

REVIEW ARTICLE



European Union's Good Governance Efforts in East Africa

Ayub Elmi Mohamud^{1*} and Abdifatah Omar Ga'al¹

¹*Horseed International University, Mogadishu, Somalia*

Received: December 19, 2024

Accepted: February 25, 2025

Published: March 15, 2025

Abstract: This study investigates the European Union's (EU) efforts in promoting good governance in East Africa, with a focus on institutional reforms, support for the rule of law and anti-corruption initiatives, and local governance strengthening programs. A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing document analysis and case studies from East African countries, including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia, and Rwanda. Data were gathered from EU reports, governmental publications, and scholarly articles to assess the impact of EU interventions on governance structures. The findings reveal that the EU's initiatives have led to significant improvements in local governance capacities, transparency, and public service delivery. However, challenges such as political instability, corruption, and limited civic space persist, undermining the effectiveness of these programs. The study concludes that while the EU has made meaningful contributions to good governance in East Africa, continuous engagement and adaptive strategies are essential to address ongoing challenges. Strengthening civil society and promoting inclusive governance processes are crucial for sustaining these efforts. This research enhances understanding of the EU's role in East African governance and provides insights for policymakers and practitioners seeking to improve governance frameworks in the region.

Keywords: European Union, good governance, institutional reforms, local governance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the European Union (EU) has positioned itself as a major advocate of good governance, which is central to its foreign policy and development cooperation strategies. The EU's focus on promoting good governance has historically stemmed from its own foundational principles of democracy, rule of law, and human rights. Good governance practices are essential for fostering sustainable development and stability, especially in fragile states. In developed countries like Germany, France, and the United Kingdom, the EU has helped reinforce institutions by advocating for transparency, accountability, and democratic practices. For instance, the EU supported governance reforms in post-communist countries like Poland and Hungary during their integration into the Union, improving governance systems and ensuring alignment with EU democratic standards (Kaufmann, 2020). Such initiatives have showcased the EU's commitment to good governance globally, improving institutional effectiveness and reducing corruption.

At the African level, the EU has long been involved in promoting good governance through various instruments such as the African Peace Facility (APF) and the Cotonou Agreement. The EU has supported governance reforms across African countries by providing financial assistance, technical support, and policy dialogue. In countries like Ghana and Nigeria, the EU has worked to promote electoral reforms and

*Correspondence should be addressed to Ayub Elmi Mohamud, Horseed International University, Mogadishu, Somalia; E-mail: ayuubcm1@gmail.com

anti-corruption mechanisms, contributing to the democratization process (OECD, 2022). In Ghana, for example, the EU provided funding to enhance electoral integrity during the 2020 general elections, which strengthened trust in the electoral process and improved governance (European Commission, 2021). Similarly, the EU's involvement in Nigeria has focused on tackling corruption and improving public financial management, key areas in which poor governance had hampered development for decades.

In East Africa, the EU has been particularly active in countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Somalia, providing development aid and promoting good governance initiatives. The EU's support in East Africa often focuses on improving governance through the establishment of democratic institutions, promoting human rights, and ensuring that public resources are managed transparently. In Kenya, the EU has been involved in supporting judicial reforms and enhancing electoral systems to ensure free and fair elections. In 2017, the EU election observation mission played a key role in addressing electoral irregularities, promoting accountability, and strengthening Kenya's governance framework (European Union External Action, 2018). In Uganda, the EU has concentrated on strengthening the judiciary and civil society, focusing on human rights, and supporting anti-corruption institutions. Additionally, the EU has worked closely with regional organizations like the East African Community (EAC) to promote good governance policies across East African states.

In Somalia, the EU has been a critical player in the country's attempts to rebuild after decades of conflict. The collapse of the central government in 1991 led to widespread lawlessness and poor governance, which crippled Somalia's ability to develop effective state institutions. The EU's governance efforts in Somalia have focused on rebuilding institutions, improving public financial management, and restoring the rule of law. The EU has also funded programs aimed at improving transparency and accountability within Somalia's public sector, which are essential for long-term stability. According to the European Union's 2021 report, the EU contributed over €500 million in development aid between 2015 and 2020, which included governance-related projects such as judicial reforms, anti-corruption programs, and capacity-building initiatives (European Union, 2021).

