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## The Prevalence of Good governance in Urban Land Administration System of Assosa Town, Benishangul Gumuz Region, Ethiopia

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### Abstract

The study assessed the prevalence of good governance in urban land administration system of Assosa town. Descriptive research design was used. Mixed approach of research was employed. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used. A simple random sampling technique was used. The study comprised 407 total house hold respondents of Assosa town. A descriptive method was employed to analyze data collected through structured questionnaire. Five governance indicators were used to assess the prevalence of good governance in urban land administration system of Assosa town, and none of them found to be inspiring. Thus, it is recommended Assosa city administration should ensure transparency, accountability, equity, and efficiency and effectiveness, as well as promote public participation in its urban land administration system of Assosa town.

**Key words:** 1Good Governance, 2Prevalence, 3Urban Land, 4Administration, 5Assosa Town

### 1. Introduction

Governance can be attributed as good when resources are administered effectively, and efficiently in response to critical needs of society, and when it relies on public participation, accountability and transparency, and render the possible services in effective and efficient manner to the general public, and when resources are managed to respond collective problems of society, that is, when public servants competently provide public services of necessary quality to its citizens impartially. In the context of this paper resource implies land, particularly urban land. Urban land can be: productive asset and source of income; it can have socio-economic value. Similarly, it could be a source of economic growth, employment, wealth, and a source of the survival of the majority of the urban population; urban land is crucial area where good governance can play a great role in dealing with the problem of land administration. Thus the existence of proper practice of good urban land administration has much significance in attaining economic development and poverty reduction of the urban (Wael, Babette & Mika-Petteri (200, p.6).

In this regard, ensuring good governance in urban land administration is vital to ascertain the economic importance of land thereby to meet the demands of the public. However, urban lands as UN-Habitat, (2012) point out that faces unprecedented stress in most parts of the world, such as the ongoing urbanization along with the increasing population create huge demands of urban land for different uses: residential, greenery, business,

infrastructure, and social services; and this comes to be more problematic due to a lack of good governance in urban land administration, and such problems are common in the urban areas of developing countries including Ethiopia (Alemie et al. 2015). Assosa town is one of the urban areas of Benishangul Gumuz Regional State of Ethiopia, and shortage of good governance in urban land administration system of this town is not different from the country scenario. For the purpose of this paper the prevalence of good governance in urban land administration system of Assosa city administration was considered, because currently Assosa city administration has been criticized for a lack of good governance in its urban land administration system as noticed from the gossip of urban community of this town. However, the city administration has been making effort to ensure good governance in its urban land administration system in order to meet public demand.

Despite in view of this Assosa city administration has been exerting its effort to implement good governance in its urban land administration system, the prevalence of good governance is not assessed clearly that could have pivotal role for effective implementation of good urban governance. Hence, by considering this, the activity of making assessment of governance condition regarding how far good governance is prevalent in urban land administration system of Assosa town for effective urban land administration is necessary. Since assessing the prevalence of good governance in relation to urban land administration could have significant share in strengthening the endeavor of Assosa city administration for the realization of good governance in its urban land administration system, but research remained either scanty or unavailable on the topic under concern in Assosa town.

However, a certain research on different topics had been conducted by different scholars: Assefa, (2006) had conducted research on urban water supply in Assosa town; moreover, Kokeb, (2016), had conducted study on the quality of urban roadside walkway environment in the Assosa town; furthermore, Wondem & Mohammed, (2016) had conducted research on the effectiveness of community policing system in Assosa Town; besides Abebe, (2012) had also assessed the challenges and prospects of good governance in revenue collection office of Assosa city administration. And this indicates that not due attention had given to the prevalence of good governance in urban land administration system of Assosa town. Therefore, this paper aims to fill that gap by examining to what extent good governance is prevalent in urban land administration system of Assosa town at present.

**2. Objective:** To examine the extent of prevalence of good governance in urban land administration system of Assosa town.

### 3. Methodology

The research methodology indicates the logical framework that discusses research design, target population, sampling size and technique, data types and Sources, data collection methods and tools, method of data analysis. So, by considering this, the study was employed descriptive case study with mixed research approach methods which include focus group discussions and closed ended questions.

#### 3.1. The Study Area

Assosa is a town in western Ethiopia, and the capital city of the Benishangul-Gumuz Region and BGRS is one of the nine regional states of Ethiopia according to the 1995 constitution of federal democratic republic of Ethiopia. Located in the Asosa zone, this town has a latitude and longitude of 10°04'N 34°31'E, with an elevation of 1570 meters. According to the 2007 population and housing census of Ethiopia the total population for Assosa town were 24,214 of whom 7520 were households, and 12,463 were male, and 11751 were female.

