



ACCOUNTABILITY OF GLOBAL PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE – RESEARCH REPORT

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SUMMARY

This report contains the results of the 2011/12 accountability assessment of the World Bank, the WHO and the WTO, three IGOs with a mandate to respond to the challenges of global sustainable development including climate change. Drawing also on the results of a previous assessment in 2006, and a post-assessment review of relevant organisational change until 2017, we identify the strengths and weaknesses in the institutional capabilities of the IGOs to be accountable to internal, and in particular external stakeholders, and sketch out the different accountability reform trajectories in the governance of the studied institutions over the past decade. The World Bank shows itself more dynamic than the WHO, which however catches up with reforms more recently. The WTO remains inert due to a very limited perspective on the accountability implications of its impact. The article finishes with lessons learnt from research methodology and engagement practice with the studied organisations.

The report builds on research conducted between 2010 and 2013 as part of a UK ESRC funded project on Power, Equity, Accountability in Global Climate Governance. ESRC/DFID Joint Scheme for Research on International Development (Poverty Alleviation) Phase 2, RES-167-25-0576, and implemented by the LSHTM and the One World Trust from 2010 to 2013. Further monitoring work on organisational change was carried out by the authors for 2014 to 2019.

WHAT IS AT STAKE?

Global public organisations with a mandate of stewardship of global public goods often have a significant impact on the lives of many individuals and communities. Nowhere is this more true than in the case of organisations which commit to realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including a stable climate, access to health, and economic development. The three organisations we focus on in this project, the World Bank/ IBRD, the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are each highly influential and tasked with leading areas of global policy critical to the achievement of the SDGs. But in many cases these, and other global organisations have only limited relationships with the people they claim to be their main beneficiaries. Decision-making in many intergovernmental organisations has come under increased scrutiny especially since the 1980s when they were seen to contribute to harmful impacts of development policies and programmes on the very people they exist to benefit (Gore, 2000). In the eyes of many, the accountability deficit

towards their primary stakeholders fundamentally undermined the legitimacy of intergovernmental organisations, and the wider global governance system, prompting calls for significant reform (Messner, Nuscheler, Maxwell, & Siegle, 2005; Woods, 2000).

Research into accountability reform in global organisations however shows a mixed record of change. Some organisations adapt fast but many others are slow, even inert (Blagescu & Lloyd, 2006; Lloyd, Oatham, Hammer, & Trust, 2007; Lloyd, Warren, & Hammer, 2008). This is partly because of the inherent tension between their design for effectiveness – the mission-aligned combination of their strategies, structures and processes (Mintzberg, 1989) – and the complex stakeholder legitimacy and public accountability requirements they face in global governance (Bernstein, 2004). Approached narrowly from a political and legal angle, the question of legitimacy can easily obscure other key dimensions of organisational accountability which are about meaningful relationships with those who the organisations serves.

A multi-stakeholder-based approach to accountability is hence critical for good governance, providing a mechanism for bringing organisational choices, approaches, and performance into the open, making it accessible for external review as well as internal evaluation. The more complex organisational choices, relationships, and performance become (such as in relation to climate change as a multidisciplinary and transnational challenge), the more structured and deliberate accountability focused on the public needs to be.

The rise of climate change as a framing element of sustainable development has increased the urgency for effective global cooperation, well-functioning and accountable global public institutions. It also highlights the need for the global governance system to demonstrate that it works collaboratively, and adds value in particular for the poorest and most vulnerable to climate change (Barrett, 2010; Newell, 2009; Unerman, Bebbington, & O'Dwyer, 2007). Delivering on their mission and promise and being accountable to citizens is even more important for global organisations today as nationalist and authoritarian forces are dismantling collaborative approaches to solving global problems.

SHIFTS IN THE CONCEPTS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Historically research and conceptual work on accountability of intergovernmental organisations revolved primarily on how they could achieve continued legitimacy as one element of good governance for their power to make decisions (Bradford, 2005). Contributions by a number of authors (Bernstein, 2004; Bovens, 2007; Buchanan & Keohane, 2006; Grant & Keohane, 2004; Scholte, 2001) have however significantly shifted the focus of the debate around accountability of public institutions, particularly global public institutions. Their emphasis has been on accountability as a social relation, in which formal power over an organisation is not the only or even decisive element anymore. In their perspective accountability is above all the deliberative and performance based review of its work from a wider public's perspective, including those affected by it, acting as a regulating element for

organisations' behaviour (Erkkilä, 2007). This social dimension in the relationship enables stakeholders in society – civil society and individual citizens – to judge an organisation's decisions, actions and impacts to be socially appropriate (or not) (Bernstein, 2004), and measure it on the basis of specific mechanisms through which this relationship works (Bovens, 2010). In this perspective organisations that are accountable are more likely to be effective at what they seek to achieve because accountability contributes to the ownership of the work processes by those affected, leading to enhanced capacity to achieve their policy goals (Whitty, 2008).

MEASURING ACCOUNTABILITY CAPABILITIES – OUR METHOD

To assess and measure organisational accountability capabilities this research uses the revised Global Accountability Framework the 'Pathways to Accountability II', developed by the One World Trust (OWT) (Hammer, Lloyd, Cumming, & Obrecht, 2011) after global consultation and prior use with diverse global organisations (Blagescu, de las Casas, & Lloyd, 2005).

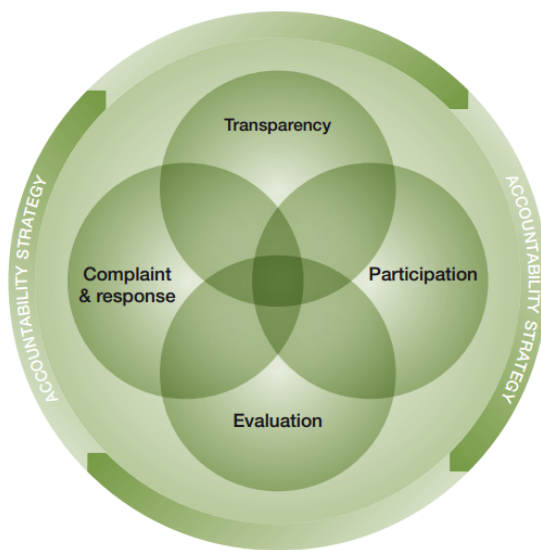
Informed by the evolution of the concept of accountability described above, the Pathways to Accountability II builds on the assumption that accountability should go beyond the replicability, reliability and transparency of processes and outputs, and enable the organisation to be responsive to changing compositions and needs of their ultimate stakeholders: individuals and communities. It uses a multi-stakeholder-based definition of accountability, placing the burden of providing structured and systematic accountability on the organisation, rather than requiring citizens to exact accountability from it. In contrast to traditional principal/agent models of accountability, this framework understands accountability as *"the process through which an organisation actively creates, and formally structures, balanced relationships with its diverse stakeholders, empowering these to hold it to account over its decisions, activities and impacts, with a view to continuously improve the organisation's delivery against its mission."* (Hammer et al., 2011, p. 30)

