

# African Development Bank



## *Economic Research Working Paper Series*

### **Re-Orienting Public Management in Africa: Selected Issues and Some Country Experiences**

**Ladipo Adamolekun  
Independent Scholar**

**Economic Research Working Paper  
No 81 (November 2005)**

The views and interpretations in this paper are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the African Development Bank.

Copyright© 2005  
African Development Bank

African Development Bank  
Angle des trois rues: Avenue du Ghana, Rue Pierre de Coubertin, Rue Hedi Nourira  
BP. 323  
1002 Tunis Belvedere  
Tunisia  
TEL: (+216) 71 333 511 / 7110 3450  
FAX: (+216) 71 351 933  
E-MAIL: [afdb@afdb.org](mailto:afdb@afdb.org)

## **Rights and Permissions**

All rights reserved.

The text and data in this publication may be reproduced as long as the source is cited.  
Reproductions for commercial purposes are forbidden.

The African Development Bank disseminates the findings of work in progress to encourage the exchange of ideas about economic research and policy issues in Africa. Our main objective is to disseminate findings quickly, so we compromise and bear with presentations that are not fully polished. The papers are signed by the author(s) and should be cited and referred accordingly. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this paper are entirely those of the author(s). They do not necessarily represent the view of the African Development Bank, its Board of Directors, or the countries they represent.

Working Papers are available online at <http://www.afdb.org/>

# Re-Orienting Public Management in Africa: Selected Issues and Some Country Experiences

Ladipo Adamolekun \*

## Abstract

The objective of this paper is to examine some aspects of the efforts aimed at re-orienting public management in Africa since the early 1990s. The paper begins with a review of the background to the re-orientation exercise: the decline of the public administration systems in a majority of countries that was accompanied, in some cases, with the collapse of the state. In the second chapter, some selected issues in re-orienting public management are examined. One of the selected issues, the politics and administration nexus, which is at the heart of the conduct of government business, is further examined in depth in the third chapter. The fourth chapter is devoted to specific country experiences of good and bad practices, including attention to key lessons from each case. The fifth and final chapter contain first a brief reflection on how countries can achieve better and sustainable public management reform results, and second, some thoughts on the desirability of introducing and implementing an “African administrative space” within the framework of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

## Résumé

L’objectif de ce document est d’examiner certains aspects des efforts consentis depuis le début des années 90 pour réorienter la gestion publique en Afrique. Il commence par un examen du contexte global de l’exercice de réorientation : le déclin des systèmes d’administration publique dans la majorité des pays qui a été accompagné, dans certains cas, de l’effondrement de l’état. Le deuxième chapitre passe en revue certaines questions choisies de réorientation de la gestion publique. L’une de ces questions, le couple politique-administration, qui est au cœur de la gestion des activités gouvernementales, est examiné à fond dans le troisième chapitre. Le quatrième chapitre est consacré aux expériences nationales spécifiques de bonnes et mauvaises pratiques, y compris l’intérêt accordé aux enseignements tirés de chaque cas. Le cinquième et dernier chapitre contient une brève réflexion sur la manière dont les pays peuvent obtenir des résultats meilleurs et durables en ce qui concerne la réforme de la gestion publique, ainsi que certaines réflexions sur l’opportunité d’introduire et de mettre en œuvre un « espace administratif africain » dans le cadre du Nouveau partenariat pour le développement de l’Afrique (NEPAD).

---

\* Independent Scholar and Professor of Management (part-time) in the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria. I would like to acknowledge, with gratitude, the useful discussions I had with Professor Dele Olowu, Principal Governance Specialist, Africa Development Bank, and Dr. Mouftaou Laleye, Director, Policy Research Unit, National Assembly, Porto Novo, Benin Republic, on some of the issues examined in this paper. They also drew my attention to some useful references. This paper has been commissioned by the African Development Bank as a Background Paper for the African Development Report 2005. Comments are welcome; please send any communication directly to the author: [dipo7k@yahoo.com](mailto:dipo7k@yahoo.com).

## **Chapter 1: Background – The Decline of Public Administration Systems**

At independence, most countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) inherited public administration (PA) systems that performed two key functions of a modern state fairly satisfactorily: assuring the continuity of the state and maintaining law and order within each country's territorial areas. Most countries moved quickly to recruit and train nationals to replace the departing colonial officials and to assure the steady supply of trained men and women for their expanding public services. There was also a re-orientation of the service delivery function of the PA from the interests of the colonial countries to those of the new states. In many cases, this meant more rapid expansion of the provision of services in agriculture, the social sector, and infrastructure than was the case during the preceding decades of colonial rule. The functions of the public services were further expanded through the establishment of many public enterprises that were operated with varying degrees of autonomy from the civil services that were at the heart of the machinery of government in each country. Another significant re-orientation was making the PA accountable to national political leaders and the public instead of the erstwhile accountability to colonial masters. In general, the momentum for nurturing a development-oriented PA was maintained up to the mid-1970s in most countries.<sup>1</sup>

At different times from the late 1970s through the 1980s, the rot set in and a decline of the PA system in many SSA countries became noticeable. Significantly, the onset of the decline coincided with a steady collapse of commodity prices and the weakening of the economies of many countries (the exceptions were the mineral producing countries), widespread political instability, and the accession to power of political leaders (many of them military officers) who undermined rather than nurtured PA institutions. (Other public sector institutions suffered the same fate, notably universities). By the late 1980s, there was widespread acknowledgment of a development crisis in SSA and the decline of the PA in the majority of the countries was just one of the manifestations, albeit a critical one, given its responsibility for the important state functions mentioned above. The main dimensions of the development crisis were summarized by the World Bank (1989) as follows:

A root cause of weak economic performance in the past has been the failure of public institutions. Private sector initiative and market mechanisms are important, but they must go hand-in-hand with good governance – a public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable, and an administration that is accountable to its public. And a better balance is needed between the government and the governed. [...] Underlying the litany of Africa's development problems is a crisis of governance. By governance is meant the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs. Because countervailing power has been lacking, state officials in many countries have served their own interests without fear of being called to account... Politics becomes personalized, and patronage becomes

---

<sup>1</sup> One notable exception was Congo-Kinshasa (later re-named Zaire and now called Democratic Republic of Congo). It inherited a very weak public administration that was unable to help maintain the continuity of the state when the country was enveloped in political crisis within months of attaining its independence in 1960. It was a case of failed decolonization, in which the departing colonial power is alleged to have played a key role.

essential to maintain power. The leadership assumes broad discretionary authority and loses legitimacy. Information is controlled, and voluntary associations are co-opted or disbanded. This environment cannot readily support a dynamic economy.

During the early 1990s, events in SSA evolved in two diametrically opposed directions: on the one hand, the governance crisis deepened in a few states, culminating in the phenomenon of failed states (for example, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia) or failing states (for example, Angola, Burundi, Sudan, and Zaire), suffering from civil strife or civil wars of varying magnitude; on the other hand, many states were joining the worldwide waves of democratization and economic liberalization. (The latter is also referred to as the installation of market-friendly economies). Significantly, the two waves broadly relate to the interlinked problems of bad governance and poor economic performance highlighted in the two extracts cited above. Given the critical functions that a PA system performs in the modern state as mentioned in the opening paragraph and echoed in one of the two extracts, it is not surprising that reversing its decline was one of the priority actions of the countries that embraced both democratization and economic liberalization.

## **Chapter 2: Re-Orienting Public Management – Selected Issues**

### **2.1 Context of Public Management Reforms**

As mentioned above, the public management reforms that were launched in many African countries in the early 1990s and whose implementation continues to the present were linked to their simultaneous embrace of democratization and market economies (commonly used as synonym of economic liberalization). The following are the main features of the new political and economic contexts of public management reforms.

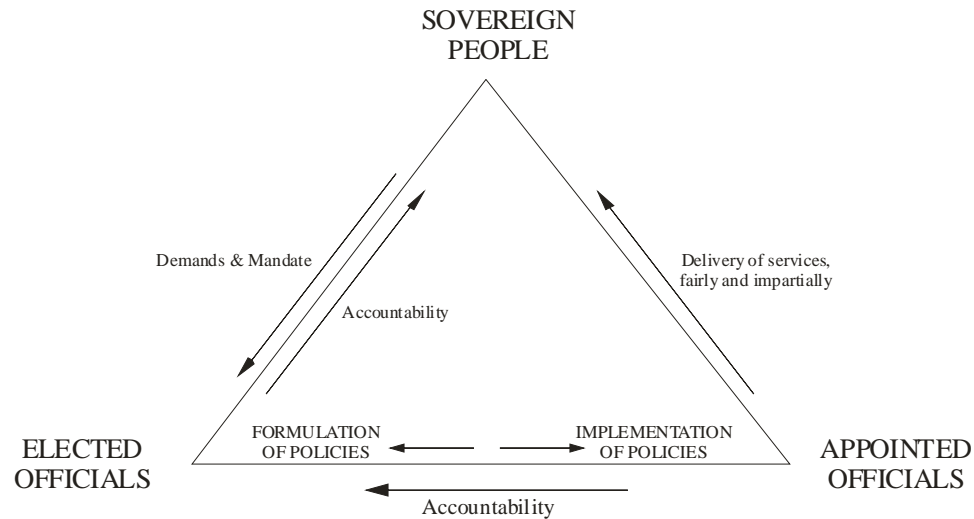
#### ***2.1.a. Political context***

Adoption of a democratic governmental system has three main implications for public administration. First, the appointed officials who run the public administration system are accountable to elected officials who derive their mandate to govern from the sovereign people. The key function that links the two groups of officials together are the formulation and implementation of public policies. Normally, elected officials determine policies that are expected to reflect the public's demands while the elected officials are to faithfully implement the policies whose results are in the form of services delivered to the public. This distinction between the responsibility of elected officials for policy formulation and that of appointed officials for policy implementation is not water-tight: appointed officials provide inputs into policy formulation while elected officials, both in the executive arm of government and in the legislative arm, are involved in policy implementation, notably in its monitoring and evaluation.

A second implication of democratic politics for public administration is the requirement that public servants should be politically neutral (or apolitical). One dimension to political neutrality is the need to ensure that public officials, who would be in permanent employment, would be available to serve successive groups of elected governments that would emerge from competitive free and fair elections. (An incumbent government's

policies might differ in significant respects from that of its successor). A second dimension to political neutrality is the need for public servants to treat all citizens fairly and impartially (regardless of their differing partisan political viewpoints) in the provision of services; see Diagram 1.

**Diagram 1: Triad Representing Relationships of Politicians, Administrators and the Public**



**Notes to Diagram 1:** The triad that represents the relationships of politicians, administrators and the public has four key dimensions:

- (i) public-politician (gives mandate, accompanied by demands),
- (ii) politician-administrator (determines policies for administrator to implement and holds him/her accountable for same),
- (iii) administrator-public (translates policies into goods and services for the public and treats all citizens fairly and impartially), and
- (iv) public-politician-administrator-public (complex web of relationships that could also operate in the reverse direction).

The third implication of democratic politics for public administration that emerged only in the last half century in most of the old democracies and assumed prominence in all democracies, old and new, since the 1990s is the need for public participation in both the determination of policies and in their implementation. These three concepts – *accountability, political neutrality and participation* – are reflected in varying degrees in the public management reforms introduced in many SSA countries since the early 1990s.

