

Principles for Equitable Governance

The foundation of **Equitable** [democratic] **Governance (EG)** is citizen supported, majority based decision-making at all levels of government. *Equitable Governance is:*

1. *OPEN*

- a. Governments should avoid making decisions with special interest groups without public awareness or approval.
- b. Information exchanged between interest groups and government should be available to the public.

2. *ACCESSABLE*

- a. Residents, interest groups, labour and business deserve equal participation in matters of governance.
- b. Access should be at convenient locations and times for all stakeholders.
- c. All vested parties deserve access to other parties' information.

3. *INFORMATIVE*

- a. Governments and interest groups should inform each other of important developments or considerations through memorandum, meetings or workshops. They should also exchange public feedback: such as through polls.

4. *FAIR AND FLEXIBLE*

- a. EG should facilitate equal opportunity for participant's input and time to question others' input.
- b. Meeting dates should be advertised in advance so interested parties can evaluate proposals and have time to prepare their responses.

5. *REPRESENTATIVE of DIVERSITY*

- a. True EG involves all spectrums of society: elderly, young, rich, poor, male, female, scientific, spiritual, etc.
- b. A broad out reach is required to have a meaningful representation of society.

6. *SENSITIVE*

- a. EG is sensitive to various peoples' ways of expressing themselves. Ie: aboriginals, immigrants, handicapped, etc.

7. *ON GOING*

- a. To perpetuate quality governance continuous communication between government and stakeholders must occur.

8. *REFLECTIVE*

- a. Equitable political decision-making should be reflective of input, consensus building or voting.

9. *EMPOWERING*

- a. Individuals or interest groups should have methods (such as public meetings, workshops or referenda) to get involved in political decision-making processes.
- b. EG requires non-partisan leadership, objective goals, fairly structured agendas, balanced time to speak, independent facilitators, opportunity for third party involvement, etc.

10. *CHECKS AND BALANCES*

- a. Conflicts, disputes and deadlocks should be resolved through re-consulting, third party arbitration, referenda, etc.
- b. Should citizens find disfavor with a politician there should be a process available by which an elected official could be removed by petition?