The framework enables an assessment of the capability of organisations to be accountable to those 'stakeholders' most affected by climate-change but with the least bargaining power (Hammer, Peet, & Vincken, 2009). It also allows assessment of how responsive an organisation's accountability mechanisms are to ever-changing external stakeholders and beneficiaries.

THE DIMENSIONS AND INDICATORS

The framework (Figure 1) assesses five interlocking and mutually reinforcing accountability dimensions: accountability strategy, transparency, participation, evaluation, and complaint & response. In each dimension the framework tests presence and quality of: policy (i.e. the commitments the organisations makes); management systems which enable the translation of policy into practice; and quality assurance mechanisms (which tell the organisation whether it practices its policy commitments).

Figure 1: Pathways to Accountability Framework



The resulting assessment framework contains 73 indicators which are scored for each organisation on the basis of a graded rating system. The one exception is “accountability strategy” for which the framework focuses on policy only because the implementation of strategic commitments on accountability would be mainly facilitated through the organisational systems assessed in the other four dimensions. The full list of indicators, the dimensions they assess, and their weightings are

accessible in the framework publication (Hammer et al., 2011), and also online¹.

The underlying method of translating qualitative data into a set of numerical values for the purposes of comparative review is akin to Ragin’s Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) (Ragin, 1987, 2008). QCA provides a bridge method between often very ideographic and intensive qualitative case studies of individual organisations, and extensive comparative research on organisations using predominantly large sets of quantitative data.

Within each accountability dimension the scoring of the indicators yields a dimensional score. To obtain an aggregate accountability score for an organisation the dimensional scores are weighted equally (i.e. at 20%) with any sub-dimensions (such as ‘external stakeholder participation’) being equally weighted within the parent dimension.

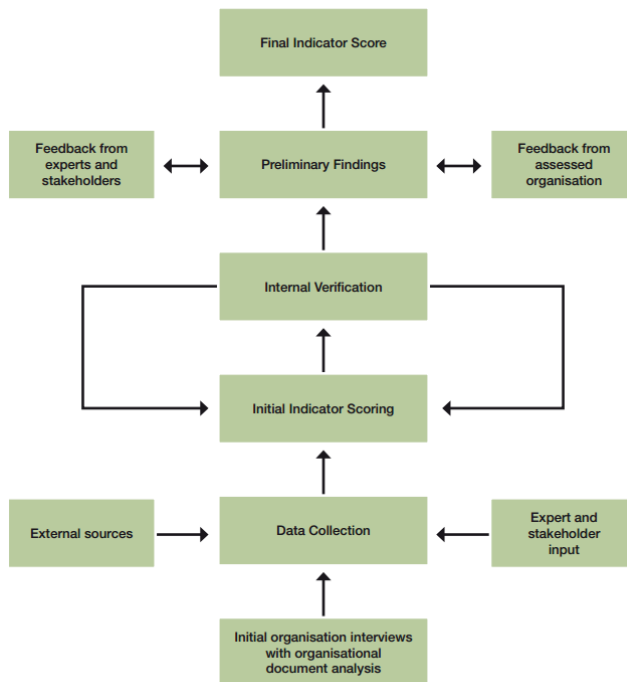
THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Data collection and analysis took place over 15 months and involved multiple verification loops (Figure 2). Organisations were informed of the intention to conduct the assessment, given a description of the framework and indicators, and requested to nominate a contact point who would serve as the main conduit for their engagement. Typically, a follow-up call was conducted to clarify any questions arising on the framework, discuss the type of evidence required, timelines, confidentiality of the process, intended publication of results, and the benefit of the exercise to the organisation’s own development. Organisations then had an agreed period to collect and share with the research team documents and notes that demonstrated whether and how the organisation met the indicators. In some cases, the organisations provided a very consolidated first submission, others shared documents and

¹<http://www.globalclimategovernance.org/sites/default/files/publications/testmanager/OWT129%20-%20Pathways%20to%20Accountability%20II.pdf>

information in a flow of communications. The information received was complemented and triangulated through additional searches for organisational documents by the research team.

Figure 2: The Accountability Assessment Process



In total 66 documents and 4 relevant webportals for the World Bank; 37 documents and 2 webportals for the WHO; and 47 documents plus two webportals for the WTO were reviewed. The difference in numbers of documents reviewed is not a reflection of complexity or size of an organisation, but how it chooses to structure its documentation.

To arrive at an initial scoring the research team analysed the materials obtained, conducted a series of calls, communications, and meetings with organisational representatives to clarify and interpret scores. Multiple verification loops followed (Figure 2).

The outcome of the whole assessment process was an individual organisational accountability profile which was shared and discussed with the organisations before finalisation and a confidential discussion with them of the implications for organisational development and improvement of accountability practices. Results were also discussed at a set of workshops held in Washington DC and London to which the assessed organisations, members of the project advisory group and other key experts were invited to help us draw overarching conclusions on the theoretical questions of accountability, power and legitimacy, as well as factors affecting organisational accountability reform.

POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK AND METHODS

A potential limitation of the accountability assessment method used here can be seen in that it only assesses strategies, policies and systems at the highest level of the organisation (i.e. its headquarters). Whether these are being implemented at all levels is not tested. Nevertheless, establishing whether responsive accountability mechanisms exist at the organisation’s heart, as this study does, and looking at quality assurance systems, are critical steps to understanding the capability of the organisation as a whole to be accountable to its multiple and changing stakeholders.