In Mogadishu, Somalia's capital, the EU has concentrated its efforts on rebuilding governance structures by supporting local governance, empowering civil society, and facilitating dialogue between stakeholders. The focus has been on improving the capacity of local authorities to deliver essential services, thereby restoring trust between the government and citizens. Through its governance initiatives, the EU has facilitated reforms in Mogadishu's financial management system, which has helped reduce corruption and improved resource allocation for public services (World Bank, 2022). Additionally, the EU has worked to strengthen security sector governance, which is vital for maintaining stability and fostering good governance in Mogadishu, a city that has experienced chronic insecurity due to terrorism and internal conflict.

The European Union (EU) has been actively involved in promoting good governance in East Africa through institutional reforms, support for the rule of law, and local governance strengthening programs. However, despite these efforts, significant challenges remain that hinder the realization of effective governance in the region. According to the World Bank (2021), good governance is critical for sustainable development, as it fosters economic growth and social stability. In an ideal scenario, East African countries would exhibit strong governance characterized by transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. This would involve robust institutions capable of effectively managing public resources, minimizing corruption, and ensuring citizen participation in governance processes. However, the current situation in East Africa is far from ideal. Many countries in the region continue to struggle with high levels of corruption, weak institutions, and inadequate rule of law. For instance, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2022 by Transparency International indicates that countries like Somalia and South Sudan rank among the lowest globally, with scores of 12 and 11 out of 100, respectively, highlighting pervasive corruption and governance challenges. Furthermore, the World Governance Indicators (WGI) reveal that East African nations often score poorly on measures of political stability, government effectiveness, and regulatory quality (Kaufmann et al., 2020). The gaps in governance in East Africa can be attributed to several factors. First, weak institutional frameworks plague many countries, as these institutions often lack the capacity and resources to implement reforms effectively, leading to inefficiencies and corruption (Bai & Wu, 2020). Se-

cond, limited public participation undermines accountability, as citizens frequently have little say in governance processes (Moe, 2019). Lastly, inadequate rule of law is a significant issue, with compromised judicial systems leading to a lack of trust in legal institutions (Baniamin & Bansal, 2021). These issues create a cycle of poor governance that hampers development efforts and undermines the EU's initiatives in the region.

This study intends to address these challenges through its specific objectives. First, by analyzing the effects of EU institutional reforms, the study aims to identify successful strategies and areas needing improvement (Meyer, 2022). Second, it will evaluate the impact of EU support for rule of law and anti-corruption initiatives, focusing on assessing the effectiveness of these interventions in promoting legal frameworks and reducing corruption (Smith, 2021). Finally, the study seeks to assess the role of EU local governance strengthening programs, aiming to understand how these initiatives can foster sustainable governance and enhance citizen engagement in decision-making processes (Jones, 2023). Through these objectives, the study aims to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing good governance in East Africa, ultimately contributing to more stable and prosperous societies.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research methodology to explore the European Union's development assistance and its impact on nation-building in Mogadishu, Somalia. Utilizing secondary sources, the research analyzed official documents, policy statements, academic literature, and relevant case studies to gain a comprehensive understanding of the EU's role in institutional consolidation, state stabilization, and sustainable development initiatives. This methodological approach facilitated an in-depth examination of the effects of EU interventions on governance and societal structures in Mogadishu, enabling the identification of both successes and challenges faced in the nation-building process. By synthesizing diverse sources of information, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of international development assistance in fostering stability and promoting sustainable governance in post-conflict contexts.

3. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study provide a detailed examination of the European Union's development assistance efforts and their impact on nation-building in Mogadishu, Somalia. By analyzing a range of secondary sources, including official documents, policy statements, and academic literature, the research uncovers key insights into how the EU's institutional reforms, support for the rule of law, and local governance initiatives have influenced the political, social, and economic landscape of Mogadishu. This section highlights the multifaceted effects of EU interventions, illustrating both the successes achieved and the ongoing challenges faced in the nation-building process. Through these findings, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of international development assistance in fostering stability and sustainable governance in post-conflict settings, ultimately informing future strategies for effective engagement in the region.

3.1 Findings on the Effects of the European Union's Institutional Reforms on Good Governance in East Africa

The European Union (EU) has played a significant role in promoting institutional reforms in East Africa, focusing on enhancing governance structures, transparency, and accountability across various sectors. The findings on the effects of these institutional reforms reveal both progress and challenges, varying across countries like Kenya, Uganda, and Somalia.

