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Artificial Intelligence Governance and Institutional Capacity in the Public Sector: Lessons from Estonia and Rwanda for Developing and Post-Conflict States: A Literature Review

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Abstract
Governments across the developing world are adopting artificial intelligence (AI) in public administration faster than they are building the institutional capacity to govern it. This review synthesises twenty-six peer-reviewed studies to examine what determines AI governance readiness in the public sector, drawing on the Technology–Organisation–Environment (TOE) framework that recurs across the literature, on the specific and consequential problem of public-sector corruption, and on the contrasting digital government trajectories of Estonia and Rwanda, two small states frequently cited as models but built on different institutional logics: legally mandated interoperability in Estonia's case, and ICT-led policy leapfrogging in Rwanda's. The review finds consistent evidence that technological infrastructure, organisational capacity, and regulatory or environmental context jointly determine AI governance readiness, and that readiness, not technological sophistication alone, is what converts AI adoption into public value rather than accountability risk. Emerging evidence further suggests that AI can support corruption control specifically, but only where institutional readiness and citizen trust are already present, a conditionality directly relevant to the sequencing question this review addresses. Studies of low-income and fragile states report regulatory fragmentation, weak data governance, and limited human capital as recurring constraints, and argue for governance-before-technology sequencing rather than pilot-first approaches. The review closes by considering what these findings imply for public institutions in Somalia, a post-conflict state building administrative capacity largely from the ground up, and identifies the absence of Horn of Africa-specific empirical evidence as the clearest gap for future research.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence Governance, Institutional Capacity, Public Administration, E-Government, Corruption Control, Estonia, Rwanda, Somalia

1. Introduction

Governments are moving from small artificial intelligence (AI) pilots to operational use in public administration faster than research or regulation has kept pace with, a shift Ahmad (2026) illustrates with the United States' consolidated federal AI use case inventory, which lists more than 1,700 deployments across agencies, a meaningful share of them classified as rights- or safety-impacting. The pattern is not confined to wealthy states. Across the developing world, AI is entering tax administration, welfare targeting, healthcare delivery, and urban governance on the promise of efficiency gains that fiscally constrained governments find hard to decline (Mhlanga, 2026).

The promise is real but conditional. Well-designed assistive systems in advanced administrations have produced measurable service delivery gains, including sharply reduced response times and meaningful staff-time savings (Ahmad, 2026), but the same literature is equally clear that without adequate governance, AI can weaken accountability through opaque decision pathways, biased outcomes traceable to poor or unrepresentative data, staff over-reliance on automated outputs, and weak or inaccessible channels for citizens to challenge government decisions (Ahmad, 2026). These risks are structurally more acute in developing states, where institutional capacity, procurement maturity, data governance, and independent oversight are often uneven to begin with (Pokhare et al., 2026).

One specific and high-stakes test of this conditional promise concerns corruption. Adobor and Yawson (2023) develop a conceptual framework for how AI can support anti-corruption efforts in emerging economies, arguing that machine learning tools applied to procurement records, tax filings, and asset declarations can detect the statistical anomalies, unusual bidding patterns, related-party transactions, and irregular disbursement timing, that characterise many forms of public corruption, in principle at a scale and consistency that manual audit cannot match. Their framework is explicit, however, that this promise is conditional on exactly the institutional prerequisites this review is concerned with: without independent oversight bodies willing and able to act on AI-generated red flags, without data infrastructure clean enough to support reliable anomaly detection, and without protection for the officials who operate such systems from the political interference that corrupt networks have an incentive to exert, AI risks becoming a further layer of technical sophistication that corrupt actors adapt to rather than a genuine constraint on their behaviour. This conditionality mirrors, at the level of a single governance function, the broader argument this review develops about AI governance readiness generally.

Two small states recur throughout the digital government literature as reference points for how public institutions can build the capacity AI governance requires: Estonia, whose e-governance system is built on legally mandated data interoperability, and Rwanda, whose ICT-led development strategy allowed a post-conflict state to become one of Sub-Saharan Africa's highest-performing digital governments within two decades (Baguma, 2020; Espinosa et al., 2024). Both are frequently invoked as models for developing and post-conflict states more broadly, yet the literature treats them as embodying different institutional logics rather than a single replicable formula, a distinction this review treats as central rather than incidental.