RESULTS

Many institutions could have been selected, but the scope of this study could not extend beyond a small sample. We selected the World Bank/IBRD, World Trade Organisation (WTO)

and World Health Organisation (WHO). First, each of these leads a field that is very important for responding to the consequences of climate change in the context of sustainable development: finance (for instance through World Bank loans), trade negotiations (such as on food pricing, environmental standards, or carbon trading), and health (including individual and public health, as well as evolution of disease patterns). Second, each of these organisations has been previously assessed as part of a three year cycle of assessments of 90 global organisations from 2006-2008 (Blagescu & Lloyd, 2006; Lloyd et al., 2007, 2008), and in a first pilot framework (IBRD and WTO) (Kovach, Neligan, & Bural, 2003). This historical data and background of engagement allowed to contextualise changes and to connect with the study organisations based on a shared journey.

For each case study institution, we present and illustrate the results of the accountability assessment scoring. The dimensional scores in each table are shown unweighted while the total aggregate score is generated from weighted scores. The tables shown contain illustrative examples of factors that determined the scoring of the indicators.

WORLD BANK/IBRD

The World Bank/IBRD is the largest of the three studied organisations: in 2011 over 10,000 staff were based in Washington DC; it had over 100 country offices; and an annual operating income of US\$ 1.023 billion, more than US\$ 26 billion of lending. In 2011, 187 member states form its board of governors, and 79 countries were eligible for support (World Bank, 2011b). The main purpose of the Bank is the reduction of poverty, with a strategic commitment to shared prosperity and sustainable development in the context of climate change and growing global interconnections (World Bank, 2014).

Table 1 shows the 2011/12 accountability assessment scores for the IBRD by accountability dimension. Its best results are on Transparency and Evaluation, specifically in External Complaints & Response. It scores significantly lower on Accountability Strategy and Participation, particularly in the sub-dimension of internal member control.

Table 1: Summary scores and notes for the IBRD

Dimension / Sub-dimension	Indicator type	Dimensional score (%, rounded)	Explanation of score
1. Accountability strategy	Policy (All)	22	No overarching stakeholder mapping and prioritisation process, although individual units within the IBRD perform such activities.
2a. Transparency	Policy	87	Substantial improvements to its Policy since 2006 on Access to Information (AI), now based on disclosure, barring a narrow, specific set of exclusions (World Bank, 2015a).
2b. Transparency	Management systems	73	Many management systems supporting the AI policy are exemplary. However, there are no formal related staff responsibilities in job descriptions, and no formal incentives for staff to behave in a transparent manner.
2. Transparency (all)	All	80	
3ai. Participation - External Stakeholders	Policy	44	No overarching external stakeholder engagement policy.
3a.ii. Participation - External Stakeholders	Management systems	44	External engagement commitments are limited to indigenous peoples (World Bank, 2013a, 2013b); no evidence of proactive guidance on civil society engagement in staff inductions. Civil society engagement is monitored by the civil society unit, but no similar reviews appear to exist for other stakeholder types.

3a. Participation - External Stakeholders (3ai-ii)	All External	44	
3b. Participation - Internal Member Control	Policy	17	All members are represented on the Board of Governors, but the USA continues to hold >15% the vote (World Bank, 2010; World Bank - Corporate Secretariat, 2017) with power to unilaterally block changes to the governing articles (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1989). The Bank's voice reform programme is gradually shifting voting shares to developing and transition countries (World Bank, 2010), but it has not to date implemented measures to counteract the existing imbalances of power (Chowla, Oatham, & Wren, 2007).
3. Participation (a, b)	All	31	
4ai. Evaluation	Policy	80	WBG policies on monitoring, evaluating, learning and reporting through self-evaluation are outlined in the <i>Operational Manual</i> (World Bank, 2015b) and the IEG provides guidelines relating to different aspects of evaluation (World Bank Operations Evaluation Department, 2004).
4aii. Evaluation	Management systems	60	Specialist Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), responsible for: independent evaluation of the IBRD and other WBG Agencies; developing formal evaluation policy; to clarifying the roles of management, Board of Executive Directors, and IEG in evaluation (World Bank, 2011a).
4a. Evaluation (ai-ii)	All	70	

5ai. Complaints and Response – External	Policy	73	Robust staff rules support the application of the policies, such as the Staff Rule 8.01, which outlines WBG policy on receiving and handling complaints from any stakeholder who is making an allegation of fraud or corruption (World Bank, 2016).
5aii. Complaints and Response – External	Management systems	58	Inspection Panel continues to be a strong innovative feature, responding to ‘requests for inspection’ from any person who believes they may have been negatively impacted by IBRD or IDA activities (World Bank Inspection Panel, 2011a, p. xvi). The INT investigates allegations of fraud and corruption made by any stakeholder. Both the Inspection Panel and INT can be contacted in a broad range of ways, including in multiple languages and INT offers a 24 hour fraud and corruption hot line (World Bank Inspection Panel, 2012; World Bank Integrity Vice Presidency, 2012). Both the Integrity Vice Presidency (INT) and Inspection Panel publish their investigation outcomes on their websites and annual reports. In addition, the Inspection Panel monitors follow-up progress by management (World Bank Inspection Panel, 2011b).
5a. Complaints and Response – External (5ai-ii)	All	66	
5bi. Complaints and Response – Internal	Policy	83	Main policy: “Protections and Procedures for Reporting Misconduct (Whistleblowing)” set out in the Staff Manual section 8.02 (World Bank, 2016). Policy applies to all “current and former staff members”, including all types of contractors. It offers multiple channels through which staff can report concerns, along with a clear and detailed description for handling, investigating and responding to complaints, and protection against retaliation. Investigations are handled by INT and the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC). However, clear timelines for investigating and responding to complaints are lacking and there is no appeals process.

5bii. Complaints and Response – Internal	Management systems	50	The Integrity Vice President in charge of overseeing compliance with internal complaints policy, does not appear to have this responsibility explicit in his/her job description and roles and responsibilities for responding to internal complaints are not clearly mapped out at different levels of the organisation. There is also no evidence of guidelines or training provided to relevant staff on handling complaints from internal stakeholders.
5b. Complaints and Response – Internal (5bi-ii)	All	67	
5. Complaints and Response (5a, 5b)	All	66	
TOTAL AGGREGATE SCORE (weighted)	All	54	

The scores also indicate that the quality of accountability policies is rated higher than the supporting management systems. The total (weighted) aggregate score is useful for a broad comparison of organisational performance. The IBRD scores above 50. This is a positive score given the demanding nature of the framework and reflects deliberate leadership on some areas of accountability reform. Nevertheless, the Bank's poor performance in the accountability strategy and participation dimensions and the need to develop balancing mechanisms in its internal governance to mitigate the inequities in internal member control and top-level decision making, shows as well. A separate calculation of the World Bank's score on quality assurance mechanisms (93) shows that the Bank has managed to put in place systems that over time should provide data on any discrepancies between its policy and practice.