##### 3.1.1. Research Design

Every research needs a research design that is cautiously adapted to the accurate requirements of the problem under study (Creswell, 2009). The choice of an appropriate research design is, therefore, essential for a scientific study. This study was focused on the prevalence of good governance in the urban land administration office of

Assosa city administration. It was employed descriptive research designs since it is designed to assess or describe the existing governance practice of the urban land administration system on the basis of how far good governance is prevalent in urban land administration system of Assosa city administration.

Consequently, research approach can be regarded as a blue print, a master plan that specifies the methods (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Research approach can be quantitative, qualitative or mixed. In quantitative research approach, an investigator relies on numerical data. The advantage of this approach is that data collection is relatively quick and less time consuming and free from bias. In this approach researchers know much about the average experience of research participants, and focus on hypothesis testing rather than on theory generation (Creswell 2003).

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is “an inquiry process of understanding” where the researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2009). It has the advantage of letting the respondents express their feeling freely/with no restriction. However, knowledge produced may not be generalized to other people or other settings and it is also difficult to make quantitative predictions. While taking in to account the above discussions, mixed-method research approach was used in this study. The rational for using mixed method was to get the benefit of both qualitative and quantitative approach.

### 3.1.2. Study Population

In this study, the target populations were the employees of Assosa city administration and the house hold population of the Assosa town.

### 3.1.3. Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The estimated total populations of Assosa town are 24,214. Of this, 7520 are house hold populations of the town. Therefore the sample size for this study was decided based on 7520 house hold populations of the town. And the sample size for this study was determined by using Krejcie and Morgan model of 1970 in Baingana (2011). Accordingly, the sample size for the house hold respondents of the town was decided to be 449. The 449 urban house hold respondents were chosen by simple random sampling technique. The reasons for using such technique for the urban house hold respondents’ is to include individual respondents from different back ground and to get opinions of them.

Assosa town has two woreda administrations i.e., woreda one & woreda two administration; and the sample size for each woredas was decided by stratified sampling as shown in the following table:

| No | woredas           | Sample size |
|----|-------------------|-------------|
| 1  | Woreda one        | 225         |
| 2  | Woreda two        | 224         |
| 3  | Total sample size | 449         |

Therefore, as indicated above the sample population obtained finally was 449. After distributing a total of 449 questionnaires only 407 were collected back. The data collection from the household respondents was very difficult because they were less cooperative suspecting that enumerators were sent from urban land administration office. From the total collected questionnaire 42 were not included in to the study because of errors in filling them. And for that reason, analysis is made on 407 sample size.

#### **3.1.4. Sources and Types of Data**

Sources of information for this study were both primary and secondary data. A type of information was both quantitative and qualitative data. Primary data was gathered through structured questionnaire from the household population of town, as well as from FGD discussants of the community members of Assosa town. Secondary data was adopted to achieve the goal of this study such as review of related literature obtained from various sources such as journals, relevant books, and appropriate official documents.

#### **3.1.5. Data Collection Methods and Tools**

The primary data was collected from the household population of Assosa town by employing the following data collection methods and tools.

#### **3.1.6. Closed ended questionnaire**

This method was employed to collect data from the household respondents of the town. Closed ended questionnaire was prepared to obtain the data from the household population of the town regarding the extent of prevalence of good governance in the urban land administration system of Assosa city administration. Data collection was done by enumerators. For this purpose 2 experts were selected and trained on the questionnaire to help them collect the data properly. Accordingly, enumerators had read the questions to the respondents and after the respondents fill out, they were collected back the data.

#### **3.1.7. Focused group discussion**

FGD's was conducted on areas that were not addressed by household respondents of the town. FGD was comprised 2 groups from the members of the community of Assosa town. Each group contained 10 individuals. Generally, 2 groups comprised total of 20 individuals. FGD included both male and female participants; they were selected by judgment sampling technique. The reason for using judgment sampling technique was to select population members who can provide for accurate information. Data gathered from FGD discussant was enabled the understanding of the prevalence of good governance in the urban land administration system of Assosa town on the basis of common characteristics of: data obtained through structured questioners from household population of Assosa town, and data collected through unstructured questioner from FGD discussants of the town.

