

Good Governance and the Legitimacy of International Organizations: Evidence from an Elite Survey in 148 Countries

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Abstract:

International organizations (IOs) are often criticized for violating fundamental principles of good governance (e.g., accountability, fairness, participation, representation, transparency) in ways that undermine their perceived legitimacy. Powerful high-income countries remain overrepresented in IOs' governing boards and staff. Stakeholder consultations are often ceremonial rather than used to inform policy. IOs are frequently accused of bypassing their decision-making processes when the interests of powerful member states are concerned. In response to such criticisms, IOs have aimed to reform their governing processes to increase the voice of and accountability towards stakeholders in low- and middle-income countries. In this paper, we probe the consequences of these reforms for the legitimacy of IOs among key stakeholders in low- and middle-income countries. To this end, we conduct a conjoint experiment with thousands of elites (i.e., ministers, parliamentarians, bureaucrats, civil society, business, and media) from 148 countries and semi-autonomous territories. The paper contributes to debates on IO legitimacy and effectiveness in two ways: First, it focuses explicitly on the potential of good governance reforms to expand the legitimacy of IOs. Second, it analyzes novel empirical evidence of perceptions of IO legitimacy from a survey experiment with elites from almost all low- and middle-income countries globally—vastly expanding the coverage of existing studies of IO legitimacy.

Introduction

International Organizations (IOs) have long been criticized for perpetuating global inequalities and a lack of representation of people living in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). Elites representing people in LMICs have formed a range of groupings intending to reform IOs and make them more accountable and representative of their interests. Some examples have been primarily directed by voices from within LMICs, such as the 1955 Bandung Meeting, the G77, the non-aligned movement, the movement for a New International Economic Order, and efforts by the BRICS and BRICS+ to demand a more equitable international order (Azevedo et al. 2024; Pham and Shilliam 2016). Other social movements, like the Global Justice movement that emerged with the Battle in Seattle in 1999, have been more diverse in incorporating voices from advanced and developing economies, calling for fundamental reforms to democratize IO decision-making procedures, increase transparency and civil society participation (Daphi, Anderl, and Deitelhoff 2022; Steger and Wilson 2012).

These criticisms undercut the perceived legitimacy of IOs. Many scholars have argued that procedural factors shape the legitimacy of IOs (Buchanan and Keohane 2006; Scholte and Tallberg 2018). In this view, actors tend to be more inclined to accept the authority of an organization if said organization follows processes that conform with established standards of appropriate governance. When IOs exercise authority without broad legitimacy among key stakeholders, this can lead stakeholders to contest this authority (Zürn, Binder, and Ecker-Ehrhardt 2012), and it can provide opportunities to gain political power by criticizing them (De Vries, Hobolt, and Walter 2021). IOs are keenly aware of the need to justify their governance features. Indeed, officials working within these organizations routinely try to legitimize their existence through engaging in public communication (Ecker-Ehrhardt 2018; Schmidtke 2019; Schmidtke and Lenz 2023) and specifically use the language of democracy and good governance to try to build legitimacy (Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020) with key constituency groups.

Beyond rhetorical commitments, IOs have also introduced wide-ranging reforms that seek to address at least some of these criticisms. While some IOs went as far as to introduce parliamentary bodies (Koenig-Archibugi and Bareis 2022), most focused on somewhat narrower good governance reforms. As Woods (2000) has succinctly summarized: “the ‘good governance’ agenda includes promoting transparency, accountability, efficiency, fairness, participation and ownership. These values translate into a broad objective to improve political accountability, participation, an

effective rule of law, transparency, and flows of information between governments and their citizens”. Based on this agenda, IOs have established a range of institutional bodies and procedures attempting to expand their accountability, transparency, the participation of key stakeholders, and representation of Global South countries in voting procedures or the bureaucracy (Kaya 2015; Lall 2023; Parizek and Stephen 2020; Tallberg et al. 2013; Vestergaard and Wade 2013; Zvobgo and Graham 2020). Scholars widely assume that such reforms should strengthen the legitimacy of IOs (Coni-Zimmer, Deitelhoff, and Schumann 2023; Dellmuth, Scholte, and Tallberg 2019; Dingwerth, Schmidtke, and Weise 2020; Lenz and Söderbaum 2023; Scholte and Tallberg 2018). As Koenig-Archibugi (2010, 1146) puts it: “Accountability is demanded, supplied and studied mainly because of the expectation that it will contribute to establishing, maintaining or enhancing legitimacy.” However, this assumption is rarely tested empirically.

In this paper, we try to understand whether good governance reforms affect the legitimacy of IOs among elites active in development policy in 148 LMICs and semi-autonomous territories. By doing so, we contribute to the extant literature in two ways. First, we focus on the impact of good governance reforms. Existing studies of legitimacy beliefs focus on individual factors, broader societal norms, and institutional sources. Studies highlighting individual explanations have explained legitimacy beliefs based on political knowledge, interests, ideology, values, and inclinations to trust institutions in general (Dellmuth 2018; Dellmuth et al. 2022; Ecker-Ehrhardt 2016; Hooghe and Marks 2005; Inglehart and Norris 2017; Johnson 2011; Sattler and Urpelainen 2012). Scholarship emphasizing broad societal structures posits that social norms, discourses, economic systems, and hegemonic states shape conceptions of IO legitimacy (Scholte 2018). However, neither strand of research can explain what institutions can do to be considered more legitimate—an essential question for both practical and theoretical reasons. Another set of studies aims to unpack such institutional sources of legitimacy beliefs (Anderson, Bernauer, and Kachi 2019; Dellmuth, Scholte, and Tallberg 2019; Lenz, Burilkov, and Viola 2019; Nielson, Hyde, and Kelley 2019; Scholte and Tallberg 2018; Tallberg and Zürn 2019). These scholars show that institutional performance, procedures, interest representation, and mandates play a crucial role. Despite their important contributions, these studies do not engage with the manifold good governance reforms implemented in the last twenty years to overcome challenges to IO legitimacy.

Second, we study novel empirical data on legitimacy beliefs by conducting an experiment with political elites in a vastly expanded sample. Most studies on legitimacy beliefs focus on public opinion (Anderson, Bernauer, and Kachi 2019; Dellmuth and Tallberg 2020; Ghassim 2024;

Ghassim, Koenig-Archibugi, and Cabrera 2022; Johnson 2011). These studies have provided valuable insights that we draw upon in this study. However, they do not study political elites—which play a central role as critical interlocutors to IOs (Bazbauers 2019; Chwioroth 2015; Heinzl and Liese 2021; Liese et al. 2021; Nelson 2017; Scholte, Verhaegen, and Tallberg 2021; Woods 2006). We do not deny the importance of understanding popular legitimacy. However, elites are central to the effective functioning of IOs. We define elites as “people who hold leading positions in key organizations in society that strive to be politically influential” (Scholte, Verhaegen, and Tallberg 2021, 862). The degree to which elites perceive IOs as legitimate plays a crucial role in their ability to fulfill their mandates. Political elites play a key role in authorizing the financing of IOs, produce much of the knowledge about IOs, shape citizens' belief in IO legitimacy, and IOs rely on them as essential counterparts for policy influence and program implementation at the domestic level (Bazbauers 2019; Broome and Seabrooke 2015; Chwioroth 2015; Dellmuth and Tallberg 2020; Herold et al. 2021; Woods 2006).

Few existing studies focus on IO legitimacy perceptions among political elites. The most comprehensive effort to study political elites is the LegGov survey conducted by Dellmuth et al. (2021). The survey includes elites from eight countries—two of them LMICs: Brazil and South Africa. Our sample comprises elites from 148 LMICs and semi-autonomous territories. Moreover, their study remains observational and explains differences mainly based on individual-level factors (Dellmuth et al. 2021, 2022; Verhaegen, Scholte, and Tallberg 2021). Despite its many contributions, the survey thus cannot tell us how good governance reforms shape the legitimacy beliefs of elites in LMICs.

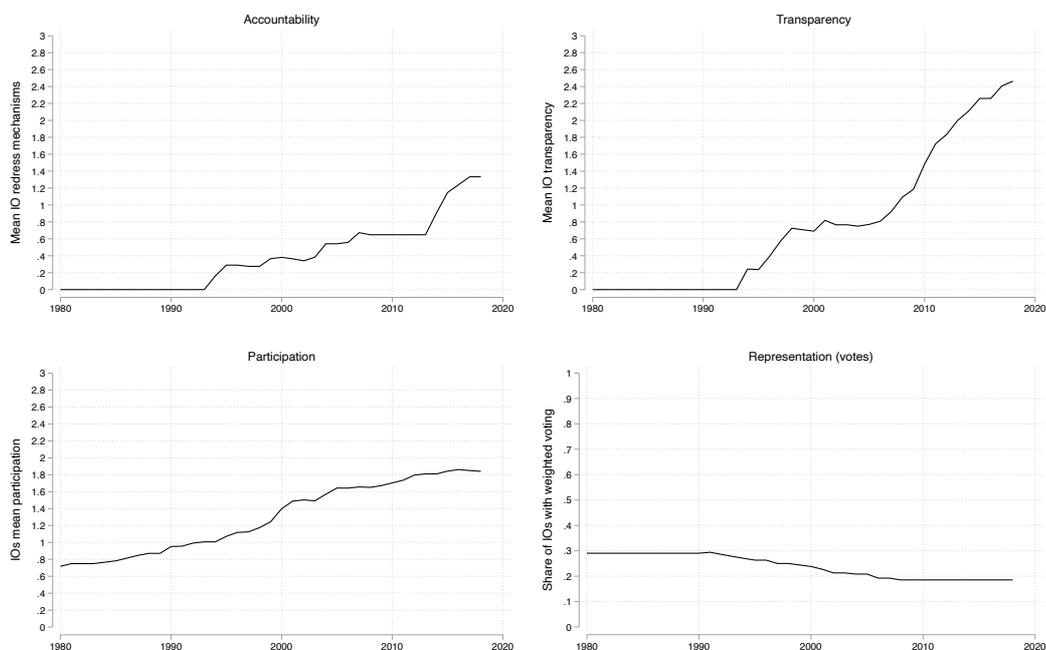
We posit that good governance reforms should increase the legitimacy of IOs in the eyes of elites in LMICs. Our empirical analysis builds on a pre-registered conjoint experiment conducted with elites in 148 countries and semi-autonomous territories in 2024 embedded in AidData's Listening to Leaders Survey (Blair, Custer, and Roessler 2024). We presented respondents with two hypothetical profiles of IOs that introduced a range of good governance reforms and asked them to rate the two IOs along multiple dimensions of legitimacy. The findings from our pre-registered analyses show that elites in LMIC have strong preferences for IOs that are more accountable for rights violations, representative towards their country in both staff and voting shares, participatory towards affected people and civil society, as well as transparent by proactively disclosing information on their operations. These mechanisms increase procedural, performance-based, and responsiveness legitimacy in our survey experiments. Exploratory analyses further reveal that these

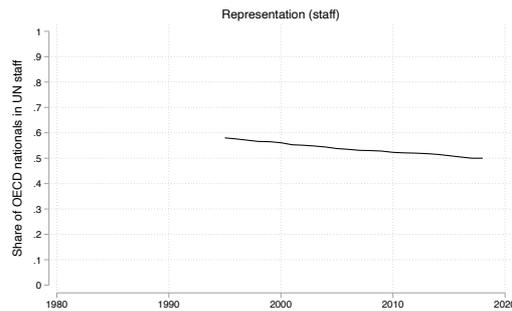
results are consistent across different types of elites and hold for both elites in democratic and autocratic countries. Moreover, we also show that participation mechanisms are associated with elites' rating of the legitimacy of real IOs in observational analyses. Together, these results strongly imply that IOs can gain legitimacy among elites in LMICs when they adopt comprehensive good governance initiatives.