THE WTO

The World Trade Organisation is the smallest of the three study organisations. Based in Geneva, it had 640 staff in 2011 and a budget of CHF 196 million (World Trade Organisation, 2012). The small size of its headquarters however belies the organisation's influence. Its main purpose is to organise and facilitate the negotiation and creation of common global trade rules in support of economic growth and sustainable development through free trade (World Trade Organisation, 1995, 2001). To this end the WTO and its 153 members states (2011) have established a multitude of committees, working groups and working parties to take forward negotiations in detail. Once rules are agreed, the WTO also serves as an adjudication body to deal with any conflicts between members about the application of rules. In addition, the WTO also manages the Trade Policy Review Mechanism and supports trade related capacity building.

Table 2 shows a muted performance by the WTO. On accountability strategy the organisation performs poorly with no systematic external stakeholder mapping evident. Transparency is the only policy area where a significant score is achieved due to its disclosure-based derestriction policy, although some flaws remain. External stakeholder participation is mainly structured around information sharing from the side of the WTO, with limited commitments to consult and fully respond to information requests. The Green Room system where separate groups negotiate critical points of trade agreements on invitation by the Director General is a factor which undermines the otherwise established equality in the formal internal member control system. Scores on evaluation are low because of a lack of an independent evaluation function which covers all main areas of WTO activities, and the fact that the WTO does not commit to sharing evaluation results beyond its members and accredited observers. External complaints and response policies and management systems are absent in the WTO, and only staff are able to use provisions akin to whistleblowing procedures, but not contractors. Similarly, the internal complaints handling procedures do not provide for a way to raise concerns outside the usual management line. Quality Assurance Mechanisms are patchy across the board and where they exist meet few best practice standards (scoring a mere 13).

Table 2: Summary scores and notes for the WTO

Dimension / Sub-dimension	Indicator type	Dimensional score (%, rounded)	Explanation of Score
1. Accountability strategy	Policy (All)	11	No systematic stakeholder mapping process. Despite identifying a number of external stakeholders in various documents e.g. founding agreement and Annual Reports (World Trade Organisation, 1995, 2012, 2016), there is no single place in which WTO explains how it will deliver accountability to stakeholders. Lack of explicit stakeholder recognition is partly rooted in the WTO's strong sense of being 'member driven', i.e. by member governments (World Trade Organisation, 2017b).
2a. Transparency	Policy	40	Innovative automatic derestriction principle grounded in the presumption of disclosure, and exceptions are narrow and well-defined (World Trade Organisation, 2002b). But, there is a clause in the policy which enables Members to ensure that documents they submit as restricted may remain so indefinitely (World Trade Organisation, 2002b, para. 2).
2b. Transparency	Management systems	27	Mixed quality: no clear way to challenge decisions not to publish documents. While external stakeholders can request information (World Trade Organisation, n.d.), WTO does not commit to respond to all requests for information, and has not provided evidence that stakeholders can formally appeal decisions to reject their information requests.
2. Transparency (all)	All	34	

3ai. Participation - External Stakeholders	Policy	33	Commitment to engage with IGOs, NGOs and non-member governments as well as the private sector: these parties can be accredited as observers to the Ministerial Conferences; observer status to General Council meetings are limited to IGOs and governments planning accession negotiations (World Trade Organisation, 1996b).
3aii. Participation - External Stakeholders	Management systems	50	Set of guidelines for engaging specifically with NGOs (World Trade Organisation, 1996a) underlies different fora through which the WTO seeks to share information about itself, such as the WTO Public Forum (Perez-Estevé, 2012). However, the guidance is not specific; no evidence that staff receive formal guidance on how to engage external stakeholders. WTO does not make specific commitments about the way it will consult external stakeholders; analysis suggests WTO selects only those NGOs which it feels are easy to embed into its processes and technical ways of working (E. N. Hannah, 2014).
3a. Participation - External Stakeholders (3ai-ii)	All	44	
3b. Participation - Internal Member Control	Policy	33	All members are represented at the Ministerial Conference and the General Council, all members can add items to the agenda, and all members hold an equal number of votes. BUT the Green Room system, where smaller groups of members try to negotiate critical issues in trade agreements by invitation of the Director general or the relevant Committee Chair, detracts from this equality in that not all members are guaranteed equal access.
3. Participation (a, b)	All	37	

4ai. Evaluation	Policy	27	No coherent approach: the <i>Monitoring and Evaluation System for WTO Technical Assistance Activities</i> (World Trade Organisation, 2002a) covers only one of the five fields set out in the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the WTO: Trade Related Technical Assistance (World Trade Organisation, 2001). It does commit to using results from evaluations to influence future policy and activities. Only states external stakeholders <i>may</i> be engaged in the evaluation process. No commitment to publicly and systematically disclose results of any evaluation although these are disclosed to Members and Observers accredited at the time.
4aii. Evaluation	Management systems	27	The Technical Cooperation Audit (TCA) is an internal body overseeing and building capacity for evaluation of technical assistance. Quality assurance provided to some level by the annual reports by the TCA to the Committee on Trade and Development. No evidence of quality review of evaluations although dissemination of lessons to staff and member governments is supported by a range of tools including the Global Trade Related Assistance Database (GTAD). Progress on supplying full content to this database not very evident (World Trade Organisation, 2017c).
4a. Evaluation (ai-ii)	All	27	
5ai. Complaints and Response – External	Policy	0	None in place. This constitutes a major weakness in the WTO’s ability to deliver on its accountability commitments to external stakeholders.
5aii. Complaints and Response – External	Management systems	0	None in place.

