



Economic Commission for Africa

# Innovations and Best Practices in Public Sector Reforms:

The Case of Civil Service in Ghana, Kenya,  
Nigeria and South Africa





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# List of acronyms

AAPAM	African Association of Public Administration and Management
AD	Alliance for Democracy
AfDB	African Development Bank
ANC	African National Congress
APP	All People's Party
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ASCON	Administrative Staff College of Nigeria
AU	African Union
BPSR	Bureau of Public Sector Reform
BS	Beneficiary Survey
CAFRAD	African Training Centre for Administration and Development
CAPAM	Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management
CDTs	Capacity Development Teams
CMAs	Central Management Teams
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
CODESRIA	Council for Development and Scientific Research in Africa
CPSI	Centre for Public Service Innovation
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSR	Civil Service Reform
CSRs	Civil Service Reforms
CSRP	Civil Service Reform Programme
CSPIP	Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme
CSU	Client Services Unit
DfID	Department for International Development
DP	Democratic Party
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
GEAR	Macro-Economic Strategy for Growth & Employment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIDD	Government and Institutional Development Division
GNU	Government of National Unity
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management

ICT	Information Communication Technology
ICPC	Independent Corruption Practices & Other Related Offences Commission
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPPDS	Integrated Payroll and Personnel Database System
IT	Information Technology
KACA	Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority
KANU	Kenya African National Union
MBO	Management By Objectives
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MPCCs	Multi-Purpose Community Centre
MSD	Management Services Division
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIRP	National Institutional Renewal Programme
NP	National Party
NPM	New Public Management
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NPS	New Public Service
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
ODM-K	Orange Democratic Movement - Kenya
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCS	Office of the Head of the Civil Service
PAC	Presidential Advisory Committee
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PIPs	Performance Improvement Plans
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council

PPBS	Planning, Programming and Budgeting System
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PRC	Provisional Ruling Council
PSC	Public Services Commission
PSRs	Public Sector Reforms
PSRP	Public Sector Reform Programme
PSRMS	Public Sector Re-invention and Modernization Strategy
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SA	Self Appraisal
SAI	Self Appraisal Instrument
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SDS	Service Delivery Standards
SMS	Senior Management Service
SOEs	State-owned Enterprises
SPA	Special Programme of Assistance
TPSM&ES	Transversal Public Service Monitoring & Evaluation System
UDF	United Democratic Front
UK	United Kingdom
UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
US	United States
VERS	Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme
WB	World Bank

# Foreword

The socioeconomic crises which African countries have been experiencing over the last two decades have inspired governments to search for solutions, among other things, through studies and policy reforms on various critical issues of public sector management and administration. In modern governance, the public service is regarded as the nerve centre of the machinery of government. As such, regular revision of public service rules and procedures is necessary to enable the service conform with changing times and circumstances and to effectively reposition itself for higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness and enhance service delivery. This is because of the recognition that an effective state depends on an effective public sector capable of spearheading socioeconomic development and reducing poverty particularly in developing countries.

One area of the public sector which underwent reforms in many African countries since the late 1980s is the civil service. The essence of these reforms was to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the civil service and to ensure its performance, capacity and sustainability over time. The ultimate goal being to raise the quality of public services delivered to citizens and to enhance their capacity to carry out core government functions, which are essential to promote sustained socioeconomic development.

Against this background, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) commissioned this study<sup>1</sup> as part of its broader mandate at promoting good governance and sustainable socioeconomic development of the continent. The activity is also in compliance with the development framework of The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) of the African Union. The study examines innovations and best practices in public sector reforms in Africa since the early 1980s to date with particular emphasis on the civil service. In addressing these issues the study aims to inspire further discussion, research and action in this increasingly important area. The paper recognizes that comprehensive civil service reforms are not easy to undertake even when they offer significant social and economic benefits. In addition, the paper acknowledges that similar to other socioeconomic reform approaches adopted by many African countries, civil service reforms have faced a variety of operational and strategic challenges, which policymakers need to address to fully benefit from the exercise. The study concludes that some progress have been made in Africa in terms of innovations and best practices in CSRs. However, the progress has been slow in some cases because of several challenges such as lack of political and bureaucratic commitment, lack of ownership of the reform process, politicization resulting in breakdown in the merit system, and poor conditions of service.

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1 The original draft of this study was prepared by Joseph R.A. Ayee, PhD, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Head of Humanities, University of KwaZuklu-Natal, South Africa.



The publication was prepared by the Governance and Public Administration Division of ECA, under the overall supervision of Mr. Abdalla Hamdok, Director. The team was led by Mr. Said Adejumobi, Chief, Public Administration Section and comprised of: Guillermo Mangué, Kaleb Demeksa, Guy Ranaivomanana, Boris- Ephrem Tchoumavi, Rebecca Benyam, Meaza Molla and ECA Publication services. A team of independent experts drawn from government, private sector, academia and civil society reviewed the draft document at an Ad Hoc Experts group meeting that took place in Addis Ababa from 7-8 November 2009. The comments and observations made by the experts contributed significantly to improving the paper and are hereby acknowledged.

It is expected that the data and information contained in this study will prove valuable to decision-makers, planners and researchers to share knowledge and experiences across the continent in order to achieve sustainable development in Africa.

Abdalla Hamdok  
Director  
Governance and Public Administration Division.

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# Executive Summary

Reform of the public sector in both developed and developing countries, which began in the early 1980s, was meant to improve ways in which government is managed and services delivered, with emphasis on effectiveness, efficiency, economy and value for money. This is because of the recognition that an effective state depends on an effective public sector capable of spearheading socio-economic development and reducing poverty particularly in developing countries. One area of the public sector which underwent reform in Africa is the civil service, regarded as the nerve centre of the machinery of government. Since the late 1980s many African countries reformed their civil service as part of the process of state redesign, which was largely influenced by the adoption of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), democratization and the new public management (NPM).

Against this backdrop, this study examines innovations and best practices in public sector reforms in Africa within the last decade with emphasis on the civil service. Cases studies from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa will be used to illustrate trends, dynamics, issues and challenges of reform initiatives and their implications for civil service performance. The four countries were selected because of time and funding, their linguistics and political homogeneity as well as the fact that they undertook public and civil service reforms (CSRs) which show the symptoms of trends, processes, dynamics, major innovations and best practices.

The study is divided into seven (7) parts. Part 1 deals with the methodology, namely, sources of data collection and reasons for the choice of the four countries as cases studies. Part 2 defines the five major concepts or terms used in the study. It is designed to enable the reader get a clearer picture of the trajectories and dynamics of civil service reform (CSR) in Africa. Part 3 discusses innovations and best practices in public sector reforms in non-African countries. Part 4 reviews the literature on public sector and civil service reforms and then focuses on the trends, processes and dynamics of civil service reform in Africa. Part 5 is devoted to the experiences of civil service reform in the four countries, namely, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, highlighting the major innovations and best practices. Part 6 identifies and analyzes some of the major challenges facing civil service reforms and the strategies aimed at addressing them. Part 7 summarizes the findings, highlights the lessons learnt and proffers policy recommendations on how the capacity and performance of the civil service can be enhanced in Africa through meaningful reform of the sector.

The study found that the four countries had undertaken far reaching CSRs with Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya beginning their reforms as far back as the late 1980s after the implementation of SAP while South Africa began its own after the apartheid era in 1994. The essence of the CSRs is to improve the

effectiveness and performance of the civil service and to ensure its affordability and sustainability over time. The ultimate goal is to raise the quality of public services delivered to citizens and to enhance the capacity to carry out core government functions, which is essential to promote sustained socio-economic development. The core elements or strategies of the CSRs used are organizational restructuring, human resource management including retrenchment and pay reform, budgetary and financial reforms while the non-core elements are strengthening the capacity of policy-making institutions, improving the relationships between ministers and civil servants and other publics, increasing the political responsiveness of top civil servants and building the capacity of the civil service through training of staff and retaining them.

The study also found that some modest progress has been made in the four countries in terms of innovations and best practices in CSRs. They include: (i) indigenizing and mainstreaming programme leadership and management; (ii) building an incentive framework under severe budgetary constraints; (iii) integrating civil service reform processes; (iv) radical reorganization of government; (v) building smart partnerships with a variety of stakeholders; (vi) effective and efficient delivery of public services; (vii) performance management agreements with senior civil servants; (viii) promoting accountability and transparency; (ix) e-government; (x) capacity building; (xi) reducing corruption; (xii) enhanced remuneration for civil servants; (xiii) institutional framework for innovation; (xiv) annual civil service monitoring and evaluation. Some of the sources which have influenced these innovations and best practices are: (i) International Financial Institutions; (ii) Charter for the Public Service in Africa; (iii) the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and (iv) Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management (CAPAM).