Good Governance Reforms and the Legitimacy of IOs

Based on the extant literature on good governance reforms, we highlight five main elements: accountability, fairness, participation, representation, and transparency (Lall 2023; Woods 2000). The last two decades have seen an expansion of reforms to strengthen these principles in IOs (Lall 2023). Figure 1 displays descriptive evidence from multiple sources demonstrating such changes. The figure shows an uptick in IOs introducing reforms to increase accountability, become more transparent, and allow for more stakeholder participation over a four-decade period. Fewer IOs have employed weighted voting and the share of OECD country nationals (i.e., a club of advanced economies) among their staff has declined, at least for the UN, where the most comprehensive staffing data is available. In the following, we define and discuss these elements and develop hypotheses predicting their impact on IO legitimacy.

Figure 1: Good governance reforms in international organizations





Sources: Lall (2023) for accountability, transparency, participation, and weighted voting; Parizek and Stephen (2021) for UN staffing data

Accountability

Accountability can be understood as “the process of being called ‘to account’ to some authority for one’s actions” (Mulgan 2000, 555). Accountability is a contested term, and many of the other dimensions of good governance we highlight are closely linked to a broad understanding of accountability (Grant and Keohane 2005; Hale 2008; Koenig-Archibugi and Macdonald 2013; Woods and Narlikar 2001). However, in our theoretical framework, we adopt a narrow understanding and use the term to denote mechanisms that can be used to seek investigation of misconduct and redress for violation of people’s rights (Buntaine 2015; Park 2017; Zvobgo and Graham 2020).

Such mechanisms include inspection panels and ombudsperson mechanisms, which have spread widely across IOs since the 1990s. For example, the World Bank established its Inspection Panel in 1994. Narlikar and Woods argue that the establishment of the Bank Inspection Panel was “[t]he most powerful and unprecedented step towards greater horizontal accountability taken by any of the international economic institutions” (Woods and Narlikar 2001, 576). Within a few years, other multilateral development banks (MDBs) followed suit. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) created a similar mechanism in 1995, the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2003, and the African Development Bank (AFDB) in 2005 (Park 2017).

Activists pushed the MDBs to embrace ideas on accountability in response to high-profile project failures (Bissell and Nanwani 2009). These initiatives were then spearheaded by the United States, which used its voting power, financial incentives, and normative suasion to convince the World Bank and other MDBs to adopt accountability mechanisms. Borrower governments were more skeptical due to the sovereignty infringement provided by these mechanisms and since they had

to shoulder the costs of bringing a project back into compliance (Park 2017, 2023). Today, inspection panels are widely used, and the respective panels have investigated hundreds of cases (Gunaydin and Park 2024; Zvobgo and Graham 2020).

We posit that establishing an inspection panel increases perceived legitimacy in the eyes of elites. We expect that these panels increase the confidence of elites that IOs rectify violations of people's rights and try to prevent these violations in the first place. Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: If an IO must investigate complaints about the violation of people's rights, that IO's perceived legitimacy increases

Fairness

A second key element of good governance is fairness. A range of fairness considerations are featured in other aspects of good governance, notably representation. However, we focus on a narrower understanding of fairness here. We follow Woods' (1999) conceptualization of fairness in two dimensions: procedural and substantive fairness. Procedural fairness is closely linked to notions of impartiality. It calls for the impartial and predictable establishment and enforcement of rules. As Woods (1999, 46) puts it: "All members should be able to understand and predict the processes by which an institution will take decisions and apply them." Substantive fairness, on the other hand, focuses on the outcomes of IOs' decisions. Here, an organization is judged as fair if its decisions lead to an equitable distribution of resources.

A burgeoning literature demonstrates that IOs do not conform to procedural or substantive fairness conditions. Existing studies show that powerful member states can bias decision-making on various outcomes (Vreeland 2019). For example, scholars have demonstrated such biases in IOs' resource allocation (Andersen, Hansen, and Markussen 2006; Thacker 1999), conditionality design (Clark and Dolan 2021; Dreher, Sturm, and Vreeland 2015), naming and shaming (Terman and Byun 2021; Terman and Voeten 2018), as well as the development of expertise (Dreher, Marchesi, and Vreeland 2008).

Development IOs have aimed to overcome such biases by introducing more rules-based systems to distribute resources. These rules-based allocation systems tend to use data on a range of country conditions and policies to determine how much money member states can access. Examples

include the International Fund for Agricultural Development, which uses data on a country's rural population, income, institutions, project performance, and rural sector to score countries on two dimensions: country needs and country performance. IOs like the AfDB, ADB, World Bank, the Global Fund, and the United Nations' One UN Fund have established similar allocation systems. Existing studies show that such allocation systems decrease the impact of political interests and, thus, increase the impartiality of decision-making (Morrison 2013).

We argue that establishing rules applying equally to all countries increases the degree to which elites in LMICs perceive IOs as legitimate. Impartiality, objectivity, and fairness have long been posited as critical sources of institutional legitimacy (Barnett and Finnemore 2004; Scholte and Tallberg 2018). We expect that allocation rules increase the confidence of elites in LMICs, that their country will be treated fairly, and that political favoritism will not undermine the decision-making, implementation, or effectiveness of IOs. Thus, our second hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 2: If an IO distributes funds according to the same rules for all countries, that IO's perceived legitimacy increases

Participation

Participation refers to the involvement of affected people or their representatives in the decision-making of IOs. Many IOs have substantially expanded the opportunities they afford for the involvement of non-state actors over the last thirty years (Tallberg et al. 2013). Some such opportunities include citizens' direct participation in consultations or deliberative fora (Fox and Stoett 2016; Garard and Kowarsch 2017; Kramarz 2016). Others rely on the participation of civil society actors that seek to represent the interests of affected communities (Bexell, Tallberg, and Uhlin 2010; Coni-Zimmer, Deitelhoff, and Schumann 2023; Dany 2014).

A key component of participation is the direct consultation of affected people. As Koenig-Archibugi and MacDonald (2017) have argued, the participation of affected people is essential for instrumental and intrinsic reasons. First, such participation can shape the content of IOs policy design and implementation. Thus, it provides opportunities for affected people to influence whether IO decisions offer benefits to them. It can also increase the effectiveness of IO interventions because it allows for a channel for incorporating knowledge about local and national context conditions. As Woods (1999, 44) argues, "participation makes IO interventions more

successful if those most affected by the particular project participate directly in its design and operation and gives people a sense of ownership in a project and a very real stake in its success.” Second, the participation of affected people is important for democratic legitimacy. A large number of (global) democratic theorists have argued for variants of the all-affected principle—which posits that those who are affected by a decision should have a say in how that decision is made (Archibugi 2008; Habermas 2006; Held 1995; Koenig-Archibugi 2017; Shapiro 2003). Hence, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3a: If an IO consults with affected people, that IO’s perceived legitimacy increases

Others have focused on the participation of civil society as a key standard of good governance. Proponents of stakeholder democracy have argued that including civil society in decision-making is a more realistic way to increase participation (Bäckstrand 2006; Macdonald and Macdonald 2006; Scholte 2004). These arguments are based on principles similar to those of individual participation. Involving civil society actors is supposed to lead to more equitable outcomes and increase the participation of affected people in decision-making. Yet, one crucial question for democratic legitimacy is whether including civil society perpetuates existing inequalities by improving access of an unequal global civil society (Bäckstrand 2006; Scholte 2014). However, empirical evidence on the influence of civil society participation on legitimacy is mixed. On the one hand, Agné et al. (2015) show that the involvement of civil society does not strengthen perceptions of democratic legitimacy among stakeholder organizations. On the other hand, Ecker-Ehrhardt et al. (2024) provide evidence that civil society inclusion increases the popular legitimacy of IOs in four countries. Based on these arguments, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3b: If an IO consults with civil society, that IO’s perceived legitimacy increases

Representation

Representation can be understood as the extent to which IOs’ decision-making structures incorporate different countries. Scholars have primarily highlighted two dimensions: representation in votes and the staff of IOs (Kaya 2015; Parizek 2017; Weaver et al. 2022). IOs vary considerably in how much they represent different countries in their voting procedures or bureaucracies.

The first dimension of representation we highlight is voting rights. Most IOs are governed by executive boards that include a subset of member states to ensure more efficient decision-making. Having a seat on these governing boards comes with privileges of influence and can allow countries to extract resources, as delegates can gain standing, influence others, or trade favors (Dreher et al. 2021; Forster 2024; Morrison 2013; Vreeland 2019). IOs use two main approaches to allocate voting rights within executive boards: one-country-one-vote or weighted voting (Blake and Payton 2015). UN organizations and regional organizations tend to give sovereign equality to member states. On the other hand, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) tend to use weighted voting based on capital subscription quotas.

Weighted voting procedures, such as those used by IFIs, have been heavily contested. Weighted votes tend to reflect the distribution of power at their creation (Viola, Snidal, and Zürn 2015). The rapid economic development of emerging economies since the 1980s has meant that the distribution of votes does not align with the distribution of power in the global economy (Stephen 2014). Moreover, the voting procedures give less voice to populous countries like India and China than powerful European countries. The poorest or most climate-vulnerable countries combine minuscule voting power and, thus, tend to lack the institutional power to push for their agenda (Merling and Forster 2024). The results have been repeated attempts at reform. However, these reforms have not produced meaningful changes in voting rights that satisfy emerging economies (Kaya 2015; Vestergaard and Wade 2013; Xu 2017).

The continued underrepresentation of some countries within IOs has been said to undermine their legitimacy (Stephen 2018). Indeed, McDowell et al. (2024) show in Argentina, China, South Africa, and Turkey that more equal representation in votes would increase the procedural legitimacy of the IMF amongst the public. We expect that similar dynamics shape the legitimacy of IOs among elites in LMICs. Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 4a: If one's country has a seat in the governing body but less votes, that IO's perceived legitimacy increases

Hypothesis 4b: If one's country has a seat in the governing body and equal voting power, that IO's perceived legitimacy increases

The second critical dimension of representation is bureaucratic representation. It can be understood as the degree to which the makeup of IO staff aligns with the make-up of the

communities it is meant to serve. In some IOs, notably the UN, staff is mainly hired based on a quota system that ensures a relatively equal distribution of staff across countries (Badache 2020; Parizek 2017). However, differences remain—especially regarding leadership positions (Heinzel 2021; Novosad and Werker 2019; Oksamytna, Bove, and Lundgren 2020).

Many governments perceive having more of “their” staff in IOs—especially in leadership positions—will give them more influence over decisions (Thorvaldsdottir 2016). Indeed, existing studies on bureaucratic representation imply that the background of staff can affect their decisions (Heinzel, Weaver, and Jorgensen 2024). Some have even argued that the nationality of IO leadership is a “measure of power in international organizations” (Novosad and Werker 2019, 27). For IOs, diversifying their staff promises them more access to knowledge about country conditions that can aid the implementation of their programs and policies (Eckhard 2021; Heinzel 2022). European and North American countries have traditionally been overrepresented. In response to criticisms of these patterns, many IOs have made substantial efforts to rectify the underrepresentation of nationals from low- and middle-income countries (Parizek and Stephen 2021; Weaver et al. 2022). However, staff from OECD countries remains very prominent in the most powerful IOs—notably the international financial institutions.