#### **3.1.8. Data Analysis**

In analyzing data that was obtained through structured questionnaire from sample respondents, frequency distribution was used to group respondents in to the sub categories in which variables had been divided. This frequency distribution was helped in coming up with percentages that was incorporated in to the analysis in the form of tables and simple descriptions as found appropriate.

### **4. Theoretical frame work for assessing the prevalence of good governance in urban land administration**

In spite of the presence of various good governance indicators, the study for relevant assessment of the prevalence of good governance in urban land administration referred various literatures, published by different international organizations and land administration experts which have developed a list of indicators to assess good governance in land administration such as, the FAO (2007), the World Bank (2007), the UNDP (2006), and land sector experts (Bell, 2007; Arko, et al., 2010; Arko, 2011) which have contributed to the advancement in land governance. For assessing the prevalence of good governance in urban land administration system of the study area, the study employed five good governance indicators as bench mark to collect and analyze data.

- **Participation:** - It denotes that the act of engagement of stakeholders at various levels in decision making processes regarding land issues that affect their interest. The indicators of participation include: the extent of involvement of community members in the land delivery processes, Plan preparation, policy decisions, implementations of laws and regulations
- **Transparency:** - It denotes that the process of decision making and implementation has to be done in an open manner and the information of decision making and implementation should freely and reliably accessible and available to those people who will be directly influenced by those decisions. The indicators of transparency include: clarity of land delivery processes, clarity and accessibility of the laws and rules regulating land delivery, free flow of and accessible land market information to all.
- **Accountability:** - It implies that answerability, responsibility, liability to the service users who have influenced by their decision and activity. The responsibility of the land officials has to be clearly defined and has to be answerable to its decisions and activities. The indicators of accountability include: mechanism of reporting, mechanisms of declaration of financial statements, mechanisms for questioning, and appeal mechanisms for conflict resolution.
- **Equity:** - It is a way of providing equal opportunity for all to access land and land information without legal impediments and procedural difficulties. The indicators of equity include: equitable access to land and land information and fair compensation.
- **Efficiency and effectiveness:** - It indicates that the quality of processes of managing land while making the best use of it to meet user needs (service levels and costs) without wastage. It is reflected by Customer satisfaction; risk of bribery; competency; land conflict resolution mechanisms; land registration systems; and time, affordable service cost and clarity of procedures to access land.

## 5. Results and discussion

This section focuses on data analysis, presentation and result discussion that were collected through closed ended questionnaires, and FGD .To examine the prevalence of good governance in urban land administration system of Assosa city administration, the analysis was conducted in line with the major principles of good governance as shown below by the table 1-5.

**Table 5.1, Respondents opinion on the question of participation**

| Questions                                                                | Response  | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| The level of public participation in land policy decision making process | Very high | 0         | 0          |
|                                                                          | High      | 13        | 3.2        |
|                                                                          | Average   | 14        | 3.4        |
|                                                                          | Low       | 75        | 18.4       |
|                                                                          | Very-low  | 305       | 75         |
| The degree of public involvement in land delivery processes              | Very high | 0         | 0          |
|                                                                          | High      | 6         | 1.5        |
|                                                                          | Average   | 16        | 3.9        |
|                                                                          | Low       | 320       | 78.6       |
|                                                                          | Very low  | 65        | 16         |
| The extent of public consultation on urban                               | Very high | 0         | 0          |

|                                                                             |           |     |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----|------|
| planning processes                                                          |           |     |      |
|                                                                             | High      | 3   | 0.7  |
|                                                                             | Average   | 8   | 2    |
|                                                                             | Low       | 88  | 21.6 |
|                                                                             | Very low  | 308 | 75.7 |
| The level of public consultation on expropriation processes of land holding | Very high | 0   | 0    |
|                                                                             | High      | 10  | 2.5  |
|                                                                             | Average   | 19  | 4.7  |
|                                                                             | Low       | 309 | 75.9 |
|                                                                             | Very-low  | 69  | 16.9 |

**Source: Own Survey, 2019**

Respondents were asked for their opinion concerning the level of public participation in land policy decision making process. In the outcome, 14 (3.4%) of the respondents rated it as average, and 13 (3.2%) high, while 305 (75%) of the respondents rated as very low, and the rest 75 (18.4%) rated public involvement in land policy decision making process as low, as indicated by the above table. Therefore, as we can infer from the result, majority of sampled respondents rated the involvement of members of the community as very low. Besides, FGD discussants believed in the deficiency of public involvement in the land policy decision making process. Further they opinion that there is no enabling environment in the city administration which encourage public participation. It is plausible to assert that public participation in land administration activities could have paramount significance in upholding good governance in land institutions. In this regard, all members of the community who are affected by a decision concerning land policy should have the opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision.