**2.1.b. Economic context**

The major consequence of the adoption of a market economy by many African countries in the early 1990s was the need for a new balance in the respective roles of the state and market in running national economies. In almost every case, it meant the abandonment of the idea of the state as the “engine of growth” (inherited from the former colonial rulers), and transmuted into a “socialist path” to development (for example, Guinea and Tanzania) or a “mixed economy” with the state controlling the “commanding heights”

(for example, Nigeria). Under the new state-market balance, the state is to play a reduced role in national economic management and in some countries, there is an explicit shift from state-led growth to private sector-led growth. The state is to provide an enabling environment for private sector economic activities by implementing appropriate economic policy reforms and providing the necessary regulatory framework. It is also expected to provide some of the social and physical infrastructure, sometimes in partnership with the private sector. A major indication of the changes is the privatization of erstwhile public enterprises (PEs) or state-owned enterprises (SOEs) that has been taking place in many SSA countries. As is the case with the new political context, the developments associated with the new economic context are reflected in varying degrees in the public management reforms introduced in many SSA countries since the early 1990s. There is another politico-economic international trend to which SSA countries have also had to adjust since the 1990s: globalization. While globalization pre-dated the new wave of democratization of the early 1990s, it assumed a much higher profile than ever before during that decade and has continued to influence both political and economic developments in all modern states. The consequences of globalization for public management reform efforts will also be considered in this paper.

## **2.2 Public Management Reforms at the Central Government Level**

The two main elements of public management reforms at the central government level are civil service reforms and public enterprise reforms. The section on civil service reforms reviews first some major influences for civil service reforms (drawing partly on Adamolekun, 1999 and 2002) and provides then an assessment of civil service reforms in Africa. The section on public enterprise reforms draws partly on Laleye (1999).

### ***2.2.a. Civil service reforms***

The most critical public administration institution at the central government level is the civil service and it was logical that it was a major focus of attention in the public management reforms launched in the 1990s in most SSA countries. In general, each country with a public management reform program sought to rehabilitate its civil service system. Regardless of whether the reform program was home grown or introduced within the context of structural adjustment programs financed by multilateral and bilateral donors, they had two common influences. First, there was the influence of some elements of the “Weberian model” of career civil service inherited by the countries at independence that still had relevance within the new political and economic contexts. The idea of a body of permanent officials appointed to assist successive political executive teams in formulating and implementing governmental policies as mentioned in the section on “political context” above is a good example. Three other elements of the Weberian model that have had continued relevance are the concept of political neutrality (for the two reasons highlighted in the section on the political context), the principle of recruitment on merit and an emphasis on efficiency in the conduct of government business.

The problems that needed to be fixed in these areas were the significant modifications that took place in the 1970s and 1980s (decades of crises in public administration

systems) in many SSA countries: meritocracy was diluted in varying degrees (amounting to abandonment in a few cases) and politicization was rampant (in the name of one party ideology or patronage politics under civilian and military rulers). Tackling these problems was a tough challenge in itself but it was made more difficult by the need to simultaneously cope with the demands of another influence, the international public sector modernization movement launched in some industrialized countries in the 1980s (notably Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and United States) called the “new public management (NPM). Drawing from public choice theory, from the new institutional economics, and from recent management theories (especially business motivation theories), the NPM seeks to apply market principles to governmental administration, with an emphasis on competition, contracting, and customer orientation. It also emphasizes merit-based recruitment and promotion and increased autonomy for managers (“letting managers manage”) with corresponding responsibility, performance-related pay, continuous skills development and upgrading. There is also an emphasis on performance measurement, with particular attention to the delivery of services to the public.

With the advantage of hindsight, one can now assert that public management reform programs in SSA countries that sought to simultaneously fix the problems of the elements of the Weberian model that were still relevant to the political and economic contexts of the early 1990s whilst introducing elements borrowed from NPM were over-ambitious. The sequencing in the older democracies (who constitute the majority of the membership of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD) is that the Weberian model had been in operation for close to a century in most cases before NPM was introduced. It is also important to stress that the social, political and economic factors that underpinned the public management institutions in these OECD countries when NPM was introduced in the 1980s and 1990s were vastly different from those in all the SSA countries: good performing economies that could finance the institutions; well functioning political systems, including respect for the rule of law; and well developed educational systems that provided both trained manpower and fairly enlightened citizenry.

Drawing on three existing assessments of civil service rehabilitation efforts in 29 SSA countries, i.e., Adamolekun (1999), Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (2002), and Levy and Kpundeh (2004), Table 1 divides the countries into four groups (though none of these three assessments have used the suggested four-part categorization).

The first group comprises a few countries where the public administration decline summarized in Chapter 1 did not take place because the inherited tradition of merit-based and politically neutral civil service system was maintained and nurtured (for example, Botswana and Mauritius).<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Up to 1990, Namibia and South Africa were one country under the infamous apartheid system. Because of its racial exclusion policy, the similarities in institutional capacity, socio-economic development between it and Botswana and Mauritius cannot be described as virtuous. However, post-independent Namibia and post-apartheid South Africa qualify to be in the same category as Botswana and Mauritius.

**Table 1: Classification of Countries by Levels of Civil Service Rehabilitation Efforts**

<b>A. Advanced Reformers (“virtuous cycle”)</b>	<b>B. Committed Reformers</b>	<b>C. Hesitant Reformers</b>	<b>D. Beginners and Non-starters (“vicious cycle”)</b>
Botswana	Benin	Cote d’Ivoire	Democratic Republic of Congo
Mauritius	Burkina Faso	Gabon	Burundi
Namibia	Ethiopia	Guinea	Central Africa Republic
South Africa	Ghana	Nigeria	Liberia
	Kenya	Togo	Sierra Leone
	Mali	Zimbabwe	Somalia
	Mauritania		Sudan
	Rwanda		
	Senegal		
	Tanzania		
	Uganda		
	Zambia		

**Public Management Reform Continuum**



**Notes to Table 1:**

1. This categorization is a snapshot that represents overall position of countries during the entire 15-odd years covered in the review, especially the last half-dozen years. A categorization of the same countries for 1995 and 1999 will show different placements for several countries in B and C including Rwanda that would have been in category D in 1995. The placement of countries in Groups A and D would have remained unchanged.
2. Information on the countries provided as examples is based partly on assessments provided in the three sources cited, and partly on the author’s first-hand observations during professional visits to all but one of the countries in Groups A, B, and C between 1990 and 2004.

The same countries made reasonable progress in socio-economic development and were, therefore, able to finance the cost of nurturing their civil service systems: providing decent pay levels for officials; funding educational institutions at fairly adequate levels to assure supply of trained manpower (expatriate technical assistants paid by the government were recruited to fill gaps in declining numbers); and progressively consolidating democratic political culture, including respect for the rule of law, thereby

providing an enabling governance environment that helped retention of trained national experts and encouraged both domestic and foreign investment that contributed to economic growth. In a sense, these developments constitute a kind of *virtuous cycle*. Namibia and South Africa would qualify to be included in this group of countries. In both Botswana and South Africa, the nurturing of a career civil service remains a priority of the governments even when a dose of NPM-style contract appointment was introduced in the late 1990s for the chief administrative heads of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) of the central government. The governments reacted to a new reality in which the fairly decent pay for qualified and experienced senior administrative and professional staffs in the civil service was lagging behind pay levels for comparable staffs in the private sector with no prospect of the gap being closed in the short to the medium term. The Botswana experience is discussed in more details in Chapter 4.

The second group comprises countries that experienced a decline of their PA system but were seriously committed to rehabilitating their civil service systems by the early 1990s. They also embraced the democratization wave of the period but with significantly varying speed towards the establishment of democratic institutions and respect for the rule of law. Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Mauritania, Senegal, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia belong to this category of countries. Because of the strong commitment to reform in these countries, both bilateral and multilateral donor agencies accepted to provide assistance. However, this external support came with what amounted to an imposed sequencing in civil service rehabilitation. Without exception, all the countries were adversely affected by the economic decline that was in varying degrees of intensity in the 1970s and 1980s. In this circumstance, they agreed with their external helpers to adopt and implement structural adjustment programs that required reducing the burden of civil service wage bill on the budget. This was an explicit condition for financial support from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank – and the support of these institutions was almost always a precondition for access to support from the other donors. In practical terms, attention was focused on civil service staff reduction, freezing of new recruitments, and removal of “ghost workers” with a view to reducing the size of the civil service wage bill. Only modest results were achieved: some retrenched workers returned through revolving doors; some new appointments had to be made to some essential services (notably in the social sector); and in most cases the largest numbers of retrenched staff were from the lower pay levels, yielding only small savings.

While none of these countries has successfully rehabilitated its civil service system by 2004, several have implemented selected reforms that have resulted in varying degrees of improvement in the functioning of the civil service systems. The reform efforts are of two types. First there are some selective and targeted reform measures such as the enclaving of tax administration, contracting of appointments of chief executives of MDAs, creation of executive agencies out of the central government’s MDAs, and salary enhancement for some groups in the senior civil service. The second type of reforms seeks to cover the entire civil service and they are focused on performance and referred to variously as improving performance through citizens’ or customers’ charters, and civil service improvement programs. Enclaving has meant the transfer of this function from the civil

service to new structures (called Tax Administration or Revenue Authorities) run at arms-length from the service and enjoying significant autonomy in staff recruitment and compensation, linked to a clearly articulated performance regime. In Kenya, tax revenues as percentage of GDP has been consistently over 25 percent since the revenue authority was created, compared to an average of about 16 percent in the majority of SSA countries. Results in some other countries that have adopted the approach have not produced similar outstanding results (Zambia and Uganda). (South Africa, a Group A country, has included an independent revenue authority in its package of civil service reforms and the results have also been outstanding). Another targeted improvement measure is the adoption, in the late 1990s, of NPM-style contract appointments (with pay levels fairly competitive with those in the private sector) for the chief administrative heads of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) of the central government. Because of poor performing economies and/or limited national resources (Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Uganda) civil service salary scales, especially at the senior staff levels, are only a small fraction of the pay levels in the other sectors and the prospects for significant improvement in the short to medium term are poor.

The creation of executive agencies is also NPM-inspired and involves the separation of service delivery functions from policy management. While the policy function remains with central government ministries and departments, executive agencies have responsibilities for discreet service delivery or development programs for which they are accountable for results. The staffs in both groups are regarded as civil servants but there is more flexibility in the staffing of the executive agencies than in the ministries, and the accountability and performance regimes differ in some important respects. For example, the flexibility regarding staffing includes the right to hire and fire. Although Ghana was the first SSA country to create an executive agency in 1994, Tanzania has gone furthest with 12 executive agencies by 2001 and fifty more in the pipeline. By 2001, the results were judged to have impacted positively on service delivery: “better roads maintenance, higher quality airport services, faster business registration and improved counter services and a more efficient and effective National Statistics Office.”<sup>3</sup> Regarding selective salary enhancement, called selective accelerated enhancement (SASE) scheme, the idea is that salaries of key technical and professional staff are to be raised to compete with those of the private sector. According to Stevens and Teggermann (2004), only Tanzania was implementing the SASE scheme by 2003 and it is receiving donor support in financing the significant salary increases involved. Donor support is provided over a five-year period during which Tanzania would progressively assume full responsibility for the scheme, pending the time that a competitive salary regime can be introduced for the entire civil service.

