

ISSUE NUMBER 01

# CAFRAD



**MONTHLY EDITORIAL FOR LEADERS  
FACING THE CHALLENGES OF  
POSTMODERN GOVERNANCE**

**PAN AFRICAN  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANIZATION**

JULY, 2025

## THE LIGHT OF THE AFRICAN LEADER





# OPENING NOTE

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DEAR READERS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN AFRICAN DECISION-MAKERS,

AS PART OF ITS MISSION TO BRING FORTH A NEW GENERATION OF AFRICAN LEADERS AND MANAGERS, AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BUILDING OF A WELL-GOVERNED AFRICA REPRESENTING A DYNAMIC FORCE ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE, CAFRAD NOW OFFERS YOU ITS BULLETIN ENTITLED: "THE LIGHT OF THE AFRICAN LEADER."

IT IS THEREFORE WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT CAFRAD SHARES WITH YOU THIS NEW PUBLICATION, WHICH WILL BE ISSUED MONTHLY. THE BULLETIN AIMS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON CAFRAD'S ACTIVITIES, TO ANALYZE SOME STRATEGIC ISSUES IN AFRICAN CURRENT AFFAIRS, AND TO DOCUMENT A GOVERNANCE CONCEPT WITH THE AIM OF ENLIGHTENING AFRICAN DECISION-MAKERS. MORE THAN A COMMUNICATION TOOL, THE BULLETIN IS INTENDED AS A DECISION-MAKING AID.

I INVITE YOU TO READ IT AND TO SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS FOR ITS CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

THIS IS THE FIRST ISSUE, AND WE ARE OPEN TO RECEIVING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EVERYONE TO ENRICH FUTURE EDITIONS.

THOSE OF YOU WHO WISH TO SHARE YOUR REFLECTIONS AND CERTAIN INNOVATIVE BEST PRACTICES FROM YOUR SECTOR OF ACTIVITY, OR THE RESULTS OF YOUR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, MAY SEND US YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS BEFORE THE 25TH OF EACH MONTH FOR THE END-OF-MONTH EDITION.

CAFRAD, A PIONEER IN AFRICA'S GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION, IS INNOVATING TO MEET AFRICA'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. SUPPORT CAFRAD WITH THE FRUITS OF YOUR REFLECTIONS AND BY ANY MEANS AVAILABLE.

THANK YOU, AND I WISH YOU AN EXCELLENT READ.

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THE DIRECTOR GENERAL



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# STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: CAFRAD'S NEW STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

## *A LOOK BACK AT COOPERATION INITIATIVES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAFRAD'S NETWORK OF LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS*

In 2025, CAFRAD is strengthening its international and local partnerships to enhance governance across Africa. A key effort includes reviving its Pan-African network with National Schools of Administration (ENAs) to better coordinate training in public administration. New partnerships with the Tamkine Foundation and MBI-PaaScoop are introducing digital solutions to modernize training programs. CAFRAD is also developing initiatives such as the Certificate of Public Management (CPM) in Morocco and continues its collaboration with international institutions such as AFLEX and CLAD to promote leadership and excellence in public sector management. These initiatives aim to increase CAFRAD's impact in training African executives and supporting effective governance across the continent.

### **1. TOWARD A PAN-AFRICAN SYNERGY IN ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING: RENEWED PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CAFRAD AND THE ENAS**

As part of the preparations for the Pan-African Conference on Training Policies in Africa, a strategic meeting was held around three key themes: an overview of CAFRAD, the revival of partnerships with African National Schools of Administration (ENAs), and the planning of the upcoming conference.



One of the central points of this meeting was the revival of the initiative to create an African network of National Schools of Administration (ENAs), originally launched in 2018. This network aims to structure collaboration between CAFRAD and the ENAs of member states to coordinate training efforts, pool educational resources, and maximize the impact of capacity-building programs.

An organizing committee, composed of the directors general of the ENAs, will be established. Its mission will be to ensure the governance of the network, identify experts, coordinate training sessions, and secure CAFRAD's integration within national training systems.

This initiative specifically aims to Involve the ENAs in trainings delivered within their respective countries; Structure the collaboration through a legal framework and national focal points; avoid isolated interventions by CAFRAD that lack local coordination; and expand the exemplary level of involvement already seen in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to all member countries.

The upcoming conference will be a key moment to officially launch the ENA network and lay the foundations for a new shared governance model for public administration training. Burkina Faso will hold the presidency of the organization, with a joint vice-presidency shared between CAFRAD and another partner institution. Senegal has expressed interest in participating in the governance structure, alongside Guinea and Madagascar, in order to form a strategic core group. Each participating country will be asked to nominate two high-level experts in public administration, who will join a scientific committee responsible for defining key concepts and ensuring the quality of all interventions.