As far as the degree of public involvement in land delivery process is concerned, 14 (3.4%) of sampled respondents rated average; on the other hand 13 (3.2%) of respondents confirmed high; to the contrary 305 (75%) and 75 (18.4%) of respondents rated low and very low respectively as shown by the above table. As the result depicts majority of respondents rated low about public involvement in the land delivery process. Hence, people should not be subjected to a passive exercise of rights in terms of land delivery process; since the absence of public involvement in land delivery process would pave a way for corrupt practice: land grabbing. Therefore, people must actively participate in land delivery process to prevent the possibility of land grabbing by corrupt bureaucrats.

Moreover, as demonstrated by the above table, 3(0.7%), 8(2%), 88 (21.6 %) and 308 (75.7%) of respondents rated high, average, low and very low respectively regarding the extent of public consultation on urban planning process. As we can infer from the result majority of respondents from the community rated very low about the extent of public consultation on urban planning process. Therefore, to prevent anticipated land acquisition and the risks of corruption, urban planning should be decided with broad public participation, and thus planning process should take into consideration public consultation by encouraging all participants to make inputs into the planning process.

Furthermore, sampled respondents were asked for their opinion with regard to the level of public consultation on expropriation of land holding. Accordingly, 10 (2.5%) of respondents rated high, while 19(4.7%), 309(75.9%) and 69(16.9%) of them rated average, low, and very low respectively as displayed by the above table. As we can infer from the result majority of respondents of the community admitted the level of public consultation on expropriation as low. In this regard, to prevent moral hazard and holdout problems by private owners' expropriation process of land holdings by city administration should put emphasis on public consultation.

**Table 5.2, Respondents perception on the question of transparency**

| Questions                                                    | Response  | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| The openness of land policy decision making process          | Very good | 2         | 0.5        |
|                                                              | Good      | 15        | 3.7        |
|                                                              | Undecided | 17        | 4.2        |
|                                                              | Poor      | 355       | 87.2       |
|                                                              | Very poor | 18        | 4.4        |
| The transparency of expropriation Procedures of land holding | Very good | 3         | 0.7        |
|                                                              | Good      | 9         | 2.2        |
|                                                              | Undecided | 13        | 3.2        |
|                                                              | Poor      | 360       | 88.5       |
|                                                              | Very Poor | 22        | 5.4        |
| The clarity of land delivery process                         | Very good | 0         | 0          |
|                                                              | Good      | 8         | 2          |
|                                                              | Undecided | 16        | 3.9        |
|                                                              | Poor      | 292       | 71.7       |
|                                                              | Very poor | 91        | 22.4       |
| The transparency of urban planning process                   | Very good | 0         | 0          |
|                                                              | Good      | 15        | 3.7        |
|                                                              | Undecided | 19        | 4.7        |
|                                                              | Poor      | 339       | 83.3       |
|                                                              | Very poor | 34        | 8.4        |

**Source: Own Survey, 2019**

As depicted by the table 5.2, out of the total respondents 15(3.7%) and 2(0.5%) of them replied good and very good respectively, while 355 (87.2%) and 18(4.4%) of respondents confirmed poor and very poor respectively, but the rest 17(4.2%) of respondents remained undecided concerning the transparency of city administration in its land policy decision making process.

There should be clarity in the decision making process of city administration to the members of the community in order to maintain good governance criteria like transparency. And to the good effect of this, people should be informed about what, how and why decision has been made regarding land activities, since this can help them to see clearly what, why and how a decision is made, and which governmental requirements are followed. However, the result indicates that majority of the sampled respondents confirmed poor transparency in decision making process concerning land policy. Similarly, the information collected from FGD discussant also disconfirmed the existence of transparency in land policy decision making process of the city administration. In this regard, transparency ought to be maintained, since it is essential to the people who is benefiting from decision and action of city administration concerning land policy.