All the reform measures aimed at achieving civil service-wide improvements are traceable, in varying degrees, to NPM influence. The idea of citizens’ charter was launched in 2001 as an African-wide initiative through the collaboration of the *Centre africain de recherches en administration et developpement* (CAFRAD) – African Centre for Research in Administration and Development - and the Government of the Republic

---

<sup>3</sup> Tanzania Government’s Public Service Reform Annual Report, 2000/2001; cited in Mutahaba and Kiragu (2002; p. 65).

of Namibia at a Pan-African Conference of the Ministers of Civil Service held in Windhoek, Namibia.<sup>4</sup> While Namibia has created an Efficiency and Charter Unit (ECU) in the Office of the Prime Minister, dedicated to promoting the introduction and implementation of charters by MDAs, less than one-third of the MDAs have launched their charters by mid-2003, and it was then too early to assess their impact. No other African country appears to have taken the idea seriously, though South Africa's *Batho Pele*, a People First initiative (that was introduced in 1997) is in the tradition of citizens' charters and is reported to be having positive impact on service delivery (Cameron, 2004). In the early 1990s, Ghana launched a Civil Service Performance Improvement Program that was assessed in 2003 to have been largely unsuccessful in improving service delivery (Mutahaba and Kiragu, 2002:73).

Countries in Group C have introduced some of the reform initiatives reviewed in respect of countries in Group B but none of them has recorded any success that is as noteworthy as those of Group B countries. In Chapter 4, Togo's experience is provided as an illustration of "hesitant reformers". Each of the beginners or non-starters that constitute Group D (at the opposite end of Group A countries) appears to have been caught up in a *vicious cycle* of unending conflicts (civil strife or civil wars), poor economies, and failed or failing states, with decaying PAs. It is noteworthy that Sierra Leone that "progressed" from non-starter status to a beginner a few years ago has identified the enclaving of revenue administration (through the establishment of a national revenue authority) as an "entry point" to public management reform. (See also the reference to Sierra Leone in the section on "Public Management Reforms at the Subnational Government Level" below).

### **2.2.b. Public Enterprise Reforms**

Besides the civil service, the other public organizations that are part of the central government and which have been affected by public management reform efforts are the public enterprises (PEs), also referred to as state-owned enterprises (SOEs) or parastatals.<sup>5</sup> As already mentioned above in the section on the economic context, the redefinition of the role of the state and the accompanying shift from state-led growth to an embrace of market economy (including a further shift to private sector-led growth in some cases) has meant the privatization of many erstwhile PEs. By 2004, a review of public enterprise sector in SSA, see Chapter 10 of World Bank (2004) asserted that its size and importance had diminished significantly and privatization programs were described as advancing to maturity. Privatization transactions are cases where governments have:

---

<sup>4</sup> A model "Charter for the Public Service in Africa" was adopted and individual countries were expected to adapt it for use. The charter has four basic principles: (i) principle of equality of treatment; (ii) principle of neutrality; (iii) principle of legality; and (iv) principle of continuity [in the provision of public service].

<sup>5</sup> The term "parastatal" is used in a broader sense than PE to refer to all government-sponsored bodies that are outside the framework of the civil service. In addition to PEs, they include autonomous or independent agencies, advisory governmental bodies and administrative tribunals. They are sometimes considered as part of the public service in the broadest sense. In France and francophone Africa, the term 'fonction publique' is used to refer to this broader definition and it is commonly translated as the synonym of both civil service and public service. The French-inspired usage is also common in continental European countries and some other countries in Asia and Latin America. PE is used in this paper as synonymous with parastatal.

- a) fully sold wholly – or majority-owned enterprises,
- b) sold shares and transferred ownership control but retained a minority equity interest,
- c) sold shares but retained ownership control,
- d) sold a proportion of a minority stake, and
- e) conducted other transactions where management control has been ceded.

What is being assessed is the extent of a government's willingness to exit from commercial activities. Some of such enterprises would have constituted a burden on the budget through payment of subsidies while others are activities that private economic operators would perform better. In both cases, the objective is to free states from these commercial activities in order to better focus on their core functions. By 2002, the majority of SSA countries have been involved in privatization transactions. However, there are significant variations in the total share transactions and total asset sales and liquidation. While many countries have moved vigorously with privatization in the last five to six years there are still a few countries where the leadership remains wedded to public ownership (for example, Namibia). Countries that have moved vigorously with privatization include Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Notable positive results from privatization have been recorded in the telecommunication sector (for example, South Africa and several francophone countries) and in air transportation (for example, Kenya and Tanzania).

PEs that are not privatized are either commercialized or restructured with a view to improving their performance. Commercialization involves reforms that aim at making PEs more efficient. There is partial commercialization as well as full commercialization. Fully commercialized PEs are expected to become entirely self-sufficient, with capacity to contribute a proportion of its profits to the state treasury. They are supposed to raise their capital and operating expenses from the capital markets. Partly commercialized PEs are expected at least to cover their operating costs. However, where the operations of a partly commercialized enterprise require a high level of capital investment, the government might have to intervene. In many cases, commercialization involves the change of the relationship between the management of the PE and the government through performance contracts or management contracts. A commonly cited example of successful commercialization is the case of Ethiopian Airlines. The restructuring of PEs that remain in the public domain and are not commercialized most often involve the introduction of reform measures that include greater clarity in the definition of PEs' objectives, increased managerial autonomy and signed explicit performance agreements, introduction of new oversight bodies, and an emphasis on profitability.

### **2.3 Public Management Reforms at the Subnational Government Level**

The two key terms in the discussion of public management reforms at the subnational level are decentralization and devolution. Definitional clarification covering these two terms and other related terms are provided in Box 1.

### **Box 1: Definitions of Decentralization, Devolution, and Other Related Terms**

The concept of *decentralization* has several uses when employed in the context of a public administration system. First, it can be used to refer to an administrative measure involving the transfer of management responsibilities and resources to agents of the central government located outside the headquarters at one or more levels (province, region, division, and district). This administrative decentralization is commonly referred to as *deconcentration*, and the field offices of the central government established in the process of deconcentration are also referred to as the *field administration*. Second, the term decentralization is used to refer to a political arrangement involving the *devolution* of specific powers, functions, and resources by the central government to subnational level government units. Subnational governments include regional, state, or provincial governments and local governments or municipalities. In many cases these subnational government units are substantially independent of the central government and have a legal status (personality). Normally the existence of provincial, regional or state governments is enshrined in constitutions in federal and quasi-federal states (for example, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and South Africa). There are examples of both federal and unitary states that formally provide for the establishment of local governments and municipalities in SSA and some countries provide for them in their constitutions (for example, Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa). Third, decentralization is used to refer to the *delegation* of authority and managerial responsibility for specific functions to organizations outside the central government structure. The organizations and agencies enjoy varying degrees of autonomy. All public organizations under the umbrella term, parastatals (as defined in the preceding section) are often cited as examples of this type of delegation. Specific examples include management boards of schools and hospitals. Finally, the term is also used to refer specifically to the transfer of responsibility for budgets and financial decisions from higher to lower levels of government. This is called *fiscal decentralization*, which is at the heart of the relationship between the central government and the subnational government units – commonly referred to as *intergovernmental relations*.

Source: Adapted from Adamolekun (1999).

The demand for political participation, which became a major feature of the worldwide wave of democratization of the early 1990s, was usually a call for the devolution of powers by central governments to self-governing communities at the regional or local level. By the late 1990s, decentralization policies had been adopted in about one hundred countries worldwide, including many countries in SSA. In all the countries that adopted decentralization, the arguments for it outweighed those against it and foremost among them is the expectation that subnational governments would be less remote from the local population and more accountable for their actions. In SSA countries that have adopted decentralization policies, there are broad similarities in the justifications that are highlighted and they are both political and economic: increased political participation and enhanced accountability combined with local revenue mobilization and more equitable resource allocation and utilization. Regarding the “dangers” of decentralization, the point that is made in some countries is that autonomy for distinct communities could weaken the state. It is in respect of implementation that there are important differences. Broadly, the Anglophone countries have moved faster in implementing decentralization policies than the Francophone countries.<sup>6</sup> The progress of implementing decentralization in Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda is far

---

<sup>6</sup> This difference is a carry over from the former colonial rulers: Britain’s decentralized “indirect rule” system in Africa and the extension of France’s centralized national administration to its colonies in Africa.

superior to the slow progress in Benin and Senegal. And there are more Francophone countries that have only decentralized in theory than is the case with Anglophone countries. Togo is an example of hesitant decentralization implementation. It is noteworthy that Sierra Leone, a “beginner” in public management reform, has identified decentralization, including elected local governments, as an “entry point” to public management reform; local government elections were held in the country in July 2004 and the on-going implementation of a decentralization project is supported by a World Bank credit.

By the end of 2003, there were elected local governments or municipal governments in many SSA countries, including Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. In some of these countries, the tradition of self-governing local governments predated the new wave of democratization of the early 1990s but in a majority of countries, local governments were extensions of central governments and instruments of control under one party or military regimes (for example, Benin, Ethiopia, Guinea, Togo, and Zambia).<sup>7</sup> The development performance of local and municipal governments in SSA countries (resource mobilization and utilization and efficient service delivery) is usually affected by financial and human resources available to them. The tendency in many SSA countries is for central governments to assign or transfer functions to local governments without due regard to the financial and human resources required to carry them out. Nigeria has a constitutional arrangement that provides for the allocation of a fixed proportion of national revenue to local governments to perform functions that are clearly spelled out in the country’s constitution. In practice, the discretion of the local governments to use the funds is constrained by spending decisions imposed by state and federal governments. Another factor that has affected the functioning of local governments in some countries is the challenge of accommodating traditional chiefs who remain influential, especially in rural areas. (In a few countries such as Botswana and Senegal, there is also a need for accommodating them at the national level).

An example of good practice in respect of fiscal decentralization is provided in Box 2. On a broader level, the commonly cited examples of good practice in achieving improved development performance through elected subnational governments in SSA are Ghana and Uganda.

Two other important issues that have been addressed, in varying degrees, in public management reforms in SSA countries, cover two or all three of the distinct areas discussed above. First, budget reform and the broader issue of public financial management improvement in both central and subnational governments. Second, combating corruption, another worldwide phenomenon of the 1990s, covers all three areas: central governments, public enterprises and subnational governments.

---

<sup>7</sup> With the exception of Botswana that has maintained elected local governments without interruption since independence, elected local governments have appeared and disappeared at intervals in some Anglophone countries before 1990. Examples include Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania.

### **Box 2: Limited Fiscal Decentralization Yields Results in Kenya**

In Kenya, where a clear-cut decentralization policy is not yet in place, the public service reform program has a component of local government reform that reflects the need for institutional pluralism in service delivery. In this context, Government has introduced a Local Authority Transfer Fund to which it disburses 5 percent of all its revenues to the local government councils. However, the release of funds to a council is tied to the submission of service delivery improvement plans, and a plan to achieve a 5 percent reduction in spending on staff each successive year in the medium term. This simple fiscal decentralization measure appears to be effective. Accountability by the councils has vastly improved, with 100 percent return of proposals and accounts. There is also ample anecdotal evidence of significant improvements in service delivery in many local government councils.

Source: Mutahaba and Kiragu (2002:61), with minor editorial changes by the author.

