



SPOTLIGHT ON KNOWLEDGE: HORIZONTAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- ▶ **Africa All Party Parliamentary Group (2008).** *Strengthening Parliaments in Africa: Improving Support.* London: Africa All Party Parliamentary Group

The report identifies the social, cultural and political factors that shape the performance of parliaments in Africa together with the formal rules, the political alliances and the nature of political parties and suggests ways to overcome the constraints.

- ▶ **African Union (2007).** *African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development.* Addis Ababa: African Union.

The charter is the instrument that gives a legal cover to accountability in Africa. The different articles though covering governance in general have some that are particular to accountability. Accountability is embedded in Principles of the African Union through Article 3 and Article 15 provides for the creation of accountability institutions. In article 32 the strengthening parliaments is spelt out clearly as well as accountable efficient and effective public administration.

- ▶ **BBC (2012): Research Summary: Understanding Accountability in Kenya.** BBC Media Action, *Transforming Lives Through Media Around the World.* BBC

The brief paper is good for every reader. It extends the definition of accountability from a concept to a process and a moral sentiment. It makes clear how horizontal accountability is different from the rest. It links accountability to impact and gives evidence from Kenya our case study on page 17.

- ▶ **Bonvecchi, A., Zelaznik, J. 2012. Argentina: Recursos de Gobierno y Funcionamiento del Presidencialismo (Argentina: Government resources and presidentialism functioning).** In Lanzaro, J. (ed.) *Presidencialismo y Parlamentarismo. America Latina y Europa Meridional (Presidentialism and Parliamentarism. Latin America and Southern Europe).* Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales,



Madrid.

The authors consider it is not true that all the legislation proposed by the executive is approved by Congress without suffering any modification. By analyzing the sanction of decrees of Necessity and Urgency (DNU), a presidential prerogative used as an indicator of the relationship between executive and legislature in Argentina, the authors note that DNUs have become rather a strategy to pass forward executive policies of general application than a usurpation of the powers of the legislature.

- ▶ **Bosley, J. 2007. *A Review of Parliamentary Scorecards in Africa*. ACBF working paper no.14. The African Capacity Building Foundation, Zimbabwe.**

It reviews the various scorecards used by development agencies and governments in Africa to measure the performance of parliaments. It makes recommendation on improving evaluation using score cards.

- ▶ **Bratton, M. 2007. [Formal and informal institutions in Africa](#). *Journal of Democracy* 18 (3) 81-95**

This is a general consideration of institutionalism in politics related to Africa. The paper argues after Douglas North the father of Institutional Economics that political institutions are any form of constraint human beings devises to shape human interactions. These can be either formal through rules and regulation or informal through conventions and codes of behavior. The paper argues that more unwritten, contextual dynamics determines who gets what, how and when.

- ▶ **CAFRAD and Hans Seidel Foundation (2013) *Enhancing the Capacity of Leaders of African Parliaments for more Astute Legislation*. A paper presented in the Pan-African Parliamentary Conference on Capacity Building. Rabat Morocco, 20th to 23th 2013.**

The paper analyses the competencies of African Parliamentarians in terms of their capacity to represent and legislate effectively and attributes weakness to lack of tools and knowledge on how best to discharge these functions. It calls for the creation of enabling environments and exposure of MPs to new methods of carrying out their functions.

- ▶ **Calvo, E. 2013. *Representación política, política pública y estabilidad institucional en el Congreso***



Argentino (Political representation, public policy and institutional stability in the Argentinian Congress).
In: Acuña, C. (ed.). *¿Cuánto importan las instituciones? Gobierno, Estado y actores en la política argentina (How much do institutions matter? Government, State and actors in argentinian politics).* **Siglo XXI, Buenos Aires**

This book states an explanation of the political representation and institutional stability between 1983 and 2007 in Argentina, in order to debunk typical assumptions about the relationship between Executive and Legislative branches. That is: a) only incumbent legislators are able to pass bills, b) bills aren't approved in commission under divided government, c) the legislative branch cannot or will not limit the executive, d) only legislation initiated by the executive is approved f) block leaders can approve any project due to extreme discipline. The study shows that a high rate of legislation entering the lower chamber is modified, while the great majority of legislation proposals coming from the executive was modified or rejected.

