.	37	Male	University	Police Prosecutor	Urban
2	J.M.	28	Female	University	Teacher	Urban
3	P. M.	25	Male	University	Assistant at the church	Urban
4	M.J.	25	Female	University	Teacher	Urban
5	M.J.	32	Male	University	Teacher	Urban
6	H. T.	24	Female	University	Accountant	Urban
7	B. J.	46	Male	University	Headmaster of School	Urban
8	M. J.	45	Female	Senior Secondary	Private Business	Urban
9	K. F.	67	Male	University	Bijilo CA Chairman	Urban
10	A. S.	42	Female	Primary	Housewife	Urban
11	A. S.	49	Male	ECD	Teacher	Urban
12	I. S.	35	Female	Primary	Petty Trader	Urban
13	E.B.	37	Male	University	Teacher	Rural
14	B.F.	41	Female	Primary	Petty Trader	Rural
15	M.L.	42	Male	University	Accountant	Rural
16	B.B.	47	Male	Upper Basic	Researcher	Rural
17	F.K.J.	53	Female	Informal Arabic School	Housewife	Rural
18	F.S.	50	Female	Upper Basic	Housewife	Rural
19	A.N.	41	Male	Secondary	District Chief	Rural
20	E.J.	46	Male	College	Teacher	Rural

Num	Name (Initial)	Age	Gender	Education	Career	Residential setting
21	L.B.	39	Female	Secondary School	Farmer	Rural
22	N.K.	30	Female	Primary School	Tailor	Rural
23	O. J.	37	Male	Senior School	Farmer	Rural
24	Y.J.	45	Female	College	Teacher	Rural
25	L.B.	54	Male		Community Mobilizer (more than 20 yrs)	Urban
26	G.J.	32	Male		Community Mobilizer (6 yrs)	Urban
27	M.B.	48	Male		Community Mobilizer (more than 20 yrs)	Rural
28	M.N.	34	Male		Community Mobilizer (more than 10 yrs)	Rural
29	N.D.	40's	Male	University	Programs and Sponsorship Director of ChidFund The Gambia	Urban
30	G.B	30's	Male	University	Partnership Specialist of ChildFund The Gambia	Rural

Appendix 2- Questionnaire for Citizens Survey

Name		Gender		Age	
Education		Occupation			
Num. of people in the family		Residential setting (Region)		Rural, Urban	

	Questions	
	Government	
1		What kind of social (education, welfare)/utility (water, electricity) services are provided by the Government?
	1.1	Are you satisfied with the service level? Choose from 0 to 5 (0:not at all, 5: very much)
	1.2	Why did you choose the level?
	NGOs	
2		What kind of social (education, welfare)/ utility (water, electricity) services are provided by the NGO?
	2.1	Are you satisfied with the service level? Choose from 0 to 5 (0:not at all, 5: very much)
	2.2	Why did you choose the level?
	Government vs NGOs	

3		When you need help regarding social service, which one would you request assistance from, Governments or NGO? (Please describe answer with reasons)
4		Do you think the services provided by NGO should be provided by the Government? (Please describe answer with reasons)
5		Do you expect the government to provide the services in the future that are provided by NGO now? (Please describe answer with reasons)
6		Are you aware of the case where NGO initiated the service and Governments took it over such as the Early Childhood Education Center?
	6.1	What do you think of the case?
5-1		Do you expect the government to provide the services in the future that are provided by NGO now? (Please describe answer with reasons)
7		Why do you think the government is not providing some of those utilities and social services to the citizens?
8		Does the social service level provided to you impact on your expectation of the Government as a social/utility provider? (Please describe answer with reasons)
	8.1	Will your expectation of the Government as a social/utility service provider impact on your political decisions such as voting in the election? (Please describe your answer with reasons)

Appendix 3- Focus Group Discussion Questionnaire

Basic questions: Age, occupation, career (experience) area

1. What is a community mobilizer?

2. Do you think the Government is depending on NGO in various ways?

3. If so, or not why do you think the government is doing so or not?

4. Do you expect the government will provide services in the future that are provided by NGO?

5. Do you experience any improvement of those services over the years?

6. How does the government takeover projects from NGOs? (Process)

7. As a mobilizer, do you experience changes in terms of people talking about politics such as critics of government? (Before and after autocracy)

8. Do you think social/utility service level in the community will impact on people's political decisions such as voting in elections?

9. What else does it have more impact? Such as tribalism

10. Any documents explaining information about the area? (Population, projects, all other things)

Appendix 4- Expert Interview Questionnaire

1. You have experience in the ministry of education for three years, what kind of job did you do?

2. What are the challenges to coming up with policies?

3. Does the ministry take complaints or opinions from citizens? Is there a channel for that?

4. What are the key considerations (priorities) when it comes to distribution of resources to different education policies? (Citizen's opinion?)

5. How do governments perceive the demands of citizens?

6. Do you have experience collaborating with NGOs?

7. How does collaboration start and proceed usually?

8. What are positive things or negative things in collaboration with NGOs?

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1. You have worked in the ChildFund for quite some time now, how do you define roles of the organization as social service provider

2. How do citizens perceive NGO, ChildFund The Gambia and government?

3. ChildFund The Gambia belongs to different committees with the government such as the national coordinating committee, Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee, what do these committees do and what are the roles of NGOs?

4. How is it initiated to collaborate with governments such as ECD?

5. From the survey, it is found that the level of service is different depending on providers. People seem to prefer to have NGOs to manage schools as they provide better service (teachers and materials, foods), Aar you aware of that? Why do you think governments want to take over those schools when they do not have enough resources to provide good service to citizens?

6. Do you experience any changes in attitudes of the government toward citizen's needs and demands?

7. Do you expect the government to improve and expand the social/utility services to its citizens in the future?

8. How do you explain the relationship between NGOs and the Government?

9. How do you project the role of NGOs in terms of providing social/utility services in the future?

Appendix 5-Interview Consent Form

Research Project Title: Citizens perception on the Government with Intervention of NGOs in Social/Utility Service Sector

Research Participants name:

The interview will take about an hour, we do not anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time.

This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you therefore read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- The interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced
- The transcript of the interview will be analyzed by Hyenyoung Jung as research investigator
- Access to the interview script will be limited to Hyenyoung Jung
- Any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed

All or part of the content of your interview may be used;

- In academic papers on our website, other feedback events

By signing this form I agree that;

- I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;
- The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above;
- I have read the information sheet;
- I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.

Participants Signature   Date