## **2.4 Budget Reform and Public Financial Management:**

Budget management (that is, the mobilization, allocation and utilization of resources) is at the core of public sector management. Its key objectives have been summarized as follows: (i) proper planning and budgeting for public expenditures; (ii) effective and efficient administration of government revenues; (iii) proper use of budget resources; (iv) effective control of public expenditure; (v) accounting and reporting on public finance; and (vi) full accountability for all public spending; see Kiragu (1999). A good handle on the subject is provided by the use of a medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) for ensuring effective linking of policy, planning and the budget. A well-designed MTEF that is faithfully implemented is normally characterized by sound development policies and the delivery of quality services to the public. However, before a country introduces a MTEF, there is need to get the basics of budgeting right. Schick (1998) has highlighted the following “basics”: a realistic budget that is faithfully implemented; high transparency in public finance; public funds spent for authorized public purposes; reported expenditure corresponds to actual expenditure; reliable external and/or internal controls; and spending units have reasonable certainty as to the funds that will be available.

Against this backdrop, public financial management reform efforts in most SSA countries with poor budgetary processes – as part of the decline of the PA system highlighted in Chapter 1 - have sought to combine getting the basics right with the introduction of MTEF. Predictably, this has proved difficult to achieve. Of 19 SSA countries that have adopted the MTEF process during the last decade, only about five have successfully integrated it with their budget processes (Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda). Many of the other countries are only piloting an MTEF. In reality, this means that the process is unlikely to have a beneficial effect on the budget process. In the countries with functioning MTEF processes, a key feature is the involvement of key stakeholders in the budget process in its preparation. The stakeholders include cabinet members, parliamentarians and civil society. South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda are arguable the leaders; see Garnett and Plowden (2004) for the good practice of the MTEF

process in South Africa. The obvious lesson from existing experiences is a reconfirmation of the counsel that getting the basics of budget right should precede the introduction of an MTEF that should be government-wide when the relevant prior conditions are met. MTEF piloting that started in Malawi in 1994 is yet to be integrated with the budget process.

Almost at the same time as MTEF was being introduced, many countries, in partnership with some donors (with the World Bank as lead agency) began to implement two initiatives aimed at improving two critical aspects of public financial management: one is focused on procurement reform and the other is focused on financial accountability. The diagnostic tool used for the former is called a country procurement assessment report (CPAR) while the diagnostic toll used for the former is called a country financial accountability assessment (CFAA). One of the main points raised in CFAAs is the widespread inadequacy of qualified accounting staff. This is the major explanatory factor for the small number of accounting staff in public services (those that are available prefer the “greener pastures” of the private sector), resulting in delayed audits. This means that technical auditing is usually delayed in such countries and there are no prospects of moving towards value for money auditing. However, there are a few exceptions (for example, Botswana, Kenya, and South Africa). And Botswana has moved further to introduce and implement accrual accounting – a practice that is at the cutting edge of accounting practice (see Box 3).

### **Box 3: Accrual Accounting in Botswana**

Government accounting is maintained on a cash basis plus a system of modified cash and accruals for special funds and trading accounts. The data for the computerized system, which was first introduced in 1977, is processed in batches and budgets, accounts (*sic.*). There are 27 local council authorities in Botswana: 6 urban councils, 9 district councils and 12 land boards. All councils are required to produce annual accounts within three months of the year-end and to have them audited by an auditor appointed by the Office of the Auditor-General. Accrual basis of accounting is used and the training of professional accountants is provided by the Botswana Accountancy College (BAC). BAC is a private sector college largely subsidized by the Botswana Government and the Debswana Diamond Company. There appears to be a strong recognition by Government of the importance of establishing a supply of qualified and trained accountants for the public and private sectors.

Source: East and Southern Association of Accountants General (ESAAG), cited in ECA (2004b: 21).

In the CFAAs that have been completed the reform measures that are usually recommended focus on the improvement of systems and procedures with emphasis on the prevention of fraud, waste and mismanagement. Although the technical quality of these assessments is high, the pace of implementation and the extent to which they enhance financial accountability is yet to be systematically carried out. In the meantime, donors who have started pilot testing “budget support” (providing funds for donor-supported development programs and projects directly through the budgets of recipient countries) appear to be more or less satisfied once a country has conducted a CFAA and accepts to

implement its recommendations. Regarding CPARs, the important point to emphasize is the fact that over 60 percent of the average SSA country's public spending (at both the national and subnational levels) involve procurement. Again, the CPARs are usually of high technical quality, covering all the issues of transparency, competition and regular public reporting. Implementation in most countries leaves much to be desired. In countries we have described as "hesitant reformers", it is a case of long delays or total inaction until donors decide to undertake another round of CPARs, according to so-called timetables agreed with the governments. Of course, this is nonsense. Even in the countries described as "committed reformers", implementation of procurement reforms is largely hesitant. The poor implementation of procurement reforms in so many countries is almost certainly linked to the problem of corruption that the countries are not yet ready to seriously combat.

## 2.5 Combating Corruption

Combating corruption is another worldwide phenomenon of the 1990s that has also featured prominently in the public management reform efforts in most SSA countries. From the extensive literature<sup>8</sup> on the subject during the last dozen years or so when research and writing on it emerged as a "growth industry", two perspectives are of particular relevance to the SSA region. One is the *universal nature of the problem of corruption*: it exists under all regime types, in old and new democracies, in all cultures, in the public, private and voluntary sectors, and it impacts negatively on both individuals and states, though with differing intensity. It appears that it is corruption as greed, linked to varying degrees of moral deficit, that is part of the nature of some humans wherever they live and work and regardless of their levels of comfort and wealth that typifies this universal dimension to the problem. The second perspective is contextual or particularistic: there are specific manifestations and consequences that relate to individual countries, sub-cultural groups (for example, there are sub-cultural groups in Cameroon, Kenya and Nigeria), cultural or racial groups (Africans, Asians, British, Italians, French or Whites and Blacks in the USA and South Africa), and economic divisions (rich or poor). Significantly the anti-corruption movement that gathered momentum in the early 1990s began in Europe, with Italy as a leader. It quickly spread to other European countries and then, to all continents. While the focus in most of these "Northern" countries was largely on moral "cleansing" of their societies and ensuring social justice, the focus in a majority of the literature focused on "Southern" countries and transition economies was essentially on how corruption undermined socioeconomic development, thereby rendering ineffective the development assistance provided by governments of "Northern" governments (henceforth referred to as OECD countries). Very quickly, all donors (multilateral and bilateral) introduced combating corruption as a condition for their development assistance.

Regarding SSA countries (as well as other developing countries) that depend, in varying degrees, on financial assistance from donors, adoption and implementation of anti-corruption programs became a condition for donor assistance. (It does not really matter if

---

<sup>8</sup> An overview of the problem of corruption, including assessments of anti-corruption efforts to date in 28 SSA countries is provided in Economic Commission for Africa (2004c).

some donors claim that they are only “helping” countries to fight corruption). In these circumstances, earlier endogenous anti-corruption efforts to combat corruption for both economic and moral reasons in several SSA countries (for example, Tanzania in the 1960s and Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone in the 1970s) were rarely mentioned. Notwithstanding the external pressure (also referred to as a “political conditionality”), the quality of anti-corruption programs, and more importantly, the progress of implementation in SSA countries has depended more on the extent of internal pressure to combat the problem than on the impact of external pressure. There are three main reasons for the concern of donors with the problem of corruption. First, because combating corruption was a topical issue in some of the donor countries, they naturally made it an issue in the context of their relationships with countries for which they were providing development assistance. Second, because of the strong evidence that corruption undermines the effectiveness of development assistance because it impacts negatively on economic growth and distorts public spending and worsens the problems of the poor (see Box 4), both the governments and their domestic constituencies supported the idea of making anti-corruption a condition for the flow of development assistance.<sup>9</sup> Anti-corruption as a political conditionality for developing countries (including SSA countries) was also consistent with what had been adopted for EU candidate member states since the late 1990s. A third reason was the concern of OECD countries with eradication of bribery in international business relations (usually linked to competition for contracts) between multilateral companies and public officials in developing countries through the adoption of a convention in 1997.

#### **Box 4. Some Consequences of Corruption**

- Distorts the composition of government expenditure.
- Reduces expenditure on operations and maintenance.
- Lowers the quality of public infrastructure and services.
- Reduces government revenues.
- Lowers incentives to private investment.
- Undermines legitimacy and credibility of the state.
- Influences outcomes of the legal and regulatory processes.
- Violates the social and economic rights of the poor and the vulnerable.
- Erodes the moral fabric of society.

It was against this backdrop that combating corruption emerged as a prominent issue in public management reform programs in many SSA countries that depended on donor assistance to finance varying proportions of their development programs and projects. The anti-corruption measures implemented within public management reform programs are of two main types: some are focused on the improvement of financial accountability,

---

<sup>9</sup> Corroborative evidence is also provided in the fact that in the case of SSA countries, the six countries in the bottom 25 percent of the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) produced by Transparency International (an international anti-corruption non-governmental organization) for 1999 were also in the bottom 25 percent of the Human Development Index (of the UNDP). More or less the same finding was repeated for 2000 through 2004.

including procurement reform, and others are focused on the work of anti-corruption bodies that enjoy varying degrees of autonomy (for example, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe). The specific measures relating to financial accountability and procurement have already been discussed in the preceding section. There is broad agreement in the assessments of performance of anti-corruption bodies in SSA on three factors of good or poor performance: the degree of autonomy of the bodies, the resources (human, financial and material) made available to them, and the ability of the bodies to forge strategic alliances with groups in the public, private and voluntary sectors with a view to enhancing their effectiveness.

Four major problem areas are highlighted in these assessments. First there is the problem of salary erosion in the civil service (including the police) that results in many civil servants in the junior and intermediate levels earning less than “living wages”. The majority of cases of what is called “petty corruption” (arising from “need”) is traced to this problem. Unfortunately, because of the persistence poor performance of the economies in most of these countries, the efforts made to tackle the problem to date have not been effective. The second problem area relates to the corruption at the level of higher civil servants, most often in collusion with politicians, and sometimes it is a tripartite collusion with businessmen/women as the third parties. These corrupt practices are usually related to contract awards. (A varying proportion of corrupt practices at the level of higher civil servants could also be said to arise from “need” partly because of the compression of salaries and partly because of uncertainty over security of tenure at these levels). The third problem area is the straightforward looting of government treasuries that is dominated by politicians, sometimes involving higher civil servants in some countries (for example, Nigeria). Fourth and finally, there is the international dimension in the form of public officials who stash away the proceeds of their corrupt practices in foreign countries – as deposits in banks and/or as property investments. There are no examples of success stories in these areas to date and promises by the countries where looted funds are lodged or “invested” to repatriate the funds have only been honored in a very few cases. Overall, the anti-corruption fight remains daunting in most SSA countries. Paradoxically, though not surprisingly, it is in countries with low levels of corrupt practices that anti-corruption efforts have recorded significant results. Again, Botswana is the commonly cited example: “[The anti-corruption agency] has produced some successful outcomes in its role of complementing the state institutions established to improve governance and deepen accountability and transparency in the country.”<sup>10</sup> This is another confirmation of the virtuous cycle hypothesis.