5a. Complaints and Response – External (5ai-ii)	All	0	
5bi.Complaints and Response – Internal	Policy	33	Procedures are codified in the <i>1998 Conditions Of Service Applicable To The Staff Of The WTO Secretariat</i> (World Trade Organisation, 1998) and provide opportunities for staff to complain about breaches of the WTO Standards of Conduct (referring to staff demonstrating integrity, honesty, truthfulness, and freedom from corrupting influences). Policy is not valid for contractors: this allows controversial operations to be outsourced to circumvent the obligations to deal with staff whistleblowing. The WTO commits to guaranteeing non-retaliation toward complainants and sanctioning those that retaliate.
5bii. Complaints and Response – Internal	Management systems	8	Complainants are only offered a channel through their supervisors or directors; no statement of who is responsible for handling and investigating complaints; no named senior executive in charge of overseeing the policies on internal complaints handling. The policy is not publicly-available, excluding it from scrutiny by external stakeholders. The WTO does not have an organisation-wide system in place for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of its internal complaints procedures.
5b. Complaints and Response – Internal (5bi-ii)	All	21	
5. Complaints and Response (5a, 5b)	All	11	
TOTAL AGGREGATE SCORE	ALL	24	

In most accountability dimensions the organisation could reach significant performance levels with just a few significant changes to the quality of its policy, management systems, and assurance framework.

THE WHO

The World Health Organisation is by staff, structure and organisational budget a large organisation. In 2011 it employed 7836 staff in Geneva (headquarters), 147 country offices worldwide, and six regional hubs. Its total bi-annual budget for 2010/2011 reached US\$ 4.848 billion. Its membership comprises 194 countries represented in its global governing body, the World Health Assembly. Its overall goal is “the attainment by all peoples of the highest attainable standard of health” (World Health Organisation (WHO), 1946). Its current 12th General Programme of work outlines six leadership priorities including universal health coverage, health-related Millennium Development Goals, non-communicable diseases, International Health Regulations, access to medical products, and social, economic and environmental determinants of health (World Health Organisation, 2014). Under Director General Margaret Chan the WHO had placed great strategic emphasis on the health of women and people in Africa (Chan, 2007).

Table 3 shows the accountability capability profile for the World Health Organisation which is characterised by a disjuncture between stakeholders it is publicly seeking to serve and benefit, and its accountability structures which privilege internally orientated relationships. Thus, in 2011 the organisation showed some areas of significant strength, particularly in evaluation, member control, and internal complaints & response indicating a technical capacity to organise and structure its work effectively, notably in areas that were accorded internal priority or were politically not contested. In other areas, however, the organisation stagnated and failed to display direction. In particular, the lack of accountability strategy together with a strong member focus in its internal power dynamics led to the neglect of high quality policies and systems to engage and support external stakeholders in terms of both their participation but also in terms of handling potential complaints. On overall quality assurance it scores only 13. Overall the period was characterised by inertia in terms of engaging those whom the organisation serves: people and communities, including those most affected by climate change.

A COMPARATIVE OUTLOOK ON THE 2011/12 RESULTS

The accountability assessments conducted for this study between 2011-2012 showed three organisations in very different places on their accountability journey, each with a distinct accountability profile. This can be visually translated to capture each organisation’s “accountability geometry” at the time of the assessment. Two views on these accountability geometries provide interesting comparative insights: one shows overall dimension scores, and the other scores only based on indicators focused on external engagement.

Table 3: Summary of scores and notes for the WHO

Dimension/Sub-dimension	Indicator type	Dimensional score (rounded, %)	Explanation of Score
1. Accountability strategy	Policy/All	11	The WHO identifies its member states as its primary stakeholders, and generically lists Intergovernmental Organisations and Non-governmental Organisations in several foundational documents: <i>Constitution of the World Health Organization</i> (World Health Organisation (WHO), 1946); <i>Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly</i> (World Health Assembly, 2008). Other documents, including <i>Principles Governing Relations between the World Health Organization and Nongovernmental Organizations</i> , <i>Guidelines on working with the private sector to achieve health outcomes</i> (World Health Organisation, 2000a), and <i>Policy on WHO Engagement with Global Health Partnerships and Hosting Arrangements</i> , further outline WHO’s engagement with these and other specific stakeholders (World Health Assembly, 2010; World Health Organisation, 2000a, 2010a). However, no evidence that this has been informed by a systematic mapping process; no overarching accountability strategy that would demonstrate the organisation’s understanding of and its commitment to its accountability relationships with identified stakeholders.
2a. Transparency	Policy	7	Lack of a transparency policy that applies to all activities and functions. In 2011 the WHO did have a policy on External Access to WHO Archives with a watershed period of 20 years for disclosure (World Health Organisation, 2006a). Decisions about earlier release are made on a case-by-case basis, and the criteria for allowing or denying a request for early access are not clear. Moreover, there was no option for appealing against unanswered or rejected requests.

2b. Transparency	Management systems	0	Absence of quality assurance mechanisms. Not possible for stakeholders to monitor the activities of the organisation and hold it to account but also for the organisation to control its own effectiveness in implementing existing policy.
2. Transparency	All	3	
3ai. Participation - External Stakeholders	Policy	33	WHO policies include guidelines for engagement with the private sector, NGOs, and IGOs but are largely generic, setting processes for accreditation and differentiated engagement opportunities, but failing to make specific commitments about the desired nature of consultation (World Health Organisation, 2000b, 2010a). Policy on engaging with global health partnerships provides the most specific framework to guide the WHO's external engagement (World Health Assembly, 2010).
3aii. Participation - External Stakeholders	Management systems	33	Staff do not receive specific guidance on how to engage with external stakeholders. Similarly, the 2010 country level cooperation strategies (World Health Organisation, 2010b) set out principles but remain unspecific on the 'how' of consultation with national stakeholders. The Department of Partnerships oversees WHO relations with CSOs and the private sector; the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations of the Executive Board reviews collaboration with each NGO every three years (World Health Organisation, 2010a). This provides a measure of quality assurance, however there is no evidence that effective and inclusive relationships with external stakeholders are part of the Head of the Department of Partnerships' job description or of his/her appraisal.
3a. Participation - External Stakeholders (3ai-ii)	All External	33	