This review asks four questions: what determines AI governance readiness in public-sector organisations; what specific evidence exists on AI's capacity to support corruption control, and under what institutional conditions; what, specifically, do the Estonian and Rwandan trajectories show about how readiness is built under different starting conditions; and what does the wider developing-country literature identify as the governance gaps still to be closed. It is written for public administrators, university researchers, and policy advisors in states, Somalia prominent among them, that are building digital and AI governance capacity largely from the ground up. The remainder of the review proceeds as follows. Section 2 sets out the methodology. Section 3 develops the readiness framework that organises the review. Section 4 examines AI and corruption control specifically. Section 5 compares the Estonian and Rwandan trajectories. Section 6 reviews the wider developing and post-conflict state literature. Section 7 discusses implications for Somalia, Section 8 sets out limitations and future directions, and Section 9 concludes.

2. Review Methodology

This is a narrative and integrative review, not a fully registered systematic review with independent dual-reviewer screening. Peer-reviewed articles, working papers, and conference proceedings published between 2017 and 2026 were located through academic literature search

using combinations of the terms "artificial intelligence governance," "AI readiness," "institutional capacity," "e-government," "digital transformation," "corruption," together with "developing countries," "Africa," "Estonia," and "Rwanda." Studies were included where they addressed AI or e-government governance capacity directly, either conceptually, empirically, or through single or comparative country case analysis, and excluded where AI was discussed only as a general policy aspiration without engagement with governance or institutional capacity specifically. Twenty six studies met the inclusion criteria. Of these, eight are quantitative or structural equation modelling studies of AI or e-government readiness, six are single or comparative country case studies of Estonia or Rwanda, five are systematic or PRISMA-guided reviews of developing-country AI governance, four are conceptual or framework-building papers, including the anti-corruption framework discussed in Section 4, and three are qualitative interview-based studies. Several of the studies retrieved apply the Technology–Organisation–Environment (TOE) framework independently of one another (Anomah, 2025; Duy et al., 2026; Pokhare et al., 2026), which is what makes it a useful organising structure for Section 3 rather than an analytical choice imposed on the literature from outside it. The corpus is weighted toward South and Southeast Asia and a small number of African states, a pattern that is itself part of the review's findings and is discussed explicitly in Sections 6 and 8.

3. Conceptualising AI Governance Readiness

A striking feature of the recent public-sector AI literature is how often independent studies, working in different countries and without apparent coordination, converge on the same three-part explanation for why some public organisations govern AI more effectively than others: their technological infrastructure, their organisational capacity, and the regulatory or environmental context they operate within (Anomah, 2025; Kampira et al., 2025; Pokhare et al., 2026).

3.1 Technological infrastructure

Anomah (2025), surveying 332 auditors, IT professionals, and public financial managers in Ghana's public audit institutions using partial least squares structural equation modelling, finds that technological infrastructure is the strongest single predictor of AI readiness, ahead of organisational and environmental factors. The same emphasis recurs in the systematic review by Kampira et al. (2025), which identifies technology and infrastructure development as one of seven domains developing countries must strengthen before e-government and AI integration moves from a theorised to an actual state.

3.2 Organisational capacity

Organisational capacity, meaning leadership, skills, budget, and culture, is treated as equally decisive but harder to build quickly. Duy et al. (2026), based on twenty-five semi-structured interviews with Vietnamese local government officials, describe an AI accountability vacuum in which generative AI is adopted informally and voluntarily by civil servants even as formal institutional capacity, absent strategies, limited budgets, weak system integration, inadequate training, prevents its sanctioned use, producing a state the authors term governance paralysis: AI is simultaneously encouraged from below and discouraged by the absence of rules from above. Phan et al. (2026), surveying 225 senior managers in Vietnamese public organisations, find that environmental context shapes AI capacity, which in turn affects organisational creativity and performance, but that AI capacity is not yet consistently translated into AI informed decision-making, evidence, again, that capacity building and actual governance practice move at different speeds. Mensah and Khan (2026) add a citizen-facing dimension to this organisational picture. Surveying 478 respondents on their acceptance of AI-powered e-government services in Ghana using the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology,

they find that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, and security and privacy concerns are the strongest drivers of citizen acceptance, and, more distinctively, that institutional capacity moderates the relationship between these factors and acceptance: the same AI service is more readily accepted by citizens when the implementing institution is perceived as capable and well governed, and less readily accepted, even when the technology itself performs well, when institutional capacity is perceived as weak. This finding extends the organisational capacity argument beyond internal government operations to the demand side of digital government, suggesting that citizen trust in AI-enabled public services is not simply a function of service quality but is filtered through prior beliefs about the competence of the institution delivering it.