Efforts to increase the representativeness of IO bureaucracies have been linked strongly to the legitimacy of these organizations (Chow and Han 2022; McDowell and Steinberg 2024; Rapkin, Strand, and Trevathan 2016). Existing studies posit an overall representational effect, where IO bureaucracies that conform more with representational norms—on gender, race, or nationality—are seen as more legitimate. Moreover, Arias and Hulvey (2023) demonstrate that publics are skeptical of leadership by nationals of powerful countries, such as China, compared to more neutral countries, like Switzerland. We make a similar argument that emphasizes that elites are more inclined to perceive IOs as legitimate that have a substantial number of nationals on their staff as it gives them more confidence in their performance within their country, trust that their interests will be represented through bureaucratic representation, and conforms more with procedural norms on equal representation in global governance. Based on these arguments, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 4c: If the head of the IO comes from their country, that IO’s perceived legitimacy increases

Hypothesis 4d: If many staff members come from their country, that IO’s perceived legitimacy increases

Transparency

In our conceptualization of transparency, we follow Hale (2008, 75), who argues that: “an institution is transparent if it makes its behavior and motives readily knowable to interested parties. This definition covers both access to information—answering inquiries—and general disclosure—making unsolicited information available.” IOs have markedly expanded their transparency since the turn of the century. They introduced a range of transparency policies to allow people to gain access to information but also proactively disclosed millions of documents about their operations, decisions, and procedures. These disclosures were, again, responses to activist pressure (Lall 2023). For example, Honig and Weaver (2019) demonstrate how activists used indicators to push for transparency in (multilateral) development organizations.

Transparency is closely linked to the wish to gain legitimacy. As Hale (2008, 73) has put it: “If ‘democracy deficit’ is the catchphrase for global governance’s problem, ‘transparency’ is its buzzword solution.” Indeed, existing research strongly indicates that transparency should increase the legitimacy of IOs. Existing studies show that transparency increases organizational performance (Honig, Lall, and Parks 2022)—a cause of legitimacy beliefs (Dellmuth and Tallberg 2015). However, it can also be a double-edged sword. When disclosing information, actors often worry about potential scandals uncovered in the newly disclosed information that can lead to criticism, protest, and instability (Hollyer, Rosendorff, and Vreeland 2015). However, such scandals would unfold over time and would not affect the evaluations of transparency policies directly. Thus, we expect that transparency increases IO legitimacy and hypothesize:

Hypothesis 5: If an IO makes information on projects publicly available, that IO’s perceived legitimacy increases

Research Design

To test these hypotheses, we conducted a large-scale survey experiment with elites from 148 countries and semi-autonomous territories. The survey experiment was embedded into the fourth round of the *Listening to Leaders Survey* conducted in 2024 by the AidData research lab at William & Mary’s Global Research Institute (Blair, Custer, and Roessler 2024; Custer et al. 2021). Rather than the convenience samples often used by market research firms, the *Listening to Leaders* sampling frame systematically identifies positions and people that meet an established inclusion criteria:

“those individuals who are knowledgeable about the formulation and implementation of government policies and programs in low- and middle income countries” during the five years before when the survey was fielded.

The *Listening to Leaders Survey* sampling frame has been developed over a period of ten years, initially created in 2010 and updated in 2014, 2017, 2020, and 2024. The 2024 survey was conducted online using Qualtrics, a well-established survey software, between February and June 2024 on a rolling basis across geographic regions. A pre-notification, an invitation, and up to three reminders were sent to prospective respondents as part of the recruitment process. The survey was administered in compliance with the standards set out by the William & Mary Institutional Review Board’s Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC).

The sampling frame for the 2024 survey round was produced using a three-step process.¹ First, the research team identified a list of 65 ideal-type organizations and mid- to senior-level positions that discharge functions relevant to our research questions to represent the five stakeholder groups in the survey. For example, the host government stakeholder group included 33 organization types such as a Ministry of Finance/Economy, a Supreme Audit Institution, and a National Statistical Office. Second, the equivalent organizations for each country were identified by mapping country-specific institutions and positions back to a unified list of ideal-type organizations using a common set of organization codes. For instance, this allows the sampling frame to capture the relevant positions of interest regardless of whether countries maintain separate Ministries of Finance and Planning or combine these functions in one agency. Third, for each of these organizations, the people in mid- and high-level leadership positions were identified and their contact information were collected from publicly available sources (e.g., organizational websites and directories, conference records, Who’s Who International, public profiles on social media). Since availability of contact information varies across actor type and institution, a quota was used to ensure that a representative number of people are included in the sample for each stakeholder group in each country.

The survey population of interest for 2024 included approximately 66,000 individuals who met our inclusion criteria. Of the emails sent, 49,000 were successfully received in the individual’s email inbox—the remainder experienced bounce backs or email client errors for various reasons. The

¹ A more extensive explanation of the methodology used to create the Listening to Leaders survey sampling frame can be found in the Technical Appendix of Custer et al. (2021)

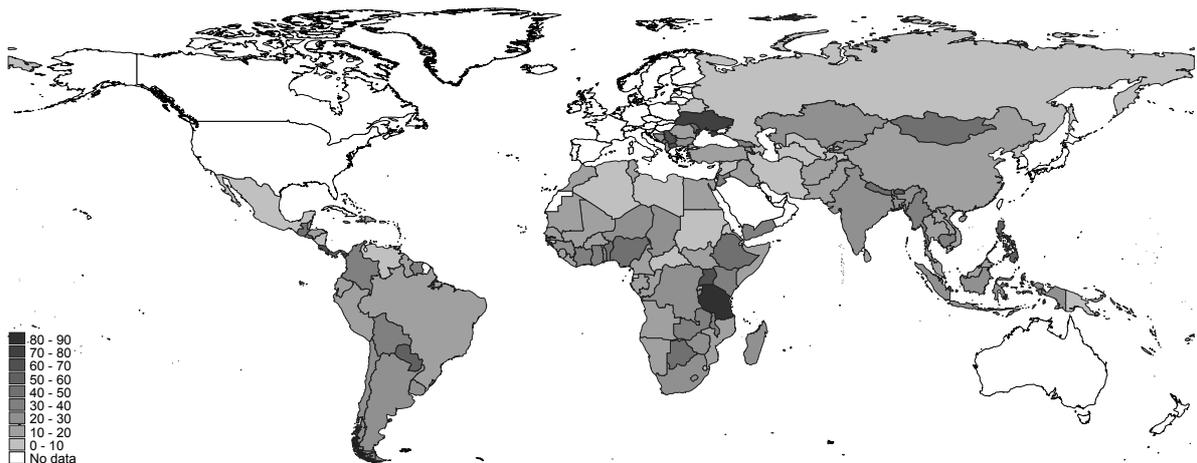
response rate to the overall Listening to Leaders Survey was 6.6% (3250 respondents). Specific to this study, 2,083 survey respondents answered questions related to the conjoint experiment (4.3% of those who received the invitation).² While relatively low in the context of broader-based public opinion surveys, this response rate is in line with other elite surveys in international relations research that use cold emailing (Heinzel, Weaver, and Briggs 2024). To mitigate potential bias in our results, we use non-response weights (accounting for unit and survey non-response) for the analysis presented in this article.³

Before explaining our experimental design, we discuss the make-up of our sample. Figure 2 illustrates the number of responses to the conjoint experiment questions we attained from elites in each country in the sample. The figure shows that respondents are distributed relatively equally across countries. On average, 22 elites responded to the survey in each country. Most respondents stem from Tanzania (81), followed by Ukraine (72), Uganda (67), North Macedonia (66), and Serbia (65). The smallest number of respondents are from Eritrea (1), Palestine (2), Venezuela (2), Equatorial Guinea (2), and Syria (3). The BRICS vary in the number of elites included in the sample. India (21) and South Africa (26) are reasonably well represented. Brazil (12), China (12) and Russia (6) somewhat less. The other large LMICs, by population, Pakistan (19), Indonesia (29) and Nigeria (46) are all included with a substantial number of elite respondents. Overall, the sample includes elites from a substantially larger number of countries than comparable elite or public opinion surveys.

² The difference between the number of overall respondents and those that answered the conjoint experiment questions is explained by the fact that respondents were not required to complete all questions. Some respondents exited the survey prior to answering the conjoint experiment questions or decided to skip these questions.

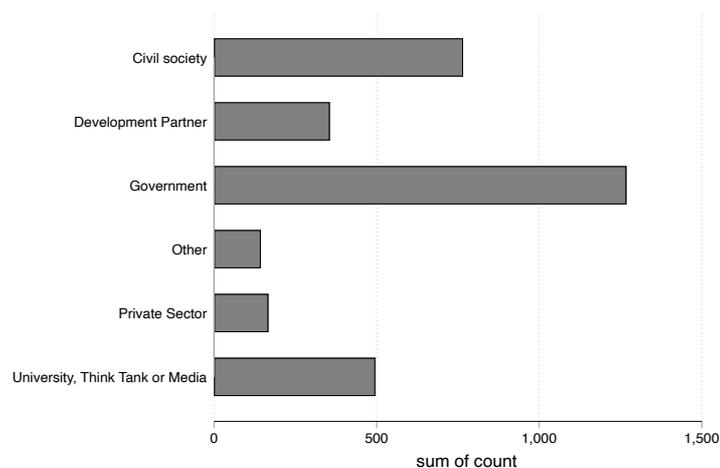
³ Non-response weights were generated using the following steps. We estimated the probability of survey response using a logistic regression based upon demographic information from the sampling frame (e.g., gender, country, institution type, stakeholder group). Then we took the inverse of the estimated probability to arrive at the final nonresponse weights for this analysis.

Figure 2: Respondents by country



The 2024 *Listening to Leaders Survey* includes five groups of elites: local representatives of development partners, government officials, leaders in civil society organizations, actors in the private sector and representatives of think tanks, academia or the media. Four of these five groups directly represent recipient country elites. The only exception are development partners, which can include local staff or expatriates working for development aid agencies in relevant positions of interest (e.g., country director or resident representative, lead economist, sector representatives). Figure 3 shows a more granular distribution of survey respondents by the types of organizations they represent. The majority of respondents are elites working for government agencies. The second biggest group are elites from civil society, followed by universities, think-tank or media (called academia in the graph), development partners, and the private sector.

Figure 3: Respondents by type of elite



We conducted a conjoint experiment to understand the impact of the different types of good governance reforms on the legitimacy perceptions of these elites. In conjoint experiments, respondents are asked to evaluate two profiles, which list a number of features that include independently randomized levels. The profiles were two hypothetical IOs, features were the different good governance mechanisms, the levels vary the degree to which these mechanisms are included. A conjoint experiment is useful for our purposes for three reasons: First, it allows us to experimentally manipulate multiple dimensions. Second, it allows us to compare the effects of the different features with each other. Third, it mitigates social desirability bias—which might affect respondents’ evaluations of good governance features (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014; Horiuchi, Markovich, and Yamamoto 2022).

To operationalize our hypotheses, we included six features in our conjoint profiles with either two or three levels. For accountability mechanisms, we focused on complaints procedures that allow people whose rights are violated to complain and require IOs to investigate these complaints. To operationalize fairness, we focused on aid allocation rules that apply to all countries equally. Our participation feature focuses on whether IOs consult with affected people or civil society when making decisions on aid allocated to a given country. Moreover, the conjoint experiment includes two representation features. The first emphasizes voting rights. Specifically, we probe whether respondents’ legitimacy perceptions change when their country has a seat in the IOs governing body and has equal votes, has a seat but not equal votes, or the country is not represented in the governing body. The second representation feature focuses on staff. Here, we include levels that test respondents’ views on their country’s representation in both IO leadership and the bureaucracy more generally. Finally, we include a feature on transparency that focuses on the release of information about projects. Table 1 displays the exact wording of the different treatments.

