

WORKING PAPER SERIES — COMPANION RESOURCE

Building Institutions That Survive

An Annotated Guide to the Literature

Akyeame Statecraft · International Governance Advisory · July 2026

This guide accompanies the Akyeame Statecraft working paper *Building Institutions That Survive: A Political Architecture Approach to Governance Reform in Canada and West Africa*. It presents the paper's sources with short annotations explaining what each contributes and where it enters the argument. Section references (e.g. 'Section II.E') refer to the working paper. All sources are formatted in APA 7th edition; grey literature is identified by source type in brackets. Readers new to this literature may wish to begin with Grindle (2004), Andrews (2013), and Mamdani (1996).

Theoretical Foundations: Historical Institutionalism and Institutional Change

Mahoney, J., & Thelen, K. (Eds.). (2010). Explaining institutional change: Ambiguity, agency, and power. Cambridge University Press.

The foundational text for the paper's theory of institutional sediment. Mahoney and Thelen propose a typology of gradual institutional change — layering, conversion, displacement, and drift — and argue that institutional change is a continuous process driven by ongoing political struggles within and over existing institutions, not only by critical junctures. Their power-distributional perspective is central to the Political Architecture framework's treatment of authority distribution as a structural force shaping reform outcomes. Directly relevant to Sections II and III.

Pierson, P. (2004). Politics in time: History, institutions, and social analysis. Princeton University Press.

Pierson develops path dependence theory as applied to political institutions, showing how early institutional choices generate increasing returns that lock in particular trajectories. The temporal dimension is central to the paper's concept of institutional sediment. A key reference for the argument that governance reform cannot be adequately designed without a rigorous account of what it is building on.

Streeck, W., & Thelen, K. (Eds.). (2005). Beyond continuity: Institutional change in advanced political economies. Oxford University Press.

Develops the full typology of gradual institutional change and the critical distinction between change in institutions (formal properties) and change by institutions (distributional effects). Essential background for the paper's argument that governance reform in both cases has generated conversion and drift rather than genuine institutional renewal.

Thelen, K. (1999). Historical institutionalism in comparative politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2, 369–404. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.2.1.369>

The definitive overview of the historical institutionalist tradition: its intellectual origins, core concepts, and methodological implications. Essential for establishing

the disciplinary tradition within which the Political Architecture framework is developed.

North, D. C. (1990). *Institutions, institutional change and economic performance*. Cambridge University Press.

North's foundational distinction between formal rules and informal constraints underpins the paper's insistence that governance reform addressing only formal institutional design will fail when informal constraints operate according to a different logic. Core reference for the institutional sediment concept.

Capoccia, G. (2016). When do institutions 'bite'? Historical institutionalism and the politics of institutional change. *Comparative Political Studies*, 49(8), 1095–1127. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414015626447>

Capoccia's analysis of when institutional structures constrain political actors — and when they do not — supports the Political Architecture framework's insistence that institutional constraints are mediated by authority relationships and legitimacy conditions. An important theoretical qualification of standard path-dependence arguments.

Andrews, M. (2013). *The limits of institutional reform in development: Changing rules for realistic solutions*. Cambridge University Press.

Andrews develops the concept of isomorphic mimicry — the adoption of institutional forms without the functional change those forms are intended to produce — which the paper cites as the mechanism by which the form-function gap is reproduced in technically well-designed reform programmes. An essential complement to the Grindle critique and the paper's central reframing of the reform failure argument.

Andrews, M., Pritchett, L., & Woolcock, M. (2017). *Building state capability: Evidence, analysis, action*. Oxford University Press.

Develops Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA), the most fully specified adaptive alternative to template-driven reform. Section II.E distinguishes the Political Architecture framework from PDIA: where PDIA discovers structural constraints through iterative action, the political architecture brief establishes them analytically prior to design — making the two approaches complementary rather than rival.

DFID. (2004). *Drivers of change* (Public Information Note). Department for International Development. [Grey Literature — Government Agency Note]

The originating statement of the Drivers of Change approach — the first donor-institutionalised framework for analysing the political and structural factors shaping reform outcomes. Cited in Section II.E as the starting point of the PEA tradition against which the Political Architecture framework is distinguished.