Progress in the implementation of CSRs has, however, been slow in the four countries because of several challenges such as lack of political and bureaucratic commitment, lack of ownership of the reform process, politicization resulting in breakdown in the merit system, inability to hire and retain senior officials, weak systems of accountability, poor and wrong diagnosis and prognosis. There is growing concern by governments and their citizens in the four countries over the slow pace of reforms and their inability to reduce poverty. Accordingly, the four governments have taken some steps to grapple with the challenges of sequencing and the pace of the reforms. In addition, some of the earlier gains made by the CSRs in the countries such as downsizing, were reversed.

Some of the key lessons include: (a) reform efforts should be guided by a holistic vision and shared by all key stakeholders; (b) CSRs must be linked to such components as financial management, decentralization and sector-wide approaches; (c) a long term, system-wide approach to civil service and public sector reforms must be adopted; (d) a selective introduction of NPM ideas and practices should be adapted; (e) reform is a continuous exercise and it tends to develop its own momentum that successive political and administrative leadership teams would deepen, depending on prevailing circumstances within and outside the country; (f) a committed workforce is important in nurturing

a well-functioning civil service system; (g) an efficient and effective public service requires not only cost containment and staff retrenchment but also incentives to attract and retain highly skilled administrative officials; (h) the Weberian bureaucratic model on which civil service systems and structures are built in Africa provides relevant data for understanding the constraints and challenges that faced CSRs; (i) CSRs were externally-driven and therefore lack the “homegrown” touch to make them successful; (j) the centrality of the character of the state in Africa is important in understanding CSRs; (k) the African continent has recorded some innovations and best practices in reform typified by the experiences of Botswana and South Africa and sporadic single cases from other African countries.

Some of the policy recommendations include: (a) focusing reforms not only on management but also on leadership; (b) tailoring reform policies to specific organizations; (c) reforming the incentive system; (d) undertaking cultural change; (e) creating a Pan-African Administrative Space similar to the European Administrative Space of 1997, which will identify common principles, strategy and actions of public administration that may be closely linked to the governance issues addressed in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM); and (f) moving towards the New Public Service, which involves a set of ideas about the role of public administration in the governance system that places citizens at the centre.



# CHAPTER I: Introduction

Even though the role of the state in development in Africa has been downplayed for decades, a paradigmatic shift and a rediscovery of the importance of the state in the development process and the need for a more capable sector occurred in the 1990s. The relevance of the state or the public sector<sup>2</sup> to socio-economic development in Africa cannot be underestimated. This has been re-echoed in the 1997 *World Development Report* which argued that “an effective state is vital for the provision of the goods and services – and the rules and institutions – that allow markets to flourish and the people to lead healthier, happier lives. Without it, sustainable development, both economic and social, is impossible” (World Bank, 1997:1). The basic function of the public sector in Africa therefore is to provide goods and services to citizens based on “realization and representation of public interests and its possession of unique public qualities compared to business management” (Haque, 2001: 65). However, the public sector was not able to perform its function effectively because of its “accumulation of excessive power, lack of accountability and representation, indifference towards public needs and demands, official secrecy and inaccessibility, and role in depoliticizing the public sphere” (Garham 1990; Haque 1994). This ineffectiveness coupled with the economic crises of the late 1970s and 1980s and the apparent lessons from international experience of the success of market-friendly economies have combined to produce what some scholars have referred to as the “redefinition of the role of the state or public sector” (Fiszbein, 2000: 163).

The redefinition of the role of the state or the public sector involves the need to overhaul administrative systems and rejuvenate public organizations in both developed and developing countries. This is because:

*Though the dawn has been clouded and goals cannot be easily defined, the vitality of a country's development depends on the rejuvenation of public administration even in the darkness of insufficient knowledge and experience (Rizos, 1965: 47).*

Public sector reforms in developed countries like the United Kingdom (UK), United States (US), Canada and Australia have shown that changes in political, social, economic and administrative environments (such as economic and fiscal crisis of the state, the influence of neo-liberal ideas like

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<sup>2</sup> The terms “public sector” and the “state” are used synonymously because there cannot be a strong state without an efficient public sector. In most African countries the clearance evidence of the weakness of states is provided by the poor performance of the public sector. See African Development Bank, *African Development Report 2005: Africa in the World Economy, Public Sector Management in Africa, Economic and Social Statistics of Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 121.

public choice theory and criticisms of the old public administration, changes in political and ideological context like the New Right ideas, development in information technology and growth and role of management consultants) have prompted and driven radical changes in public administration and management systems. The central objective of change was improvement in the ways in which government is managed and services delivered, with emphasis on effectiveness, efficiency, economy and value for money (Lane, 1997; Kettl, 1997, Metcalfe and Richards, 1990; Ayee 2008).

In Africa and other developing countries, however, the need to reform public sector institutions has been prompted largely by world-wide decline in public finances and the need “to get more for less” (Caiden, 1988: 332). The unjust international economic system and persistent public pressures for increased government intervention to reverse the situation have forced governments in Africa and other developing countries to adopt temporary measures which have resulted in large-scale borrowing, unprecedented public indebtedness, high rates of inflation, frequent currency devaluations, and harsh policies imposed under the pressure of the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Hicks and Kubisch, 1984). Governments have had to cut back to reduce expenditures, staff, investments and services and to demand higher productivity and better performance from their sluggish public sectors.

The renewed sense of urgency about creating an effective public sector in Africa can be observed both at the continental and national levels in many African countries. For instance, the fourth Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public Service, held within the framework of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) in March 2003 in South Africa, agreed to a Pan-African Government and Public Administration capacity-development programme to strengthen public institutions and systems of African states. Public sector reform has also become a high priority for governments in Africa.

In order to improve their countries’ positions in the emerging world economy, governments in Africa and other developing countries have been forced to redefine their roles and strategies. In doing so, almost all have blamed the “dead hand” of bureaucracy: the poor performance of public bureaucracies, the daily annoyances of irksome restrictions, cumbersome red tape, unpleasant officials, poor service and corrupt practices<sup>3</sup>. The “dead hand” of bureaucracy had to be replaced by a new invigorating concept of public management and clear proof that public organizations were value for money (World Bank, 1997).

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3 For an extensive discussion of the “dead hand” of bureaucracy see G.E. Caiden (ed.) “Symposium on Public Policy and Administrative Reform”, *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 8, Special Issue 4, 1980-81; Peter Self, “What’s Gone Wrong with Public Administration”, *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1986: 329-338; Peter Drucker, “The Deadly Sins in Public Administration”, *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (March-April), 1980: 103-106.



Against this backdrop, this study examines innovations and best practices in public sector reforms in Africa within the last decade with emphasis on the civil service. Cases studies from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa will be used to illustrate trends, dynamics, issues and challenges of reform initiatives and their implications for civil service performance.

## 1.1 Structure of the Study

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The study is divided into seven parts. Part one deals with the methodology, namely, sources of data collection and reasons for the choice of the four countries as cases studies. Part two defines the five major concepts or terms used in the study. It is designed to enable the reader get a clearer picture of the trajectories and dynamics of civil service reform in Africa. Part three discusses innovations and best practices in public sector reforms in non-African countries. Part four reviews the literature on public sector and civil service reforms and then focuses on the trends, processes and dynamics of civil service reform in Africa. Part five is devoted to the experiences of civil service reform in the four countries, namely, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, highlighting the major innovations and best practices. Part six identifies and analyzes some of the major challenges facing civil service reforms and the strategies aimed at addressing them. Part seven summarizes the findings, highlights the lessons learnt and proffers policy recommendations on how the capacity and performance of the civil service can be enhanced in Africa through meaningful reform of the sector.

## 1.2 Methodology

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This study used primary and secondary sources of data. First, it reviews the literature on public and civil service reforms globally, in Africa and the four countries, namely, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa to enable us analyze the trends, processes, dynamics, major innovations and best practices. Secondly, the paper draws on documentary sources such as constitutions and government publications and reports, which give official views of reform initiatives and processes in the four countries to beef up and validate some of the trends, processes, dynamics, major innovations, best practices and issues raised in the literature.

The choice of the four countries is instructive for three reasons. First, there is evidence that the countries undertook substantial reform efforts since the 1990s in the regions that they belong to in sub-Saharan Africa, namely, Ghana and Nigeria in West Africa, Kenya in East Africa and South Africa in Southern Africa. Secondly, they show the symptoms of trends, processes, dynamics, major innovations and best practices in both public and civil service reforms. Thirdly, time and funding did not allow us to expand the study to Arabophone, Francophone and Lusophone countries in addition to the

problem posed by them linguistically and politically as they have different systems of public sector, hence different set up of their civil service structures.

### 1.3 Definition of key Concepts

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In this study, the following definitions are used.