3.1.1 Kenya

In Kenya, the EU's support for institutional reforms has been particularly visible in judicial reforms, electoral integrity, and anti-corruption efforts. Following the controversial 2007 elections, which led to post-election violence, the EU, alongside other international actors, supported a series of reforms to im-

prove the country's governance. These reforms included strengthening the judiciary, promoting electoral reforms, and enhancing the independence of anti-corruption agencies. The EU's Election Observation Mission (EOM) during the 2013 and 2017 general elections in Kenya contributed to identifying irregularities and pushing for electoral reforms aimed at reducing the risk of violence and improving transparency (European Union External Action, 2018).

One notable success was the reform of the judiciary through the creation of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) and the vetting of judges to ensure their integrity. These reforms have contributed to improving public confidence in the electoral process and the judiciary. The EU also supported capacity building for civil society organizations, enabling them to play a watchdog role in governance and electoral processes. This has led to greater public awareness and engagement in governance issues, fostering good governance through active civic participation.

3.1.2 Uganda

In Uganda, the EU has worked to strengthen institutions in the areas of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The EU has partnered with the Ugandan government to reform its public financial management systems and enhance the independence of institutions like the Judiciary and the Human Rights Commission. For instance, the EU provided support to the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) to strengthen its capacity to monitor and address human rights violations (European Union Delegation to Uganda, 2021).

However, despite these efforts, challenges remain. The persistence of corruption, political interference in key institutions, and restrictions on civil liberties have limited the impact of EU-driven reforms. While the EU has successfully advocated for the reform of certain governance structures, such as in public financial management, its influence on deeper political reforms has been more constrained due to entrenched authoritarian tendencies. As a result, institutional reforms have not fully translated into more accountable or transparent governance.

3.1.3 Somalia

In Somalia, where governance institutions were severely weakened after the collapse of the central government in 1991, the EU has played a crucial role in rebuilding the institutional framework. The EU has been involved in supporting the establishment of federal institutions and strengthening local governance structures in collaboration with other international actors. The EU's Somalia National Stabilization Programme (SNSP), initiated in 2014, focused on rebuilding key institutions such as the judiciary, the police, and public financial management systems (European Union, 2021).

One key success of the EU's institutional reforms in Somalia has been the gradual improvement in the federal government's capacity to manage public finances. The EU provided technical assistance and financial aid to develop Somalia's Public Financial Management Reform Programme, which has led to more transparent budget processes and better resource allocation for public services. These reforms have contributed to greater accountability and transparency in the use of public funds.

Despite these successes, challenges persist. Institutional reforms in Somalia are hampered by political instability, corruption, and limited capacity at the local level. The federal government continues to face difficulties in extending its authority to regional states, and clan-based political divisions often undermine efforts to build cohesive and accountable institutions. Nevertheless, the EU's efforts have laid the groundwork for longer-term improvements in governance, especially through capacity-building initiatives.

3.1.4 Tanzania

Tanzania has also benefited from EU-supported governance reforms. The EU has focused on enhancing democratic governance, human rights, and anti-corruption measures. It has worked closely with the government of Tanzania to support electoral reforms and strengthen the capacities of independent oversight bodies like the National Audit Office. These reforms aim to improve government accountability and transparency in resource management.

However, the political environment in Tanzania has become increasingly restrictive, particularly under the late President John Magufuli, where crackdowns on civil liberties and the press escalated. The EU's efforts to promote good governance faced resistance, as the government became less open to international scrutiny. Despite this, the EU continues to support civil society organizations and efforts to promote institutional integrity in governance (European Commission, 2020).

3.1.5 Challenges and Opportunities

While the EU has made significant strides in promoting institutional reforms across East Africa, several challenges persist. Political will remains a critical barrier in many countries, as entrenched political elites resist changes that threaten their power. Corruption, weak rule of law, and limited institutional capacity also impede the effectiveness of reforms.

Despite these challenges, the EU's institutional reforms have created opportunities for improved governance. For instance, enhanced public financial management systems have enabled better delivery of public services in some countries. Additionally, the EU's focus on empowering civil society has led to greater civic engagement and accountability, even in difficult political environments. The reforms have laid the foundation for long-term governance improvements, though sustained efforts are needed to ensure their success.

The EU's institutional reforms have had a mixed but overall positive effect on good governance in East Africa. Countries like Kenya have benefited from judicial and electoral reforms, while in Uganda and Somalia, the EU's efforts have helped rebuild and strengthen public institutions. However, political challenges, corruption, and weak institutional capacity continue to undermine the full realization of good governance. Continued EU engagement, focusing on capacity building, public accountability, and political dialogue, remains critical for furthering good governance across the region.