As indicated by the table 5.2, 3(0.7%) of respondents replied very good about the transparency of expropriation process of land holding by city administration, while 15(3.7%) of respondents admitted as good, conversely, 355 (87.2%) and 18(4.4%) of respondents responded poor and very poor respectively, but 17 (4.2%) of respondents remained undecided on the issue. From this result we can infer that majority of respondents of the community confirmed poor about the transparency of expropriation process. Moreover, the data obtained from FGD discussant depicts lack of transparency in the expropriation process of land holding by city administration. Furthermore, they disclosed that land holders were forced to vacate their land holding without any pre-

notification while they have the right to be noticed by the city administration as cited under Proclamation No. 455/2005 of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Considering the clarity of land delivery process respondents were solicited for their opinion. And as demonstrated by the above table, 8(2%) of respondents confirmed high; whereas 292 (71.7%) and 91 (22.4%) of respondents admitted poor and very poor respectively; while 16 (3.9%) of respondents remained undecided on the issue. Therefore, as we can infer from the result, majority of respondents from the community concerning the transparency of land delivery process replied poor. In this regard, land delivery process of city administration has to be open to the community to avoid the erosion of governance criteria transparency.

Whether urban planning process is transparent or not, sampled respondents were asked. Accordingly, as shown by the table 5.2, 15(3.7%) of respondents confirmed the transparency of urban planning process as good, while 19 (4.7%) of them chosen undecided, on the one hand 339(83.3%) and 34(8.4%) of respondents replied poor and very poor respectively about the transparency of urban planning process. As we can see from this result, majority of respondents from the community confirmed poor transparency in urban planning process of the city administration. In the same vein, FGD discussant disclosed there is lack of transparency in city administration with regard to urban planning. Further, they revealed that, only incumbents have information on the planned regulations ahead of their actual implementation. In this case, having insider information on planned regulations ahead of their actual implementation can allow those in the know to acquire land in anticipation. Hence, to prevent speculative land acquisition and the associated dangers of corruption, urban planning process should be conducted transparently.

**Table 5.3, Respondents' opinion on the question of accountability**

| Questions                                                                                                      | Response          | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| City administration is dedicated in reporting land activities carried out to the community members of the town | Strongly agree    | 0         | 0          |
|                                                                                                                | Agree             | 19        | 4.7        |
|                                                                                                                | Neutral           | 13        | 3.2        |
|                                                                                                                | Disagree          | 341       | 83.8       |
| Land dispute resolving Institutions (administrative tribunals) are accessible in city administration           | Strongly disagree | 34        | 8.3        |
|                                                                                                                | Strongly agree    | 0         | 0          |
|                                                                                                                | Agree             | 24        | 5.9        |
|                                                                                                                | Neutral           | 19        | 4.7        |
|                                                                                                                | Disagree          | 307       | 75.4       |
|                                                                                                                | Strongly disagree | 57        | 14         |

**Source: Own Survey, 2019**

Good governance requires the accountability of public authorities to their citizens. In view of this, respondents were asked whether officials of city administration are accountable or not to the community members of the town in reporting land activities performed. Accordingly, out of the total respondents 19(4.7%) of them replied agreed, while 341(83.8%) and 34(8.3%) of respondents answered disagree and strongly disagree respectively, but 13(3.2%) of respondents chosen neutral as demonstrated by the above table.

Accountability would be served if there is public report regarding land activities carry out from those who manage urban land administration institution. However, the result of the finding indicates the majority of respondents disagreed with the accountability of officials of city administration to the members of the

community. Therefore, in order to enhance public trust to the city administration, upholding good governance via ensuring accountability, officials of city administration have to discharge their duty while reporting, explaining, and be liable for the consequences of decisions they made on behalf of the citizens.

To prevent opportunistic behavior and erosion of authority, dispute resolution institutions should be accessible to the people, and thereby to uphold good governance in land administration system. Accordingly, as indicated by the table 5.3, 24 (5.9%), 307(75.4%), and 57(14%) of respondents responded agree, disagree, and strongly disagree respectively with regard to the accessibility of dispute resolving institution in the city administration, whereas the rest 19 (4.7%) preferred neutral. With this in mind, Burns et.al, (2008) feel that land administration systems should aim to assist the resolution of disputes over land. Thus, at initial phase there should be dispute resolving institution (administrative tribunal) to help citizens to lodge complaints and get solution to their grievance, and thereby to make officials answerable for the effect of their action and decision. However, the result shows that majority of respondents disagree with the accessibility of dispute resolving institution (administrative tribunal) in the city administration to hear and manage complaints cases.