- **Innovation:** In this study, innovation refers to two processes of change in an organization or society. First, it refers to putting new ideas into useful practice (UNDESA 2007). In the words of John Adair (2007: 5) innovation “combines two major overlapping processes: having new ideas and implementing them”. Secondly, innovation is also about doing old things in new and better ways by an organization or society to meet its challenges (Aldair 2007: Olaopa 2009a).
- **Best Practices:** The concept of best practice is a relatively new one. According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, a best practice “is the belief that there is a technique, method, process, activity, incentive or reward that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc. The idea is that with proper processes, checks and testing, a desired outcome can be delivered with fewer problems and unforeseen complications” ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best\\_practices](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best_practices) 6/24/2009). In short, best practices in this study refers to the “most efficient (least amount of effort) and effective (best results) way of accomplishing a task, based on repeatable procedures that have proven themselves over time large numbers of people” (Ibid).
- **Public Sector:** The term public sector or service indicates a wider scope than the civil service. We may define the public service as the machinery of government, that is, the totality of services that are organized under public (that is, government) authority. It is the totality of the administrative structures within which the work of government is carried out (Lane 1993). A more governance oriented definition sees the public sector as the nature and mode of operation of the state in presiding over the public sector covers the following categories of institutions. They are the (a) the civil service in the strict sense of ministries and departments of the central government; (b) the legislature and judiciary; (c) local governments; (d) public or state enterprises, boards, corporations generally referred to as parastatals which operate and provide service in areas such as water and electricity; (e) the security forces; (d) the professional regulatory bodies which are given the power to prescribe training required for members; to regulate the conduct of members and to prohibit the unqualified from practicing.
- **Civil Service:** Within the Commonwealth of Nations of which seventeen are in Sub-Saharan Africa, the term civil service is often used synonymously with government. In this paper, civil service is used to describe two sets of ideas, namely, (i) it refers to the body of

permanent officials appointed to assist the political executive in formulating and implementing governmental policies, who are referred to as civil servants; and (ii) it refers to ministries and departments within which specific aspects of government work are carried out (Adamolekun 1999).

- **Reform:** In this paper, administrative reform is seen as: (i) a deliberate plan to change public bureaucracies; (ii) synonymous with innovation, which is the injection of new ideas and new people in a new combination of tasks and relationships into the policy and administrative process; and (iii) coping with the uncertainties and rapid changes taking place in the organizational environment (De Guzman and Reforma, 1992; Turner and Hulme, 1997).
- **Public Sector Reforms (PSRs):** We may define public sector reforms as processes and practices which are concerned with improving the capacity of institutions to make policy and deliver services in an efficient, effective and accountable manner. In addition, it also involves the strengthening and management of the public sector. Some of the range of reform measures include (i) civil service reform; (ii) financial and fiscal reform; (iii) decentralization; (iv) legal and judicial reform; (v) privatization and deregulation; (vi) enhancing accountability; and (vii) improving corporate regulatory frameworks (African Development Bank 2005).

## 1.4 The Nexus Between the Six Terms

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The nexus between innovation, best practices and reform vis-à-vis the public sector, public sector reforms and civil service is that they are all concerned with making changes by introducing something new or novel and conjures up thoughts of creativity, bring in new ideas, experimentation and taking risks to enable organizations and institutions in the public sector and civil service more functional, effective and efficient.

# CHAPTER II: Innovations and Best Practices in Public Sector Reforms

## 2.1 The International Context

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Public sector reforms in Africa were driven by economic reform, democratization and the search for administrative efficiency with a view improving the quality of good and service delivered to the public. In other words, reforms were inspired by or have parallels in the public administration reform experiences of other countries outside Africa (Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999; Caiden and Sundaram 2004). Notable examples include the “big bang” comprehensive state reforms in New Zealand (from the mid-1980s through the early 1990s) (see Box 1), the radical transformation of administrative culture in the United Kingdom under Margaret Thatcher and her successors (1979-1998) (see Box 2), the Government Performance and Results Act (1993) in the United States, the total quality management movements in several Southeast Asian countries, and the decentralized management initiative in several Latin American countries (Campbell and Fuhr 1997; Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999).

By 1997, international innovations and best practices in public sector reforms had the following four main features:

This entails that the state only performs functions that should be at the level of the state while leaving the other functions to sub-national governments and the private sector. The main issues are the need for the state to nurture an environment that is conducive to private sector development; decentralization of functions and privatization, commercialization or liquidation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs). These form the core features of the New Public Management (NPM) (World Bank 1997). A good illustration of the redefinition of the role of the state is the reforms in New Zealand. The two elements in the exercise were the restructuring of SOEs and the downsizing of the core public service. SOEs were corporatized, privatized or liquidated and the core public staff was reduced from 88,000 to 35,000 within five years (Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999; Bale and Dale 1998; Schick 1998). The restructuring of the SOEs was inspired in large part by their significant contribution to the serious economic crisis of the country faced in the early 1980s. With regard to the ministries and departments of central government, the government decided to transfer policy implementation (production of goods and delivery of services) to outside agencies, leaving the ministries and departments with policy planning, contracting and monitoring of performance. The redundancies that resulted were managed through severance payments that were recouped within eighteen months (see Box 1).

These are introduced to enhance public management performance. The measures include, among others, improvement in financial and personnel management systems with emphasis on increased autonomy for managers (with corresponding responsibility), pay reform (partly linked to performance), and continuous skills development and upgrading. Some of the initiatives include the creation of British-style executive agencies that are responsible for policy formulation and the management of the contract arrangements with the executive agencies. In human resource management, merit-based recruitment and promotion procedures as well as due attention to incentives to motivate staff, notably through decent pay were recognized. In general countries with a merit system (for example, Japan, Korea and Singapore) have better qualified civil services than those that do not (example, Philippines) (Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999).

In financial management, budget reform and expenditure controls through making budget systems more transparent and linking budgets to development plans and the introduction of the medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) to ensure a more strategic approach to resource allocation and management as well as control public spending were implemented (Caiden and Sundaram 2004; Turner and Hulme 1997).

Improved public management performance was meant to improve service delivery. Three measures that sought to improve the quality of service delivery are surveys of service delivery, quality charters, and programme evaluation. Surveys of service delivery see to establish benchmarks against which progress in service delivery is measured. The use of quality charters was started in the United Kingdom in 1991 while Australia started the use of programme evaluation to improve service delivery as a key feature of its public management reform programme in the mid-1980s (Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999; Turner and Hulme 1997).

The emphasis is on measures for enforcing the accountability of the governors to the governed through increases transparency, openness and citizen participation. Some of the measures include respect for electoral legitimacy, internal control mechanisms (hierarchical control, internal audits, code of ethics) and external controls (the judiciary, legislature, media and ombudsmen) (Olowu 1999a).

## 2.2 The African Context

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The literature shows that there are innovations and best practices in some Africa countries. The best known example is Botswana, which is reputed for its good institutions, prudent macroeconomic management, political stability and efficient civil service. The country is the embodiment of enviable constitutional order, law-based state and respect for the rule of law, which have strengthened state legitimacy, leadership succession and political stability. One of the key aspects of public policy and public sector reform in the country is enforcing market discipline and promoting efficient allocation

and use of economic resources through the encouragement of private sector activity in economic development (ADB 2005).

Public management reforms featured prominently in successive development plans of Botswana and its “Vision 2016”. Some of the reforms include the adoption of the Performance Management System (PMS), Work Improvement Teams (WITs), Computerized Personnel Management System (CPMS), Organization and Methods Reviews (O & MRs), Performance Based Reward System (PBRS) and Decentralization. Ministries and departments were rationalized in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Part of the reform led to the establishment of autonomous authorities which work on largely commercial principles (ADB 2005; Olaopa 2009a).

A key thing to note is that the reforms, unlike in most African countries, have largely been driven by a succession of competent leadership and dedicated workforce who are committed to continuous administrative reform. This reinforces the view of Adamolekun (1999) that the quality of political leadership is not only key to successful reform but also development and reducing poverty by adopting strategic policies and programmes. The transformational leadership good practices have also been recorded in Ghana, Liberia and Rwanda where the leaders have designed policies and programmes in the areas of good governance and the economy to ensure the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Some of the good innovations and practices in other African countries include the following: (i) Egypt’s Information and Decision Support Centre and its rapid and swift response in serving as a catalyst for the establishment of a flourishing computer industry; (ii) the integrated coastal management with local development planning model in Namibia; (iii) Mali’s two-pillar inter-tier resource planning initiative 166; the introduction of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) in public financial management in Ghana, Zambia and Tanzania; (iv) Tanzania’s salary supplementation scheme; (v) Diaspora capacity leveraging schemes in Liberia and Sierra Leone; (vi) Public Expenditure Tracking Systems (PETS) in Ghana, Uganda and Zambia by civil society organizations; (vii) Namibia’s National Public Private Partnership scheme for expanded waste management services in poor communities; and (viii) Rwanda’s investment in the ICT sector as a driver of economic transformation and aiming to become a regional supplier of ICT related capacity support to, for example, South Sudan (Kiragu and Mutahaba 2006; Olaopa 2009b).