After seeing these profiles, respondents were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 to what extent they would have confidence in the two hypothetical IOs. Confidence is the standard measure in studies of IO legitimacy (Anderson, Bernauer, and Kachi 2019; Bernauer and Gampfer 2013; Dellmuth et al. 2021; Dellmuth and Tallberg 2020; Ghassim 2024; Ghassim, Koenig-Archibugi, and Cabrera 2022; Verhaegen, Scholte, and Tallberg 2021). We asked respondents to evaluate their confidence into IOs on three dimensions: confidence in their effectiveness, confidence in their decision-making procedures, and confidence in their representational qualities. These dimensions align with conceptualizations of the main sources of IO legitimacy (Buchanan and Keohane 2006; Dellmuth, Scholte, and Tallberg 2019; Dellmuth and Tallberg 2015; Scholte

and Tallberg 2018; Tallberg and Zürn 2019). In doing so, we follow arguments that governance features can affect different sources of legitimacy beliefs (Scholte and Tallberg 2018). For example, transparency can both increase the confidence in IO procedures and their effectiveness (Honig, Lall, and Parks 2022). Indeed, the results of the different dependent variables are not substantively different. These findings indicate that respondents appreciate the qualities of good governance features for multiple sources of legitimacy beliefs. Since the results do not differ much, we focus on procedural legitimacy here and display the results using the other dependent variables in the Appendix.

We refrain from employing a forced choice option due to the superior external validity of rating tasks (Hainmueller, Hangartner, and Yamamoto 2015). Our models include country fixed effects to account for country-specific heterogeneity and we cluster standard errors at the level of the individual. We display marginal means to ease the interpretation of sub-group preferences we conduct in the exploratory part of the article (Leeper, Hobolt, and Tilley 2020). Each respondent evaluated two profiles (one pair), and standard errors are clustered at the individual level.

Table 1: Design of conjoint experiment

Concept	Feature	Levels
Accountability	Complaints	(1) Donor must investigate complaints about the violation of people's rights in project implementation (2) Donor does not need to investigate complaints about the violation of people's rights in project implementation
Fairness	Allocation rule	(1) Decisions on how much money your country can receive are based on the same rules for all countries (2) Decisions on how much money your country can receive are not based on the same rules for all countries
Participation	Consultations	1) Organization consults with affected people when making decisions on aid in your country (2) Organization consults with civil society when making decisions on aid in your country (3) Organization does not consult local stakeholders
Representation (votes)	Board	(1) Your country's government has a seat in the governing body and all members have equal voting power (2) Your country's government has a seat in governing body but fewer votes than powerful member states (3) Your country's government is not represented in governing body
Representation (staff)	Staff	(1) The head of the organization comes from your country (2) Many staff members come from your country (3) Few staff members come from your country
Transparency	Disclosure	(1) Donor makes information on projects publicly available (2) Donor does not make information on projects publicly available

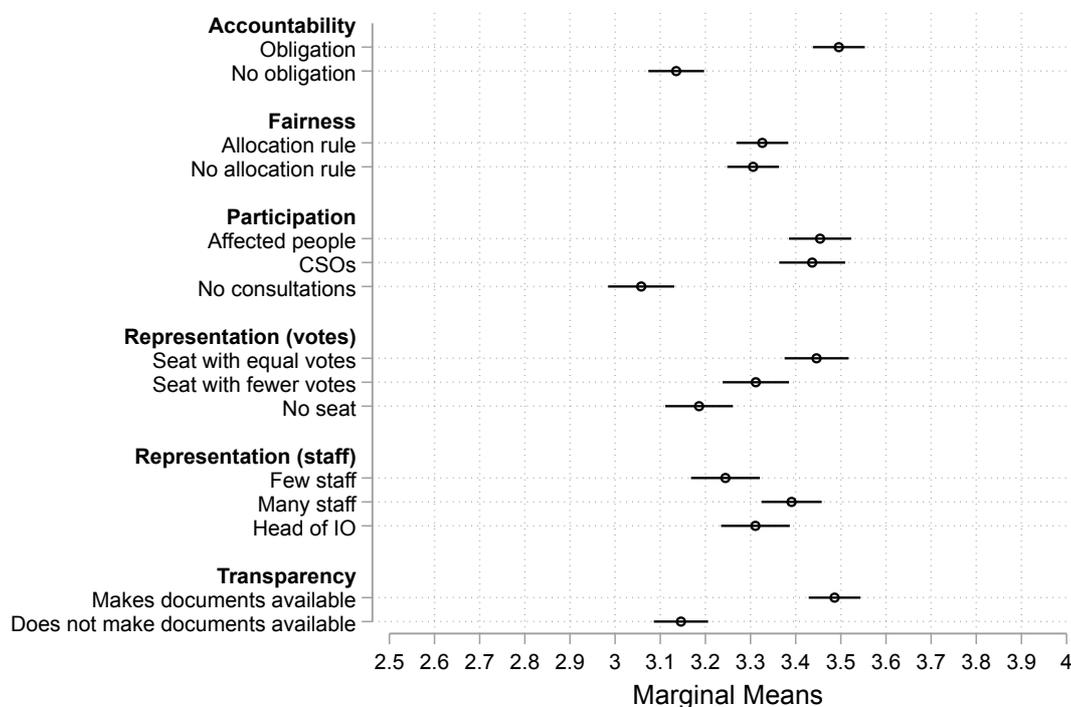
Results

Overall, our results show that many of the good governance features increase the perceived legitimacy of IOs among our sample of LMIC elites. We present the results from our pre-registered analysis in Figure 4. The difference in marginal means for the inclusion of good governance features is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) for accountability, participation, representation (votes), representation (staff) and transparency. The only feature that does not attain statistically significant results in at least one level is fairness.

Nevertheless, our findings also reveal important nuances and differences between the effects of these features. The features with the greatest effects are stakeholder consultations with a marginal means difference of approximately 0.39 on a scale of 1 to 5, followed by accountability (marginal means difference of 0.36), and transparency (marginal means difference of 0.34). While stakeholder consultations have the strongest effect of the treatment conditions, respondents do not appear to

distinguish between consulting with affected people directly or consulting with civil society organizations (which may indirectly represent the interests of affected people). Moreover, we see a progressively stronger effect for representation in votes. When “their” country is included in governing boards, respondents see IOs as more legitimate (marginal means difference of 0.13) and that effect doubles when they also have equal votes. The same is not true for representation in staff. Here, we only find statistically significant effects for many staff being included in the broader bureaucracy (marginal means difference of 0.15) but no effects for the nationality of the head of the IO.

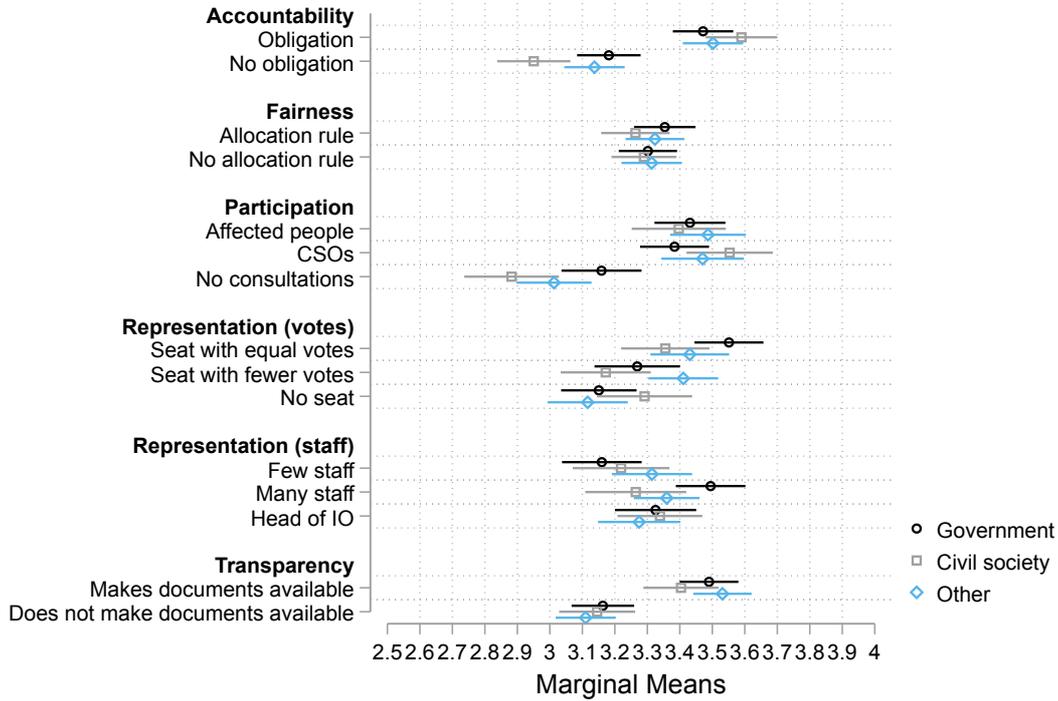
Figure 4: Results of conjoint experiment



Our pre-registered results provide substantial evidence for our argument that good governance features should increase the perceived legitimacy of IOs among LMIC elites. To further understand heterogeneity in our results, we now investigate sub-group differences. These tests are exploratory as we did not have strong theoretical expectations on sub-group differences.

In a first step, we focus on differences between stakeholder groups. Our sample was made up of a variety of stakeholders with different interests in good governance reforms. Therefore, we probe the differences between stakeholder groups. Specifically, we display the views of government elites, civil society elites and a residual group including all other stakeholders in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Results by stakeholder group



The results are relatively consistent across stakeholder groups. Overall, all stakeholders prefer accountable, participatory, representative and transparent IOs. However, we also observe some heterogeneity in their evaluations. Civil society actors have stronger preferences for accountability mechanisms—the models show a 21.6% increase in IO legitimacy among this group when the IO has such mechanisms—compared to government officials (9.1% increase). These findings align with the literature on the adoption and use of these mechanisms. Civil society actors played a large role in pushing for these reforms and the success of individual claims often depends on the support of resourceful civil society supporting affected people (Gunaydin and Park 2024; Lall 2023; Park 2022; Zvobgo and Graham 2020). Moreover, civil society often see their institutional mandates as providing a watchdog function to hold those in power to account. Recipient governments, on the other hand, were much more skeptical and, at times, even pushed back against establishing inspection panels (Park 2017).