This meeting represents a significant step forward in building an integrated Pan-African space for administrative training. By formally structuring the ENA network and revitalizing strategic partnerships, CAFRAD is reaffirming its commitment to becoming a key platform in support of public governance across Africa.





## 2. CAFRAD'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: TAMKINE AND MBI-PAASCOOP FOR DIGITAL INNOVATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION IN AFRICA

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The Tamkine Foundation and MBI-PaaScoop are two new technical partners of CAFRAD, strengthening the organization's capacity to study administrative issues related to Africa's socioeconomic development. These partnerships enable CAFRAD to expand the number of beneficiaries of its programs and initiatives, while introducing digital and artificial intelligence solutions in the fields of e-learning, administrative management, and the digitization of administrative processes.

The goal of these strategic partnerships is to equip CAFRAD with an e-learning platform and a Learning Management System (LMS), ensuring the fluidity and efficiency necessary to deliver distance learning programs. Additionally, they aim to broaden CAFRAD's training offerings to better meet the needs of African administrative professionals, by providing an ecosystem of solutions that enhance the quality of continuing education.







### **3. INNOVATING PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA: CAFRAD LAUNCHES THE CPM PROGRAM IN MOROCCO**

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Following CAFRAD's participation in the symposium on the Public Management Certificate (CPM), organized by the William P. Hobby Center for Public Service at Texas State University and the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) in Marrakech, the next step in this Africa–U.S. cooperation initiative is to establish this continuing education program in Africa—initially in Morocco.

Indeed, CAFRAD's Director General, Dr. Coffi Dieudonné ASSOUVI, has initiated discussions with Dr. Howard Balanoff, Dr. Mohammed Mekkaoui, and Dr. Aziza Zemrani to explore possible avenues for collaboration and implementation of the CPM program in Morocco and across Africa through CAFRAD. The institution believes that this training will bring new best practices and practical learning materials to public officials, decision-makers, and future managers, offering a complementary curriculum to what national institutions provide in their initial training.

To this end, CAFRAD plans to become a member of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). As a reminder, ASPA was founded in 1939 as a professional association and public service forum. Its work focuses on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of governance, government systems, and public service by promoting new ideas, progressive theories, and the latest advancements—aimed at improving citizens' quality of life nationally and internationally.

Today, ASPA counts around 10,000 diverse members across the United States and abroad, including academics and students. In 2017, ASPA launched a section on African Public Administration with the goal of focusing on public administration and public affairs in Africa. It aims to highlight the differences between the continent's administrative systems and underscore their uniqueness. Through conferences and colloquia, the section explores the individuality of African public administration.

Another objective of establishing the African CPM section at CAFRAD is to build a network dedicated to teaching and researching the uniqueness of African public administration. Since African countries do not share a common administrative system or tradition—having inherited various systems from colonialism, adapted to differing sociocultural conditions—CAFRAD aims to address this fragmentation. It seeks to explore the creation of a unified African administrative system by studying the systems used within continental organizations.





## 4. A NEW ERA OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION WITH CHINA FOR GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

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CAFRAD continues its efforts to strengthen its international network, particularly in China, where significant progress has been made thanks to the Chinese delegation led by Mr. GU Long, who has been appointed CAFRAD's Goodwill Ambassador in China. Mr. GU has conducted outstanding networking work, successfully promoting the institution across both the public and private sectors in China.

The Director General of CAFRAD, Dr. Coffi Dieudonné ASSOUVI, has expressed his desire to organize an activity in the near future in collaboration with Chinese partners. This initiative is expected to take place in the coming months, following ongoing negotiations between CAFRAD and several potential partners. A key initiative in this framework is the upcoming China-Africa Summit on Governance, for which a concept note is currently being prepared. A joint organizing committee will soon be formed to oversee the event, in cooperation with potential sponsors.

The expansion of CAFRAD's presence within Africa is also being discussed, including the creation of a working group tasked with seeking investments to strengthen the institution's footprint on the continent. Additionally, a support group will be established to further CAFRAD's international visibility.

These initiatives reflect CAFRAD's commitment to expanding its influence and strengthening its international partnerships—especially with China—to support public governance in Africa. A comprehensive partnership dossier will be submitted for consideration by the Board of Directors at the next board session.