### **Box 1: Overview of Public Institution Reform in New Zealand, 1985-1997**

- (i) Launched in the mid-1980s to address the national economic crisis that emerged in the early 1980s: balance of trade deficits, rising inflation, budget deficits, growing national debt, unemployment.
- ii. Commenced with the transformation of trade activities of government organizations into state corporate structures, which were subsequently privatized. Corporatization entails the removal of the non-core government activities into corporate structures with: (a) clear roles and objectives; (b) minimal controls – corporate freedom; agreed performance measures and controls; and incentives;
- iii. Later in late 1980s, extended to non-trading activities, including public personnel management.
- iv. In the corporatization programme of New Zealand: (a) departmental heads (chief executives) are appointed on contract, provided with resources and autonomy, and judged by results; (b) civil servants compete with private sector professionals for appointment to the state corporate agencies.
- v. Results: core public service staff halved in five years.

**Sources:** *Bale and Dale, 1998; Schick 1998; Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999.*

## **Box 2: Administrative Reform Experience of the United Kingdom, 1979-1997**

1980: Creation of an Efficiency Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister.

1980-1997: Downsizing of the civil service and privatization of nationalized industries. This led to a reduction in the number of permanent civil servants from 735,000 to 482,000, a 34% reduction.

1982: Establishment of the Audit Commission to watch over the efficiency of local governments and the national health service.

1983: Improved auditing capacity through the establishment of a National Audit Office.

1988: "The Next Steps Initiative" – creation of the first executive agencies to run the "executive functions of government as distinct from policy advice". By mid-1997, 130 executive agencies were established, employing 384,000 civil servants, about 74% of the total staff strength.

1991: "Competing for Quality" – promoting customer responsiveness by means of a Citizen's Charter (several other charters have followed, including charters for patients, taxpayers, parents and job seekers).

1994: Establishment of a standing committee on standards in public life.

1995: Creation of the Office of Commissioner of Public Appointments (to uphold the principle of selection on merit to positions in non-ministerial administrative agencies).

1996: Establishment of a Senior Executive Service.

1997: Devolution – steps toward the establishment of regional assemblies in Scotland and Wales, to be followed by the transfer of functions and resources.

**Sources:** *Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999; Guy Peters, 1995.*



# CHAPTER III: The Post-Colonial State in Africa

## 3.1 Reasons Behind State Intervention in Africa

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Even though the terms “state” and the “public sector” have been used synonymously because there can be no strong state without an efficient public sector (African Development Bank, 2005), for purposes of analysis and to contextualize reform of the African public sector and understand its processes, dynamics and intricacies, it is pertinent for us to examine the state and state capacity building in Africa. This section is therefore devoted to the post-colonial state in Africa and efforts made to build its capacity.

Several studies have identified three main reasons for state intervention in the economy in Africa. They are as follows: (i) statist conceptions of development; (ii) economic nationalism; (iii) political patronage (Tangri, 1999).

### *3.1.1 Statist Conceptions of Development*

The post-independence period in the 1960s in Africa witnessed an enormous expansion of government intervention in national economies when the public sector was seen as a major contributor to economic growth and socio-political stability. This statism or state capitalism, that is, ownership and intervention by the state was accepted as the dominant development strategy and paradigm. That the state had a central role to play in directing the development process was especially acknowledged in the African context in the midst of a weakly developed indigenous private sector as well as substantial foreign economic presence. Thus justifying state intervention in the economy was not only an ideological necessity but also a historical one. Consequently, a variety of forms of state economic intervention inherited from the colonial period were expanded and generalized in the years after independence, leading, in particular, to the marked expansion of SOEs undertaking important shares of production and investment in African countries (Tangri, 1999; Young, 1991; Bennell, 1997).

### *3.1.2 Economic Nationalism/Africanization of the Economy*

After independence there were strong feelings in African countries of “economic nationalism”, which stemmed from the weakness and subordinate status of African private enterprise as well as from the fact that African economies were largely in the hands of foreigners. Public sector enterprise was seen as enabling the state to carry out activities that African private entrepreneurs could not perform and also to reduce the dominance of foreign enterprise. Throughout the continent, political leaders sought

to secure greater indigenous ownership of the economy, especially of the activities a country depended on for its foreign exchange earnings. Greater ownership and control of the economy through what was called “capturing the commanding heights of the economy” to influence the broad direction of national development through nationalization of foreign economic concerns were carried out in Zambia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Ghana, Zimbabwe. In addition, new SOEs were created in Swaziland and Kenya to accelerate the policy of Africanization of the economy. In some socialist countries like Tanzania, Ethiopia and Mozambique, the policy of extensive proliferation of SOEs was pursued as way of fulfilling the ideological ambitions of the governments (Adamolekun, 1999).

### **3.1.3 Political Patronage**

State intervention was seen as maintaining the leaders in power. Because of the intense pressures exerted on African leaders for providing employment and the redistribution of public resources, the public enterprise sector offered the leaders the resources and opportunities to meet some of the demands. As a result, state owned enterprises (SOEs) were to be physically impressive, spread all over the country, should create new jobs, and should benefit the consumer via lower prices. And just as it was necessary to impress the electorate, it was also necessary to reward party activists; hence the enterprises were used as sources of political patronage. This point has been reinforced by Van de Walle (1994: 155-156) who argued that in Cameroon, SOEs “proved to be an ideal instrument to distribute state resources in the form of jobs, rents, power and prestige which enabled President Ahmadou Ahidjo to reward allies and co-opt opponents and thus secure his power base”. In short, SOEs were beneficial to state office holders in terms of consolidating their power and maintaining their political incumbency (Tangri, 1999).

Furthermore, the creation of SOEs stemmed from the fact that they (SOEs) were visible and highly ostentatious evidence of the governments’ efforts to develop the economy of the country. SOEs erected impressive facades, and though there was not much behind the façade in real terms, the political impact was considerable (Adamolekun 1999).

## **3.2 Three Thematic Areas of the Post-Colonial State**

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It is instructive to note that the post-colonial state in Africa has attracted interest in three thematic areas, namely, (i) state consolidation; (ii) state decline; and (iii) state capacity building. State consolidation, which came into vogue in the immediate post-independence era, emanated from the underlying assumption that the state was a major means to bring about societal change and fulfilling economic and social aspirations with strong integrative and development objectives (Herbst, 2000). The shift to state decline from the mid 1970s focuses on analyzing what went wrong with the state and the reasons for its weakness. The state proved incapable of bringing about intended changes in society and

was seen to be erected on rather doubtful foundations of legitimacy. The state was variously characterized as “prismatic” (Riggs 1964), “soft” (Myrdal 1968), “weak” (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982), “over-developed” (Leys 1975), “precapitalist affectation” (Hyden 1983) and “anti-development” (Dwivedi and Nef 1982) because of its inability to meet the aspirations not only of civil society but also those who occupied central political institutions (Azarya, 1988). This characterization was not only a major cause of economic decline experienced by most African countries during the 1970s and 1980s but a weakening of governmental capacity and effectiveness, which in turn hindered efforts at economic revival via structural adjustment (Jeffries, 1993).

### 3.3 Building State Capacity

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State intervention in the economy African countries has largely been seen as counterproductive and detrimental to economic growth and progress. Patronage, neopatrimonialism, corruption, nepotism, inappropriate policy design, poor policy implementation and transactional rather than transformational leadership, all not in the interest of pursuing the public interest but rather sectional and partisan interests, poor service provision and delivery, characterized the period of state intervention. With the economic crises which faced most African states in the 1970s and 1980s coupled with the lessons of market forces in developed countries, there was the need to redefine the role of the state through the building of its capacity.

Four features underpinned state capacity building. They are: (a) a reduction of the role of the state in national economic management; (b) an enhanced role for sub-national governments; (c) public-private partnership in respect to the production and provision of goods and services; and (d) efforts such as designing corporate plans and signing of performance contracts aimed at achieving improved performance in public management (Adamolekun, 1999).

Given the incapacity of the state to implement structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), the World Bank and other donors in the 1980s moved towards a concern with improving state capacity through “rolling back the state”, that is, the restriction of the role of the state while providing greater opportunity for market forces to assert themselves on the development process and liberalizing the economy which it is hoped will induce economic development. The concern also involves building administrative capacity as an instrumentality of the development process rather than of a spoils system and the development of more efficient and, in sense, more autonomous state machines. Various panaceas were suggested, including administrative reform covering areas such as organizational development, manpower development, training, and the introduction of management techniques along the lines of the New Public Management School (Schaffer, 1969; Levy, 2004; Haque, 2001).

# CHAPTER IV: The Weberian Bureaucratic Model and the African Civil Service

## 4.1 Features of Bureaucratic Model

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The civil service systems of African countries inherited from the colonial rulers in the 1960s were inspired by the Weberian bureaucratic model (Adamolekun 2002). The model therefore provides relevant data for understanding the challenges that new ideas have to overcome to truly become innovations and best practices in Africa. In other words, one cannot understand the functions, structure, orientation and organizational culture as well as challenges facing the civil service without looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the Weberian bureaucratic model.