3.3 Regulatory and environmental context

The third dimension, legal frameworks, independent oversight, and citizen expectations, is where the literature identifies the sharpest gap between developed and developing administrations. Nahar (2026), evaluating AI governance across seventy-four developing countries and more than fifty peer-reviewed studies published between 2019 and 2026, reports that seventy per cent of developing countries face regulatory fragmentation across multiple agencies and identifies thirty-four distinct governance gaps spanning institutional, technical, financial, human capital, and policy dimensions. The same study finds that governance-before-technology approaches, establishing rules before scaling deployment, reduce implementation problems by an estimated forty-two per cent relative to technology-first approaches, and proposes three governance tiers, Foundational, Emerging, and Advanced, matched to a country's institutional capacity, alongside South-South learning mechanisms between states at similar tiers.

3.4 Common barriers across readiness dimensions

Across the technological, organisational, and regulatory dimensions just discussed, several barriers recur regardless of which dimension a given study emphasises. Kampira et al. (2025) identify data quality and interoperability as a cross-cutting constraint: even where individual agencies hold relevant administrative data, that data is frequently held in incompatible formats across ministries, making the kind of integrated analysis AI applications depend on difficult to perform without prior investment in data standardisation, an investment that is rarely funded as its own line item because its benefits are diffuse across many later applications rather than attributable to any one of them. Pokhare et al. (2026) add a human capital constraint that compounds the data problem: many low-income country public sectors lack not only data scientists but the intermediate cadre of public servants able to translate a technical AI output into a decision a non-technical manager can act on, a gap that neither large-scale training programmes nor short-term technical assistance from international partners has, on the evidence reviewed, closed at scale. A third recurring barrier is procurement-related: Anomah (2025) notes that public procurement rules designed for conventional IT systems often struggle to evaluate AI vendors on criteria such as model explainability, bias testing, or ongoing retraining obligations, criteria that fall outside standard technical specification templates, which in practice pushes agencies toward whichever vendor presents the most reassuring narrative rather than the most rigorously evaluated system. These barriers help explain why the readiness gap between advanced and developing administrations, documented by Nahar (2026) in Section 3.3, persists even where individual governments express strong political will to adopt AI.

4. AI and Public Sector Corruption Control

Corruption control is worth treating as a distinct application domain rather than folding it into the general efficiency case for AI adoption, because the institutional preconditions for it to

work safely and effectively are unusually explicit in the literature. Adobor and Yawson (2023) organise the potential contribution of AI to anti-corruption work around three functions: detection, through anomaly and pattern recognition in procurement, tax, and disbursement data; prediction, through risk scoring that flags transactions or officials for closer scrutiny before losses occur rather than after; and transparency, through natural language processing tools that can review large volumes of public contracts and disclosure filings for inconsistency or omission at a scale no manual audit team could match. They are careful to note that each of these functions depends on a precondition that many developing-state institutions do not yet meet: detection requires digitised, reasonably clean administrative data; prediction requires an oversight body both willing and empowered to act on model outputs rather than treat them as advisory; and transparency tools are only as useful as the disclosure regime that determines what data becomes available to analyse in the first place. Where these preconditions are absent, the authors argue, AI risks either producing outputs that are ignored by exactly the political actors with an interest in ignoring them, or displacing corrupt practices into forms less visible to the models being used, rather than reducing corruption overall.

This conditional framing is consistent with the broader readiness literature reviewed in Section 3. Just as Anomah (2025) finds technological infrastructure to be a necessary but not sufficient predictor of general AI readiness, Adobor and Yawson (2023) find that anti-corruption specific AI tools are necessary but not sufficient to reduce corruption absent the organisational will and regulatory mandate to act on what those tools reveal. For a post-conflict state such as Somalia, where public financial management systems are still being rebuilt and where corruption risk in public procurement and aid disbursement is widely documented in the policy literature, this conditionality carries a direct and cautionary implication, developed further in Section 7: an AI-enabled anti-corruption tool introduced ahead of the oversight capacity needed to act on its findings may generate credible-sounding evidence of misconduct that nonetheless goes unaddressed, an outcome that could plausibly damage rather than build public trust in both the technology and the institution deploying it.