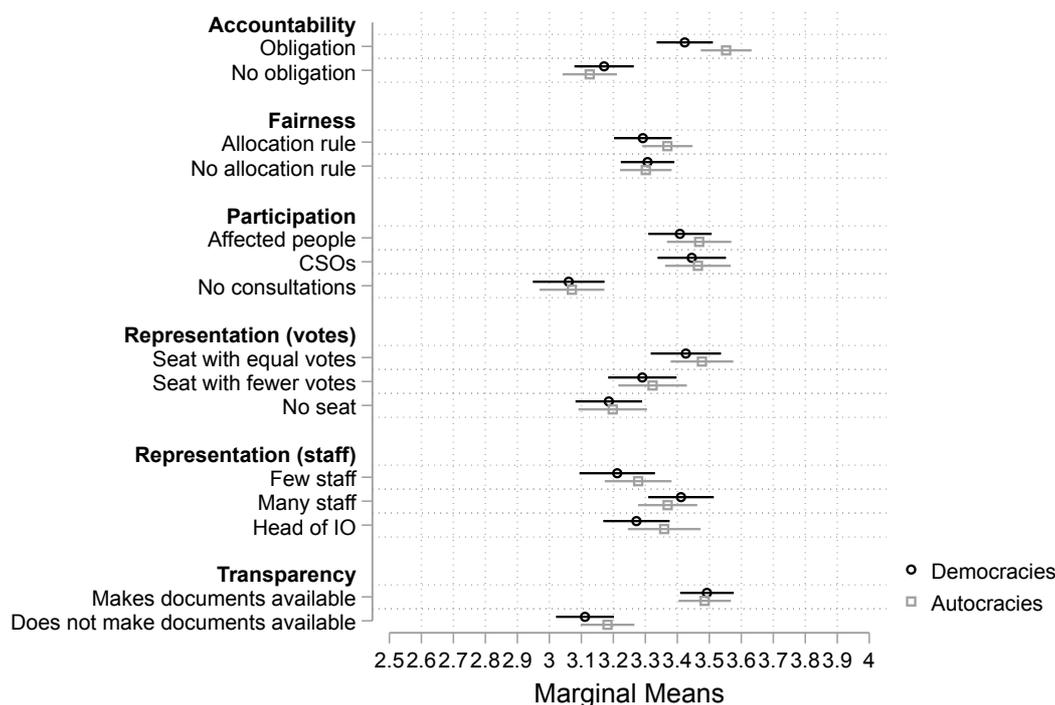
We also see some differences in evaluations of participation mechanisms. Civil society is more skeptical of IOs that do not have these mechanisms (-17%) than government officials (-7%). Both of these coefficients are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Perhaps unsurprisingly, civil society actors particularly like consultations with civil society. They increase confidence by civil society actors by 4.6% compared to consultations with affected people—albeit this difference is not statistically

significant at conventional thresholds. All other stakeholder groups do not appear to make distinctions between IOs that consult with civil society versus those that consult with affected people.

Finally, government officials appear to have stronger views on representation in votes and staff than the other stakeholder groups. Having a seat in the governing board increases IO legitimacy for government stakeholders and the residual group ($p < 0.05$) but the coefficient is not statistically significant for civil society actors. Moreover, we only find statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) coefficients for representation in staff among government officials but not for the other stakeholders.

In a second step, we probe heterogeneity by home countries' regime type. Figure 6 displays the results among autocracies and democracies. Our categorization of democracies and autocracies is based on Lührmann et al. (2018). They differentiate countries into four groups using data from the Varieties of Democracy project (Coppedge et al. 2022). Closed and electoral autocracies as well as electoral and liberal democracies. We split our respondents into two groups: those working in democracies (electoral and liberal) and those working in autocracies (closed and electoral). Surprisingly, our findings are remarkably consistent across regime types. Elites in both democracies and autocracies have more confidence in IOs that are accountable, allow for participation of affected people and civil society, are more representative in their votes and staff, as well as those IOs that are more transparent.

Figure 6: Results by regime type

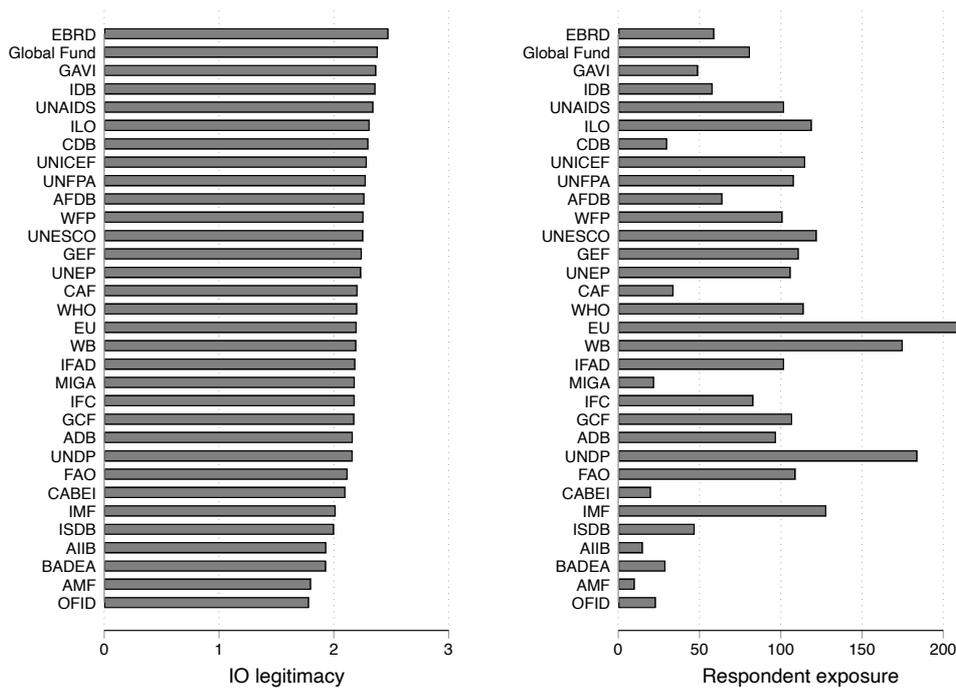


In a third step, we probe the external validity of our experimental results (Findley, Kikuta, and Denly 2021). We relied on evaluations of good governance features of hypothetical IOs. Two main factors can complicate the degree to which our findings generalize to real world evaluations of IO legitimacy. First, elites may be unaware of good governance reforms and the legitimacy gains may, thus, not materialize. Second, a broad range of alternative factors may shape the perceptions of IO legitimacy. For example, the World Bank has been at the forefront of many of the good governance reforms discussed in this article. However, confidence in the Bank may be affected by the relative unpopularity of structural adjustment reforms in the 1990s (Babb and Kentikelenis 2018). Thus, we asked respondents to indicate to which IOs they have direct exposure—either by working with them directly or by working with the expertise they provide. We then asked them to rate these IOs’ legitimacy on a scale of 0-3.

The left panel of Figure 7 displays the results for all IOs that were evaluated as part of our survey and the right panel displays the number of respondents that evaluated them. The descriptive results show that sectoral and regional factors appear to play a large role in shaping recipients’ relative confidence across IOs. Respondents voice most confidence in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. Three of the top five IOs are active in health policy. Organizations

set up or funded primarily by Middle Eastern countries fare the worst. Specifically, elites voice the least confidence in the OPEC Fund for International Development, Arab Monetary Fund, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Islamic Development Bank.

Figure 7: Ranking of IOs by legitimacy



In a final step, we use regression analysis to probe whether the real-world presence of good governance features affects legitimacy in non-hypothetical IOs. Our dependent variable are the legitimacy ratings of each stakeholder towards each IO. We employ five independent variables to understand whether they are associated with respondents' legitimacy. First, we measure accountability using an additive indicator from Lall (2023) that measures whether IOs have a mechanism to address stakeholder complaints, whether the mechanism is independent from the secretariat, whether complainants are guaranteed confidentiality and nonretaliation, and whether implementation of remedial measures is monitored. Second, the variable measuring fairness codes all organizations that have a performance-based allocation system in place. We coded the indicator as one for AfDB, ADB, GAVI, the Global Fund, IDB, IFAD, and the World Bank and as zero otherwise. Third, the participation variable is an indicator that measures whether external stakeholders are members of the governing body, participate in the governing body, observe the governing body, are represented in advisory body or participate in consultations (Lall 2023).

Fourth, our indicator for representation focuses on weighted voting. While it would have been preferable to measure representation on executive boards and in the bureaucracy for each country, such data is not consistently available. Thus, we focus on weighted voting. Our variable measures on a binary scale whether an organization uses weighted voting (Blake and Payton 2015; Lall 2023). Fifth, the transparency indicator measures whether access to information is granted to all stakeholders or whether it is restricted based on issue area, other criteria, or restricted only to named or elected stakeholders (Lall 2023). Because of data availability on our independent variables, the regressions focus on individuals' relative rating of 23 of the 34 IOs listed in Figure 7.

We employ respondent-level fixed effects to control for all individual-level factors shaping their legitimacy evaluations. Hence, our models leverage the fact that individual respondents evaluated multiple IOs and model their relative preference for the different IOs they rated. The standard errors are clustered at the level of the individual. We present the results from three regressions in Table 2. Model 1 simply includes the five independent variables. Model 2 further includes three control variables. First, we control for whether the IOs issue area is health to ensure that the higher legitimacy of health IOs does not drive our results. Second, we control for IOs with larger budgets as these might be more scrutinized by stakeholders and civil society. This criticism may lead to more adopted good governance mechanisms and lower legitimacy perceptions in our survey. Third, we control for IO age as older IOs have more opportunity to create scandals that might negatively affect the perception of stakeholders but also have more time to adopt good governance mechanisms. Model 3 further includes IO-location fixed effects to ensure that the descriptive differences we observed across locations do not drive the results.

The results in Table 2 show that real-world legitimacy perceptions are more complicated than hypothetical evaluations of IOs in survey experiments. We do not find strong results for accountability, fairness, representation and transparency. However, participation has a positive and statistically significant association with legitimacy perceptions. Elites in low- and middle-income countries rank the legitimacy of a fully participative organization around 10.6% higher than that of an organization that does not allow for participation of external stakeholders based on the fully specified Model 3. The coefficient is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). As expected, the effect sizes are somewhat smaller than in the hypothetical setup. Nevertheless, they are still sizeable and these results provide further evidence implying that broadening the opportunities for the participation of relevant stakeholders is an important avenue for IOs to increase their legitimacy.

The null results in these observational regressions may lead to some caution in the interpretation of our experimental results. While respondents clearly have preferences for good governance mechanisms, they do not appear to lead to more favorable legitimacy perceptions in practice for several of the good governance mechanisms. Three possible explanations for this finding seem plausible. First, existing studies show that IOs are more likely to reform when they are publicly criticized or even affected by legitimacy crises (Bes, Sommerer, and Agné 2019; Lall 2023; Tallberg et al. 2013). One explanation for the null findings could be selection. IOs with relatively lower levels of perceived legitimacy may have reformed more substantially. In that case, the null findings would reflect an already positive effect of good governance reforms on legitimacy perceptions. Second, stakeholders may not be aware of the reforms conducted by IOs. While they might gain confidence in IOs if they knew about good governance reforms, these reforms may not be popularized enough to make a difference. Third, the increase in legitimacy perceptions may not appear long-term. While elites in LMICs prefer IOs with good governance mechanisms in principle, legitimacy perceptions may revert back to the initial value after a short-term bump. In any case, the fact that we find strong results for participation in both the survey experiment and the observational data increases the confidence in the validity of these results.

Table 2: Predicting IO ratings

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Accountability	-0.0092 (0.0105)	-0.0106 (0.0112)	-0.0163 (0.0135)
Fairness	-0.0459 (0.0449)	-0.0395 (0.0493)	0.0048 (0.0805)
Participation	0.0432* (0.0227)	0.0457* (0.0239)	0.0686** (0.0322)
Representation (votes)	0.0407 (0.0509)	0.0540 (0.0491)	0.0183 (0.0896)
Transparency	0.0067 (0.0081)	0.0148 (0.0141)	0.0018 (0.0191)
Health		0.0298 (0.0557)	-0.0108 (0.0713)
Expenditures (log)		-0.0169 (0.0175)	-0.0227 (0.0198)
Age		-0.0005 (0.0009)	0.0007 (0.0010)
IO-location fixed effects	No	No	Yes
Respondent fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2208	2208	2208
R ²	0.751	0.751	0.753

Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$

Supplementary analyses and robustness checks

We conduct a number of additional tests that we report in the supplementary appendix of this article. Appendix A displays the exact wording of the questions we asked respondents. Appendix B reports several auxiliary analyses. More specifically, we display the results using our three different dependent variables (Figure A1). We also alter specification choices to ensure that specific decisions did not affect our results. We display models that do not weight responses (Figure A2), not cluster standard errors at the individual level (Figure A3), employ respondent rather than country fixed effects (Figure A4), employ sector rather than country fixed effects (Figure A5), and present models without any fixed effects (Figure A6). Moreover, we present results for each of the stakeholder groups separately. These include government (Figure A7), civil society (Figure A8), university, think tank or media (Figure A9), development partners (Figure A10), and the private sector (Figure A11). We do not present results for parliamentarians due to very low statistical power ($n=18$) for this group. Moreover, we display the distribution of respondents by the sector of their work (Figure A12).