### **Chapter 3: The Politics and Administration Nexus in the Conduct of Government Business**

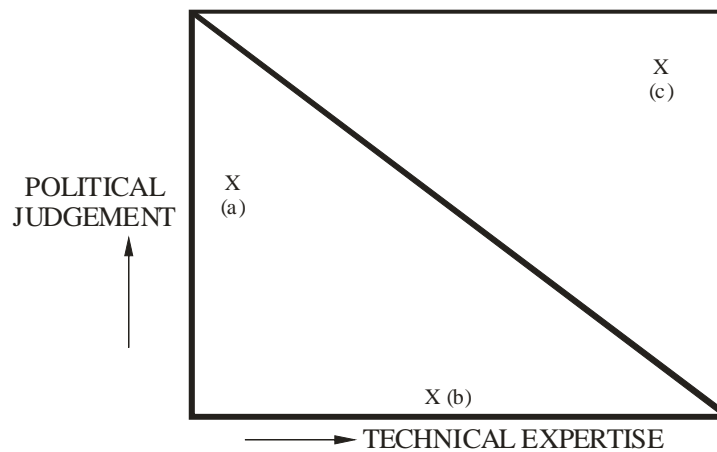
The politics and administration nexus in the conduct of government business is a special focus in public administration literature, for example Adamolekun (1983 and 2002), on which some of this discussion here is drawn. The politics and administration nexus

---

<sup>10</sup> Kpundeh (2004: 269).

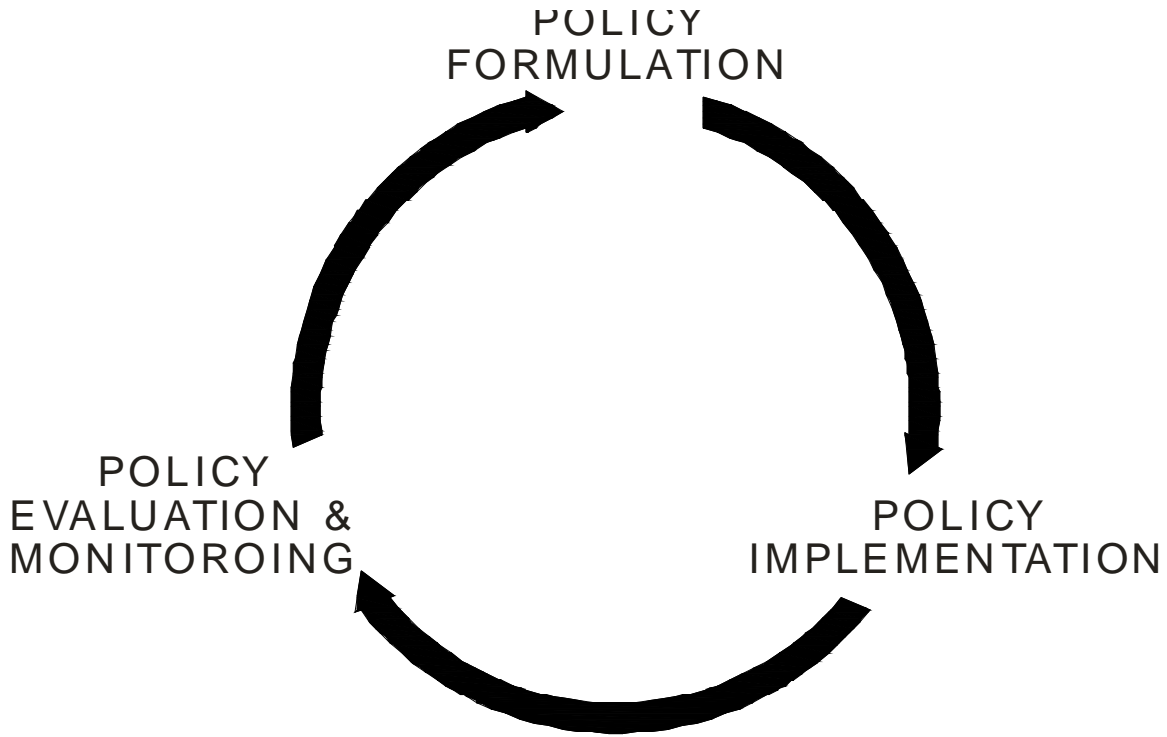
determines, to a great extent, the quality of a public administration system, simply because leadership matters. Strong leadership at the top of the machinery of government, provided jointly by the political leadership team and the leadership of the career civil service is essential for both policy formulation and implementation which sum up what governmental administration is about. Diagram 2 provides a graphical representation of a conceptual framework that summarizes the respective roles of politicians and administrators in the conduct of government business.

**Diagram 2: The Respective Roles of Politicians and Administrators in the Conduct of Government Business**



The basic assumption of this framework is that there exists a distinction between the political judgment content and the technical expertise content of major issues with which politicians and administrators deal. It is postulated (a) that politicians dominate the issues which have a high content of political judgment and a low content of technical expertise (e.g. decentralization policy); (b) that administrators dominate the issues with a high content of technical expertise and a low content of political judgment (e.g. science and technology policy); (c) and that in regard to issues with both a high content of political judgment and technical expertise, politicians and administrators take decisions by cooperative effort, as partners in a joint enterprise (e.g. the budget process). Each postulate is represented in the diagram. Although the above illustrations relate to policy formulation, they can be extended to policy implementation. The implementation stage of the policy process can be described as highly technical, with little room for political judgment (notwithstanding the intrusion of political considerations), until the monitoring and evaluation stage when politicians in both the executive and legislative arms of government do become involved. This point confirms the salience of the cyclical nature of the policy process: ideas about new directions for existing policies or totally new policies could emerge at the implementation and evaluation/monitoring stages; see Diagram 3.

### Diagram 3. The Policy Cycle



**Note to Diagram 3:** The policy cycle begins at the policy formulation or policy-making stage; continues to the implementation and evaluation / monitoring stages; and then returns to the formulation stage.

Although SSA countries inherited politics-administration relationships that reflected, in varying degrees, the features of the framework summarized in Diagram 2, the dominant trend in most countries before the public management reforms of the 1990s was the progressive politicization of administration and the bureaucratization of politics. The same trend was noticeable in all the regime types that emerged in the majority of SSA countries from the late 1960s to the advent of the new wave of democratization of the early 1990s. The differences in politics-administration relationships were essentially in the details, depending on whether it was a one-party state regime (for example Guinea and Tanzania), a military regime (for example, Benin and Nigeria), or a state that maintained a façade of constitutionalism (for example, Senegal). In almost every case, there was failure to nurture technical competence and bureaucratic domination of the policy process resulted in weakness in both policy formulation and implementation. There were only a few examples where politics-administration relationships approximated our framework (for example, Botswana and Mauritius).

One aspect of the politics-administration relationship problem that has been addressed in many of the public sector reform programs in SSA countries is how to assure a quality administrative leadership that is also loyal to an incumbent political leadership team. This is linked to a broader issue of how best to separate political from career appointments. There is need to acknowledge and accept that under a democratic order where political executive teams could change after periodic elections, newly elected leadership team members would want to appoint a few staff whose loyalty includes personal confidence and who are totally committed to the achievement of their programs. This category of public officials constitute a distinct group within the leadership of governmental administration in many of the old democracies: they are known variously as special advisers in the United Kingdom, political administrators in Germany, political appointees in the USA and members of Ministerial Cabinets in France. They are responsible for policy advocacy and are not bound by the norms of anonymity and political neutrality. They are able to speak out in public in defense of policies being pursued by the political leadership. This enhances open and accountable government: those responsible for government policies can be identified and named for praise or blame.<sup>11</sup>

In the SSA contexts, it would be sensible to specify the number of such appointments and prescribe some minimum technical professional qualifications. A good practice is the arrangement in South Africa that allows each minister to have two or three special advisers with a slightly larger number for the president and his deputy. In the Francophone African countries, they constitute the Ministerial Cabinets.<sup>12</sup> In all cases, the tenure of political appointees should be coterminous with that of the appointing political executive. What is required in every case is total transparency in all matters relating to political appointees: their qualifications, job descriptions and remuneration packages. The relevant information should be widely published in the media. When a career official accepts to perform the functions of a political appointee, it would be necessary to state under what conditions the official could return to the career service. In the case of a political appointee who seeks a career or contract position at the end of his/her tenure, it would be reasonable to require the official to go through the prevailing competitive procedures for recruitment to the career or contract position. The suggestions proffered here are summarized in Box 5.

---

<sup>11</sup> Of course, career higher civil servants would also contribute to policy advice as already pointed out in the section on “political context”. The career higher civil servants have, as their primary responsibility, the leadership of the programmatic activities of their ministries, departments and agencies. They would also be responsible for providing leadership for the civil service as an institution. However, in countries that have adopted the executive agency arrangement, the smaller number of higher civil servants in MDAs would focus on regulatory management and the management of the contracts for the agencies, especially the monitoring and evaluation of performance

<sup>12</sup> The establishment of Ministerial Cabinets in Francophone African countries is an imitation of an institution by the same name in France. Although the emphasis is on the political responsiveness of members of French Ministerial Cabinets, they are mostly drawn from the higher civil service, which also happens to produce the majority of Cabinet Ministers most of the time. In the Francophone African countries, partisan political considerations predominate, and this means a loss in technical and professional competence in many cases.

### **Box 5: Proposed Composition of Staff in the Civil Service in SSA**

#### **A. Political Appointees**

Temporary tenure, coterminous with that of the appointing political executive. Key criteria for selection are loyalty and policy compatibility. Minimum professional qualifications to be specified for different types. Number must be small at all times.

#### **B. Contract Appointments**

Transitional arrangement to be phased out as an element of strategy as “C” below becomes adequately strong. Total number of top managers and top-notch professionals to be appointed on contracts to be determined by the needs of each country, especially the initial capacity condition at level “C”. (The occasional contract appointments that are found in most state bureaucracies would remain a permanent feature in the SSA countries).

#### **C. Small but Strong Career Civil Service**

Could have a small corps of senior executives – a Senior Executive Service (SES). Rest of the career civil service to be recruited on merit with appropriate measures introduced to ensure some degree of representativeness – notably race, gender and ethnicity. Overall size would vary from one country to another. Civil Service Commissions whose independence is enshrined in national constitutions would be needed to provide overall direction for the career civil service, including the protection of the merit system. If necessary, there should also be provision for judicial protection of the security of tenure of career officials.

#### **D. Non-Career Officials**

Messengers, cleaners, lift attendants, food caterers and so on should not be included in the career service. They should be hired under the prevailing labor market laws. And their pay, allowances and separation terms would be in accordance with these laws.

As shown in Box 5, the group of officials next to the political appointees, that is, the chief administrative heads of MDAs, can be appointed on contract. Such contract appointments are already the practice in some SSA countries, including Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, South Africa and Uganda. The salary factor in contract appointments at this level has already been mentioned. Another factor that has been invoked, in varying degrees in all cases, is the need to open the most senior civil service positions to talents from both within and outside the service. Although not explicitly acknowledged, the incumbent political team would like this category of officials to be loyal to them. In particular, they would like them to be sympathetic to their policy thrusts and priorities without the concern for partisan loyalty they require of political appointees.

While all these justifications for the use of contract appointments at the immediate level below political appointees are sensible, it must be acknowledged that it is a temporary “solution” that would eventually be replaced by a more robust and sustainable arrangement that is integrated with the career system. To derive satisfactory results from the contract appointments, the procedures need to be transparent and competitive and there should be credible arrangements for monitoring and evaluation. This is not likely to be an easy task because the limited information available on the working of contracts for senior managers in the public services of the few SSA countries that have adopted the reform measure highlights the following main problems: inadequate transparency in the contracting process; ineffective monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the hired managers and technical professionals (fear of political manipulation) and weak

enforcement of the contracts in some cases.<sup>13</sup> It might be useful to fix most contract terms longer than each country's political cycle with provisions for the removal of non-performers whenever adequate evidence is available. The merit of the contract "solution" is that it would help ensure that the hired staff could be held responsible to deliver the results spelled out in their contracts. The results of a better performing civil service could produce additional resources that would enable government to progressively increase the pay levels of its career civil service staff. An interesting variation on the contract theme was the short-lived experiment of a team of national experts parachuted from outside to breathe new life into the lethargic civil service in Kenya in July 1999. The story is summarized in Box 6.