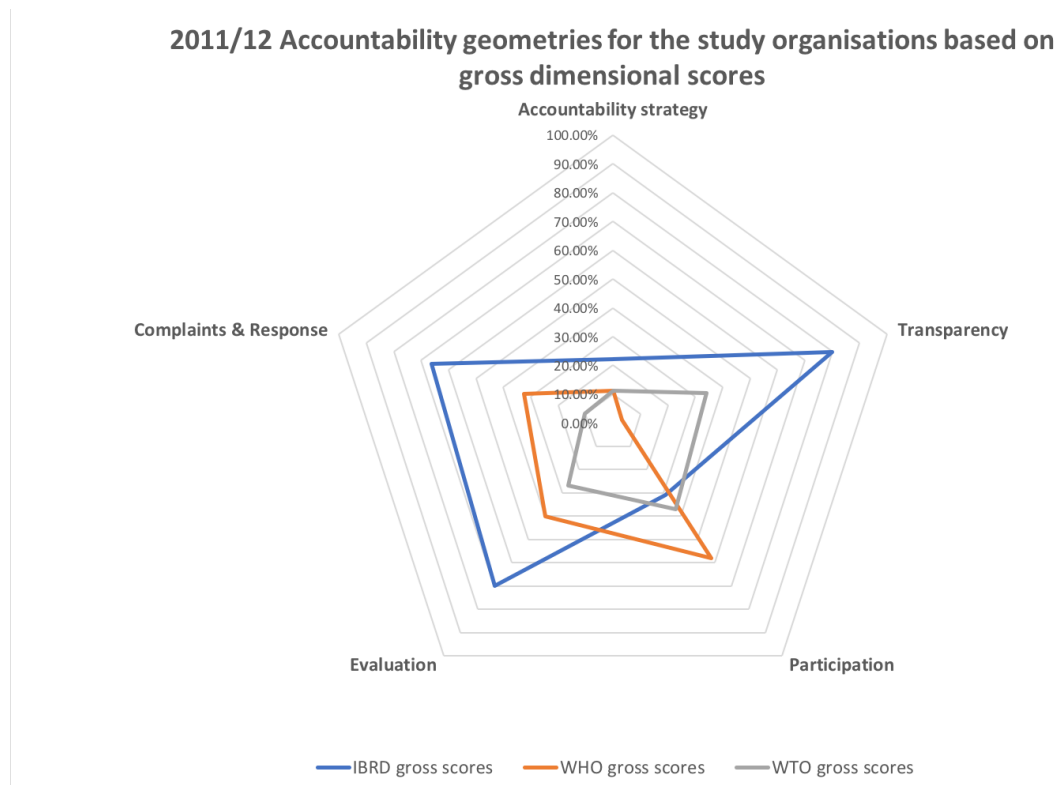
3b. Participation - Internal Member Control	Policy	83	Equality of members both at the level of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board. All members are represented at the World Health Assembly with an equal vote and rights to add items to the agenda (World Health Assembly, 2008; World Health Organisation (WHO), 1946). WHA elects those members, who may nominate a representative to serve on the Executive Board with provision that not less than three be elected from each of the WHO regions. However, once elected only the member state that designates the person to serve on the Board can dismiss that person. Members of the Executive Board each have one vote (World Health Organisation, 2008).
3. Participation (a, b)	All	58	
4ai. Evaluation	Policy	80	Set out in the Office of Internal Oversight Services <i>Evaluation Guidelines</i> . The WHO makes four important commitments in its policy: involving internal and external stakeholders in its evaluations; making evaluation reports available to all stakeholders; conducting evaluations at the field, thematic, and strategic levels; and using the findings of evaluations by ensuring each evaluation is assigned an owner whose responsibility is to apply the findings of the evaluation. The WHO's Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) acted as the organisation's independent evaluation function, although the OIOS also performed other tasks (World Health Organisation - Office of Internal Oversight Services, 2006).
4aii. Evaluation	Management systems	0	No evidence of management systems in place to support the WHO's evaluation policy or review the quality of its evaluations.
4a. Evaluation (ai-ii)	All	40	

5ai. Complaints and Response – External	Policy	13	No commitment to respond to complaints from external stakeholders; no publicly named channel through which external stakeholders can lodge complaints. No evidence of a policy to protect external stakeholders if they complain.
5aii. Complaints and Response – External	Management systems	8	No evidence that stakeholders were consulted in the development of the WHO's approach to external stakeholder complaints in place at the time. In an internal WHO document, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) was named as being responsible for handling and investigating complaints from external stakeholders; this office is functionally independent, but reported to the Director-General, not the Executive Board (World Health Organisation - Director General's Office, n.d.). No mechanisms in place for complainants to appeal decisions or escalate a complaint.
5a. Complaints and Response – External (5ai-ii)	All External	11	
5bi. Complaints and Response – Internal	Policy	67	Two policies on receiving complaints from internal stakeholders: the <i>Fraud Prevention Policy & Fraud Awareness Guidelines</i> and the <i>WHO Whistleblower Protection Policy</i> (World Health Organisation, 2005, 2006b). Both policies provide certain protections and apply to all current WHO staff, including interns. However, although the <i>Fraud Prevention Policy</i> stated that it covers any fraud, including that committed by “consultants, contractors, outside agencies doing business with WHO, and/or other parties with a business relationship with WHO”, the protections offered to external complainants under the policy did not extend to these parties. The <i>WHO Whistleblower Protection Policy</i> in place in 2011 did not apply to contractors.

5bii. Complaints and Response – Internal	Management systems	42	There was no process through which complainants could appeal a decision regarding the way their original complaints were handled. Finally, the WHO stated that anonymity could not be guaranteed (World Health Organisation, 2006b).
5b. Complaints and Response – Internal (5bi-ii)	All	54	
5. Complaints and Response (5a, 5b)	All	32	
TOTAL AGGREGATE SCORE	ALL	29	

Error! Reference source not found.3 shows the geometries based on overall dimension scores. The IBRD fills the canvas well overall but shows a big ‘dent’ on participation due to the inherent inequalities in its internal member control, and also on accountability strategy. The WTO shows a poor but more balanced picture. The very low scores on complaint & response and accountability strategy hardly show because of the overall very muted picture. The WHO’s accountability geometry is perhaps the most surprising and lopsided. Only evaluation and participation capabilities (due to strong internal but equality-based member control) are somewhat higher scoring areas. The very poor performance on transparency and accountability strategy point to the organisation neglecting their relevance rather than complacency in designing systems to a certain standard.