5. Two Governance Trajectories: Estonia and Rwanda

The Estonian and Rwandan cases recur throughout this literature not because they followed the same path but because they illustrate two different ones, each instructive for different reasons to a post-conflict, developing state such as Somalia.

5.1 Estonia: legally mandated interoperability

Estonia's digital government rests on X-Road, a decentralised data exchange layer that allows public and private databases to interoperate without a single centralised repository, underpinned by the Digital Signatures Act, a Personal Data Protection Act aligned with the EU's GDPR, and a digital identity system used across public services (Makuch-Fedorkova et al., 2025; Barde, 2024; Nguyen, 2025; Vatsa et al., 2021). Espinosa et al. (2024), analysing Estonia through a Weberian bureaucracy lens, argue that the country's e-government success rests on two institutions in particular: secure property rights, and governance rules built around transparency, trust, and security. Sarjito et al. (2026), comparing Estonia's framework to Indonesia's much larger and more decentralised digital governance reform, reach a pointed conclusion: Estonia's performance is underpinned not by technological sophistication but by institutional coherence, legally mandated interoperability, a universal digital identity system, and transparent accountability mechanisms, a finding that cautions against reading Estonia's success as primarily a story about technology choice. Pappel et al. (2021), reporting on an eighteen-year action research collaboration with 126 of Estonia's local governments, more than half the country's total, describe this as a reusable model, e-LocGov, built on four sequential building blocks: state readiness, local government readiness, transition and implementation,

and ongoing analysis and assessment, a sequencing that treats readiness itself as something built deliberately over years rather than assumed (see also Abderrazak, 2025).

5.2 Rwanda: ICT-led policy leapfrogging

Rwanda's trajectory begins from a different starting point and follows a different logic. Aubert (2018) frames Rwanda's digital and innovation policy explicitly against the backdrop of post-genocide reconstruction after 1994, arguing that the government's choice to make information and communication technology the cornerstone of national development, rather than a sector among others, was itself a deliberate leapfrogging strategy for a state rebuilding administrative capacity with limited natural resource endowment. Baguma (2020) documents the institutional machinery this produced: liberalisation of the telecom sector, new laws governing electronic transactions, signatures, and data protection, and the establishment of dedicated regulatory institutions, the Rwanda Utilities and Regulatory Agency and the Rwanda Information Society Authority, that took Rwanda from a low base to the second- or third-best-performing ICT country in Sub-Saharan Africa within roughly a decade. Nsengimana (2017), writing from a ministerial vantage point, frames Rwanda's approach to privacy protection as continuous with pre-colonial social values around personal information rather than as an imported regulatory template, and situates the country's data protection posture within the continent-wide Smart Africa initiative it has since helped lead. Dinika (2023) extends the picture to human capital policy, documenting more than twenty digital incubators and hubs in Kigali built to prepare young Rwandans for a digitalising labour market, evidence that the country's ICT-led strategy was paired deliberately with workforce development rather than treated as an infrastructure project alone.

Read together, the two cases suggest that AI governance readiness can be built from either legal institutional coherence (Estonia) or from centralised, ICT-prioritising policy leadership operating under resource constraint (Rwanda), but in both cases, deliberately and over an extended period, not as a by-product of technology procurement.

6. AI Governance in Developing and Post-Conflict States: Gaps and Emerging Models

Beyond the Estonian and Rwandan cases, a wider literature examines AI governance capacity across developing and post-conflict states more generally, and it is here that the gaps most relevant to Somalia become visible. Pokhare et al. (2026), synthesising 146 sources on AI in low-income country public sectors, identify four opportunity domains, administrative efficiency, service delivery, decision support, and integrity monitoring, set against constraints in data availability, infrastructure reliability, skills, procurement capacity, and regulatory gaps, and argue that institutional readiness mediates whether AI initiatives generate public value or amplify governance risk. Plantinga et al. (2024), analysing policy and legislation across twelve African countries, argue for explicit policy learning: rather than designing AI-specific rules from scratch, governments can adapt existing governance capabilities, model management procedures already used in banking supervision, air quality assessment, or electronic transactions law, to AI-related risks, since the accountability and oversight mechanisms those sectors already use are more mature than anything built for AI specifically.

