

# Chapter 11

## Sustaining Governance: The Case for Leadership

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter has three core aims. First, to discuss the concepts of governance and leadership while drawing upon key literatures and qualitative data to make sense of the factors that can enable leadership to sustain governance systems. Second, the chapter explores the practice of leadership at the Greater London Authority (GLA) level in the United Kingdom (UK) in order to establish features synonymous with the practice of leadership. Third, the relations between governance and leadership are explored so as to better understand how the latter is employed in sustaining the governance process at the GLA level in the UK.*

### INTRODUCTION

Leadership is important across various institutional settings due mainly to its role in steering, coordinating and enabling the creation of the necessary environment needed to allow for the functioning of any organization, institution or society. The governance of a place or an organization is also significant for planning and implementation purposes and for ensuring the making and enforcement of rules. This chapter explores the concept of leadership due to its relevance in sustaining the practice of governance across different levels. While governance is arguably a complex concept as reflected in its contrasting definitions, leadership is better understood.

In politics, leadership occurs on many different levels, from the Mayor of London (Boris Johnson) whose jurisdiction is London, to the UK Prime Minister (David Cameron) who ultimately is responsible for the protection and services of the entire country he preside over, and regional president such as the President of the European Commission (Jean-Claude Juncker), who ensures members of the EC engages with one another in a fair manner. Thus, it is clear that leadership occurs across different levels.

To better understand the concept of governance and leadership, this chapter is structured as follow: The first section discusses the concept of governance. Stoker's (2004) definition of governance as referring to the rules and forms that guide col-

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lective decision-making is employed. This then makes it clear that governance is not just about one individual making a decision but rather about groups of individuals or organizations or systems making decisions. Thereafter, the definitions of political leadership are considered. In defining leadership, here the view of Northouse (2013) who defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal, is employed (see also Western (2008)). Subsequently, the case of leadership at the Greater London Authority (GLA) is examined drawing on qualitative data. The fourth section seeks to understand the relationship between leadership and governance, especially on how the latter inform the former. To conclude, the fifth section argues for the relevance of good leadership in sustaining governance across levels in the society in order to sustain socio-economic developments.

## **THE CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE**

The concept of governance has existed for quite a long time and its formal use can be traced to the work of Plato where he referred to governance as a way of designing a system of rule (Kjær, 2004). Governance as a concept witnessed a renaissance in the 1980s and 1990s as several authors (March & Olsen, 1995; Kooiman, 2003; Kjær, 2004; Leftwich, 1993, 1994; Rhodes, 1997; Stoker, 1998) defined the concept based on their interpretation and emerging trends. However, despite the definitional problem suffered by the term especially due to its use in different contexts, it shall be defined here according to Stoker (1999) as rules guiding collective decision among interconnected stakeholders.

## **LITERATURE SURVEY**

Although governance literatures (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Stoker, 1997; Kooiman, 2003;

Healey, 2006) suggest that there are multi-level institutions and organizations involved in the governing process, thereby witnessing a reduction in the role of the state (the power of the state becoming de-centered as argued by Newman et al., 2004), the reality based on some case studies is that the state, especially in the UK has developed more means (use of commissions such as the National Audit Office and Ofsted) to regulate the powers it hitherto devolved in the governing process. Elsewhere, Bovens, T'Hart and Peters (2001) also critiqued governance based on the failure of the new governance structure to adapt to the new conditions of co-dependence identified by Newman, Barnes, Sullivan and Knops (2004) to include citizens depending on interactions with the state, state actors depending on citizens to participate in government policies and service users dependence on feedback mechanism in order to influence the policy process that delivers public goods and services. Furthermore, democratic channels have also partly failed to address increasing citizen differentiation and reflexivity as central government policies sometimes conflict with local and other spheres of government priorities and developmental needs.

Notwithstanding the challenges inherent in governance, it has fundamentally changed the structure of governing from government use of hierarchies to networks, and from the state use of direct control to approaches devised to engage a number of stakeholders. However, despite the aforesaid change in the structure of governing, it is pertinent to note that the state in particular its leadership still plays key roles (regulator and producer (Evans, 1995)) by using the tools of government for example, law and regulation, public spending and taxation, bureaucracy, institutions, information and networks especially to protect citizens while delivering relevant public goods and services (John, 2011). While commenting on governance in the UK, Newman et al. (2004) suggests that intricate social issues, for example, social exclusion, community regeneration and inequalities cannot be addressed by using the

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