Conclusion

Since their inception, IOs have been faced with substantial procedural criticisms. Observers have lamented inequality in their institutional design, decision-making and a substantial democratic deficit. These criticisms present a threat to IO legitimacy. In response, IOs implemented a wide range of good governance reforms aimed at rendering their decision-making more accountable, fair, participative, representative and transparent. In this paper, we aimed to understand whether these reforms can expand IO legitimacy among people in low and middle-income countries—that have traditionally been underrepresented in the governance of many contemporary IOs.

We studied this question in a unique sample of policy-making elites active in development policy in 148 LMICs and semi-autonomous territories. Elites play a key role as interlocutors of IOs and are, thus, important for studies of IO legitimacy. We implemented a conjoint experiment with 2,038 elites active in government, civil society, parliament, the private sector, academia, and among development partners and asked our survey respondents to rank hypothetical IOs that include different variants of good governance mechanisms. To probe external validity, we also conducted an observational analysis of the same respondents' views on the legitimacy of 23 real IOs. Our results show that respondents prefer IOs that are more accountable, more consultative towards affected people and civil society, more representative in votes and staff, and more transparent.

These results hold across stakeholder groups and countries' regime types. Moreover, we find that results regarding stakeholder consultations also appear to explain differences in the legitimacy evaluations of real-world IOs—albeit one should not overinterpret these exploratory results. Together, these findings strongly imply that IOs can expand their legitimacy among elites in LMICs by implementing good governance reforms.

Our results speak to two key debates. First, while a large literature has focused on the determinants of good governance reforms (Hale 2008; Honig and Weaver 2019; Lall 2023; Park 2017; Woods 1999, 2000), evidence on their consequences is much scarcer (Honig, Lall, and Parks 2022). Our results show that these reforms have a substantial potential to expand the legitimacy of IOs. Some of these findings hold even years after their introduction in observational relative ratings of IOs. Second, our paper also speaks to broader debates on IO legitimacy. We show that processual governance reforms have broad effects on performance, representational and procedural legitimacy in the eyes of key stakeholders. These results support arguments highlighting the empirical complexity and interrelationship of different sources of legitimacy.

Finally, our results also speak to debates on how to reform global governance in the 21st century. Scholars have long pointed towards increasing contestation of IOs and their authority (Börzel and Zürn 2021; Lake, Martin, and Risse 2021; Stephen 2014; Walter 2021; Zürn, Binder, and Ecker-Ehrhardt 2012). Some of these challenges are based on the privileges afforded to high-income countries within these institutions. Our results show that some of these criticisms can be mitigated by reforming governance processes to become more accountable, representative, consultative and transparent.

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Appendix: Good Governance and the Legitimacy of International Organizations: Evidence from an Elite Survey in 148 Countries

Appendix A: Survey questions

There are many different factors that countries may consider when choosing a development partner. We are interested in understanding how these decisions are made and your preferences. Please read the two descriptions of hypothetical multilateral donor organizations (for example, like the UN or World Bank). Please read the donor organization descriptions carefully and answer the questions listed below.

Feature	Donor Organization 1	Donor Organization 2
Board (3)	(1) Your country's government has a seat in the governing body and all members have equal voting power (2) Your country's government has a seat in governing body but fewer votes than powerful member states (3) Your country's government is not represented in governing body	(1) Your country's government has a seat in the governing body and all members have equal voting power (2) Your country's government has a seat in governing body but fewer votes than powerful member states (3) Your country's government is not represented in governing body
Consultations (3)	(1) Donor consults with affected people when making decisions on aid in your country (2) Donor consults with civil society when making decisions on aid in your country (3) Donor does not consult local stakeholders	(1) Donor consults with affected people when making decisions on aid in your country (2) Donor consults with civil society when making decisions on aid in your country (3) Donor does not consult local stakeholders
Transparency (2)	(1) Donor makes information on projects publicly available (2) Donor does not make information on projects publicly available	(1) Donor makes information on projects publicly available (2) Donor does not make information on projects publicly available
Staff (3)	(1) The head of the organization comes from your country (2) Many staff members come from your country (3) Few staff members come from your country	(1) The head of the organization comes from your country (2) Many staff members come from your country (3) Few staff members come from your country
Accountability (2)	(1) Donor must investigate complaints about the violation of people's rights in project implementation (2) Donor does not need to investigate complaints about the violation of people's rights in project implementation	(1) Donor must investigate complaints about the violation of people's rights in project implementation (2) Donor does not need to investigate complaints about the violation of people's rights in project implementation
Allocation rules (2)	(1) Decisions on how much money your country can receive are based on the same rules for all countries (2) Decisions on how much money your country can receive are not based on the same rules for all countries	(1) Decisions on how much money your country can receive are based on the same rules for all countries (2) Decisions on how much money your country can receive are not based on the same rules for all countries

For each of the two IOs, please indicate on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

Concept	1 (strongly disagree)	2 (somewhat disagree)	3	4 (somewhat agree)	5 (strongly agree)

				(Neither agree nor disagree)		
Performance-based legitimacy	I have confidence that donor organization 1 will positively impact development in [country]					
Performance-based legitimacy	I have confidence that donor organization 2 will positively impact development in [country]					
Responsiveness legitimacy	I have confidence that donor organization 1 will be responsive to the interests of [country]					
Responsiveness legitimacy	I have confidence that donor organization 2 will be responsive to the interests of [country]					
Procedural legitimacy	I have confidence that donor organization 1 will make decisions in the appropriate way					
Procedural legitimacy	I have confidence that donor organization 2 will make decisions in the appropriate way					

In Q20.1 & Q20.2 (in the last LTL), respondents chose which multi- and bilateral donors they have worked with (out of 32 IDOs). Let us assume for this example that a respondent would choose the World Bank and UNICEF.

You previously identified that you had received advice or assistance from one or more multilateral development organizations. For the donors listed below, do you have confidence that they make decisions in the appropriate way?

	Not at all (1)	Only slightly (2)	Quite (3)	Very (4)	Don't know/not sure (5)	Prefer not to say (6)
[Multilat Choice #1]						
[Multilat Choice #2]						