Tohopi et al. (2025), conducting a PRISMA-guided systematic review of forty-five studies on Indonesia's public governance, find that while opportunities in bureaucratic efficiency, transparency, and citizen-centric services are real, developing-country governance mechanisms remain largely normative and under-implemented compared with the enforceable technical standards and independent oversight found in developed administrations, a gap they address by proposing a governance checklist built around multi-level accountability, lifecycle monitoring, algorithmic audits, and participatory oversight. Kampira et al. (2025) reach a structurally similar conclusion from a different literature base, arguing that e-government and

AI integration in developing countries remains largely in a potential state, with benefits theorised but not yet realised, pending investment across the seven capacity domains their review identifies.

Figure 1

Institutional capacity framework for AI governance in public administration

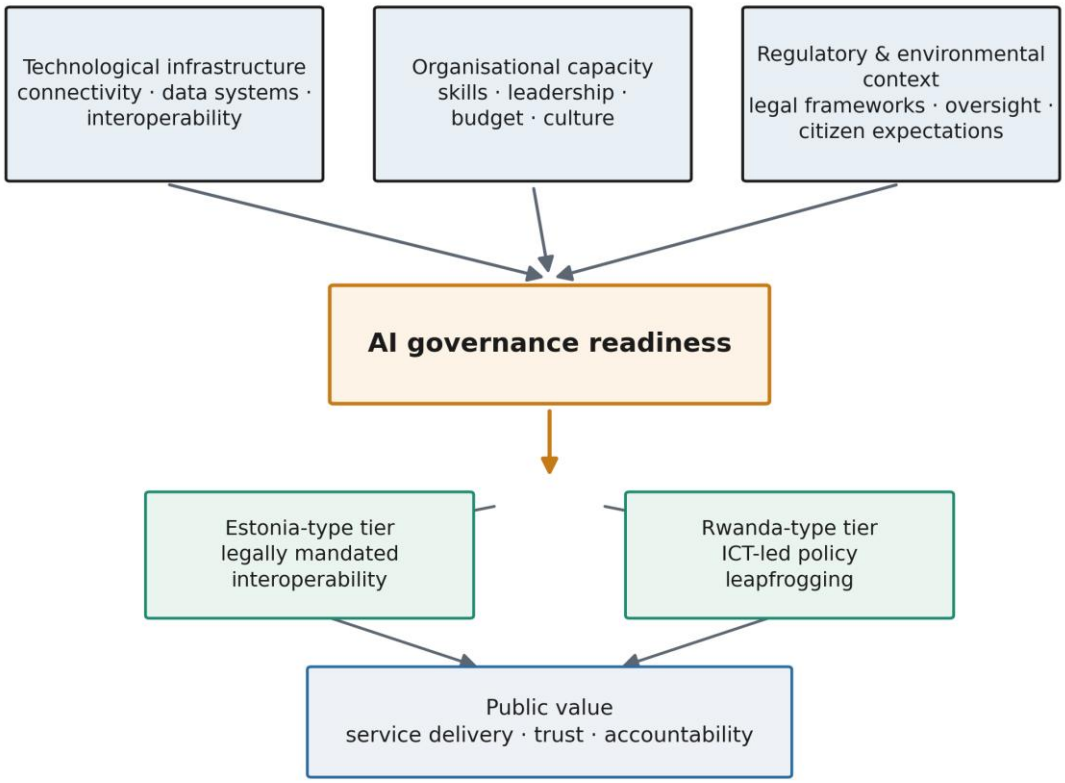


Figure 1. Institutional capacity framework for AI governance in public administration. Technological, organisational, and regulatory or environmental dimensions jointly determine AI governance readiness, which in turn shapes whether a state follows an Estonia-type (legally mandated interoperability) or Rwanda-type (ICT-led policy leapfrogging) path to public value, and whether AI applications such as corruption control succeed or are neutralised by weak oversight capacity.

Table 1 summarises twelve of the twenty-six studies reviewed, spanning the readiness framework, corruption control, Estonian, and Rwandan/African strands discussed above.