Warrener, D. (2004). *The drivers of change approach* (Synthesis Paper 3). Overseas Development Institute. [Grey Literature — Research Institute Synthesis Paper]

Early synthesis of how Drivers of Change was applied across DFID country offices. Documents the gap between analysis and operational uptake that Section II.E identifies as PEA's first structural limitation.

Leftwich, A. (2006). Drivers of change: Refining the analytical framework — conceptual and theoretical issues (Report prepared for DFID). University of York, Department of Politics. [Grey Literature — Commissioned Report]

Conceptual refinement of the Drivers of Change framework, distinguishing structures, institutions, and agents — the closest the PEA tradition comes to a structural analytical vocabulary, and a useful benchmark for what Political Architecture adds.

Leftwich, A. (2009). From drivers of change to the politics of development: Refining the analytical framework to understand the politics of the places where we work (Final report prepared for DFID). [Grey Literature — Commissioned Report]

The final report of the refinement programme, moving from country-level 'drivers' toward a general politics of development. Directly relevant to Section II.E's argument that even refined PEA remained actor-centred rather than structural.

Fritz, V., Kaiser, K., & Levy, B. (2009). Problem-driven governance and political economy analysis: Good practice framework. The World Bank. [Grey Literature — International Organisation Framework]

The most systematised statement of donor PEA — the World Bank's good-practice framework for problem-driven governance and political economy analysis. A primary reference for Section II.E's account of what existing PEA does and does not supply.

Fritz, V., Levy, B., & Ort, R. (Eds.). (2014). Problem-driven political economy analysis: The World Bank's experience. The World Bank. [Grey Literature — International Organisation Publication]

Documents the Bank's operational experience applying problem-driven PEA, including candid discussion of uptake and integration challenges. Direct empirical support for Section II.E's claim that PEA analysis is frequently decoupled from reform design.

Whaites, A. (2023). The beginner's guide to political economy analysis (PEA). National School of Government International / Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. [Grey Literature — Government Practitioner Guide]

Practitioner overview situating Drivers of Change and problem-driven approaches within the wider PEA lineage. A useful map of the tradition Section II.E engages, and of the operational expectations a Political Architecture brief must meet to improve on it.

Grindle, M. S. (2004). Good enough governance: Poverty reduction and reform in developing countries. *Governance*, 17(4), 525-548. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0952-1895.2004.00256.x>

Grindle's critique of best-practice governance templates and her argument for context-specific, sequenced, and politically realistic reform approaches anticipates

the Political Architecture framework's core methodological commitment. Essential for Section II's critique of dominant reform frameworks.

State Capacity and Legitimacy

Fukuyama, F. (2004). *State-building: Governance and world order in the 21st century*. Cornell University Press.

Fukuyama's central distinction between state scope and state strength reorients attention toward the conditions under which institutions actually function. Key reference for Section II's capacity-deficit framework discussion.

Fukuyama, F. (2014). *Political order and political decay: From the industrial revolution to the globalization of democracy*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Fukuyama's examination of institutional decay — through repatrimonialization, interest group capture, and substitution of personal networks for impersonal state functions — provides a dynamic account of how functional institutions deteriorate. Particularly relevant to the West Africa sections.

Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2012). *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity, and poverty*. Crown Publishers.

The extractive/inclusive institutional framework — whose authors received the 2024 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences — has reoriented development policy toward institutional quality. The paper engages critically with this framework, arguing that the binary understates the role of legitimacy and competing institutional logics in postcolonial hybrid governance contexts.

Arif, I. (2023). Legitimacy of government and governance. *Journal of Institutional Economics*, 19(5), 789–805. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1744137423000334>

Arif provides a contemporary analytical framework distinguishing the legitimacy of government (procedural) from the legitimacy of governance (output-based), demonstrating that both dimensions independently shape institutional performance. The paper's competing legitimacies pillar is directly grounded in this distinction.

Hien, A. (2024). State capacity and growth in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2024.1487658>

Identifies three independent pillars of state capacity — security, fiscal, and legal — and tests their relationship to governance outcomes across Sub-Saharan Africa. The finding that these pillars operate independently and unevenly is consistent with the framework's emphasis on context-specific analysis.

Afrobarometer. (2022). *Mapping state capacity in Africa: Professionalism and reach* (Working Paper No. 190). [Grey Literature — Research Institution Working Paper]

Uses representative survey data to distinguish administrative professionalism from territorial reach across African states — a distinction directly relevant to the paper's authority distribution analysis in the West Africa sections.