▶ **Canadian International Development Agency and Parliamentary Centre for Africa (2012): Measuring Parliamentary Performance: THE AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY INDEX (API). A Summary Report of the API Round II Assessments in Seven African Countries, 2012. CIDA**

This report assesses the performance of African Parliaments against the international best practices for parliamentary oversight. Using selected indicators, Kenya score highly on legal roles, budget review, hearings, budget control audit scrutiny, human resources and periodic reviews but score low on accessibility and financial and materials resources

▶ **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa 2009. [African Governance Report II](#). Oxford University Press, Oxford.**

This report by ECA shows the state of governance in Africa. As early as page 9 it summarises the effectiveness and accountability of the executive. Again on page 123 it describes the effectiveness and accountability of the executives followed by that of the legislature. But the most comprehensive analysis is Chapter 5 which solely reserved to effectiveness and accountability of the executives. The overall value of the literature is pointing out the gaps of the function of accountability by executives and by parliament

▶ **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa 2012. [Role of parliament in promoting governance](#). United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD).**

ECA (2012): The Report highlights the importance of parliaments in governance but notes that most of



them lack the necessary policies and laws that can enable them to promote peoples' participation. It recommends integration of peoples' participation in the activities of parliaments.

- ▶ **Helmke, G., Levitsky, S. 2003. *Informal institutions and comparative politics: a research agenda*. Working Paper 307. The Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies. University of Notre Dame, Indiana.**

This article seeks to move informal institutions from the margins to the mainstream of comparative politics research by developing an initial framework for defining and studying informal institutions and, importantly, integrating them into comparative institutional analysis. In the theoretical realm, the article examines both the question of why and how informal institutions emerge, and the sources of informal institutions stability and change.

- ▶ **Hodges, T. 2004. *Angola: The Anatomy of an Oil State*, The Fridtjof Nansen Institute and The International African Institute in association with James Currey and Indiana University Press. Oxford, UK and Indianapolis, US**

A study of Angola's development crash, from a relatively prosperous agricultural Portuguese colony in the early 1970s to one of the poorest and most destitute economies in Africa, today.

- ▶ **Hudson, A., Wren, C., Overseas Development Institute (ODI), One World Trust (2007). *Parliamentary strengthening in developing countries*. ODI, London.**

It identifies weaknesses of Parliaments in enacting laws, debating development issues, controlling governments and supporting development. It attributes weakness to lack of knowledge and skills, weak electoral systems, the nature of political parties and the marginalization of parliaments by the executive.

- ▶ **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) 2010. [Analytical Study of Parliamentary Mechanisms for MDGs](#). Inter-Parliamentary Union**

Analytical Study of Parliamentary Mechanisms for MDGs: It examines mechanisms put in place in South Africa, Nigeria, India and Indonesia to support parliaments to work with governments on MDGs. Nigeria was the only country with a standing committee of parliament on MDGs.



▶ Jones (1999)

This paper analysis the budget process in Argentina between 1983 and 1991. The argument is that the separation of powers under the Constitution, combined with the separation of purpose existing in Argentine society and enhanced by its electoral system, fostered conflict, and indecisiveness under divided government. Only under conditions of unified government was budgetary policy resolute. The consequences of divided government depend upon the president's ability to forge coalitions with the majority parties or coalition members in the legislature: if coalition bargaining is difficult, budgets will be stable and incremental, as the reversionary outcome will be maintained. Jones identifies three critical institutions that contributed to this outcome: the president's procedural power; the separation of power among the two legislative chambers and the president; and the electoral laws that lead to strong party loyalty and, in this case, to separation of purpose.

▶ Jones, M.P. 2008. *Legislative Candidates in Argentina*, en Siavelis, P., Morgenstern, S. 2008. *Pathways to Power*. The Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania.

This is Chapter 2 of the much celebrated collection edited by Morgenstein and Siavelis. It is a collection of research findings from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia Mexico and Uruguay. The dependent variable in all countries is party and legal factors that drive the recruitment and selection process to produce candidates of certain attributes. The independent variable is candidate type analyzing the candidate impact on campaigns, political parties and behaviour of the politicians when they area elected. Jones analyses Argentina to provide what determines politics in the country compared to the rest of Latin America.

▶ Jones, M. P., Saiegh, S., Spiller, P.T., Tommasi, M. 2002. *Amateur legislators-professional politicians: the consequences of party-centered electoral rules in a federal system*. *American Journal of Political Science* 46 (3) 656-669.

In this paper the authors use Spiller and Tommasi's (2000) transactional approach to understand how the legislative works. They argue that Argentina's legislative branch is unable to exercise control on the executive and that it plays a limited role in production of public policies. The lack of institutional incentives investing for lawmakers in Congress as an institution, the body generally relegated to a role of mere actor veto in its interaction with the Executive Branch. Highlighting the short duration of most legislative races in Argentina, they discuss how electoral rules in the country limit incentives for deputies to invest in Congress and affect political career in Argentina in general.