Appendix B: Supplementary analyses

Figure A1: Results for three types of legitimacy

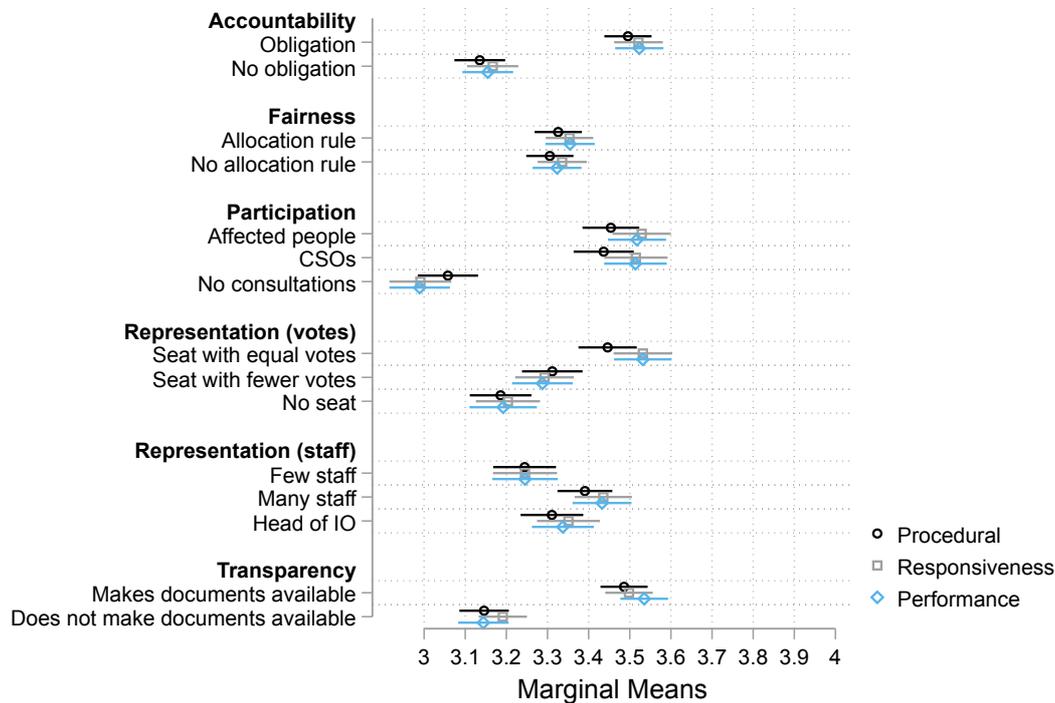


Figure A2: Without weighting

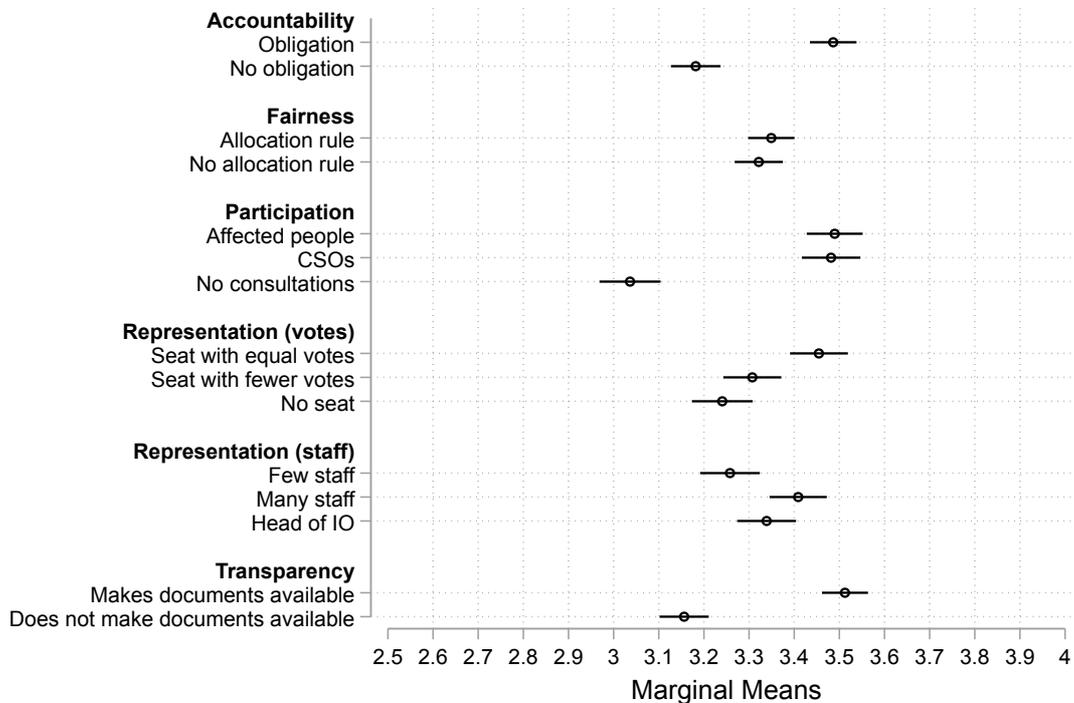


Figure A3: Without clustered standard errors

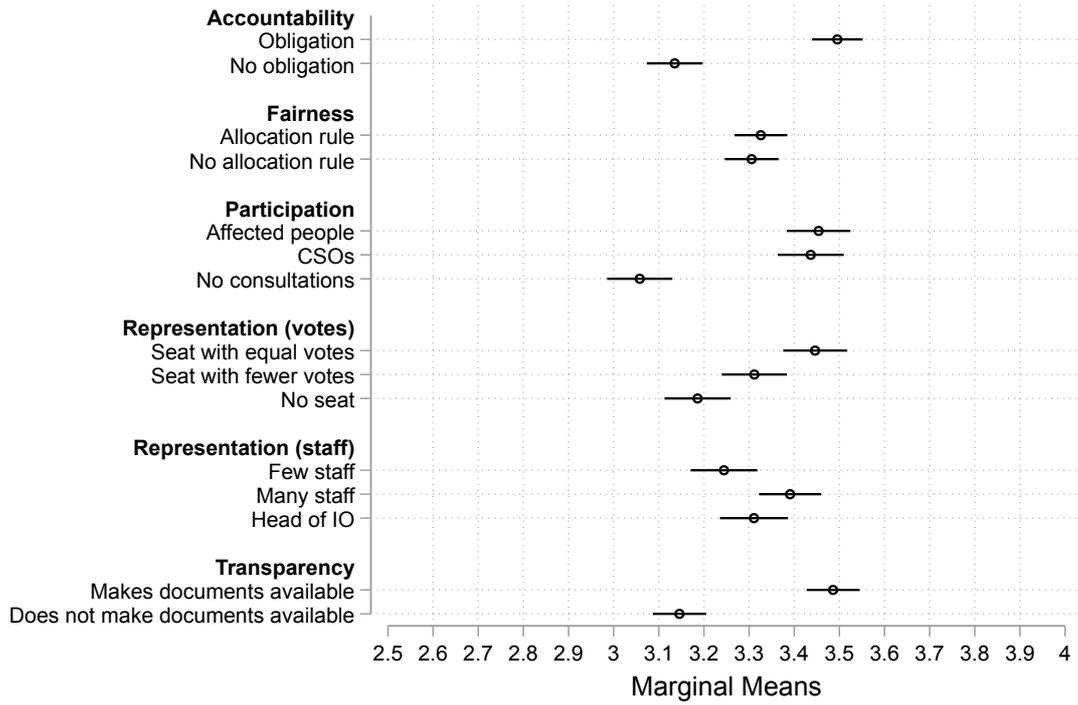


Figure A4: Respondent fixed effects

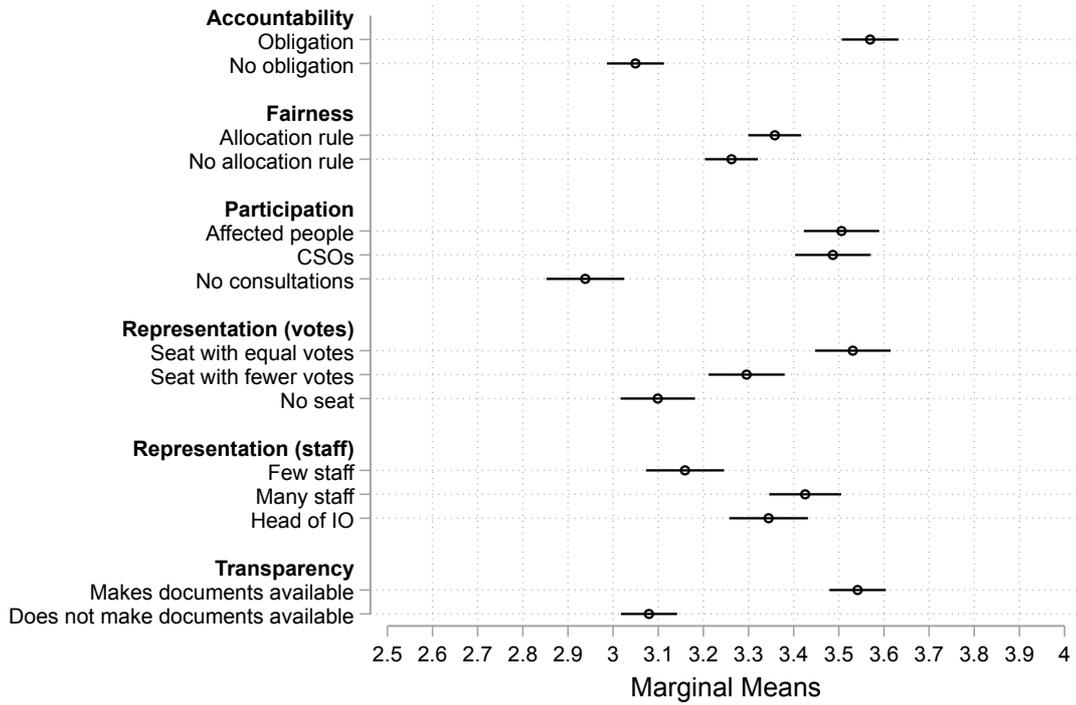


Figure A5: Sector fixed effects

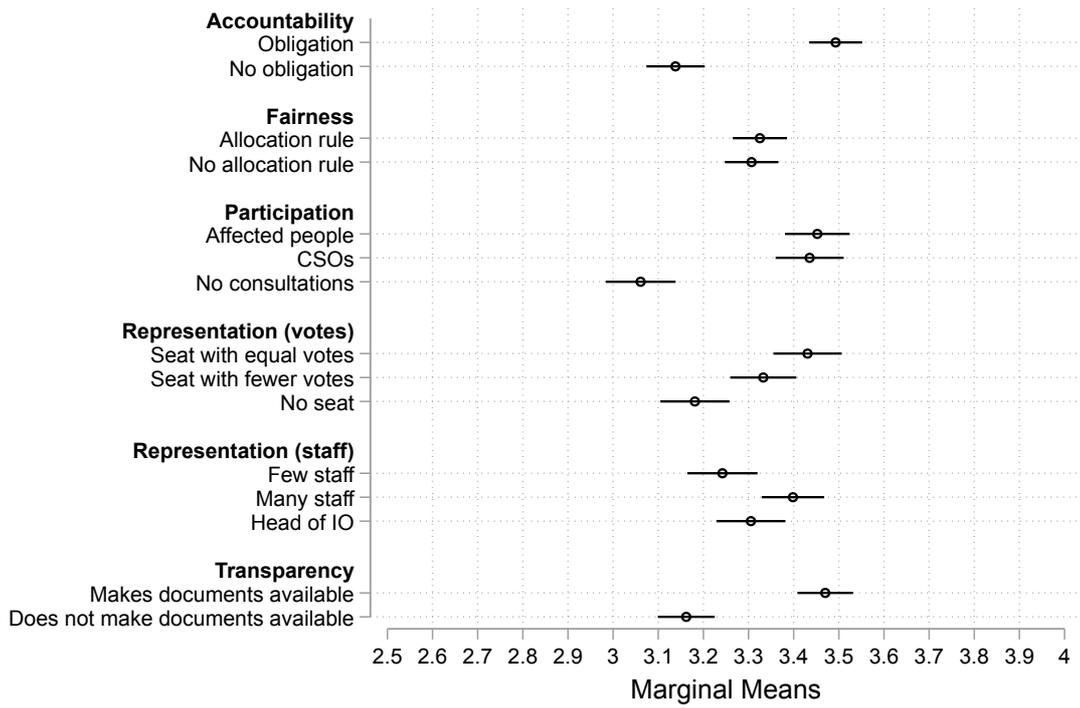


Figure A6: No fixed effects

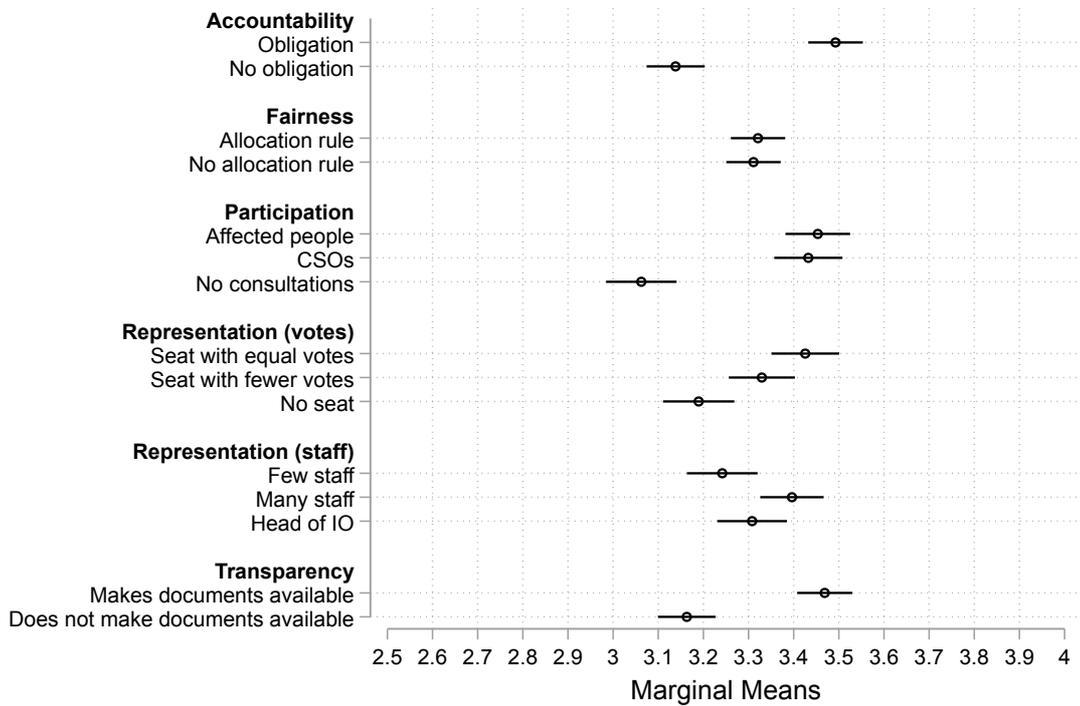


Figure A7: Only government elites (n= 1,358)