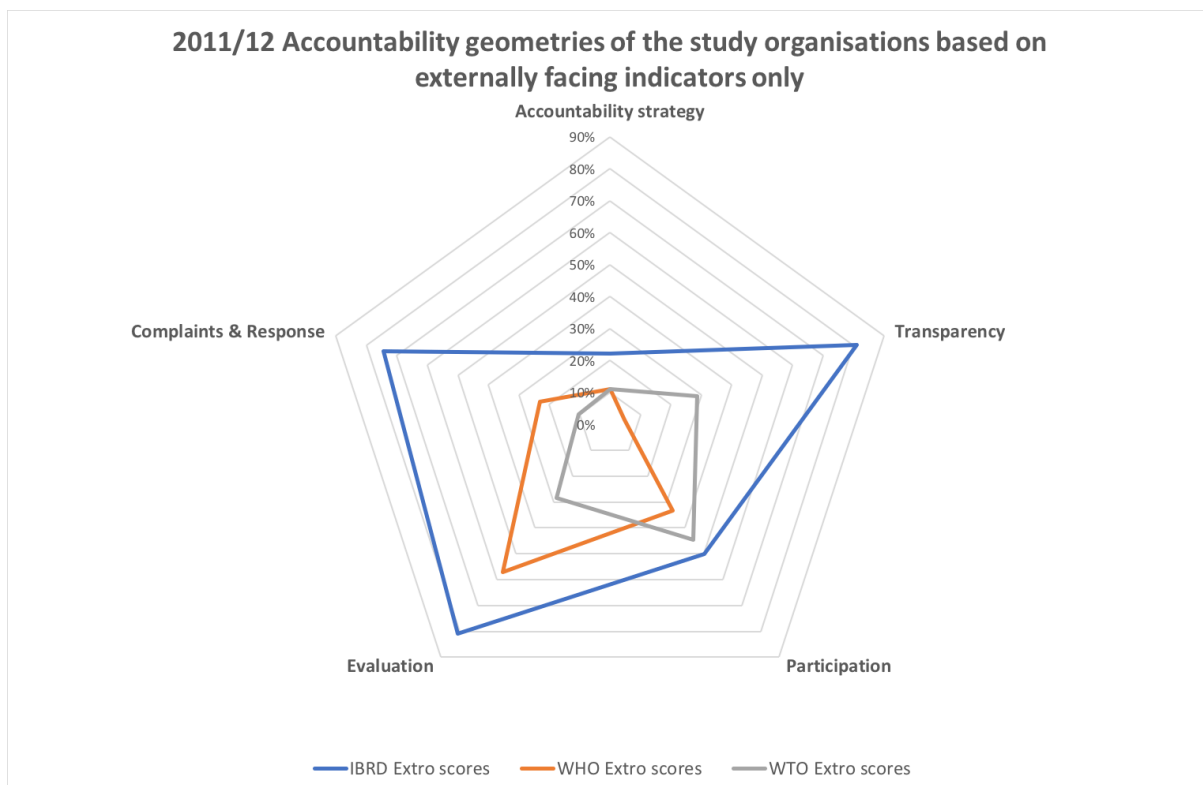
Figure 3: accountability geometries



Common to all organisations’ profiles in 2011/12 is the absence of a coherent and integrated strategy for accountability, and limited policies, systems and assurance mechanisms in particular on external stakeholder participation.

In contrast, Figure 4 shows the organisations’ accountability geometries when generated by calculating a ‘net score’ for the different dimensions in which only those indicators are included which are relevant to external stakeholders (49 out of the gross 73 indicators). The purpose is to create a picture of how well engaged the organisations are to external stakeholders including the communities and individuals that they claim to serve. This externally-facing accountability is, we argue, the most important reflection of organisational accountability in the area of climate change and development (Bernstein, 2004; Bovens, 2007; Buchanan & Keohane, 2006; Grant & Keohane, 2004; Scholte, 2001).

Figure 4: External Accountability Geometries



When we compare the overall scores with those based on external facing indicators only, the picture changes noticeably. There is a visible ‘flattening’ or ‘bulging’ of some accountability capabilities when the accountability profile is reviewed from an angle of the external focus of accountability indicators. The IBRD shows greater capabilities in external stakeholder participation when score is not mitigated by weaknesses that are related to inequities in member control. The WHO’s very limited external complaints handling capabilities lead to a significant drop in score on this dimension in the external profile, while the generally higher externally oriented evaluation policies and systems scores improve the picture. The net score for participation capabilities virtually collapses compared to the gross score, as the organisation in 2011/12 had only very limited options available for external stakeholders, in contrast to the otherwise very democratic nature of internal decision making (member control). The WTO profile remains low overall.

The juxtaposition of the assessment results in the two charts enables us to conclude that while the use of full aggregate data on the main dimensions (Strategy, Transparency, Participation, Evaluation, Complaints & Response) provides a useful rounded picture, it may mask the true extent to which an organisation can demonstrate its external accountability. This is important for future accountability assessments and for wider discourse on accountability in which the measurement and monitoring of external accountability ought to be taken more seriously.

Furthermore, the two sets of results allow us to articulate a set of linked hypotheses. First, those organisations which pay specific attention to external stakeholders in the way they design and support their accountability frameworks across all main dimensions will perform

better than those who invest in selected dimensions of accountability only. Second, given that the pressures are increasing for organisations involved in the stewardship of global public goods to demonstrate broader social accountability, such improved performance in the field of external stakeholder accountability is likely to consolidate both their actual capacity to deliver against their mission for the benefit of those whom they claim to serve, and their legitimacy with these critical stakeholder groups.

From the perspective opened by the above hypotheses the 2011/12 assessment shows that WTO had not shifted on developing a consistent and thought through approach to accountability, and that it fails to make the conceptual link between enhanced external accountability and its own much affirmed desire for legitimacy. The WHO had some foundations to build on but lacked drive, orientation and a consolidated understanding of its needs for accountability reform across all dimensions tested in this analysis. Finally, the IBRD showed itself way ahead in key areas but needed to address its inequalities in its internal power balance to tip the scales of public perception of legitimacy with stakeholders who will otherwise remain critical of its performance despite many positive changes.