**Table 5.4, Respondents opinion on the question of equity**

| Questions                                                                                                    | Response          | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| All community members have equal access to housing land in the town                                          | Strongly agree    | 4         | 1          |
|                                                                                                              | Agree             | 12        | 3          |
|                                                                                                              | Neutral           | 25        | 6          |
|                                                                                                              | Disagree          | 330       | 81         |
|                                                                                                              | Strongly disagree | 36        | 9          |
| Land information is equally accessible to all community members in the town                                  | Strongly agree    | 3         | 0.7        |
|                                                                                                              | Agree             | 10        | 2.5        |
|                                                                                                              | Neutral           | 11        | 2.7        |
|                                                                                                              | Disagree          | 351       | 86.2       |
|                                                                                                              | Strongly disagree | 32        | 7.9        |
| Compensations are paid fairly to all community members who are losing their land holdings in the in the town | Strongly agree    | 0         | 0          |
|                                                                                                              | Agree             | 14        | 3.4        |
|                                                                                                              | Neutral           | 17        | 4.2        |
|                                                                                                              | Disagree          | 48        | 11.8       |
|                                                                                                              | Strongly disagree | 328       | 80.6       |

**Source: Own Survey, 2019**

As shown by the table 5.4, 12(3%) of respondents replied agree, whereas 4(1%) of them responded strongly agree, however 330 (81%) and 36(9%) of them confirmed disagree and strongly disagree respectively, while the rest 25 (6%) of respondents preferred neutral concerning equal accessibility of housing land. From this result we can infer that majority of respondents disagree with the equal accessibility of housing land. As well, the data obtained from FGD discussant coincides with what the majority of respondents from the community replied. Moreover, as to the suggestion of FGD discussant the opportunity to access housing land equally is inconceivable. According to them, in order to obtain housing land an individual expected to pay some kind of bribe or he/she need to have relatives working in the city administration for the sake of securing the advantage of an individual. Further they revealed that the poor and the aged people are the most victims of discriminatory treatment in the city. This indicates that to obtain housing land one has to be economically rich to pay inducement, one need to have relatives for the smooth processing of the issue on the behalf of his/her relatives in the city administration. As they suggested that there are old people lodging on the street due to unreasonable confiscation of their land holding. As to them due to

lack of capacity (matter of age) the old people are not in position to secure their right while lodging complain to the responsible body. As they asserted even if they attempted to lodge complain there is less consideration given to it. Basically, this indicates that the prevalence of discriminatory practice in the service delivery of city administration, though community members as citizens deserves fair treatment irrespective of economic status, age, and relationship. Therefore, to prevent the corrosion of governance criteria like equity all members' of the community, particularly the most vulnerable: the poor and aged people must be treated fairly; and therefore, all community members should feel that their interests have been considered rationally by officials of city administration in their decision-making process.

Moreover, respondents were also solicited for their opinion whether land information is equally accessible to all members of the community or not. By considering this, as shown by the above table, 3(0.7%) of respondents responded strongly agree, while 10(2.5%) of them replied agree, conversely 351(86.2%) and 32(7.9%) of sampled respondents confirmed disagree and strongly disagree respectively with the equal accessibility of land information to all, but 11 (2.7%) of them preferred neutral. As we can understand from this result majority of respondents of the community disagreed with the equal accessibility of land information to all members of the community. In the same vein, information obtained from FGD discussant revealed unequal accessibility of land information to all interested parties in the study area. As FGD discussant disclosed some individuals who are in need of land information (land registry information) can easily access, while some cannot, instead they required to pay inducement to access it. As they suggested, when they are in need of their land registry information, the reaction/response of public service providers is opposite of service users' expectation: hiding of land registry information. As they asserted, often service users were solicited some kind of inducement in the name of searching deliberately hidden files. Essentially, this indicates that discriminatory treatment towards customers, and well intentioned stance of service providers to ask bribe from customers in return for the service they provide them, though they have the right to get service freely or without paying inducement. Therefore, handling customers unreasonably can contribute for the erosion of the element of good governance such equity. In this case, to ensure equity among service users, and thus to maintain good governance service users must get equal access to land information without offering any kind of incentives, since information can enable them to have knowledge and exercise their right confidently.