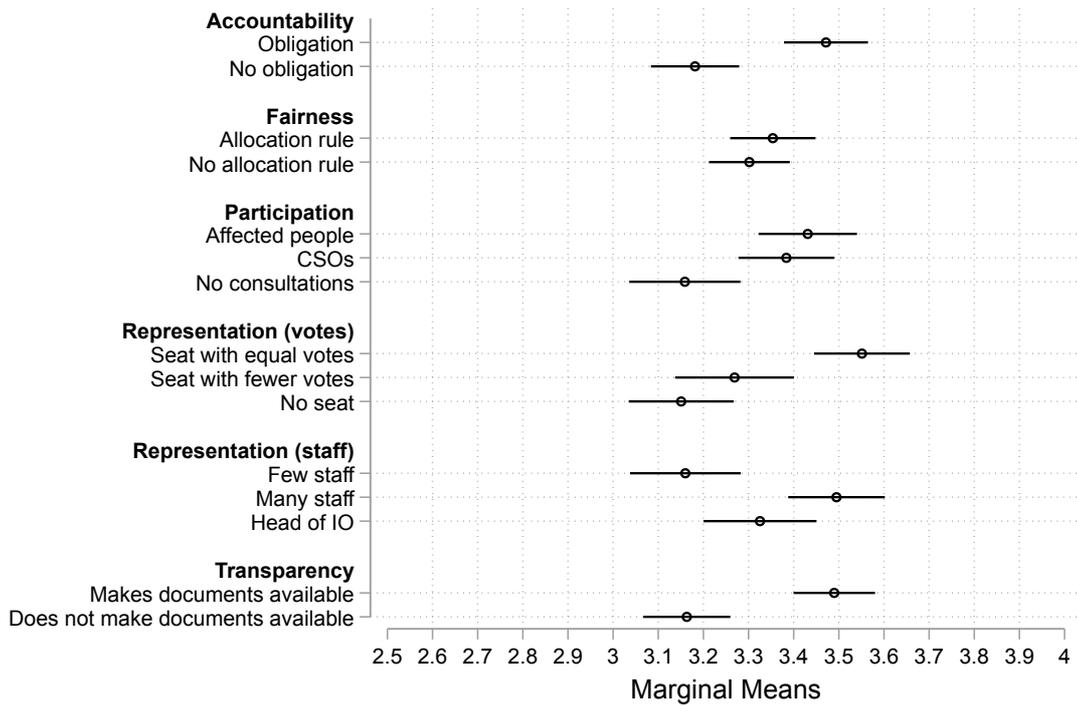


Figure A8: Only civil society elites (n=825)

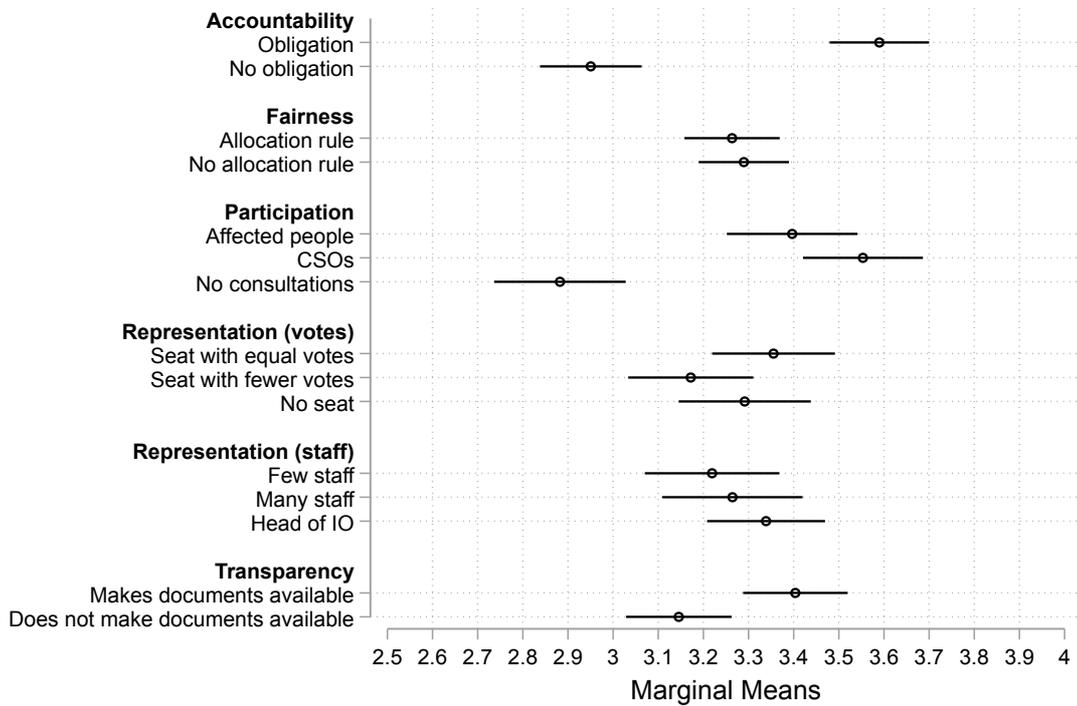


Figure A9: Only elites from universities, think tanks or media (n= 568)

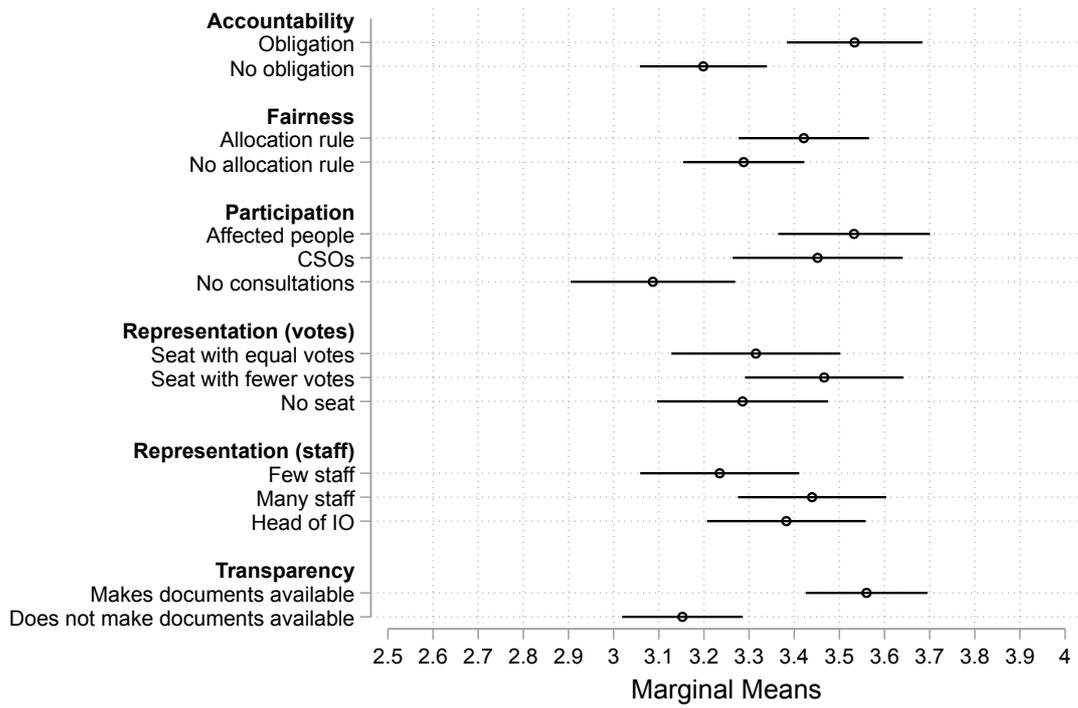


Figure A10: only development partner elites (n= 401)

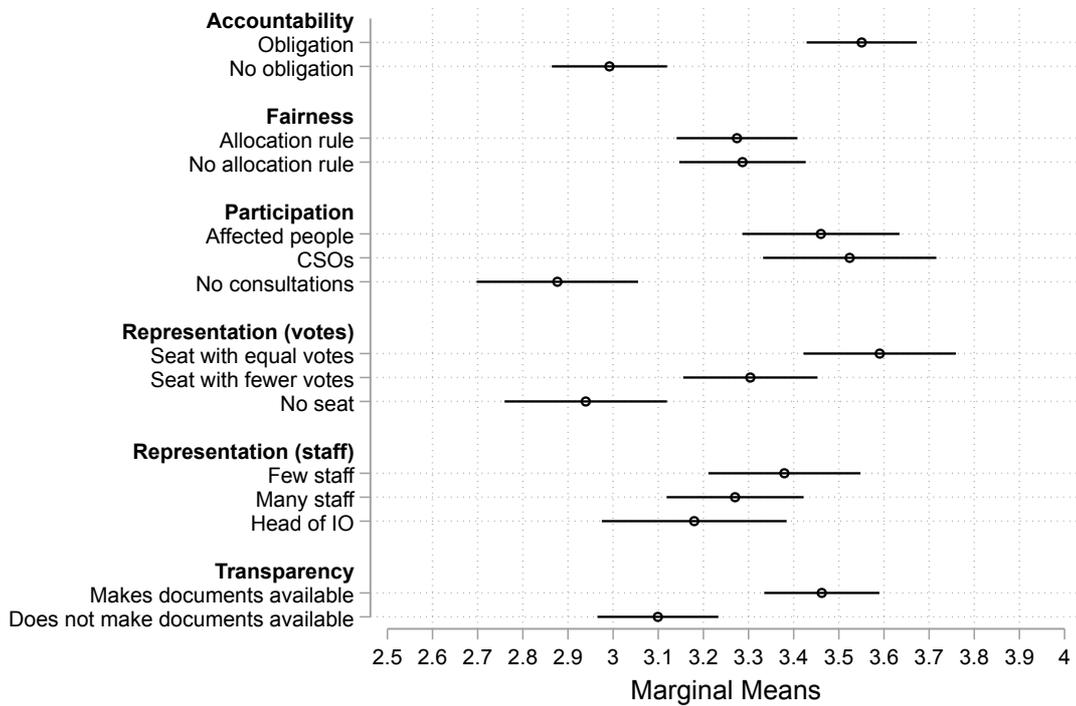


Figure A11: Only private sector elites (n=146)

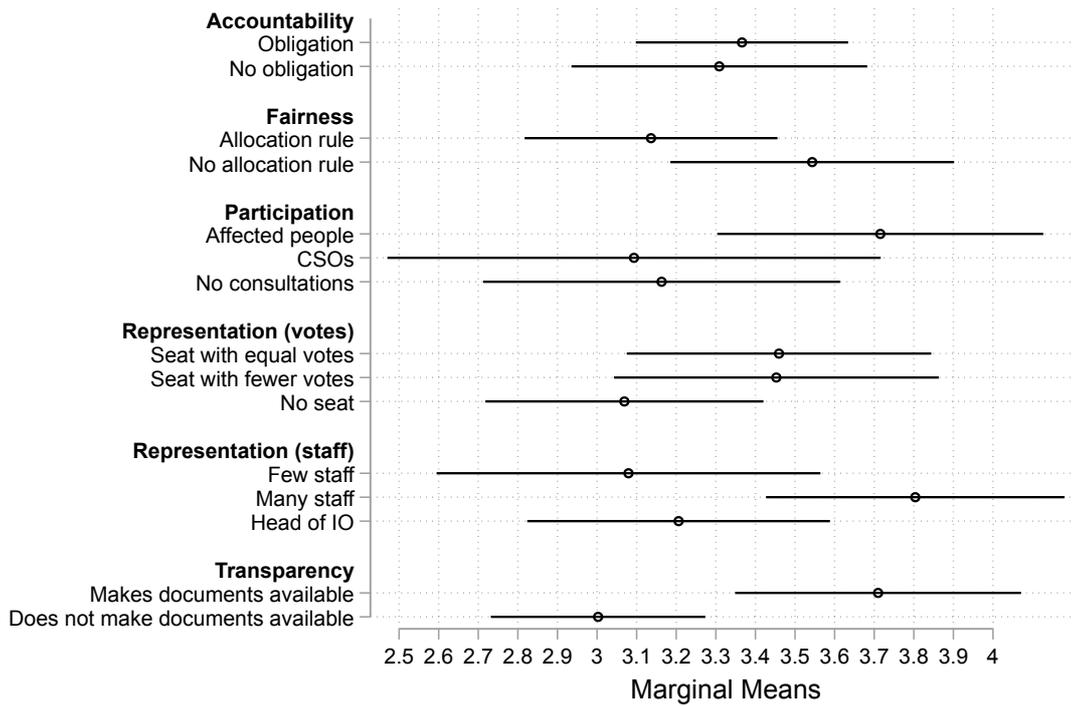


Figure A12: Respondents by sector