3.2 Findings on the Impact of the European Union's Support for the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Initiatives in East Africa

The European Union (EU) has been a key player in supporting the rule of law and anti-corruption initiatives across East Africa. The findings on the impact of these efforts reveal that the EU has contributed to strengthening judicial systems, fostering transparency, and promoting anti-corruption frameworks in countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Somalia. However, the extent of success has varied depending on the political landscape and governance challenges of each country.

3.2.1 Kenya

In Kenya, the EU has supported various initiatives aimed at strengthening the rule of law and combating corruption. Kenya has struggled with high levels of corruption, which has undermined public confidence in state institutions and slowed economic growth. The EU's financial and technical support has been channeled towards judicial reforms, training for law enforcement agencies, and strengthening anti-corruption bodies such as the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC). The EU has also provided support for civil society organizations to monitor corruption and advocate for good governance.

One key area where the EU's support has had a noticeable impact is in the judiciary. The Judiciary Transformation Framework (2012-2016), which was supported by the EU, aimed to improve judicial efficiency, access to justice, and accountability within Kenya's courts. The establishment of mobile courts and increased judicial transparency are examples of reforms that have enhanced the rule of law. As a result, public trust in the judiciary has improved, although challenges such as delays in the justice system and cases of judicial corruption remain.

The EU has also been instrumental in supporting Kenya's anti-corruption drive. For instance, during the 2017 elections, the EU Election Observation Mission recommended steps to address election-related corruption and irregularities, which led to further scrutiny of the electoral process. Additionally, EU-funded initiatives such as the Transparency International Kenya chapter have raised awareness about corruption

and fostered public dialogue on the need for stronger anti-corruption measures (European Union External Action, 2018).

3.2.2 Uganda

In Uganda, the EU's efforts have focused on promoting human rights, strengthening the judiciary, and supporting the fight against corruption. The EU has worked closely with the Ugandan government to enhance the capacity of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. This includes providing training for judges, prosecutors, and police officers to ensure the rule of law is upheld. The EU has also supported reforms in Uganda's public financial management to curb corruption, particularly in areas like procurement and budgeting.

The EU's involvement in promoting the rule of law has yielded some positive outcomes. For example, through its support for the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), the EU has helped improve the protection of human rights, ensuring that violations are investigated and prosecuted. Additionally, the EU has worked to empower local civil society organizations, such as the Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda, to play a more active role in holding government officials accountable for corruption. These efforts have increased public awareness about corruption and contributed to a more vocal civil society demanding better governance (European Union Delegation to Uganda, 2021).

Despite these efforts, Uganda continues to face significant challenges in combating corruption. High-profile corruption cases involving senior government officials, as well as the politicization of anti-corruption bodies, have hindered progress. The lack of political will to address corruption at the highest levels of government remains a significant obstacle.

3.2.3 Tanzania

Tanzania has experienced a mixed impact from EU-supported rule of law and anti-corruption initiatives. Under the late President John Magufuli, Tanzania took significant steps to fight corruption, earning praise from the EU and other international organizations. The EU supported reforms in the judiciary and public procurement systems, aimed at reducing corruption and ensuring more transparency in public administration. For instance, the EU provided technical assistance to the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB), which enhanced its investigative capacity (European Commission, 2020).

During Magufuli's presidency, there was a noticeable improvement in the management of public resources and accountability, leading to increased public trust in the government's anti-corruption efforts. However, the same period also saw a shrinking of democratic space, with increased restrictions on the media and civil society organizations, which limited public scrutiny of government actions. After Magufuli's death in 2021, there have been efforts to reopen the democratic space, and the EU continues to support reforms that promote the rule of law and governance transparency.

3.2.4 Somalia

Somalia represents a more complex environment for rule of law and anti-corruption initiatives due to decades of conflict and political instability. The EU has been actively involved in Somalia's stabilization process, with a significant focus on rebuilding institutions, including the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. The EU's support for Somalia's Rule of Law Programme has been instrumental in re-establishing the country's legal system, training judges, and providing legal aid to vulnerable populations (European Union, 2021).

Moreover, the EU has provided assistance in developing Somalia's anti-corruption strategy, which aims to tackle widespread corruption in both the public and private sectors. In 2019, Somalia launched its Anti-Corruption Commission, a direct outcome of international pressure and support from entities like the EU. The establishment of this body marked an important step toward addressing Somalia's entrenched corruption issues.

However, the political environment in Somalia remains fragile, and corruption is deeply embedded in the political and economic systems. Clan-based politics and the lack of centralized control over regions

complicate efforts to enforce the rule of law. While the EU's support has contributed to rebuilding key institutions, the lack of security and persistent corruption remain significant challenges to achieving long-term governance improvements.