Furthermore, sampled respondents were asked whether compensation is paid fairly or not to all community members of the study area who are losing their land holdings; and as demonstrated by the table 5.4, 14(3.4%) of respondents replied agree while 48(11.8%) and 328(80.6 %) of respondents confirmed disagree and strongly disagree respectively with the fairness of compensation paid to the losers of land holdings in the study area, whereas 17(4.2%) of respondents choose neutral. In fact, as we can infer from the result majority of respondents disagreed with existence of fair treatment in terms of compensation as a result of loss of land holding. As well, information gathered from FGD discussant accords with what the majority of respondents of the community confirmed. Explicitly, they revealed that losers of land holding are not acquiring compensation fairly; as to them there are some losers remain without getting compensation, and with non-consideration of their complain by responsible institution. In fact, it is not credible for city administration to behave in a discriminatory fashion towards the community members. Necessarily it should provide an equitable treatment or similar considerations to all members the community in order to ensure good governance.

**Table 5. 5, Respondents opinion on the question of efficiency and effectiveness**

| Questions                                                              | Response          | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Land registration system of the city administration is simple and fast | Strongly-agree    | 0         | 0          |
|                                                                        | Agree             | 8         | 2          |
|                                                                        | No comment        | 11        | 2.7        |
|                                                                        | Disagree          | 315       | 77.4       |
|                                                                        | Strongly-disagree | 73        | 17.9       |
| Current and reliable land information is                               | Strongly agree    | 0         | 0          |

|                                                                                                                              |                   |     |      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----|------|
| accessible                                                                                                                   |                   |     |      |
|                                                                                                                              | Agree             | 14  | 3.4  |
|                                                                                                                              | No comment        | 31  | 7.6  |
|                                                                                                                              | Disagree          | 330 | 81.1 |
|                                                                                                                              | Strongly disagree | 32  | 7.9  |
|                                                                                                                              |                   |     |      |
|                                                                                                                              | Disagree          | 330 | 81.1 |
|                                                                                                                              | Strongly disagree | 32  | 7.9  |
| The workers of urban land administration institution are competent enough in performing urban land administration activities | Strongly agree    | 5   | 1.2  |
|                                                                                                                              | Agree             | 19  | 4.7  |
|                                                                                                                              | No comment        | 16  | 3.9  |
|                                                                                                                              | Disagree          | 339 | 83.3 |
|                                                                                                                              | Strongly disagree | 28  | 6.9  |
| Residents are satisfied with service delivery<br>Process of city administration                                              | Strongly agree    | 0   | 0    |
|                                                                                                                              | Agree             | 21  | 5.2  |
|                                                                                                                              | No comment        | 18  | 4.4  |
|                                                                                                                              | Disagree          | 303 | 74.4 |
|                                                                                                                              | Strongly disagree | 65  | 16   |

**Source: Own Survey, 2019**

As shown by the above table, the sampled respondents were asked whether land registration system is simple and fast or not. Accordingly, 8(2%) of respondents rated as agree, but 315(77.4%) replied disagree, and 73(17.9%) strongly disagree, while the remaining 11(2.7%) answered no comment. From the above information we can understand that, majority of respondents witnessed as land registration system was not simple and fast. In this case, digitalized recording system might have paramount value in making easy and fast the land registration system. However, the information collected from key informants of city administration revealed that the city administration is in use of manual recording system due to lack of computer; and as to them, this might be the case, why land registration system is not simple and fast.

Subsequently, respondents were asked about whether current and reliable land information is accessible or not. In view of this, as demonstrated by the table 5.5, out of the total respondents 14(3.4%) replied agree while 330(81.1%) and 32(7.9%) answered disagree and strongly disagree respectively, and the rest 31(7.6%) of respondents responded no comment concerning the accessibility of current, and reliable land information. Essentially, access to land information should be current, reliable. However, as it can be seen, majority of sampled respondents disagreed with the accessibility of reliable and current land information. Similarly, the data gathered from FGD discussant shows the absence of current and reliable land information. As FGD discussant revealed there is difficulty in making meaningful inferences on ownership. Further, they disclosed that they are not easily accessing land information up on their request. As to them, informal payment is common in order to get land information, unless there is the risk of losing files. And they equate such problem with incumbents' intention to enforce illegitimate transaction while undermining the ownership rights by destroying the files. In this regard, computerization may help to prevent the destruction of records by those who want to undermine the ownership rights of people; since, computerization of land information can enhance improved accessibility of land information, and thereby can enable individuals to check whether the data recorded about them or their rights to land are correct or not.