## 5. CAFRAD AND SISTER ORGANIZATIONS: AFLEX AND CLAD

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The Director General of CAFRAD and his team had the honor of attending a presentation meeting of the African Leadership Excellence Academy (AFLEX). This meeting highlighted the ambitions and accomplishments of both institutions, as well as potential areas of cooperation.

The African Leadership Excellence Academy (AFLEX), founded in June 2021 by the Ethiopian government, has quickly established itself as a key player in leadership development across the continent. Located in Sululta, near Addis Ababa, AFLEX focuses on training both emerging and experienced leaders in Ethiopia and across Africa. The institution prioritizes three main areas: leadership development, public policy research, and advisory services. Its vision is to become the primary hub for African leaders to foster positive societal and cultural impact.

AFLEX's achievements are impressive: 64,000 individuals trained, including 9,522 senior leaders over the past two years, and 48 research studies on public policy implementation. These figures underscore the growing impact of the academy on leadership development in Africa.

Dr. Coffi Dieudonné ASSOUVI, Director General of CAFRAD, praised AFLEX's accomplishments, highlighting the many commonalities between the two institutions, especially in their areas of focus and target audiences. Discussions then turned to the possibility of a partnership between CAFRAD and AFLEX through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

CLAD – During the 2025 World Government Summit (WGS) in Dubai, a bilateral meeting was held between CAFRAD and the Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD) to revitalize their historic partnership and explore new strategic initiatives. Dr. Coffi Dieudonné ASSOUVI expressed his satisfaction with the strengthening of this partnership, emphasizing its vital role in developing African public administrations. He also stressed the importance of ensuring continued financial support from CLAD for CAFRAD's activities, especially those supporting structural reforms in Africa.

Alexandre LOPEZ, Director of International Affairs at CLAD, affirmed the commitment of both institutions to formalize their collaboration through a strong institutional partnership backed by mutually beneficial projects.

This meeting allowed both institutions to reaffirm their commitment to pooling resources, sharing experiences, and strengthening cooperation between Africa and Latin America. CAFRAD is thus committed to offering high-level, context-specific training programs for Africa, at lower costs and without the logistical challenges of international travel.

Finally, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be developed and signed in 2025, marking a new chapter in this strategic partnership.

# THE CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE: HISTORY AND DEFINITION

A brief historical overview of the concept of governance (1) will help clarify its meaning (2).

## 1. Historical Background of the Concept of Governance

The concept of governance entered the vocabulary of international politics toward the end of the 1980s. Before that, the term—derived from the Greek *kybernan* and the Latin *gubernare*, meaning “to steer or to pilot a ship”—was rarely used. It appeared in the French language as early as the 13th century, but was later overshadowed by the term *gouvernement* (government).

In English, the word was occasionally used in colonial discourse during the first half of the 20th century to refer to indirect rule—an administrative system used to govern indigenous populations for pragmatic purposes. In the United States, it referred to the management of semi-autonomous bodies, especially universities. The term later surfaced in the vocabulary of legal sociology with the publication of Philip Selznick’s *Law, Society and Industrial Justice* (1969). There, it referred to the ways in which certain legal procedures, typically confined to the public domain, could be extended into the private sector—particularly labor law—to better protect workers.

[1] Philip SELZNICK, *Law, Society and Industrial Justice*, 1969.

About twenty years later, American and then European companies adopted the concept to describe the set of principles defining shareholders’ powers in relation to management duties. In this context, the goal was quite the opposite of Selznick’s: it aimed to prevent companies from being restricted by regulatory constraints, and to grant shareholders greater authority over employees.

These diverse uses demonstrate that the suffix -ance in governance has the advantage of referring to processes of governing even in the absence of a formal authority directing public affairs—whereas the notion of government usually presupposes such authority.



It was in this context that the concept caught the attention of the World Bank in the 1980s, which integrated it into its development policy vocabulary. Initially, the term served as a softened expression for “state reform,” mainly encompassing institutional restructuring measures such as privatization, deregulation, or the establishment of a legal framework favorable to foreign investment—conditions the World Bank imposed on heavily indebted countries in order to generate the resources needed to service their debt.

The term had the advantage of masking—under a euphemistic and soothing label—the inherently political nature of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), whose legality can at the very least be questioned. These programs were subject to conditionality, thereby bypassing constitutional procedures in the countries concerned, including parliamentary debate. The concept of governance proved especially useful in this regard, since the statutes of the Bretton Woods institutions formally prohibit them from interfering in political matters.