- ▶ **Linz, L. 1990. [The Perils of Presidentialism](#). Journal of Democracy 1 (1) 51-69. The Johns Hopkins University Press.**

This is an ordinary paper but with authority on making distinct parliamentary from presidential systems. It is done by the decorated professor Linz and expert in authoritarianism and totalitarianism with authority on Spain. He uses the Spanish case to analyse several countries including those of Latin America with regard to the difference between presidentialism and parliamentary system, paradoxes of presidentialism, elections, the Spanish case, and the link between presidential system and political stability.

- ▶ **Mainwaring, S., Shugart, M.S. 1997. [Juan Linz, Presidentialism, and Democracy: A Critical Appraisal](#). Comparative Politics 29 (4) 449-471.**

This paper studies the characteristics of party systems in Latin America, discussing how these features interact with variations in the legislative branch. Among its' several conclusions they stress that in some cases, the experience of democratic presidentialism had resulted in presidents so checked by congress and other actors that most Latin American presidents have had trouble accomplishing their agendas.

- ▶ **McCubbins, M. D. Schwartz, T. 1984. [Congressional oversight overlooked: Police patrols versus fire alarms](#). American Journal of Political Science 28 (1) 165-179**

This paper presents a theoretical model to argue that what has appeared to scholars as neglect of oversight was a preference for one form of oversight over another. That is, the preference for a decentralized, incentive-based control mechanism, referred to as fire alarms, over police patrols. While in police-patrol oversight, Congress examines a sample of executive agency activities with the aim of detecting and remedying any violations of legislative goals and, by its surveillance, discouraging such violations, fire alarm oversight implies the establishment of a system of rules, procedures and informal practices that enable individual citizens and organized interest groups to examine administrative decisions; that is, occasionally intervening in response to complaints.

- ▶ **Rossi, M.A., Tommasi, M. 2012. [Legislative Effort and Career Paths in the Argentine Congress](#). IDB working paper series no. Idb-wp-378, Inter-American Development Bank.**

The paper is among few titles appearing under economics research findings series. Using data from Argentine House of representative it analyses the relations between legislative effort and political success where the latter uses re-election promotion to other positions. It provides an empirical analysis of what affects career paths of politicians and is a good example of how a research on accountability of develop tangible indicators.



▶ **Mohamed, S (2006).** *African Parliaments. Between Governance and Government.* **Palgrave Macmillan**

The book is a historical analysis of development of parliament in Africa. It focuses on the post 1990s democratic wave. It shows the tension between the role of parliament as government machinery and the process of bringing to account the government.

▶ **Moe, T.M., Wilson, S. 1994. Unilateral action and presidential power: a theory.** *Presidential Studies Quarterly* **19 850-72.**

An analysis of the political structure in presidentialisms. The authors conclude that legislators want to be able to intervene quickly, inexpensively, and in ad hoc ways to protect the interests of some groups in certain matters. This sort of particularized control reduces the costs of collective action for it can be managed by an individual legislator, has direct payoffs the legislator can claim credit for and generally does not provoke conflict. Overall, the electoral connection, combined with notoriously short time horizons of most legislators ensures that they will be highly responsive to the costs of group pressure.

▶ **Mustapic, A. M. (2000). Oficialistas y diputados: las relaciones Ejecutivo-Legislativo en la Argentina (Relationships between the executive and the legislative in Argentina).** *Desarrollo Económico*, **39 (156)**

A study of executive-legislative relations in Argentina under the democratic presidencies between 1983 and 1995. Mustapic characterizes the relations between the Executive and Legislative branches in Argentina, focusing in the factors that affect legislative discipline, the incentives that favor legislator's autonomy and those who limit it. Executive-legislative relations emerge from two overlapping logics: presidential and parliamentary. Tension between the two components can be illustrated by the idea that lawmakers, in their role as members of the ruling party, owe their loyalty to the president (parliamentary logic) but simultaneously speak for the interests and preferences of their constituency (Presidential logic). Moreover, this studying argues that even though it is not on the horizon of legislators to start government policies, this does not exclude them from exercising an impact on the process of decision-making, either by modifying the proposals, denying, delaying or blocking their sanction.

▶ **Nijzink, L., Mozaffar, S., Azevedo, E. 2006. [Can parliaments enhance the quality of democracy on the African continent? An analysis of institutional capacity and public perceptions.](#) Working Paper No. 160. Center for Social Science Research. University of Cape Town.**

It is a paper with a good account on the Africa side of the research. It starts by pointing out that the interest in strength of the parliaments in Africa is visible among the donors but points out that knowledge about



African parliaments is limited. It's important to read the footnotes that have a lot of specific information on specific countries in a variety of reputable journals. The paper is a source of information on the problem of institutional capacity of African parliaments and the gaps that need to be researched on further.