Consequently, respondents were asked for their opinion concerning whether the workers of urban land administration institution are competent or not in carrying out land activities. Accordingly, 19(4.7%) of respondents replied agree, while 5(1.2%) of them confirmed strongly agree, to the contrary 339(83.3%) and 28(6.9%) of them disagree and strongly disagree respectively, whereas the rest 16(3.9%) of respondents chosen no comment as depicted by the above table. From this result we can deduce that majority of respondents did not admitted the competency of workers of urban land administration institution in carrying out land activities. Correspondingly, data obtained from FGD discussant confirmed the existence of problem concerning the competency of workers in running land activities. Likewise, the key informants of city administration also admitted about shortage of competent work force in urban land administration. In this case, a lack of adequately qualified man power in urban land administration institution may affect the efficiency in performance and on the one hand may put the city administration in a difficult position to tackle the fast increasing demand for land in cities like Assosa where this study had undertaken. Therefore, availability of work force with appropriate skills and competencies to carry out urban land administration activities may be crucial for ensuring efficiency in performance, and thereby good governance in urban land administration system.

Among respondents asked about whether he/she satisfied with the service delivery of city administration, as shown by the table 5.5, 21(5.2%) of them confirmed agree, while 303(74.4%) rated as disagree, and 65(16%) strongly disagree, but the remaining 18(4.4%) responded as no comment. Efficient service delivery by land administration institution can be a vital quality of good governance in land administration; and good governance in urban land administration office can contribute to the satisfaction of service users; while the influence of poor governance within land administration office might be reflected in poor service delivery, and thereby contributes to the discontent of service users. As it can be inferred from the result of the survey, majority of household respondents rated as they are dissatisfied with the service delivery of urban land administration office. Similarly, FGD discussants of the urban community commented as they are not pleased with its service delivery. Therefore, to enhance service user's satisfaction, and thereby to avoid the erosion of good governance urban land administration office needs to carry out land administration activities effectively and efficiently.

## **6. Conclusion and Recommendation**

### **6.1. Conclusion**

The finding of this study shows that there is a shortage of public participation in: land policy decision making, land delivery, urban planning, and expropriation process of land holding. Moreover, the study indicated there is a lack of transparency in: land policy decision making, land delivery, urban planning, and expropriation process of land holding in the city administration of Assosa town. Furthermore, the finding of this study shows lack of accountability in urban land administration system of Assosa city administration with regard to handling land disputes, and reporting land activities carried out. Similarly, the study displays lack of equity in terms of equal access to housing land, land information, and fair compensation. Thus, the result of this study indicated urban land administration system of Assosa city administration as lacking efficiency and effectiveness in ensuring; the accessibility of competent work force for carrying out urban land administration activities, the simplicity and fastness of land registration system, accessibility of current and reliable land information, and the satisfaction of service users of the town.

Generally, this study tried to display how good governance is prevalent in urban land administration system by the virtue of five core good governance principles: participation, transparency, accountability, equity, and efficiency and effectiveness. Based on the result of this study, urban land administration system of Assosa city administration assessed has not found encouraging in any of the five good governance indicators and the sub-indices of the indicators used in the study. Therefore, it is necessary to deduce that ensuring; public participation, transparency, accountability, equity, and efficiency and effectiveness in urban land administration activities of Assosa city administration would help to realize the prevalence of good governance.

## 6.2. Recommendation

The proper implementation of the governance principles: participation, transparency, accountability, equity, and efficiency and effectiveness can enhance prevalence of good governance in urban land administration system of Assosa city administration. However, the finding shows that as it is not inspiring. Hence, to ensure the prevalence of good governance in the urban land administration system of Assosa city administration, it is recommended that proper implementation of the aforementioned principles is vital by:

- Providing training on these pillars to the staffs of urban land administration office, because lack of know-how on these pillars of governance on the side of service providers can contribute to the outcomes which is not desirable to the communities of the study area. Therefore, building know-how through training can guide activities from socially undesirable out come to desirable one.
- Enhancing public involvement and transparency in: land policy decision, land delivery, urban planning, and expropriation process of land holding of city administration to maintain good governance and deter the danger of corruption
- Ensuring accountability in via reporting and explaining land activities; as well as ensuring the accessibility of land dispute resolving institution
- Ensuring: fairness in accessibility of housing land and land information to the members of the community, as well as fair compensation for the losers of their land holdings in the town to avoid the erosion of governance criteria like equity in urban land administration system of the study area
- Adopting: computerized recording system to ensure that land registration system simple and fast; computerization of land information in order to enhance improved accessibility of reliable and current land information; ensuring the availability of adequate work force with appropriate skills and competencies to carry out urban land administration activities, while affording service users with quality service so as to enhance their satisfaction, and thereby to uphold good governance while ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in its performance.

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