Postcolonial Governance and West Africa

Mamdani, M. (1996). *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*. Princeton University Press.

Mamdani's bifurcated postcolonial state — divided between urban citizens under civil law and rural subjects under customary authority — remains the most analytically powerful account of the structural legacy that postcolonial governance reform must contend with. An essential theoretical reference for the West Africa sections.

van de Walle, N. (2001). *African economies and the politics of permanent crisis, 1979–1999*. Cambridge University Press.

Van de Walle provides the most comprehensive account of why decades of structural adjustment and governance reform in Africa produced institutions that were formally compliant but operationally hollow. Directly relevant to the paper's thesis and to Section II's critique of capacity-deficit approaches.

Ohemeng, F. L. K. (2025). The state of policy capacity problems in Africa: The viewpoint of historical institutionalism from Ghana. *Review of Policy Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ropr.70044>

Applies historical institutionalism to Ghana's policy capacity deficits, demonstrating path dependence from colonial administrative structures. A direct application of the institutional sediment concept to the Ghanaian case and one of the most current peer-reviewed treatments available.

Ohemeng, F. L. K. (2022). The 'illusion' of administrative sovereignty in developing countries. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 44(4), 269–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10841806.2022.2138193>

Argues that Ghana's administrative system retains a structural dependence on external frameworks that undermines genuine administrative sovereignty — a product of institutional sediment in which colonial administrative logics were retained beneath surface-level post-independence reforms.

Adjei, J. K., & Asante, E. A. (2022). Changing role of traditional authorities in local governance and development in Ghana. In *Local government and development in Ghana* (pp. 225–244). Springer Nature.

Documents how Ghana's traditional authorities have developed neo-traditional governance roles as development brokers, electoral stakeholders, and land governance custodians that intersect with and sometimes override the formal local government system. Essential empirical source for the competing legitimacies analysis.

Tieleman, J., & Uitermark, J. (2019). Chiefs in the city: Traditional authority in the modern state. *Sociology*, 53(1), 119–134.

Documents the persistence and adaptation of traditional authority in urban governance contexts, establishing that competing legitimacies in West African governance are not a transitional problem but a structural feature that persists and adapts as urbanisation deepens.

Hickey, S., Abdulai, A.-G., Izama, A., & Mohan, G. (2019). The politics of state capacity and development in Africa (ESID Working Paper No. 117). [Grey Literature — Research Centre Working Paper]

Introduces 'pockets of effectiveness' — administrative units that deliver results despite surrounding weakness — and argues their existence is explained by political architecture variables: alignment between authority, legitimacy, and political commitment. Key reference for the diagnostic framework section.

World Bank. (2024). Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa (Policy Research Working Paper 10713). [Grey Literature — International Organisation Research Paper]

Provides a comprehensive contemporary assessment of governance performance across Sub-Saharan Africa. Key empirical reference for contextualising the Ghana case within regional governance trends.

Canadian Governance and Intergovernmental Relations

Forum of Federations. (n.d.). Intergovernmental relations in Canada. Forum of Federations. [Grey Literature — International Research Organisation]

Documents the convention-based, non-constitutionalised character of Canadian intergovernmental coordination, central to the paper's argument that the system's recurrent coordination failures are structurally predictable outputs of its political architecture.

Public Safety Canada. (2024). Advancing the federal-provincial-territorial emergency management strategy. Government of Canada. [Grey Literature — Government Report]

A primary source for the emergency management case study, acknowledging persistent systemic gaps in coordination as ongoing structural challenges. Notable as an implicit governmental acknowledgment of the political architecture problem the paper identifies.

Policy Options. (2026, April). Why Canada must reform governance to fix security. IRPP. <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/2026/04/fix-ottawa-governance/> [Grey Literature — Policy Journal]

Identifies structural governance failures in Canada's federal executive — extreme PMO centralisation, marginalisation of ministers, dominance of political staff over public service advice — as a current authority distribution problem whose roots predate any current government. A practitioner-oriented reference for the institutional sediment analysis.

World Bank. (2024). Empowering fragile states. World Bank Group. [Grey Literature — International Organisation Strategy Document]

Outlines current World Bank strategic approaches to institutional strengthening in fragile states. Serves as a productive foil: represents the technical-design approach the paper engages critically, and against which the Political Architecture framework's prior analytical discipline is offered.

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