Defined conceptually by Weber as legal rational authority and embodied in civil service structures and laws, the primary goal of the model was to eliminate patrimonial, amateur and spoils system administration. The common components of the model include entrance by examination, or other professionally sanctioned qualifications, promotion by merit, job tenure, reasonable and predictable salaries, and administration based on written rules. By taking personnel decisions out of the hands of politicians, the bureaucratic model was expected to reduce patronage and clientelism. Stable employment and income are to diminish the temptations of corruption, while detailed rules and extensive paper trails provide means for rooting out malfeasance (Gerth and Mills 1946).

## 4.2 Pathologies of the Model

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In spite of these virtues, the bureaucratic model has created pathologies such as over regulation, rigidity and emphasis on complying with rules rather than achieving results. The rules of Weberian administration tend to absorb more of a bureaucrat's time than actually implementing policies or providing services. Moreover, job tenure and rigid rules for promotion, which often depend more on seniority than merit and performance, deprive managers of the ability to use promotions and dismissals to motivate subordinates (Evans 1995).

In Africa, the civil service structures which were based on the bureaucratic model led to inefficient organizations, excessive red tape and structural arrangements that impeded as much or more than serve the implementation of public policy. It discouraged individual initiative and supported a culture of unreflective defence of the status quo. It lacked flexibility, imagination and adaptability that

generate the capacity for self-correction. In short, the formal organizational structures which were originally designed to promote “neutrality” became dysfunctional and inefficient. They had socialized public and civil servants to follow rules and regulations to the point that they became ends rather than means to a public policy goal. The model made them a self-interested group of people which placed its own interests far above those of the government and the people that constitute the public that it serves (Olaopa 2009b). According to Adamolekun (2002), the abandonment of the principles underlying Weber’s model in Africa saw the loss of its associated benefits. He identified politicization and partisanship as the common features of the single party or patronage political systems in different countries, which were not conducive to the practice of the bureaucratic model.

# CHAPTER V: Trends and Processes of Civil Service Reforms in Africa

## 5.1 Review of the General Literature on Public Sector Reform (PSR)

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The general literature on public sector reform indicates that changes in the socio-economic conditions in the 1970s and 1980s have provided grounds for administrative reforms in both developed and developing countries (Caiden, 1978; 1988; 1991; Bjur and Caiden, 1978; Boudiguel and Rouban, 1988; Ayee 2008). These reforms, partly prompted by the world-wide economic recession of the 1970s and 1980s, de-emphasized the role of the state, and rather emphasized the role of the private sector in the socio-economic life of the countries concerned, a phenomenon that is referred to in the literature as the “rolling back of the state” or the “withdrawal of the state”. Underpinning these reforms was the search for efficiency and effectiveness in the face of dwindling resources (World Bank, 1997). This was elaborated in most cases into a general crusade to reorganize and modernize the public sector including the civil service (Caiden, 1988; 1991; Peters, 1992; Collins, 2000).

These changes had their political and ideological underpinnings in the rise of neoliberal economic thinking and conservatism in both the United Kingdom and the United States in the late 1970s and 1980s, and were reflected in the concurrent shift in the strategies of the IMF and the World Bank toward a more liberal and market-oriented ideology (Christensen, 1988; Luke, 1991; Collins, 2000). The implications, for the public service, were demands for a smaller but efficient and effective public service. In the process of reforms, some management techniques from the private sector were imported into the public service such as Planning, Programming and Budgeting Systems (PPBS), merit pay, Management By Objectives (MBO) and contract-based appointments (Batley 1994a; Batley 1994b; Denhardt and Denhardt 2000).

The emergence of the neoliberal agenda in the form of “rolling-back the state” in western countries in the 1970s began to have expression in IMF- and World Bank-supported economic reform programmes in African countries in the 1980s, with a similar demand for smaller, efficient and cost-effective public administration institutions which could only be achieved through reforms (Caiden 1991; Denhardt and Denhardt 2000).

PSR is also seen as part of the agenda for improving governance, which includes three broad areas: rule-based operation of the government itself to improve the supply of public goods, voice and accountability for citizens to demand better public services and more efficient and effective regulation

of the private sector to improve its competitiveness (World Bank 2008; Levy 2004; UNDESA 2005; UNECA 2004). As rightly pointed out by Dror (2001) public sector reform tries to head off crises in the capacity to govern and therefore commands attention everywhere especially when public officials are expected to provide satisfactory service, make improvements, plan ahead to meet most contingencies and keep up with the state of the art.

According to Caiden and Sundaram (2004), public sector reforms are highly complicated and emotional because they are bound up with ideology and values, not just techniques and processes, and include not mere detail but key societal issues. Some of the key questions embedded in public sector reforms are: (i) What should be considered public and how far should public intervention go? (ii) How should public goods and services be provided and delivered and to whom? (iii) How should public organizations be run and by whom? (iv) What should be the social standing of public servants and what should their duties and obligations cover? (v) What are the key public personnel to be found and how are they educated and developed? (vi) To whom and how should they be accountable and for what? (vii) What should be considered fair compensation to them? (viii) Who should be denied public office or removed from office for what offences; (ix) How is performance, capacity, and talent to be measured, by whom and for what purpose?

## **5.2 Review of the Literature on Public Sector Reforms in Africa**

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### ***5.2.1 Literature on Rationale for Public Sector Reforms:***

The literature on public sector reforms in Africa can be divided into three areas, namely, (i) those that deal with the rationale for public sector reforms; (ii) those that deal with the strategies deployed for public sector reform; and (iii) those that looked at the phases of the reforms.

The literature identifies the drivers for public sector reforms (PSRs). They include (a) inability by many governments to balance the budgets; (b) incapacity of governments to adequately respond to public demands; (c) the internationalization of many issues that previously were solely domestic; and (d) the over expansion of the scale of government and its intervention in all spheres of society, even where it has no competence and track record, leading to overload problems Cohen 1993; Levy and Kpundeh 2004; Mutahaba 1989; Mutahaba, Baguma and Halfani 1993; Van de Walle and Ramachandran 2003; UNECA 2004; Rugumyambeto 2004; AfDB 2005). Attention to PSR has therefore emerged because the quality of the public sector – accountability, efficiency in service delivery, transparency, and so forth – correlates strongly with long-term growth and poverty reduction (Mukandala 2000; Van de Walle 2001; Mutahaba and Kiragu 2002; Aye 2008). Indeed, inadequate state capacity is seen as the failure of the public sector to perform its functions (AfDB 2005). Accordingly, public sector reform addresses four problems constraining developmental progress in Africa, namely, (i) over-centralized

government; (ii) recurrent personnel costs that consume large amounts of scarce budgetary resources; (iii) large budget deficits; and (iv) declining administrative capacity (Cohen 1993; Levy and Kpundeh 2004; Mutahaba 1989; Mutahaba, Baguma and Halfani 1993; UNECA 2004).

Some of the studies have either focused on public sector reforms under structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) or specifically SAP-related public service reforms. Studies that focused on public sector reforms under SAP include the corporate works of the African Training Centre for Administration and Development (CAFRAD) (1990), Balogun and Mutahaba (1991), and the individual works of Mutahaba (1989), Mukandala 1992; Adamolekun (1991), Kaul (1996), Nti (1996), Macgregor et.al. (1998); Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999; Mukandala 2000; and Olowu (1999). These studies highlight the impact of SAPs on public sector institutions in general. They cover a variety of issues ranging from privatisation and deregulation, to decentralization and civil service reforms and problems confronting the public service in Africa such as serious human resource management issues of leadership, merit pay and related governance reforms, the appropriate strategy for mobilizing resources. They point out that these issues must be adequately addressed before African countries can make significant progress the public sector and in development.

CAFRAD's work was the result of a seminar and was a pioneering one on the issue of the implications and the impact of SAPs on public administration structures and management. Some of the important issues raised in the CAFRAD work are set out below. First, public sector reforms in Africa resulted from serious economic crisis and were thus not ends in themselves but directed at supporting policies for economic stabilization and adjustment; consequently these administrative reforms sometimes failed to answer the specific needs of African countries. Secondly, the central objectives of SAP-related administrative reforms were to reduce cost and to increase the effectiveness of the public service. Reduction in the size of the public service including the civil service as a requirement of SAP was based on the goal of reducing budget deficits and redressing financial imbalances. This contrasts with the extra demands which the implementation of SAPs imposed on the service in terms of producing voluminous information and data for monitoring the implementation of SAPs.

Most of the contributions in the volume edited by Balogun and Mutahaba (1991) dwell more on the effects of the economic crisis on public sector institutions rather than the impact of SAPs on these institutions. There is a distinction between the effects of the crisis, on the one hand, and the effects of adjustment, on the other. One would expect that any SAP-related administrative reforms would seek to redress some of the negative impacts of the crisis on the public services in general, and on the civil service in particular.