- ▶ **Nino, C. 1992. El hiperpresidencialismo argentino y las concepciones de la democracia (Argentinianhyperpresidentialism and understanding of democracy) . In: Nino, C., Gargarella, Rodriguez, M.V., Krsticevic, Lerer, Sabsay, De Riz, Smulovitz,(eds.) El presidencialismo puesto a prueba (Presidentialism tested). Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, Madrid.**

Nino (1992): A study of Argentina's presidentialism, characterizing it as a hyper presidentialism concentrating extensive powers on the executive as an extensive control over the administration and the ability to appoint and dismiss ministers. Among its features we find that the executive appoints the cabinet members. As well, the national executive has been constitutionally granted with important powers of legislation, such as the President capacity of sanctioning decrees and the power of federal intervention in the provinces, when public order is threatened. These factors contributed to the centralization and concentration of power in the executive, debilitating the attributions of the Congress, subordinating it to the presidents' will.

- ▶ **O'Donnell, G. 1999. Horizontal Accountability in New Democracies. In: Schedler, A., Diamond, L., Plattner, M. F.(eds.). *The Self Restraining State: Power and Accountability in New Democracies*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colorado.**

Horizontal accountability implies the capacity state institutions have to check abuses by other public agencies and branches of government, or the requirement for agencies to report sideways. Thereby, refers to the existence of state agencies that are both legally enabled and factually willing to take actions that can span from routine oversight to minimal sanctions or impeachment in relation to either actions or omissions by other state agents that may be qualified as unlawful.

- ▶ **Przeworski, A., Stokes, S.C. and Bernard, B. 1999. *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.**

The edited book gives a very comprehensive analysis which could lead to understanding not only horizontal accountability but its location in governance and related discourse. Chapter 4 has links accountability and authority. Chapter 9 by Michael Laver and Kenneth Sheple is on Government accountability and Parliamentary Democracy



- ▶ **Rhodes, R.A.W, Binder, S.A, Rockman B.A. 2006. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.**

The handbook is perhaps the authority on the political science of institutions and accountability. Being a collection of chapters by various authors it has the most profound and advanced analysis of the concepts. While it may not be useful to read all the chapters the introduction will give the setting and storyline of the book while chapters 17 and 18 are more directly related to the required subject matter. Chapter 16 by Rhodes is on Executives in Parliamentary Government and Chapter 18 by Mathew Shugart is on the Executive- legislative relations

- ▶ **Rossi, M., Tommasi, M. 2012. *Legislative Effort and Career Paths in the Argentine Congress*. DB Working Paper No. IDB-WP-378 .Inter-American Development Bank.**

This study uses data from the Argentine House of Representatives to explain the relationship between legislative effort and political success, measured by reelection, becoming a leader of the House, and moving to higher political positions. They find an association between more effort and a higher probability of being reelected and also that for those legislators that are reelected, higher effort is positively associated with acquiring leadership positions in the House. This happens in a context of fairly high legislative turnover and in a political context in which career paths of legislators are largely dictated by provincial party leaders. As well, it is found that higher legislative effort is associated with a lower probability of improving politically outside Congress. The rate of re-election of Argentine legislators is low.

- ▶ **Shugart, M.S. 2005. [Comparative Executive-legislative Relations: Hierarchies Vs. Transactions in Constitutional Design](#). University of California, Irvine, Center for the Study of Democracy.**

The paper is on constitutional design that determines the relationship between the executive and legislature. It is not about how politicians are selected only. It should be broader and the design of the constitution could involve also the choice between a parliamentary and presidential system and other institutions of the state. It is important for understanding clearly the broader application of horizontal accountability under different systems and how all the variations came along in different parts of the world.

- ▶ **Spiller, P.T., Tommasi, M. 2000. *The Institutional Foundations of Public Policy: A Transaction Approach with Applications to Argentina*. Presented at the III International Society for New Institutional Economics**



Annual Conference, Tübingen, Germany, September 22-24.

This paper studies the causes of Argentina's stagnation and low performance. How institutional characteristics of Argentina have affected the creation of both public policies and long-term investments -actions based primarily on expectations about the future. Among set characteristics, these authors find that electoral rules limit incentives for legislators to invest in the congress by setting the decision of their reelection in the hands of the provincial governor or local party bosses more than district voters. This enhances their ability to develop a professional legislative career, encourages delegation of crucial political agreements to lateral agreements between the national executive branch and the provincial governors. Therefore, the structure of governance hindered the efficient conduct of inter-temporal transactions and the sanction of long-term, high-quality public policies.

▶ World Bank Institute (2003): Trends in Parliamentary Oversight :Edited by Riccardo Pelizzo, Rick Stapenhurst and David Olson, USA: World Bank Institute.

The World Bank Handbook summarises research on legislative oversight in countries with presidential forms of government. The thrust of the argument in the book is that legislative oversight has impact on corruption. It offers very simple definitions and distinctions of accountability

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