Advancing Good Governance Seminar
June 12, 2014 – 11:00 am-12:00 pm
Global Development Expectations Transformed

The keynote address presented by Lord Malloch-Brown focused on the rise of civil society and the new accountability to which international development finds itself subjected. Contextualized against a background that not all states have adopted this horizontal power dynamic, Lord Malloch-Brown highlighted the role of social media and citizen feedback in driving global development, particularly in the areas of accountability and control.

Key Points from the Session

1   **Corruption is a proxy for development.** It acts as a reflection of the broader sense of unfairness in society. It is an indicator for countries where the elite seem to control wealth creation and benefit from it. It is a representation of very high levels of inequality. Corruption casts a profound doubt on the way in which society is organized and societal benefits are shared in most developing countries.

2   **An empowered and enhanced civil society produces accountability.** The magnification of the message and the turning up of the volume through global social media has moved society towards a broad-based initiative. Social media has empowered the people in the affected communities by providing a platform of social "crowding in" of protests from an extensive and dispersed geographical reach, resulting in a much more transparent and accountable civil society, which in turn is better able to hold projects to account.

3   **A sensible framework of compliance is necessary to drive business.** An important set of changes has already been brought about by civil society. However, the downside to this is that there is a dangerous lack of entrepreneurship arising out of a fear of transgressing regulations. The key is to develop a sensible framework of risk management which ensures compliance, but not the box-ticking type of compliance which has become a substitute for real engagement. It is necessary for companies to start thinking of themselves as development partners in order to be successful. Long-term business relationships are only possible when companies receive social recognition, which can only be achieved when there is compliance with rules and regulations. It is necessary for companies to align their own development with the ambitions and expectations of the nations and communities in which they operate. The role of companies in developing countries has become very different and it is necessary for companies to demonstrate that they are full scale partners. Thus, the move to greater accountability, largely driven by civil society, has to bring the private sector with it.

Emerging Questions

1   How do we maintain a balance between governments and civil society which will allow for a win-win situation for all?

2   What sort of governance issues need to be considered when we are looking at digital citizenry and do we need to be concerned about the monopoly and homogenization that occurs in social media?

3   Should we be giving more consideration to the idea that parliamentarians can be the key players in good governance and should a shift in focus towards making democratic governance a priority area be considered?

4   Is it possible that the rise in civil society is just another fad and that a number of the international agencies are concerned primarily with box-ticking rather than people-centered development?

5   Why has it become so difficult to drive the private sector to invest in small businesses and social development and what can we do, collectively or otherwise, to change this?

6   Is there the ability for international development to mitigate, or at least ring-fence, corruption in the countries where we operate?