A few of the contributions in Balogun and Mutahaba (1991) however shed some light on the impact of SAPs on the public service. Adamolekun (1999), for instance, highlights the World Bank's involvement in public sector management improvements in Africa, and notes that civil service management



improvement under adjustment programmes has included, inter alia, staff reduction, salary and wage reviews, the strengthening and the reorganization of key ministries and central agencies of some African countries such as the Gambia, Senegal, and Mali. Wamalwa, in the same volume, argues that SAPs have promoted cost-consciousness at all levels of the public administration system and have the potential to ensure merit-based employment and the rationalization of public administration institutions such as the public and civil service. However, the concomitant restrictions on employment and the mass retrenchment of public personnel have adverse effects on the motivation, morale, and productivity of public personnel (Balogun and Mutahaba, 1991: 109-119).

Writing on administrative reforms in East Africa, Mutahaba (1989) has noted that much of the reform efforts in Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya took place amidst complementary reforms in the socio-economic systems. In most of the cases administrative reform measures in these three countries were taken to facilitate socio-economic development objectives. In agreement with the CAFRAD (1990) study and the Nti (1991), Mutahaba forcefully argues that efforts at reform should not be concerned merely with rehabilitating the public service systems, but should aim at transforming and building viable systems that are capable of handling the shocks of independence and of economic crisis.

A few studies have emerged that have focused specifically on adjustment-related public sector reforms. In this category, there is the work of De Merode (1992) for the United Nations (1992), Olowu (1999), Demongeot (1994), Macgregor (1998), Wescott (1999), Kaul (1996), Langseth, (1995). De Merode (1992) points out two sets of reasons that have been used to justify the reform of the public sector under the SAPs. The first is that most of the Africa public services were oversized and thus represented a budgetary burden on the government, especially in the context of economic decline and increasing budget deficits. One obvious way of redressing the imbalance is to reduce the number of public servants and their cost, which is a prominent feature of SAPs.

The second set of reasons for SAP-related public sector reforms have to do with weak government capacities reflected in weak public sector capacities. These represent bottlenecks for both the immediate feasibility and the long-term sustainability of SAPs. The reform of the public service was therefore required for the effective implementation of structural adjustment. However, the works of the UNDESA (1992), Olowu (1999), Demongeot (1994), Macgregor (1998), Wescott (1999), Kaul (1996), Langseth, (1995) take a somewhat different position from that of De Merode. While recognizing that public sector reforms are overdue in African countries, and pointing out that some African public services are oversized, ineffective and inefficient, they doubt whether SAPs provide a basis for comprehensive administrative reforms in the public service. They particularly note that the emphasis on the reduction of the size of the public service and the cuts in cost, privatisation and deregulation would not necessarily improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service unless attention is focused on other aspects of public service management such as capacity building, service delivery,

aid mechanisms, change management processes, leadership commitment, sequencing, ministerial restructuring, decentralization, attitudinal changes, perception change and good governance.

### ***5.2.2 The Influence of the New Public Management (NPM)***

Arguably one of the most influential drivers of public sector reform in Africa is the New Public Management (NPM). It is often associated with positive, action-oriented phrases like: reinventing government, re-engineering, revitalization of the public service, organizational transformation, total quality management, paradigm shift, entrepreneurship, empowerment, results over process, downsizing, now rightsizing, lean and mean, contracting out, off-loading or outsourcing, steering rather than rowing, empowering rather than serving and earning rather than spending (Frederickson, 1996). It emphasizes the centrality of the citizen or customer, accountability for results, decentralized authority and control, market orientation of cost recovery, competition between public and private agencies for the contract to deliver services and the creation of semi-autonomous agencies for service delivery (Hood, 1991; 1995; Manning, 2001; Larbi, 1999; Walsh, 1995; UNECA 2003; Caiden and Sundaram 2004). Thus the components or elements of the NPM reform include privatization and regulation, civil service reforms, decentralization, contracting and market mechanisms, improved service delivery, human resource management and development, information and communication technology, sustainable development and good governance. Accordingly, the NPM is part of a bigger scheme to transform government and promote de-bureaucratization, de-regulation, performance and output orientation, financial viability, downsizing, client service-focus, innovation and entrepreneurship (Larbi 1999; Lane 2000; Hope 2001; Minogue 2001; Schacter 2001; Taylor 2001).

The NPM captures most of the structural, organizational and managerial changes that took place in the public services in OECD countries like the UK, New Zealand and Australia in the late 1970s. It is seen as a body of managerial thought or as an ideological thought system based on ideas generated in the private sector and imported into the public sector (Hood, 1991; 1995). The NPM shifts the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management and pushes the state towards managerialism. The traditional model of organization and delivery of public services, based on the principles of bureaucratic hierarchy, planning, centralization, direct control and self-sufficiency, is apparently replaced by a market-based public service management or “enterprise culture” (Larbi, 1999; Walsh, 1995; Hood, 1991; Caiden and Sundaram 2004; Hood 1991; 1995).

The doctrinal components of NPM have been expanded upon and have evolved since the 1990s. For example, the core ideas of the United Kingdom’s Citizens Charter initiative, launched in 1991, added a consumerist dimension to public management. The Citizens Charter brought the issue of consumers to prominence and has since become a key feature of most of NPM discussions (Hood, 1991; 1995).

The core measures of the NPM are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Core Measures of the NPM**

Variable	Managerialist Measures	Enabling Factors
Professional Management	Delegating management authority within public services	Breaking up existing bureaucracies into separate agencies
Output Control	Results orientation and funding of outputs, not inputs	Encouraging greater awareness by adopting “citizens charters”
Operational Efficiency	Greater discipline and parsimony in resource use	Greater competition in the public sector and fees for services rendered
Terms of Service	Flexibility in hiring and firing employees	Downsizing and public service and limit union influence
Budgeting	Make budgets more transparent in accounting terms	Encourage governments to become more enterprising by earning, not spending

**Sources:** James Gow & Caroline Dufour, “Is the New Public Management a Paradigm? Does it Matter?”, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 66 (2000): 573-597; P. Dunleavy & C. Hood, “From Old Public Administration to New Management”, *Public Money and Management*, Vol. 14, No. 3: p. 10; G.A Larbi, *The New Public Management Approach and Crisis States* (Geneva: UNRISD, 1999); Nick Manning, “The Legacy of the New Public Management in Developing Countries”, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 67 (2001): 297-312.

According to the African Development Bank (AfDB) Report (2005), the NPM has led to the creation of autonomous executive agencies, decentralized management, subsidiarity, accrual accounting and commercialization, For instance, Ghana, South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria, the internal revenue departments were hived off from the civil service while separate teaching hospitals with autonomy from the Ministry of Health were created.

This notwithstanding, the NPM as a uniform template for reform in Africa, has not worked as expected across board. Batley (1997) in his five-year review of the “changing role of government in adjusting economies” has concluded that the effect of the NPM on most African countries has been mixed at best with some improvements in efficiency and mixed effects on equity. On the downside, in relation to the move to autonomize service delivery agencies, the transaction costs of radical reforms tend to outweigh the efficiency gains of unbundling, and that the reforms that pursue the separation of purchasers from providers may have decreased accountability – and that, consequently, inequity has grown (Manning, 2001; Batley, 1997). Similarly, the implementation of the NPM has led to the realization that “market inspired reforms of government “failures” do not really work very well in conditions where the state remains weak and subject to formal influences (AfDB 2005: 132). In addition, the NPM has not succeeded in eliminating the “clientelistic” tendencies that tend to permeate African governments. While in such a context the creation of independent agencies is a step in the

right direction – the manner in which NPM has been introduced as a “technocratic fix” does not lend itself to full utilization of its attributes (AfDB 2005; UNECA 2004).

The AfDB (2005: 131) has identified some of the key lessons from implementing NPM measures in Africa as follows:

- (i) Whereas the downsizing of the public sector in African countries has been significant, by up to 40% in some instances like Ghana and Uganda, the cost savings have been much less, in most cases by a mere 6-7%, largely due to high compensation costs in a context of previous low salaries. Retrenchment is a costly exercise, as evidence from North Africa confirms (Larbi 1995; 1998; Bulmer 2000);
- (ii) The creation of independent executive agencies has moved ahead in many African countries and, those revenue authorities that have helped increase government income, have also incurred high managerial costs stemming from the need to pay top executives salaries competitive with those of the private sector. In specific cases of decentralization to sub-national units, serious problems have arisen in monitoring the use of funds, thus increasing rather than lowering transaction costs (Ayee 2008);
- (iii) More countries than in any other region have adopted user fees for health care services in Africa. In the mid-1990s only three countries – Angola, Botswana and Sao Tome and Principe – had no user fees in the government sector. The problem in most countries that have adopted this system is that management and accounting capabilities have been inadequate to support cost recovery programmes. The gains, therefore, have remained modest, if any at all (Larbi 1998; 1999); and
- (iv) Performance standards have been introduced in many African countries and have in some instances contributed to improving public services. Such reforms in the Tanzanian public sector are a case in point. At the same time, there is evidence that many employees feel that their remuneration is not commensurate with what they are expected to do (UNECA 2004).