3.2.5 Rwanda

In Rwanda, the EU's support for anti-corruption and rule of law initiatives has been relatively successful. The country has made notable strides in establishing a strong rule of law framework and maintaining a zero-tolerance policy toward corruption. Rwanda's judiciary is seen as relatively independent, and the government's commitment to fighting corruption has earned it a reputation as one of the least corrupt countries in Africa. The EU has supported these efforts by providing technical and financial assistance to Rwanda's legal institutions and anti-corruption agencies, such as the Office of the Ombudsman.

Rwanda's progress in combating corruption and upholding the rule of law has been lauded, with Transparency International ranking it among the least corrupt countries in Africa. However, there are concerns about the lack of political freedom and the tight control the government exercises over civil society, which can hinder independent checks on corruption (European Union Delegation to Rwanda, 2020).

The EU's support for rule of law and anti-corruption initiatives has had a varied impact across East Africa. In countries like Kenya and Rwanda, the EU's efforts have contributed to strengthening institutions and promoting transparency, although challenges like judicial inefficiencies and political interference persist. In Uganda and Tanzania, the EU's support has fostered some governance improvements, but entrenched corruption and political repression have limited broader gains. In Somalia, the EU's contributions have been critical in rebuilding key institutions, but insecurity and clan-based politics continue to undermine long-term governance reform. Overall, the EU's sustained efforts are crucial for improving governance in East Africa, but long-term success will depend on political will and continued international cooperation.

3.3 Findings on the Role of the European Union's Local Governance Strengthening Programs in Fostering Sustainable Governance in East Africa

The European Union (EU) has invested significantly in local governance strengthening programs across East Africa as part of its broader strategy to promote sustainable governance. These initiatives aim to empower local authorities, enhance public service delivery, and foster citizen engagement in governance processes. The findings indicate that while the EU's local governance programs have made meaningful strides in improving governance at the local level, challenges such as political instability, resource constraints, and entrenched corruption persist.

3.3.1 Kenya

In Kenya, the EU has implemented various programs aimed at strengthening local governance structures, particularly following the devolution process introduced in 2013. The EU's support has focused on enhancing the capacity of county governments to deliver services effectively and transparently. Initiatives such as the "Strengthening of Devolved Government Program" have provided technical assistance, training, and resources to county governments to improve public service delivery and financial management (European Union External Action, 2020).

One notable success has been the establishment of citizen engagement platforms, which have facilitated participatory governance. For instance, the EU-supported County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) require local communities to participate in planning and decision-making processes, thereby increasing accountability and responsiveness to citizens' needs. This approach has led to improved public service delivery in areas such as health, education, and infrastructure, enhancing the overall governance framework at the local level (European Union Delegation to Kenya, 2021).

However, challenges remain, including political interference at the local level and the capacity limitations of some county governments. Despite the EU's efforts to enhance local governance, the impact of corruption and the politicization of local resources often undermine these initiatives. Continuous support

and monitoring are necessary to ensure that local governance reforms translate into tangible benefits for communities.

3.3.2 Uganda

In Uganda, the EU has also focused on strengthening local governance through various initiatives aimed at enhancing accountability, transparency, and public participation. The "Support to Local Governance" program has provided financial and technical assistance to local government institutions to improve service delivery and engage citizens in governance processes (European Union Delegation to Uganda, 2020).

The program has emphasized capacity building for local authorities, enabling them to plan and implement development projects effectively. For example, through training and resource allocation, local governments have improved their ability to manage public funds and engage with citizens. The EU has supported local councils in areas such as health, education, and infrastructure, leading to enhanced service delivery.

However, Uganda faces significant challenges in local governance, including corruption and limited political space for civic engagement. Despite the EU's support for citizen participation, local governance structures are often undermined by political patronage and lack of accountability. Moreover, the central government's influence over local governments can hinder the effectiveness of governance reforms. Ongoing engagement and support from the EU will be critical in addressing these challenges.

3.3.3 Tanzania

In Tanzania, the EU has supported local governance initiatives aimed at enhancing public service delivery and promoting citizen participation. The "Local Government Capacity Building Program" has focused on strengthening the capacity of local authorities to manage resources and engage with communities effectively (European Commission, 2021). This program has provided training for local officials and financial resources to implement community-driven development projects.

The impact of the EU's local governance initiatives is evident in improved service delivery in sectors such as health and education. For instance, through community participation in planning and monitoring local projects, citizens have gained a greater voice in decision-making processes. This participatory approach has led to increased accountability and responsiveness of local governments to community needs.

