



# **Making Democratic Governance Work: How Regimes Shape Prosperity, Welfare, and Peace**

*Pippa Norris*

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This book focuses on three core questions. Is democratic governance good for economic prosperity? Has this type of regime accelerated progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals, social welfare, and human development? Does it generate a peace-dividend and reduce conflict at home? Despite the importance of understanding these questions and the vast research literature generated, remarkably little consensus has emerged about any of these issues. Within the international community, democracy and governance are widely advocated as intrinsically desirable and important goals. Nevertheless, alternative schools of thought continue to dispute their consequences - and thus the most effective strategy for achieving a range of critical developmental objectives. Some believe that human development is largely determined by structural conditions in each society, such as geographic location, natural resources, and the reservoir of human capital, so that regimes have minimal impact. Others advocate promoting democracy to insure that leaders are responsive to social needs and accountable to citizens for achieving better schools, clinics, and wages. Yet others counter that governance capacity is essential for delivering basic public services, and state-building is essential in post-conflict reconstruction prior to holding elections. This book advances the argument that both liberal democracy and state capacity need to be strengthened in parallel to ensure effective development, within the constraints posed by structural conditions. Liberal democracy allows citizens to express their demands, to hold public officials to account, and to rid themselves of incompetent, corrupt, or ineffective leaders. Yet rising public demands that cannot be met by the state are a recipe for frustration, generating disillusionment with incumbent officeholders, or, if discontent spreads to become more diffuse, with the way that the regime works, or even ultimately with the promise of liberal democracy ideals. Thus governance capacity is also predicted to play a vital role in advancing human security, so that states have the capacity to respond effectively to citizen's demands. The argument is demonstrated using systematic evidence gathered from countries worldwide during recent decades and selected cases illustrating the effects of regime change on development.

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