Two conclusions can be made from the review of the literature. First, that major socio-economic reforms, such as those introduced under SAPs would require a capable administrative machinery to support and sustain them. Though, for most African countries, this implied comprehensive and system-wide reforms in the public service, the literature seems to suggest that reforms have been less comprehensive and less systemic in their impacts. The second conclusion is that the public sector reforms are a by-product of structural adjustment programmes and the NPM and this implies that the scope and content of the reforms have largely tended to be determined by adjustment conditions (AfDB 2005; UNECA 2004).

### **5.2.3 Literature on Strategies for Public Sector Reform**

Generally, the literature identifies the responses to deal with the problems that had led to PSRs. The most common measures have included the (a) re-examination of the role of government, that is, what the government should do and should not do; (b) re-examination of the costs of running government business, followed by necessary cost-cutting measures; (c) decentralization and devolution of authority within government; (d) consideration of more cost-effective ways of service delivery including privatization or corporatization of activities; (e) introduction of management ideas from the private sector into the public sector, including, giving responsibility to public service managers to manage and become accountable for using techniques and tools derived from the private sector; (f) partnership between the government and the private sector in the provision of services to the public (Turner and Hulme 1997; World Bank 1997; Larbi 1999; Rugumyamheto 2004; Caiden and Sundaram 2004; AfDB 2005; Ayee 2008).

Specifically, the literature has identified nine strategies that have largely been used in public sector reforms (World Bank 2008; Turner and Hulme 1997; Collins 2000; Batley 1994; 1997; Levy and Kpundeh 2004; Ayee 2008). They are as follows:

- (i) **Civil Service and Administrative Reform:** It involves all aspects of the management and organization of personnel. It includes programmes to downsize the civil service and reforms to the personnel information system (including civil service censuses), career paths, pay grades (decompression), other aspects of the incentive system and the organization of the ministries (Olowu 1999; Olowu 2003; Levy and Kpundeh 2004; AfDB 2005);
- (ii) **Public Expenditure Analysis and Management** concerns the management of money through the entire budget cycle. This includes budget planning and execution, in particular, financial management information systems and medium term expenditure frameworks (MTEFs), procurement, auditing and monitoring and evaluation. It also includes the implementation of reforms arising from country financial accountability assessments and country procurement assessment reviews and the strengthening of key budgetary accountability institutions, such as public accounts committees of the legislature and supreme audit institutions (World Bank 2008; AfDB 2005; Garnett and Plowden 2004; Philippe and Taliercio 2002);
- (iii) **Revenue Policy and Administration** involves tax administration reform and includes the key aspects of revenue administration, particularly the institutional setting and development of operational processes, including automation and interaction with taxpayers (actual and potential). Some of the trends in tax administration reform are reorganization of tax departments along functional lines, establishing a comprehensive system of tax-payer identification numbers, computerization, granting autonomy to tax departments and establishment of large taxpayer units. Their objectives are to ensure proper planning and budgeting of public expenditures, effective and efficient administration of government revenues, proper

- use of budget resources, effective control of public expenditure, accounting and reporting on public finance and full accountability for all public spending (World Bank 2008; Kiragu 1999; Rakner and Gloppen 2003; Dorotinsky and Floyd 2004; Taliercio 2003; 2004);
- (iv) Anti-corruption and Transparency to combat corruption and improve transparency across the public sector. Some of the initiatives include mainstreaming anti-corruption in country analysis, helping countries to curb corruption in such key areas such as extractive industries, preventing fraud and corruption such as fiduciary controls and contributing to efforts to fight corruption (Kpundeh 2004; Hope Snr and Chikulo 2000);
  - (v) Decentralization has been considered by many as one of the most important strategies in public sector reform. This is because donors and governments in Africa have considered decentralization as a strategy that will bring service delivery closer to consumers, improve the responsiveness of the central government to public demands, improve the efficiency and quality of public services and empower lower units to feel more involved and in control. It is also meant to reduce overload and congestion at the centre and speed up operational decision-making and implementation by minimizing the bottlenecks associated with over-centralization of powers and functions at just one or two points in the hierarchy of a public service organization or ministry. Consequently, decentralization seeks to increase the operational autonomy of line managers and agencies, leaving only broad policy guidelines to be worked out at the centre (Smith 1985; Rondinelli 1989; Olowu 1992; 1997; Ndegwa and Levy 2004; Olowu and Wunsch 2004; AfDB 2005);
  - (vi) Legal and Judicial Reform involves the computerization of the judiciary, continuing legal education and providing a conducive legal environment to facilitate the development of the private sector. One of the outcomes is the setting up of special courts such as commercial courts and “fast track courts” to dispense justice expeditiously. The emphasis has been on a law-based state, respect for the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary and the creation of the enabling environment for private sector development by reducing the costs of doing business (Adamolekun 1999; Ayee 2008);
  - (vii) Sectoral Institutional Building involves the building and maintaining the capacity of institutions in all sectors and skills areas to provide value for money services. This entails the ability and capacity to attract staff and retain them. Accordingly, emphasis is placed on Human Resource Management (HRM) and Human Resource Development (HRD) issues. HRM focuses on selection, recruitment, appraisal, reward and career opportunities within institutions while HRD refers to the organizational activities directed at improving

the skills and capacities of the workforce through training, development of inter-personal skills, mentoring, participative management styles and providing performance feedback (Peters 1992; Dror 1976; AfDB 2005; EDI and ISAS 1992; Turner and Hulme 1997; Ayee 2008); (viii) Public Enterprise Reform entails a combination of objectives such as ensuring profitability by avoiding trading losses, avoiding liquidity crises and rising debts, removing the dominance of unproductive investments, creating a favourable investment climate for both local and foreign investors, providing institutional arrangements and operational guidelines that would ensure that the gains of the reform programme are sustained in the future and ensuring wider share ownership, especially among lower income groups. The two common types of state enterprise reform are privatization and commercialization. Privatization involves the partial or total transfer of ownership of a state owned enterprise (SOE) to the private sector while commercialization involves making SOEs more efficient with the capacity to make contributions to the treasury. In some cases commercialization could involve the change of the relationship between the management of the SOE and the government through performance contract or management contracts. While on one hand, performance contracts are used to define new relationships between managers of SOEs and the government with a view to making the achievement of the desired results possible, management contracts, on the other hand, involves a private enterprise taking up the management of an SOE (Ramanadham 1989; 1995; Adamolekun 1999; Laleye 1999; Islam 1993; World Bank 1995; Tangri 1999; AfDB 2005); (ix) Public-Private Sector Partnerships (PPPs) emphasize the synergy between the public and private sectors in the provision of social welfare, public goods and services. Such partnerships or cooperation are meant to present governments with the opportunities to improve citizen access to services. In addition, the competition in such service provision arrangements is expected to encourage quality institutions (Batley 1994; 1997; Collins 2000).

#### **5.2.4 Literature on the Phases of Public Sector Reforms**

Reforming the public sector in Africa is divided into three phases<sup>4</sup>, namely, (1) the reforms from the 1980s to early 1990s, which focused mainly on macro-economic stability and were mainly “quantitative”; (2) the reforms of the mid-1990s to 2000, which focused on performance and civil service management; and (3) reforms from 2000, which focused on service delivery as a result of the pub-

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4 The three phases are sometimes referred to as “First-Generation Reforms”, “Second-Generation Reforms” and “Third-Generation Reforms”. See Richard Crook, “The State of the State in Africa: What is to be Done?”, Inaugural Lecture delivered at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, October 27, 2004; Dele Olowu, “African Governance and Civil Service Reforms”, in N. van de Walle, Nicole Ball & Vijaya Ramachandran (Eds.) *Beyond Structural Adjustment: The Institutional Context of African Development* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), Chapter 4. Before these three phases there was an earlier phase in late 1950s to the 1960s which was devoted to implementation of statist policies, Africanization and professionalizing the system of public administration that has been inherited. The main strategy used is technical assistance

lication of the *World Development Report* 1997. See Table 2 for an overview of the aims, features, achievements and challenges of the phases.

#### **5.2.4.1 Phase One Reforms: 1980s to Early 1990s:**

Large scale, donor-funded civil service or public sector reform programmes really began in Africa with the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) of the 1980s. Between independence and the late 1970s, the main focus had been Africanization of the small inherited colonial civil services combined with rapid expansion (particularly of education services), a process aided by the former colonial powers mainly through training and technical assistance.