#### **Box 6: The Kenya Change Team Experiment (July 1999-March 2001)**

The "Change Team" (also referred to as the "Dream Team") comprised six top rate Kenyan professionals drawn from the parastatal and private sectors inside Kenya and from international organizations in July 1999. They were recruited through a "search" procedure for a two-year stint on salaries and allowances equivalent to what they were earning at the time of the recruitment. The Government of Kenya also successfully arranged a re-entry guarantee for each member of the team. The team was specifically mandated to clean the civil service of its inefficiency and corruption and to develop and begin to implement an economic recovery program.

By August 2000, the Change Team had succeeded in bringing about the resumption of development assistance to Kenya by the IMF, the World Bank and several other donors, notably the European Union and UK. This achievement was made possible by several improvements made by the Team in national economic management. By December 2000, the highlights of the Team's achievements included the production of an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP); adoption and progressive implementation of transparent and competitive procurement reform measures; removal of poor performers from some key civil service and parastatal positions and their replacement with competent and honest professionals; strong support for the serious anticorruption measures of the Kenya Anticorruption Authority (KACA) that included the catching and prosecution of many corrupt public officials, including a few "big fishes".

However, the work of the Change Team came to an abrupt end in March 2001 when its leader and two other members were removed. One other top rate Kenyan professional recruited to join the team in June 2000 to serve as the privatization "czar" was also removed. Reports in newspapers in the immediate weeks after the dismantling of the Team suggests that some key persons in the incumbent regime had become uncomfortable with the overall thrust of the Change Team's work, especially in respect of anticorruption and privatization. KACA was declared illegal in December 2000 and the privatization effort lost steam. The obvious question to pose is whether the experiment was worthwhile since the sustainability of the Team's achievements is highly unlikely.

**Note:** On immediate reactions to the demise of the "Change Team", see, for example, *Daily Nation* (Nairobi) for March, April, May and June 2001. The newspaper's archive can be found in the Internet: <http://www.nationaudio.com>.

<sup>13</sup> Given the evidence that these contracting problems also exist, in varying degrees, in older states with stronger contract cultures, the learning curve for effective implementation of contracts could take many years in most SSA countries. It is noteworthy that some of these contracting problems were mentioned to a team of World Bank Public Sector Management Specialists (including the writer) who visited New Zealand in January/February 1997. New Zealand is widely acknowledged as the pioneer country that introduced contract appointments on a large scale at the senior levels of its public service, beginning in the late 1980s

The third group of officials involved in the politics-administration nexus relationships is the group of senior career civil servants. The failure of most SSA countries to fully re-introduce merit-based recruitment in their civil services means that those who occupy the topmost positions in the career civil service are indistinguishable in many respects from the two groups of political appointees and chief administrative heads of MDAs. Some Anglophone countries (for example Kenya and Uganda), are considering the creation of an elite corps of higher civil servants, similar to the Senior Executive Service (SES) that was first established in the USA in 1978 and has already spread to several OECD countries (for example, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom). In the francophone countries, a poor imitation of French-style ministerial cabinets (*cabinets ministeriels*) is the major cause of the muddle between political appointees and senior career civil servants. Normally, members of ministerial cabinets are temporary political appointees who are to assist the members of the political executive through the combination of their technical expertise and unconditional political loyalty. In a majority of the francophone countries, the political appointees are strong on the political loyalty criterion and weak on the technical competence criterion.<sup>14</sup> In some of the countries (e.g. Benin and Chad), the problem is exacerbated by a confused arrangement in which the political appointees also constitute the leadership group of the state administration. International experience shows clearly that the depth of political appointments in government ministries and departments is inversely related to public administration capability and performance (see Box 7).

**Box 7: Politicization and Public Administration Capacity (depth of political appointments)**

<b>Philippines</b>		<b>Other East Asia</b>		<b>Francophone Africa</b>
Secretary	X	Minister	X	Minister X
Under secretary	X	Level 2	X	Level 2 X
Assistant secretary	X	Level 3	Y	Level 3 X
Bureau director	X	Level 4	Y	Level 4 X
Regional director	X	Y		
Service director	X			Y
Division chief	Y	Division Chief	Y	Division chief Y

Notes:

1. X = Political appointments; Y = Administrative (career) appointments.
2. Philippine's public administration was ranked low compared to the moderate to high ranking for the other East Asian countries and the latter recorded better economic performance in the 1990s than was the case in the former. The evidence in the Figure suggests that economic performance in Francophone African countries would be close to that of the Philippines.

Source: Adapted from *World Development Report 1997*, p. 93

<sup>14</sup> In some countries, some members of ministerial cabinets are treated as glorified household servants.

It is important to stress that the ultimate objective of getting the political leadership team and the appointed officials (both permanent and temporary) to work well together is to ensure that the policy process, which is at the heart of their interactions, is managed in a manner that assures the formulation of sound policies as well as their faithful implementation, resulting in the delivery of desired goods and services to the public. Persistent underdevelopment in SSA region (the increase in the percentage of persons living in poverty by 2000 compared to 1990 is one strong evidence and another is the alert already raised that the region would be the laggard among developing countries in achieving the 2015 Millennium Development Goals) shows that the majority of these countries are experiencing serious problems in respect of their policy processes. By the logic of democratic politics, prescribing educational qualification for elected politicians has to be strictly limited, for example, exclusion of persons who cannot read or write in a country's official language. However, given the explosion in knowledge and the advance in technology (especially information and communication technology), and the reality of globalization, there is a strong argument in favor of developing appropriate programs to raise the level of understanding of politicians in SSA countries (both in the executive and legislative branches). Failure to do this would result in a much wider ability gap between politicians and permanent officials, resulting in virtual domination of the policy process by the latter. One possible solution would be to expose political appointees and some political leaders to aspects of the managerial training and leadership development programs offered to top public managers and professionals. A summary of the contents of leadership development programs that could be adapted and integrated into the education and training programs for top managers and professionals in public services in SSA is provided in Table 2.

**Table 2: Executive Core Qualifications**

Leading Change	Leading People	Results Driven	Business Acumen	Building Coalitions and Communications
Continual learning; Creativity and innovation; Strategic thinking; Vision.	Conflict management; Cultural awareness; Integrity and honesty; Team building.	Accountability; Customer service; Problem solving; Technical credibility.	Financial management; Human resources management; Technology management.	Influencing and negotiating; Interpersonal skills; Oral and written communication; Political savvy.

Source: Adapted from OECD (2001: 97-99).

## **Chapter 4: Some Country Experiences of Good and Bad Practices**

In addition to the brief references to good and bad practices provided in the discussion of selected public management reform experiences in the previous two Chapters Two and Three, four country experiences of good and bad practices are summarized below. They are in greater depth than those provided in the preceding two chapters and, at the end of each country experience, attention is drawn to a few lessons that reformers in other countries could learn from it. The first case pre-dates the independence of Nigeria from which it has been selected. It is included in a review of experiences of 1990-2004 because of its continued salience. Not only is there no similar experience in an area of crucial importance in the conduct of government business in SSA, the specific experience would compare favorably with any of its kind worldwide, then and now. It would probably qualify to be called a classic. The second country experience is how South Africa planned and implemented the initial stages of its public service reform program: a systematic and carefully planned approach that combined rigor in design with due regard to both the usefulness of a conceptual framework, including relevant constitutional, legal and legislative measures and the practical considerations that would promote successful implementation. The third example is the successful public management reform experience in Botswana from the immediate post-independence years to the present. The fourth country experience is the hesitant approach to civil service reform in Togo. While key stakeholders in the public sector as well as the private and voluntary sectors had clear ideas on priority actions that should feature in a public sector management reform program whose implementation is badly needed for the country's socioeconomic development, there was only a half-hearted effort to design a reform program on the part of the leaders of the governmental administration.

### **4.1 Nigeria: Successful Joint Leadership of Government Business, 1954-1959<sup>15</sup>**

In his valedictory address to the Western Nigeria House of Assembly in 1959, the outgoing premier, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, made the following remarks about the civil service:

Our civil service is exceedingly efficient, absolutely incorruptible in its upper stratum, and utterly devoted and unstinting in the discharge of its many onerous duties. For our civil servants, government workers and labourers to bear, uncomplainingly and without breaking down, the heavy and multifarious burdens with which we have in the interest of the public saddled them, is an epic of loyalty and devotion, of physical and mental endurance, and of a sense of mission, on their part. From the bottom of my heart I salute all of them.

This is a most unusual praise by a political head of government for civil servants. Evidence that one can really talk of a successful partnership between politics and administration is provided by the reciprocal admiration of the leadership of the career civil service for the politicians with whom they worked between 1954 and 1959:

---

<sup>15</sup> This is an extract (with slight modifications) from Adamolekun (1993: 59-63).

When I served under Chief Awolowo in the West, he used to say that I should tell my colleagues that he could deal with the politics of the issues. What he wanted were detailed analyses of their implications. With the facts at his disposal, he felt that he would be in a better position to decide on what to do. This sums up my own view too about the relationship that should exist between ministers and civil servants.

The “success story” upon which both the head of government and the head of the civil service were agreed consisted of two sets of actions. One set was related to administrative organization and management and the other concerned certain government policies for social and economic development that were adopted and implemented with varying degrees of success. Regarding administrative organization and management, the inherited colonial administration was transformed into one that became appropriate for a parliamentary system of government; its personnel was “Nigerianized”, and a functioning system of staff recruitment and training was established. The Nigerianized civil service was also of a high quality, with a carefully established legal and constitutional foundation consisting of a public administration law and a set of regulations prepared by a public service commission. All this earned the Western Nigeria civil service the enviable title of “first in Africa”, “a pacemaker and model for other civil services in Anglophone Africa”, and one that many observers regarded as matching that of Britain “in terms of formal organization and official working”. This was no mean achievement.

In the sphere of social and economic development, the ruling party in the region was formally committed to a set of policies and programs, one of which was “free universal primary education for all children of school-going age”. At the time this policy was being prepared in 1954, an expatriate education officer in the civil service declared that the policy was “impossible in our own lifetime, absolutely impossible”. It was successfully launched in 1955. The determination of the political leadership that had mobilized the population in support of the program combined with the hard work of the majority of civil servants ensured the successful implementation of this visionary policy.

This exemplary politics-administration relationship was short-lived; it did not survive the departure of both the political head of government and the head of the civil service. Both moved on to assume positions at the federal level. However, the solid civil service institution that they built survived the political crisis that began in the region in 1962, merging into the advent of military rule in the entire country in January 1966.<sup>16</sup> Eventually, decline and decay set in during the decades-long bad governance imposed by successive military rulers. The onset of the decay and decline was probably around the mid-1970s.

### ***Lessons from the Western Nigeria “success story”***

1. A political leader with a clear vision and a well articulated development strategy would tend to manage the politics-administration interface in a manner that enhances the chance of successful implementation of his development programs and projects,

---

<sup>16</sup> On the survival of the high quality Western Nigerian civil service through the political crisis of 1962-65, see Murray (1970).

including such an ambitious one as a universal primary education program at a time the idea was virtually unknown in any developing country.