By 1995, under the presidency of James Wolfensohn, the World Bank expanded its interpretation of “good governance” to include anti-corruption measures and increased delegation of authority and responsibilities to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) within its development programs. In doing so, it adopted recommendations from the Commission on Global Governance (established in 1992), which aimed to encourage cooperation between official institutions—whether state or intergovernmental—and private or civil society actors in the management of public affairs (Senarclens and Ariffin, 2007).

Today, the concept of governance is used to describe the complexity of any management system and the necessity of involving multiple actors—both state and non-state—in the pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness. It is from this perspective that we must understand the concept of governance as it shapes political discourse at the international, regional, national, and local levels. However, the meaning of the concept is not clearly understood by all stakeholders.





## 2. Conceptual Clarification

In the language of international relations, governance is synonymous with the regulation of global order in the context of globalization, based on four main ideas: a new way of approaching regulation, which is not limited to rules and self-responsibility; a combination of public and private actors, regulation that is both international and domestic, adherence to the principles of “good governance”, notably as defined by the World Bank.

Global governance aims to reconcile and accommodate all competing interests. It is the sum of various ways through which individuals and public institutions manage their shared affairs. It is a continuous process of cooperation and compromise among diverse and often conflicting interests. It includes both formal institutions and enforcement regimes, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions have agreed to—or perceive as serving their interests (Commission on Global Governance, 1995; Durand et al., 2008).

From this definitional perspective, limiting the meaning of “good governance” to anti-corruption efforts is a mistake. While fighting corruption is indeed a component of governance, it is far from the only one. Other key elements include: citizen and popular participation in public affairs, the quality and responsiveness of public service delivery, equity, transparency, and balanced sharing of management information, the rational, prudent, and forward-looking management of public resources,

• Collective spirit, social dialogue, negotiation, and, in essence, the active and effective involvement of all stakeholders in managing collective issues.

Global governance is thus a dynamic and demanding process that urges public authorities to involve all citizens, especially non-state actors (NSAs), and to establish the foundations for collective management of shared affairs.

This process has several dimensions. Globalization has given rise to multi-level governance: global, regional/continental, national, and local. Here, our focus is on local or municipal governance.

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation defines governance as access to political, social, and economic public goods and services to which every citizen is rightfully entitled, and which every state is obliged to provide.

From a functional point of view, government refers to “the act or method of directing or ruling (someone or something).” It is based on a certain conception of power characterized by asymmetry, inequality, and unilaterality, meaning it gives the one who holds power the ability to impose their will on others. It implies the existence of a central source of power and resources (legal, physical, symbolic), enabling its holder to assert authority.

In this sense, government is consubstantial with the state, insofar as the state is founded on the principle of sovereignty, which assumes that the state holds supreme power. However, sovereignty resides with the people. These traditional techniques of governance—marked by unilateral domination—no longer align with the new balances in contemporary societies. As state sovereignty erodes, organizations of all kinds are seeking new power technologies. It is in this context that the issue of governance emerges (International Social Science Journal, 1998), encompassing two essential shifts in public action:

1. Governance means diverse actors are involved in decision-making processes:

The state is no longer the sole decision-maker; it is now obliged—both externally and internally—to consider the existence of other actors, who participate in decision-making formally or informally. Governance, therefore, breaks down barriers between public and private actors, and between the various levels of collective action (international, regional, national, local) (Chevallier, 2020, pp. 205–206).

2. Governance favors consensual solutions, based on the agreement of all actors involved, over authoritarian approaches:

Decisions result from negotiation and compromise, taking into account the views of all stakeholders. The state agrees to negotiate on equal footing with its partners within a process of collective deliberation.

Thus, governance is rooted in a pluralistic and interactive approach to collective action. It acknowledges the complexity of issues and the existence of multiple power centers (polyarchy), aiming to coordinate their actions and foster cooperation. Governance can be understood as “a method or mechanism of regulating a wide range of problems or conflicts through which actors regularly reach mutually satisfactory or binding decisions via negotiation and cooperation.” It is characterized by horizontal forms of interaction among actors with conflicting but interdependent interests, where no one actor can impose a solution alone, yet all lose if no solution is found (P. Schmitter, 2000).

The concept of governance reflects the shift in modes of action of a state embedded at all levels in interdependent relationships (G. Petter & D. Savoie, eds., 1995).

## WHAT IS CAFRAD?

CAFRAD is a Pan-African intergovernmental organization that acts as a catalyst and driving force for comprehensive transformation, governance, regional integration, and inclusive, sustainable development in Africa. Since 1962, CAFRAD has brought its expertise to the training of African leaders and senior officials across a range of fields, including public administration, governance, and management.





# Useful Links

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