Study	Context / Scope	Focus	Key Contribution
Anomah, 2025	Ghana (public audit institutions, PLS-SEM, n = 332)	TOE and Institutional Theory readiness	Technological infrastructure is the strongest predictor of AI readiness; readiness mediates institutional and technological effects on adoption intention
Kampira et al., 2025	Developing countries (PRISMA systematic review)	E-government/AI integration capacity	Identifies seven capacity domains needed to move AI-enabled e-government from a potential to an actual state

Nahar, 2026	74 developing countries (50+ studies, 2019-2026)	AI governance capacity	70% face regulatory fragmentation; governance-before-technology sequencing cuts implementation problems by 42%; proposes three governance tiers
Pokhare et al., 2026	Low-income countries (146 sources)	Review of AI governance pathways	Institutional readiness, infrastructure, data maturity, human capital, regulatory capacity, mediates whether AI generates public value or risk
Adobor & Yawson, 2023	Emerging economies (conceptual framework)	AI and anti-corruption	AI can support detection, prediction, and transparency in corruption control, but only where oversight capacity and clean data already exist
Mensah & Khan, 2026	Ghana (UTAUT survey, n = 478)	Citizen acceptance of AI-powered e-government	Institutional capacity moderates the effect of service quality factors on citizen acceptance of AI-enabled public services
Ahmad, 2026	Cross-national policy analysis	Risk-based AI regulatory model	Proposes low/medium/high-risk classification with a phased implementation roadmap for resource-constrained administrations
Plantinga et al., 2024	12 African countries	Responsible AI policy learning	Identifies existing governance capabilities in banking, air-quality, and e-transaction law adaptable for AI oversight
Espinosa et al., 2024	Estonia	E-government as development strategy	Secure property rights and transparency-trust-security institutions explain e-government's developmental effect
Pappel et al., 2021	Estonia (126 local governments, action research)	e-LocGov model	Four sequential building blocks: state readiness, local readiness, transition/implementation, assessment
Sarjito et al., 2026	Indonesia compared with Estonia	Comparative digital governance reform	Estonia's performance rests on institutional coherence and legal interoperability, not technological sophistication alone
Baguma, 2020	Rwanda	ICT-led development policy	Pro-ICT public policy (RURA, RISA) made Rwanda

			a top-tier ICT performer in Sub-Saharan Africa

7. Discussion: Implications for Somalia

Somalia shares Rwanda's starting condition more closely than Estonia's: a post-conflict state rebuilding public administration with limited legacy infrastructure and a correspondingly open field for policy choice. The Rwandan case suggests that this condition is not purely a disadvantage. Aubert (2018) frames Rwanda's ICT-led strategy as leapfrogging precisely because reconstruction removed path dependency on legacy analogue systems that more established administrations must first dismantle. What the Rwandan case also makes clear, however, is that leapfrogging was not spontaneous: it required a centralised, ICT-prioritising policy choice sustained over roughly two decades, dedicated regulatory institutions built specifically for the purpose, and parallel investment in digital skills infrastructure such as Kigali's incubator network (Baguma, 2020; Dinika, 2023).

The Nahar (2026) finding that governance-before-technology sequencing reduces implementation problems by roughly forty-two per cent relative to technology-first approaches is directly relevant to how Somali public institutions should sequence AI adoption: establishing basic rules for data protection, algorithmic accountability, and citizen redress before, rather than after, AI tools are procured and deployed. The corruption control literature reviewed in Section 4 sharpens this sequencing argument considerably. If, as Adobor and Yawson (2023) find, an AI anti-corruption tool is only as effective as the oversight capacity available to act on it, then a Somali institution considering such a tool, for example in customs administration or aid disbursement, would be well advised to first assess and, where necessary, strengthen the relevant oversight body's independence and enforcement authority, rather than treating procurement of the analytical tool itself as the primary governance milestone. The Mensah and Khan (2026) finding that citizen acceptance of AI-enabled public services is moderated by perceived institutional capacity adds a further, complementary consideration: a Somali public agency introducing an AI-enabled service before it has established a track record of institutional competence in the eyes of citizens may find uptake constrained regardless of the service's technical quality, suggesting that early AI deployments might usefully be paired with, or even follow, visible investments in more conventional institutional reliability.