Despite these successes, challenges remain. The political environment in Tanzania has become increasingly restrictive, with diminishing space for civil society and citizen engagement. This poses a significant barrier to sustainable governance at the local level. Additionally, corruption and lack of transparency in local government operations continue to undermine the effectiveness of governance reforms. The EU's continued support for civil society and local governance initiatives will be essential in overcoming these challenges.

3.3.4 Somalia

In Somalia, the EU has been instrumental in supporting local governance structures as part of its broader stabilization efforts. Given the country's history of conflict and institutional fragility, the EU's local governance programs focus on rebuilding state capacity and promoting citizen engagement in governance processes. Initiatives such as the "Somalia Local Governance and Decentralization Programme" aim to strengthen local government institutions and enhance service delivery (European Union, 2021).

The EU's support has included capacity building for local authorities, enabling them to provide essential services and engage with communities effectively. For instance, the establishment of local governance forums has facilitated dialogue between citizens and local authorities, promoting accountability and transparency. These forums have empowered communities to participate in decision-making processes, contributing to improved governance at the local level.

However, the challenges of political instability, insecurity, and clan-based politics pose significant barriers to effective local governance in Somalia. Despite the EU's efforts to strengthen local governance, the

ongoing conflict and lack of centralized authority hinder progress. Continued EU support for capacity building and stabilization efforts is crucial for fostering sustainable governance in Somalia.

3.3.5 Rwanda

In Rwanda, the EU has supported local governance initiatives aimed at enhancing accountability, service delivery, and citizen participation. The "Decentralization Support Program" has focused on strengthening local government capacity and promoting community involvement in governance processes (European Union Delegation to Rwanda, 2020). This program has led to significant improvements in local service delivery, particularly in health and education sectors.

Rwanda's unique governance model, which emphasizes accountability and community involvement, has been enhanced by EU support. The establishment of "Umuganda," a community work initiative, has encouraged citizens to actively participate in local development projects, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for governance outcomes. This approach has contributed to significant progress in public service delivery and overall governance.

However, the political environment in Rwanda is tightly controlled, which can limit the scope for genuine citizen engagement and independent oversight. While the EU has supported local governance reforms, the lack of political pluralism and restrictions on civil society engagement pose challenges to achieving sustainable governance.

The EU's local governance strengthening programs have played a crucial role in fostering sustainable governance across East Africa. Through capacity building, citizen engagement, and support for local authorities, these initiatives have improved service delivery and accountability in countries like Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia, and Rwanda. However, challenges such as political instability, corruption, and limited civic space continue to hinder the full realization of effective local governance. Sustained EU engagement and support for local governance reforms will be essential in overcoming these challenges and promoting long-term sustainable governance in the region.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the European Union's (EU) multifaceted role in fostering good governance in East Africa, specifically focusing on the effects of its institutional reforms, support for the rule of law and anti-corruption initiatives, and local governance strengthening programs. The findings highlight that while the EU has made significant strides in enhancing governance frameworks across East Africa, substantial challenges remain that must be addressed to achieve sustainable governance.

Firstly, the effects of the EU's institutional reforms have been evident in the enhanced capacity of local governments to deliver public services and engage citizens in governance processes. These reforms have empowered local authorities, but political interference and resource limitations continue to undermine their effectiveness. Therefore, continuous support and adaptive strategies are necessary to reinforce these institutional frameworks.

Secondly, the EU's support for the rule of law and anti-corruption initiatives has contributed to increased transparency and accountability in governance. However, entrenched corruption and limited political will in various East African countries hinder the full realization of these efforts. Strengthening civil society and enhancing public participation in governance can further bolster these initiatives.

Lastly, the EU's local governance strengthening programs have successfully promoted citizen engagement and improved service delivery. Nevertheless, the restrictive political environments in some countries have posed challenges to genuine participation and accountability. The EU's commitment to supporting civil society and local governance is vital in overcoming these obstacles.

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate that while the EU's efforts have positively impacted governance in East Africa, ongoing challenges necessitate sustained engagement and innovative approaches. By addressing these challenges and fostering a collaborative governance environment, the EU

can contribute to building resilient and accountable governance structures in the region, ultimately supporting the broader goal of sustainable development.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms sole responsibility for the following: study conception and design, data collection, analysis and interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

Not applicable.

FUNDING

None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author confirms that this article's content has no conflict of interest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Declared none.

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