2. Mutual respect and trust between the top political leader and the head of the civil service helps to ensure provision of adequate resources for nurturing the civil service, including assurance of decent pay, security of tenure, staff development and training and skills upgrading - all contributing to produce a competent administration with a public service ethos and an *esprit de corps*.
3. The phenomenon of a visionary and development-oriented head of government and a strong and competent head of the civil service is not a chance event; it is the former who selects the latter and has the powers to fire him/her if he so desires. In other words, for a state that becomes a “beginner” in public management reform, either in a post-conflict situation or through a “window of opportunity” following an election, it is the quality of the head of government that would determine whether or not that country would proceed to move in the direction of a virtuous cycle.
4. The reversal that happened in Western Nigeria is a reminder that whatever the heights attained in the context of building a strong public administration system, it cannot survive political decay for too long. The experience underscores the strong link between governance environment and the quality of a public administration system. The evidence provided by the Western Nigeria story needs to be nuanced because the region was a part of a federation that had the misfortune of military rule for over three decades from 1966 onwards. In 2004, over 70 percent of Nigeria’s population lives below the poverty line compared with less than 20 percent in 1960. Would developments in Western Nigeria have evolved differently if it were an independent state? Perhaps.

#### **4.2 South Africa: Conceptualization and Initial Implementation of Public Service Reform<sup>17</sup>**

Public debate on the desirable features of a new public service for post-apartheid South Africa began during the transition to the democratic elections held in 1994. The debate continued after the elections and the Minister of Public Service, a highly respected veteran of the anti-apartheid struggle and one of the chieftains of the ruling African National Congress (ANC), assumed the role of cabinet-level champion of public service reform. To prepare the ground for government decisions on the subject, members of the reform committee went on study tours to selected countries in both developed and developing countries. Furthermore, two workshops were organized in 1995 and 1996: the former was focused on learning lessons from the experiences of other African countries while the latter was focused on learning lessons from the experiences of other Commonwealth countries. Participants in the workshops were drawn from the central government, provincial government, parliament, academia and selected civil society organizations. The minister attended sessions of both workshops. At each workshop, the South African participants made it clear to the other participants that they were interested

---

<sup>17</sup> This country experience is based partly on Picard (1999) and Fraser-Moloketi and Robertson (2003), and partly on information obtained by the author during his participation in two workshops on public service reform held in South Africa in 1995 and 1996.

in learning about good practices to adapt for use and bad practices to avoid. Just before the organization of the workshops, the government had produced a “White Paper” [policy document in Anglophone administrative terminology] on the transformation of the public service (1995). Taking into account the insights from the workshops and further debates within the country, government proceeded to take decisions on the fundamental principles that would govern the public service and on its structures, functions, and operational methods.

The fundamental principles are enshrined in the country’s 1996 constitution, and further elaboration is provided in the 1997 Public Service Act. In addition to the constitution and the Public Service Act, the legal and legislative framework for running the public service include the following: White Paper on public service education and training (1997), Skills Development Act (1997), Code of conduct for public servants (1997), Organized Local Government Act (1997), White Paper on Affirmative Action (1998), Employment Equity Act (1998), and White Paper on local government (1998). This legislative and legal framework for running the public service is arguably the most comprehensive in Africa. Evidence provided in the two sources on the South African experience cited above as well as evidence provided in the studies focused on assessments of public service reforms in SSA cited earlier suggest that the first years of implementing the public service reforms have helped to transform it into a well performing non-racial service that has made significant contributions to socioeconomic development in the country. All this qualify South Africa for inclusion in the group of “advance reformers” that are enjoying a virtuous cycle (see Table 1)

### *Lessons from the South African Experience*

1. Careful design of a public sector management reform program (including learning from the lessons of reform experiences in both developing and developed countries) that is an integral part of a national public sector reform strategy, itself linked to an overarching economic development and reconstruction strategy, results in a credible reform program. The participation of representatives of parliament and selected stakeholders from the private and voluntary sectors at the reform design stage enhances the credibility of the program and the chances of successful implementation.
2. Emergence of reform champions in critical positions (especially at the cabinet level, at the leadership level of the public service, and in parliament) is essential for success. Continuity in strong reform leadership at the cabinet level, especially during the first five to eight or ten years of reform implementation would ensure prompt and appropriate adjustment of reform program and initial implementation with some results on the ground that helps to generate broad-based support for reform within society. The first cabinet-level champion of reform served during a 4-year presidential term and his successor who was also a strong champion of reform served the succeeding 4-year presidential term.

### 4.3 Botswana: Role of a Competent Administration in Achieving an Impressive Development Performance

In an overview of Botswana's public administration published in the late 1990s<sup>18</sup>, the authors observed as follows:

There is a consensus in the literature on governance and public management issues in post-independence Botswana on the quality of the public administration and its key role in the country's impressive development performance: high GDP growth rates for many years, combined with significant poverty reduction, a fairly high degree of political and economic participation, and relatively accountable and honest government.<sup>19</sup>

The governmental administrative system inherited from the colonial power at independence has been nurtured over the three post-independence decades into a competent and reasonably honest instrument to assist the political executive in the formulation and implementation of development policies and programs. The impressive development performance recorded in Botswana during the past two decades (an average GDP growth of 9.2 percent per annum from 1970 to 1995, which was the highest in the world) is due, in large part, to its solid institutional infrastructure.

The authors cited the following, among others:

- Botswana has the reputation of a country in which the rule of law, assured by an independent court system, is predictable.
- Official financial transactions are transparent insofar as Botswana adheres to standard international accounting, reporting and auditing standards.
- On the whole, the quality of successive plans has been very high (both in respect of its rigor and realism) and the implementation record has been impressive, including the successful management of the diamond "boom" of the 1980s.

According to another observer, "the [Botswana] public service has been generally well respected, and it enjoys the confidence of the political elites for its professionalism". And he continues: "Botswana's record of performance has been made possible, to a large extent, by the quality of its public administration, the caliber of people employed in it, and the appropriateness of the institutions and processes put in place."<sup>20</sup>

Another observation about Botswana's achievement of a well-performing public service is the commitment of successive presidents to continuous administrative reform, similar to the good practice in other countries with well performing public services such as the Canada, France, Japan, Singapore, and the United Kingdom. In the country's successive Development Plans, public management reform features prominently and the subject also

---

<sup>18</sup> See Adamolekun and Morgan (1999).

<sup>19</sup> In recent years, Botswana's high rate of HIV/AIDS infection has significantly reduced its erstwhile high rating in "Human Development". For example, life expectancy has fallen from 60.3 years in 1992 to 44.7 in 2001. [Life Expectancy rose from 46 in 1960 to 52 in 1975, 59 in 1987 and 60.3 in 1992]. Source: UNDP: *Human Development Report*, various issues between 1990 and 2003.

<sup>20</sup> See Ayeni (1999). Similar observations on the quality of Botswana's public administration are contained in several articles focused on Botswana's impressive development performance; see, for example, Good (1992).

features prominently in its “Vision 2016”. The main points in a recent laudatory overview of the Botswana experience that is consistent with our virtuous cycle hypothesis are provided in Box 8.

### **Box 8: Overview of Botswana Experience**

[Botswana is] Africa’s longest-running democracy [...]. The country has a good claim to be the best-run democracy in Africa. Botswana’s 1.8 m people are among the continent’s wealthiest, after four decades of fast economic growth. International surveys suggest they are Africa’s least corrupt...along with South Africa, it is the easiest place to do business in Africa. Good institutions, stable economic policies and a smart use of technology make it more competitive than, say, Brazil or Mexico... Botswana’s rulers keep their fingers out of the honey pot. Botswana’s ...presidents have been honest. They have made sound policies, ensure that civil servants implement them and leave office dutifully when the constitution says so, after a maximum of ten years.

Source: *The Economist* (London), November 6, 2004, page 52.

#### ***Lessons from Botswana’s “success story”:***

1. A leader who is at the same time an institution builder and development-oriented is a distinct advantage in the quest for a well performing public administration system. Botswana has been in the fortunate position of having, during the first four decades of its independence, a succession of presidents who fit the mould that the French philosopher Montesquieu referred to in one of his many insightful observations on the governance of societies: “At the birth of societies, it is the leaders of the commonwealth [state] who create institutions; afterwards, it is the institutions that shape the leaders.”
2. Administrative reform is a continuous exercise and it tends to develop its own momentum that successive political leadership teams as well as successive administrative leadership teams would deepen, in varying degrees, depending on prevailing circumstances within and outside the country.
3. Sound economic policies - honestly and efficiently managed (natural resource endowment helps) - an emphasis on educational development, and conscious nurturing of a democratic political culture, including respect for rule of law, create an environment in which good governance, socioeconomic progress, and a well functioning public service co-exist in a mutually reinforcing manner. This is what I referred to earlier as a *virtuous cycle*.

#### **4.4 Togo: Half-Hearted Efforts to Modernize a Decaying Civil Service**

During interviews conducted by the author in 2001/2002, senior public officials in Togo (a minister and several senior civil servants) stated that the main thrusts of the government’s proposed civil service modernization efforts were: (i) revision of the statute of the civil service with a view to incorporating new ideas such as emphasis on neutrality of civil servants, transparency, honesty and efficiency (*the statute adopted in 1968 has*

*never been revised*); (ii) human resources management (including staff reduction and functional review); (iii) professional training, including the strengthening of the National School of Administration; and (iv) decentralization. An Inter-Ministerial Commission was to be appointed to develop a modernization strategy, including an implementation plan. More than a year after the decision was announced, the chair of the Commission who was the Director of the Civil Service was still unable to convene the first meeting because the members to be nominated from the coordinating ministries (Finance and Planning) and the Office of the Prime Minister had not been designated.

Another illustration of half-hearted attention to civil service modernization is the failure of the government to implement the guidelines of the sub-regional organization, West Africa Economic and Monetary Union, regarding wage bill control (wage bill not to exceed 40% of government revenue in the late 1990s, with 35% as the target for 2002). A manpower audit was organized by a joint team of officials from the Civil Service Department and the Military in 1997. The objective was not achieved as the wage bill remained at over 50% of revenues. Two subsequent audits undertaken in 2000 and March 2001 made no difference. The latest round of audit, undertaken exclusively by the military, was launched in September 2001 and the results had not been made public by mid-2003.

Significantly, the desirable administrative reform (modernization) issues identified by participants involved in three Focus Group Discussion sessions organized in 2002 are broadly similar to those in the government's outline agenda for modernizing the civil service (see Table 3). The participants in the Focus Group Discussion sessions were drawn from the government, civil society and academia, and the private sector. In other words, there is broad consensus among all the key stakeholders on what needs to be done; it is government's willingness to act that is lacking. The Focus Group Discussion participants not only linked the decline in the capacity of the civil service to the poor performance of the economy in the last decade or so, they were also of the view that turning the situation around would require faithful implementation of the reform measures they recommended.

***Lessons from Togo's hesitant approach to reform:***

1. There is need for champions of reform at the level of the strategic leadership groups (political and administrative) in the machinery of government. In the absence of reform champions at these levels, the first steps towards reform design would not even happen in spite of the clarity of views and strong similarities in the public management reform priority actions identified by senior civil servants, leading private sector economic operators and articulate leaders of civil society groups.
2. With a public administration in decline and a poor performing economy, both linked to problems in the governance environment (political uncertainties due, in large part, to an incumbent president in his 38<sup>th</sup> year of rule that is sustained by a patronage system; allegations of violations of human rights from time to time; virtual absence of oversight institutions; and strong evidence of systemic corruption), it is a case that is

close to the *vicious cycle* of the governance/public management continuum mentioned earlier in the paper.