The Plantinga et al. (2024) argument for policy learning, adapting existing sector governance rather than writing AI rules from a blank page, is similarly actionable: Somalia's telecommunications and mobile money regulatory experience, discussed further in the companion review of AI governance in the telecommunications sector, is an existing governance capability that could plausibly be extended to AI oversight rather than duplicated. As in the Estonian and Rwandan cases, the literature reviewed here converges on a single point: readiness is built deliberately, through institutions established for the purpose, not assumed as a by-product of acquiring the technology itself.

7.1 Practical recommendations for Somali public institutions

Three sequencing steps follow from the evidence reviewed above. First, before procuring any AI-enabled anti-corruption or audit tool, the responsible Somali institution should confirm, and where necessary first establish, that an oversight body exists with both the legal authority and the political protection to act on the tool's findings, following the conditionality Adobor and Yawson (2023) identify as decisive; procuring the analytical capability before the enforcement authority risks the credibility damage discussed in Section 4. Second, given the Mensah and Khan (2026) finding that citizen acceptance of AI-enabled services depends on perceived institutional capacity, agencies introducing citizen-facing AI tools, for instance in tax filing or

civil registration, should consider pairing the launch with visible, independently verifiable improvements in ordinary service reliability, so that the AI feature is encountered by citizens as an extension of a credible institution rather than as a substitute for one. Third, following the e-LocGov sequencing logic documented by Pappel et al. (2021) for Estonia, Somali federal and state institutions could benefit from a staged readiness assessment, state-level readiness, then institutional readiness, then a bounded pilot, then evaluation, before any AI system is scaled beyond a single pilot site, rather than moving directly from a successful pilot to nationwide deployment.

8. Limitations and Future Research Directions

This review is narrative rather than a formally registered systematic review, and its search strategy, while applied consistently, was not designed for exhaustive multi-database coverage with independent dual-reviewer screening. It also draws on a literature still concentrated in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and a handful of African states, Ghana, Indonesia, Vietnam prominently, with the Horn of Africa, Somalia included, essentially unrepresented in the primary studies reviewed here, a gap the underlying Nahar (2026) and Pokhare et al. (2026) reviews note for developing countries generally. A further limitation specific to Section 4 is that the Adobor and Yawson (2023) framework is conceptual rather than tested against a documented case of AI-assisted anti-corruption enforcement in a low-income or fragile state, so its practical claims, while plausible and consistent with the wider readiness literature, remain to be validated empirically.

Four directions follow directly from the gaps identified. First, the TOE-based readiness instruments validated in Ghana (Anomah, 2025) and Vietnam (Duy et al., 2026; Phan et al., 2026) should be adapted and tested in Somali public institutions, where no equivalent readiness assessment currently exists in the peer-reviewed literature. Second, the three-tier governance model proposed by Nahar (2026), Foundational, Emerging, Advanced, offers a concrete framework against which Somali federal and state institutions could be benchmarked, and against which South-South learning from Rwanda specifically, given the shared post-conflict starting point, could be structured rather than left informal. Third, empirical case studies of how Somali regulatory institutions such as those governing mobile money and telecommunications, among the country's most mature regulatory domains, might be extended to AI oversight would test directly the policy learning argument advanced by Plantinga et al. (2024). Fourth, given the conditional claims reviewed in Section 4, a documented pilot study of an AI-assisted anti-corruption or audit tool in a Somali public institution, evaluated explicitly against the oversight capacity preconditions Adobor and Yawson (2023) specify, would make a distinctive contribution to a literature that is, on this specific application, still almost entirely conceptual.

9. Conclusion

AI governance readiness in the public sector is not primarily a function of the technology a government acquires but of the institutional capacity, technological, organisational, and regulatory, it builds to govern that technology's use. Estonia and Rwanda, despite following different paths to that capacity, share the underlying pattern the wider developing-country literature identifies: readiness is built deliberately, sequenced ahead of large-scale deployment, and sustained through dedicated institutions rather than assumed to follow automatically from technology adoption. The corruption control literature reviewed in this article makes the same point in sharper relief for a single, high-stakes governance function: AI can plausibly strengthen detection, prediction, and transparency in public administration, but only where independent oversight, clean data, and institutional will to act already exist, conditions that are themselves the product of the same deliberate institution building this review documents for

AI governance generally. For Somalia, a post-conflict state with Rwanda's starting conditions but without yet a documented AI governance strategy of its own, the task is to make that same deliberate institutional choice, informed by evidence this review shows is available from comparable states but not yet generated locally.

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