DYNAMICS POST ASSESSMENT – A VIEW FROM 2017

Any assessment is a snapshot of organisations at a specific point in time, but continuous observation give insight into organisational transformation trajectories. We therefore try to draw an arc from the 2006 assessments through to a perspective from 2017. In 2006 all three organisations showed only limited accountability capabilities, the 2011/12 assessment showed that the IBRD had moved considerably, while WHO and WTO still remained fairly inert. From a perspective of 2017 however, we are able to record a number of interesting dynamics, again over a roughly five-year period.

For the IBRD the revision of its Access to Information policy in 2010 continued to prove seminal in building and sustaining better relationships with its external stakeholders in particular. Already the Voice Reform programme launched in 2008 recognised the importance to reflect external power shifts in the global economic and political landscape also in the internal governance and decision-making arrangements at the Bank, although it does not remedy continuing imbalances. Both initiatives continue with some momentum across the 2011/12 assessment point. They are complemented by the 2016/17 'Forward Look' initiative which displays a continuing drive towards serving all its 'client segments', i.e. those who the Bank maintains financial or political relationships with, delivering collective action on global public goods and strengthening the WBG's engagement on global issues by helping countries to address a range of these including refugees, crisis response including pandemics, climate action, and infrastructure (World Bank - Development Committee, 2017) as well as defining cross WBG collaboration as a measurable dimension of its work. While the latter is currently an initiative aimed at increasing internal efficiency, the approach and metrics developed could well be meaningful to foster, understand and be more accountable for the effectiveness of collaboration with external stakeholders as well should the WBG choose to apply them in this way.

The WTO, in contrast showed neither much movement on its accountability frameworks between 2006 and 2011/12, nor afterwards. The one area where the WTO has put in greater effort and structure is the outreach to external stakeholders in the form of its annual Public Forum (World Trade Organisation, 2017a). However, these events are still primarily WTO defined and conceived as information sharing events rather than spaces for true dialogue, prompting calls for creating more space for external stakeholders to define agendas and direction of the fora (E. Hannah, Scott, & Wilkinson, 2017). The conundrum of WTO remains – that it finds it hard to convincingly prioritise its stakeholder accountability despite its aspirations of promoting commercial liberalization, social justice, sustainable development and mutual accountability (Wolfe, 2015). The controversies around civil society presence at the 11th Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December 2017 shows that some key members in the organisation may still not be ready to openly engage with external stakeholders (Shawn Donnan & Benedict Mander, 2017). Movement towards better stakeholder accountability will therefore require greater leadership from the Secretariat to succeed. This inevitably also requires a shift in its mindset, becoming more confident in its role to introduce, facilitate and guide discussions of the wider membership.

The WHO had, as discussed, remained rather stagnant in terms of organisational accountability reform between 2006 and 2011/12. However, the new (now public) evaluation policy of summer 2012 (World Health Organisation, 2012) eventually showed itself as a precursor to very significant reforms in other accountability areas especially in the years 2015 to 2017. These changes include for instance the introduction of an annual report on the evaluation function to the Executive Board, the publication of an evaluation practice handbook, the creation of a Global Evaluation Network and other steps within the WHO to improve quality assurance of evaluations. (World Health Organisation, 2013a, 2013b, 2015a). In 2014 a new Office of Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics began its work. In 2015 the WHO published a new accountability framework which for the first time presents a common strategic vision of the different elements of accountability for the organisation (World Health Organisation, 2015c). A new Whistleblower policy followed in 2015 (World Health Organisation, 2015b), new WHA guidelines for the engagement of non-state actors (World Health Assembly, 2016), and a code of ethics and professional conduct in 2017 (World Health Organisation, 2017a). Following the assessment, the WHO also started work on a new information disclosure policy which eventually was adopted in March 2017 (World Health Organisation, 2017b). This new policy is based on a presumption of disclosure and contains a narrow list of specific exclusions as well as timelines for response to information requests and an appeals process. None of these new policies and systems have been assessed in detail in this project, but the WHO reform process is now producing tangible changes also on accountability.

HOW CAN RESEARCH OF THIS KIND SUPPORT UPTAKE AND CHANGE?

First, striking the balance between detail of the research protocol and capacity of responding organisations to participate, absorb results and turn them into action is critical. Overall the study organisations engaged positively in the supply of data for the QCA informed

assessments. However, their capacity to follow up and engage with the results was more mixed, primarily owing to internal dynamics.

So, second, this context of internal organisational development, external pressures, windows of opportunity for change, and perceptions of legitimacy that apply to each organisation differently, greatly affect how assessment results are received and taken up. In the case of the IBRD the findings confirmed the journey the organisation had already been on (with some influence from the 2006 assessment and other pressures), led by two reformist Presidents. This will have contributed to its invitation to us in 2013 to discuss our findings with its internal accountability panel. For the WHO, the second assessment of 2011 (after the 2006 exercise) showed continuing inertia. Combined with a critical view on its performance by one of its main donor member governments (UK Department for International Development, 2011, 2016) this project's results may however have eventually contributed to jolting the organisation into action. In the case of the WTO there is not much internal pressure from members for change, and its leadership clearly feels unable to resolve the strong internal views on member accountability only. Hence we see a lack of progress.

Third, while benchmarking exercises like the one we undertook may trigger reflections and action, time is still required for these to mature into new policy and systems. The time between the assessment documented here, the communication of its results, and the latest wave of more significant WHO reforms (2015-17) is a good illustration. But so is the decade between the beginnings of World Bank accountability reform around 2008, and the maturing of the voice process which involves gradual but tangible shifts in shareholder quotas.

Fourthly, long haul observations and engagement and repeat studies matter to build confidence in the process, results and intent on the side of the receiving organisations. Typically, this type of persistence in engagement is the realm of advocacy and civil society groups but researchers have argued a duty of researchers to pursue policy recommendations where these uphold international rights and commitments, but recognise that this may raise questions of partiality (Buse, 2008; Surjadaja & Mayhew, 2011).

Finally, while we used the QCA informed approach in this study only for three cases, the experience of the broader assessment cycle of 2006-2008 (see section on **Error! Reference source not found./Error! Reference source not found.**) validated the use of the Qualitative Comparative Analysis approach to gain more broadly valid findings about accountability reform in global organisations. This overcame the limitations that some, including Ragin himself, saw for the method for the use of QCA in its earlier stages of development (Ragin, Shulman, Weinberg, & Gran, 2003).

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