

## Govern Like Us: U.S. Expectations of Poor Countries

M. A. Thomas

*\*Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1008761 in eBooks 2015-05-05 2015-05-05 File Name: B00UCC69RY | File size: 39.Mb

**M. A. Thomas : Govern Like Us: U.S. Expectations of Poor Countries** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Govern Like Us: U.S. Expectations of Poor Countries:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Realpolitik Applied to GovernmentBy NonaThomas posits that financially poor governments govern less because they do not have the resources to govern more; necessarily must govern differently because they do not have the resources to govern in accord with our Western ideal; and then concludes that because of their lack of economic resources, poor governments have more important priorities than providing those governed with public goods like health care, infrastructure and the rule of law. I don't think anyone can reasonably disagree with Thomas' first two points, but to me her third point seems more a product of the people in

government, than the nature of the government, but it may be impossible to separate the two when dealing with poor countries and governments. Thomas points out how advanced governments have failed to recognize the essential differences and flaws in poor governments and continually waste capital when making aid decisions based on misperception and hope, rather than reality. Thomas also persuasively compares the success of western governments, the product of centuries of the consolidation of power, with the failure of poor governments, set up arbitrarily and quickly through decolonization without much thought to how those poor countries could finance expected governmental activities far from the capital. Some of the Thomas' prescriptions, like the repeal of FCPA, may lead to debate, but her essential thesis, is hey guys lets get real. Poor governments don't function like rich governments, so we should deal with those poor governments with our eyes open and with realistic expectations in the hope for incremental progress. (After all is it realistic to expect the Third world to establish functional governmental machinery in two generations machinery when it took th First world centuries to accomplish that task). The book is an important addition to discussion regarding foreign policy, aid and NGOs. I highly recommend it.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. This is an excellent book about the limitations of governance reform as practiced ...By Francis FukuyamaThis is an excellent book about the limitations of governance reform as practiced by the contemporary development community, from someone who has both extensive practical experience and theoretical grounding. And it's very readable, to boot.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Solid, realistic contributionBy Michael RoskinA solid updating of development strategies that takes corruption and malgovernance as givens but can be overcome. Many examples, mostly from Africa. Usable in courses on the developing areas.

In the poorest countries, such as Afghanistan, Haiti, and Mali, the United States has struggled to work with governments whose corruption and lack of capacity are increasingly seen to be the cause of instability and poverty. The development and security communities call for "good governance" to improve the rule of law, democratic accountability, and the delivery of public goods and services. The United States and other rich liberal democracies insist that this is the only legitimate model of governance. Yet poor governments cannot govern according to these ideals and instead are compelled to rely more heavily on older, cheaper strategies of holding power, such as patronage and repression. The unwillingness to admit that poor governments do and must govern differently has cost the United States and others inestimable blood and coin. Informed by years of fieldwork and drawing on practitioner work and academic scholarship in politics, economics, law, and history, this book explains the origins of poor governments in the formation of the modern state system and describes the way they govern. It argues that, surprisingly, the effort to stigmatize and criminalize the governance of the poor is both fruitless and destabilizing. The United States requires a more effective foreign policy to engage poor governments and acknowledge how they govern.

M. A. Thomas is critical of our policy rightly sobut refrains from relativism and bombast. She provides a useful contrarian perspective that is difficult to ignore. (Michael Johnston, Colgate University)In recent years, there has been a broad recognition in rich countries that poor government is a leading cause of poverty, and they have undertaken vast programs to stem corruption and dysfunctional politics. In *Govern Like Us*, M. A. Thomas exposes the illusions that have undergirded this effort and shows why the vast sums invested in places like Afghanistan and Iraq have yielded such meager results. This book should be required reading for anyone in the development field. (Francis Fukuyama, Stanford University)Wow. A hard-hitting analysis from a scholar/practitioner of the deep intellectual roots of the failures to create 'good governance' everywhereand why that failure is ignored or blamed on others. A useful corrective to the conventional development wisdom. (Lant Pritchett, Harvard University)*Govern Like Us* delivers a thought-provoking and valuable reminder that sanctimonious insistence on moral perfection can be as self-defeating as moral indifference. (Mark Moyar *The Wall Street Journal*)Highly recommended. (Choice)*Govern Like Us* is a valuable guide to outsiders looking to familiarize themselves with some of the challenges of development. It also should be of great value to students, as it provides an excellent outline of the origins and operations of the neopatrimonial state and the challenges to escaping the poverty trap. (Christopher Mitchell *Political Science Quarterly*)About the AuthorM. A. Thomas is a lawyer and political economist who has worked as a governance specialist for foreign aid donors in some of the world's poorest countries. From 2005 until 2014, she was associate professor of international development at The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at The Johns Hopkins University. Her articles have appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, the *American Interest*, *Policy*, *International Affairs*, the *Journal of Modern African Studies*, the *European Journal of Development Research*, *Development and Change*, and the *Defense Acquisition Research Journal*.