**Table 3: Togo – Desirable Public Administrative Reform Interventions<sup>21</sup>**

<b>CIVIL SERVANTS</b>	<b>NGOS/ACADEMICS</b>	<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depoliticize the administration.</li> <li>• Redefinition of the role and functions of the state and the civil service.</li> <li>• Decentralize public services (implement Law N°. 98-006 on decentralization).</li> <li>• Improved management of human resources (motivation and rational deployment of personnel).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic education for civil servants and the beneficiaries of public services.</li> <li>• Depoliticize the administration.</li> <li>• Decentralize public services (implement Law N°. 98-006 on decentralization).</li> <li>• Training and re-training of civil servants.</li> <li>• Strengthen IEC (Information Education and Communication).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good governance (human rights, efficient management of public finances and redefinition of the role of the state).</li> <li>• Improved management of human resources (motivation and rational deployment of personnel).</li> <li>• Decentralize public services (implement Law N°. 98-006 on decentralization).</li> <li>• Participation of the private sector in the formulation of policies that would affect them.</li> </ul>

<sup>21</sup> These are suggestions made by participants in three Focus Group Discussion Sessions, February 2002.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusions**

### **5.1 Toward Achieving Better and Sustainable Public Management Reform Results**

Arising from the issues in public sector management re-orientation examined in this paper, the main point that needs to be addressed in seeking to help SSA countries achieve better results from their reform efforts can be summed up as helping countries move from a vicious cycle to a virtuous cycle, in the sense in which the two terms are used in Chapter 2. In other words, countries and their (donor) partners should devote attention and resources to how best to transform both the governance and management situations in all countries interested in public management reform towards the virtuous cycle end of the continuum indicated at the bottom of Table 2. Because of the initial weak institutional conditions in countries in Groups D and C, and the overall disabling environment (including poor socioeconomic conditions), leapfrogging to Group A is very unlikely. Besides, the fortunate succession of development-oriented political leaders and the continuous commitment of both the political and administrative leadership teams to public management reform on a continuing basis would happen only very rarely. In most cases, Group D countries would need to pass through the stage of becoming “committed reformers” (Group B) – leapfrogging the Group C (“hesitant reformers”) would not be too difficult - and then, move incrementally toward Group A. The rare exception would be a country where a “window of opportunity” produces a visionary and development-oriented leader who sets the country on a fast track toward Group A. For countries that are already in Group B, they would need to continue with incremental progress toward Group A. The danger they need to avoid is backsliding into Group C. Similarly, countries in Group C should endeavor to avoid backsliding to Group D.

An important dimension to achieving better and sustainable public management reform that is valid for countries that aim to join Group A and avoid future reversal is the need for serious attention to learning and research on public services. (It is assumed that countries already in Group A would continue to pay attention to both subjects). On learning, the objective for each country should be to turn its public service into a learning organization in which all staff will be exposed to life-long learning. The political leadership team of each public service should also be exposed to appropriate education and training programs, as already suggested elsewhere in this paper. The lesson from ancient times (notably Greece and China) is that knowledge is relevant for the exercise of power and those who exercise both political and administrative power need to acquire relevant knowledge on a continuing basis. In many countries where management development and training institutes (MDTIs) and their equivalents have suffered from neglect, their rehabilitation should be a priority and the largely ad hoc training programs under ongoing reform programs need to become systematic through adoption of training policies that are properly funded and fully implemented. Regarding research on public services to be conducted within MDTIs or appropriate research institutes or faculties/departments of universities, there would be need for provision of adequate

resources on a continuing basis. A priority list of topics for research on public services should include the following: public sector governance, incentives for effective service delivery, impact of HIV/AIDS on human resource development, impact of culture on public management, and implications of globalization for national public administration systems.

## **5.2 Toward an African Administrative Space**

One possible future initiative that could be developed under the auspices of NEPAD (possibly with financial and intellectual support from AFDB) is an imitation of an excellent initiative of the European Union relating to the promotion of quality public administration systems in its member states. In 1997, the EU decided to place administrative issues on its enlargement agenda and some “administrative conditions” of membership eventually emerged. It is the main thrusts of these conditions that are sometimes referred to as constituting the “European Administrative Space”.<sup>22</sup> Although there is as yet no single European “administration model” the “attractiveness” of some features of public administration that are common in all existing fifteen EU member states as a result of mutual borrowing over centuries (with only minor differences) – for example, a professional, non-political civil service - together with the “imposition” of some administrative texts and formal arrangements that are essential for effective and uniform implementation of many EU policies constitute what some refer to as the European Administrative Space. In the SSA situation, there are two possible roots that are also complementary. First, there is an emerging convergence in certain aspects of public administration among the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states (for example, annual conferences of auditors general, accountants general, and so on) to share experiences. SADC member states are seeking to adopt a common anti-corruption strategy and action plan that would co-exist with national strategies and action plans. In West Africa, member states of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) have adopted common principles and practices in certain areas of public administration such as budget and public financial management (including common administrative texts and procedures) and civil service wage bill management. The common colonial administrative heritage shared by most member states in the two sub-regional organizations is a strong factor for the convergence. Like the EU, too, the need for uniform and effective implementation of each organization’s policies must have played a role in the trend toward convergence. Other sub-regional organizations in Eastern, Central and West African could move in similar directions.

Simultaneously with these developments within sub-regional organizations, the first steps towards a Pan-African Administrative Space could be embarked upon, closely linked to the governance issues addressed in the APRM: democracy and political governance; economic governance and management; corporate governance; and socio-economic development. A starting point could be the principles underpinning the “Charter for the Public Service in Africa” adopted at the Third Pan-African Conference of the Ministers

---

<sup>22</sup> For an informative narrative on an evolving “European Administrative Space”, see Olsen (2002).

of Civil Service held in Windhoek, Namibia, 2001. The four principles are: (i) principle of equality of treatment; (ii) principle of neutrality; (iii) principle of legality; and (iv) principle of continuity. Whilst this effort focused on a charter has its own merits and deserves to be taken into account, the principles and criteria to be adopted would need to have a broader orientation, including issues of economic management (linked to economic and corporate governance), accountability and transparency, and administrative competence. A future research program focused on public services could explore the desirability or otherwise of this suggestion, beginning with an assessment of the value added provided by the trend towards administrative convergence within SADC and WAEMU.

## REFERENCES

- Adamolekun, L. (1983) *Public Administration: A Nigerian and Comparative Perspective*. London: Longman.
- Adamolekun, L. (1993) *Politics and Administration in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books (first published in London by Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1986).
- Adamolekun, L. (ed.) (1999) *Public Administration in Africa: Main Issues and Selected Country Studies*. Colorado: Westview Press.
- Adamolekun, L. (2002) “Africa’s Evolving Career Civil Service Systems: Three Challenges – State Continuity, Efficient Service Delivery and Accountability” *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 68 (3): 373-387.
- Adamolekun, L. and P. Morgan (1999) “Pragmatic Institutional Design in Botswana. Salient Features and an Assessment” *The International Journal of Public Sector Management*, Vol. 12 (7): 584-603.
- African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD) (2001) *Charter for the Public Service in Africa*. Windhoek: Government Printer.
- Ayeni, V. (1999) “Botswana” in L. Adamolekun (ed.) *Public Administration in Africa: Main Issues and Selected Country Studies*. Colorado: Westview Press: 192-212.
- Balogun, M. (2002) “The democratization and development agenda and the African civil service: issues resolved or matters arising?” *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 68 (4): 533-556.
- Cameron, R. (2004) “Affirmative action in the South African Public Sector” *mimeo*.
- Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (ed.) (2002), “Special Issue on New Public Management in Africa” *Africa Development*, Vol. 27 (3&4).
- Doe, L. (1989) “De la reforme de la fonction publique des pays de l’UMOA,” *Revue Internationale des Sciences Sociales*, Vol. 50 (1): 131-149.
- Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (2004a) *Best practices in participatory approach to delivery of social services*. Addis Ababa: ECA.

- Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (2004b) *Public Sector Management Reforms in Africa: Lessons Learned*. Addis Ababa: ECA.
- Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (2004c) *Striving for Good Governance*. Addis Ababa: ECA.
- Fraser-Moloketi G. and H. Robertson (2003) “The Interaction between Governance, Policy and Public Service Reform in Democratic South Africa” in D. Olowu and R. Mukwena (eds.), *Governance in Southern Africa and Beyond. Experiences of Institutional and Public Policy Reform in Developing Countries*, Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan Publishers: 45-60.
- Garnett H. and W. Plowden (2004) “Cabinets, Budgets, and Poverty: Political Commitment to Poverty Reduction” in B. Levy and S. Kpundeh (eds.) *Building State Capacity in Africa*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank: 149-178.
- Good, K. (1992) “Interpreting the Exceptionality of Botswana” *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 30 (1): 69-95.
- Kiragu, K. (199) “Public Financial Management” in Adamolekun (ed.) *Public Administration in Africa: Main Issues and Selected Country Studies*. Colorado: Westview Press: Chapter 5.
- Kpundeh, S. (2004) “Process Interventions versus Structural Reforms: Institutionalizing Anticorruption Reforms in Africa” in B. Levy and S. Kpundeh (eds.) *Building State Capacity in Africa*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank: 257-282.
- Laleye, M. (1999) “Public Enterprises,” in Adamolekun, *Public Administration in Africa: Main Issues and Selected Country Studies*. Colorado: Westview Press: 28-48.
- Murray, D. (1970) “The Western Nigerian Civil Service Through Political Crises and Military Coups” *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, Vol. 8 (3): 229-240.
- Mutahaba, G. and K. Kiragu (2002) “Lessons of International and African Perspectives on Public Service Reform: Examples from Five African Countries” *Africa Development*, Vol. 27 (3&4): 48-75.
- Olowu, B. (1999) “Redesigning African Civil Service Reforms” *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 37 (1): 1-23.
- Olowu, B. (2002) “Introduction. New Public Management: An African Reform Paradigm?” *Africa Development*, Vol. 27 (3&4): 1-16.
- Olowu, B. (2001) “Pride and Performance in African Public Services: Analysis of Institutional Breakdown and Rebuilding Efforts in Nigeria and Uganda” *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 67 (1): 117-134.
- Olsen, J. P. (2002) “Towards a European Administrative Space?” *ARENA Working Papers*, WP 02/26; available at: [http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/wp02\\_26.htm](http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/wp02_26.htm)
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2001) *Public Sector Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Paris: OECD Publications.
- Picard, L. (1999) “South Africa,” in L. Adamolekun, *Public Administration in Africa: Main Issues and Selected Country Studies*. Colorado: Westview Press: 311-327.

- Schick, A. (1998) "Why Most Developing Countries Should Not Try New Zealand's Reforms," *The World Bank Research Observer*, Vol. 13 (1): 123-131.
- Stevens, M. and S. Teggemann (2004). 'Comparative Experiences with Public Service Reform in Ghana, Tanzania and Zambia' in B. Levy and S. Kpundeh (eds.) *Building State Capacity in Africa*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank: 43-86.
- World Bank (1989) *Sub-Saharan Africa. From Crisis to Sustainable Growth. A long-term perspective study*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- World Bank (1997) *World Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- World Bank (2004) *African Development Indicators*. Washington, D.C: The World Bank.