The SAP loans of the 1980s were primarily aimed at stabilizing macro-economic crises of balance of payments and fiscal deficits, runaway inflation and currency overvaluations. For this reason, the civil service reform packages which frequently accompanied SAP loans were mainly concerned to reduce the cost of public sector employment, which was regarded as self-evidently excessive or bloated. The main problems of the African civil services which had emerged during the economic crises leading up to the SAP are identified in Table 2.

It is estimated that in Anglophone Africa, public sector wages declined 80% in real terms between the early 1970s and 1980s (paralleling the general decline in GDP per capita) (Van de Walle, 2001: 134). For instance, in Ghana in 1984, a top Principal Secretary earned only 2.5 times the salary of a basic clerk, although, of course, there were substantial non pay benefits (Nunberg, 1996: 146).

During this period therefore the now familiar problems of moonlighting and absenteeism, low morale, corruption and politicisation of recruitment emerged. There is little doubt that in many countries the capacity of ministries including finance ministries to fulfil even basic tasks virtually collapsed.

Solutions offered by the 1980s civil service reform programmes (CRPSs) were relatively crude. In line with neo-liberal economic policies aiming to drastically reduce the role of the state in the economy, they focused on: (i) downsizing - retrenchments, mergers and recruitment freezes, eliminating ghost workers; and (ii) decompressing wage scales, trying to use savings on recruitment to pay higher salaries to higher level managers with scarce skills.

Large amounts of aid money were allocated for this purpose. From 1981 to 1991, the World Bank included civil service reform programmes in 91 loan/credit facilities worldwide, 55 of which were to African countries, either SAP or Technical Assistance loans. They totalled \$2131 million (Nunberg, 1996: 122).



#### **5.2.4.2 Phase Two Reforms: Mid-1990s to 2000**

The phase 2 reforms of the mid 1990s focused on performance and civil service management. They, to some extent, emerged from a limited recognition that downsizing and pay restructuring alone were not producing the desired results. Net reductions in numbers were not great, except perhaps in the former SOE sector, overall salary expenditures were actually rising and yet as one authoritative World Bank study found, the idea that retrenchments and decompressions would produce savings which would fund real improvements in salary rates for skilled staff had not worked (McCourt, 1998; Dia, 1996). This phase retained the assumption that the civil service needed to be reduced in size, but accompanied this with much more ambitious attempts at total restructuring of civil services, focusing on management systems, performance management and budget/financial management, and marketization of service delivery.

As Richard Batley (1996) has shown in his work on the changing role of government, this period of reform was nothing less than an attempt to transfer to African and other developing countries all the techniques of public sector reform which in the developed, particularly English speaking countries, have come to be known as the New Public Management (NPM).

The main problems of African Public Services before SAP have been summarized as follows:

- Norms about hiring and firing are rarely enforced;
- Resources tied for specific purposes are often diverted to meet urgent needs in other sectors;
- Attitudes towards both planning and scheduling are flexible and it is generally assumed that nothing occurs quite as arranged;
- Organizations tend to lack capacity for organizational intelligence, ability to learn from past mistakes is limited, decision-making techniques remain personal to the managers;
- Large-scale organizations tend to be divided into micro-organizations controlled by individual top managers;
- Managers show a marked ambivalence about technical matters;
- There was an excessive expansion in the numbers of low level and poorly qualified employees, particularly in unproductive state owned enterprises and 'parastatal' agencies; and
- There was an erosion of real wage levels caused by massive inflation and the effects of import controls (Hyden 1983: 145-147; Olowu 1999: 1-4; UNECA 2004).

The typical mechanisms for designing and implementing these reforms were the creation of high level reform agencies usually located in the Presidential or Prime Ministerial offices, deliberately intended to by pass the mainstream ministries and backed up by teams of foreign consultants and technical assistance personnel. At the same time, foreign aid flows to African countries continued to increase

massively, increasing the direct role of donors and their agents in government programmes especially public sector reform.

#### **5.2.4.3 Phase Three Reforms: 2000 to Present**

Phase 3 of reforms has only emerged since the end of the 1990s, following on the World Bank's recognition in its *1997 World Development Report: The State in Changing World* that having an effective, responsive and legitimate state was crucial for sustaining an effective market economy (World Bank 1997). In a section entitled "Good Government Is Not a Luxury – It Is a Vital Necessity for Development", the Report urges reform in alarmist terms: "People living with ineffective states have long suffered the consequences in terms of postponed growth and social development. But an even bigger cost may now threaten states that postpone reforms: political and social unrest and, in some cases, disintegration exacting a tremendous toll on stability, productive capacity, and human life" (World Bank 1997: 15).

New generation programmes since the millennium, although still very much within the NPM paradigm, have tended to focus on how to improve service delivery to citizens, making it more responsive and effective. They are normally specifically linked with the new Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSPs) which have become a new conditionality for loans to Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), the majority of which are located in Africa. Thus for public servants this has meant programmes which attempt to involve officers in taking on board the opinions and demands of their clients - the public or users - and designing their own Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) which involve service delivery standards monitored by both responsible managers and citizen user groups. The Department for International Development (DfID) funded such programmes in, for example, Tanzania, Uganda and Ghana. In fact, the Ghanaian Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme (CSPIP) was started in 1996. The Ghana programme involved staff in targeted agencies engaging in 'self appraisal' exercises in which they were supposed to confront and discuss what their public clients felt about the quality of their service, and then come up with PIPs which could form the basis of a Performance Agreement with their Chief Director and the government. PIPs have to include measurable targets.

### **5.3 The Outcome of the Reform Phases**

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After twenty four or more years the general consensus to be found in both consultants reports and in the academic literature is that the results or achievements of public sector reforms have been extremely limited. In some instances, they have even been negative. (Tangri, 1999; Olowu and Wunsch, 2004; Olowu and Wunsch, 1995; Rondinelli et al., 1989; 1996; Smith, 1985; Mawhood, 1993; Olowu and Smoke, 1992; Wunsch, 2000; 2001; Adamolekun, 1999; Collin, 2000; Olowu, 1997; Englebert, 2000; Dia, 1996; Levy and Kpundeh, 2004; Ayee, 1994; 2001; Ayee and Crook, 2003; Crook and Manor, 1998; Devas, Delay and Hubbard, 2001; UNECA 2004; AfDB 2005; Ayee 2008).

In the words of Caiden and Sundaram (2004: 374) “despite all the hoopla that accompanies them, public service reforms rarely succeed, as evidenced by numerous failures to come even close to their initial intentions”.

The policy initiatives aimed at making the public sector more equipped to play its post-SAPs regulatory have largely remained unsuccessful because they emphasize training, incentives, downsizing and institutional innovations which Englebert (2000) described as “somewhat misguided”. In his words which seem fatalistic:

*It is doubtful whether African bureaucrats need additional training and more imported institutions. They are neither less competent nor less moral than civil servants elsewhere. Patterns of bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption, delinquent rule of law, and the like answer to a political logic and are the consequences of the dichotomization between statehood and power in African non-legitimate states. It is hard to see how public sector management programmes address these deeper issues. They may provide temporary Band-Aids, but they are unlikely to bring about lasting improvements (Englebert, 2000: 180-181).*

In spite of the reforms, many public organizations have remained inefficient. Their continued poor performance has been blamed on a number of factors, which are set out as follows:

- (i) Reforms were mainly seen in technical and managerial terms rather than in political and institutional terms because “public administrations are embedded in a complex, interdependent system. This system incorporates not only the bureaucratic apparatus as a whole, but also political institutions and social, economic, and political interests more broadly (Levy, 2004: 11).
- (ii) Most of the reforms are nested in politics. For instance, whereas many governments agreed to reduce the number of ministries as part of the retrenchment exercise they have often resorted to the temptation of increasing the number of ministries again. The introduction of multi-party politics has reinforced the pressure to reward followers as part of coalition-building in government. The result is that democratic reforms have often worked against the necessary consistency in reforming the public sector. The “one-size-fits-all” approach that ignores country-specific organizational aspects of public organizations (Lienert and Modi, 1997; Nunberg, 1996);
- (iii) Reforms have failed to respond to the livelihood concerns of employees (poor working conditions and inadequate salaries for public sector employees have continued due to the need to reduce government expenditure) and requirement that recruitment be frozen with its attendant admonition to underpaid and poorly motivated workers to assume additional respon-

sibility and to lead efforts at improving efficiency (Goldsmith, 2000; Olowu, 2003; Lienert, 1998; Schiavo-Campo, 1998).

- (iv) African bureaucracies suffer from weak organizational culture as a result of more emphasis being put on motivation rather than on public service ethos of commitment, professionalism and promoting public service and interest (Crook, 2004).
- (v) There is low demand for quality service and good performance from citizens, clients, users and civil society organization, which has made operations of public organizations not only unresponsive and unaccountable but also fraught with neo-patrimonial logics (Crook, 2004).

The trends in reforming the public sector in Africa show that they were influenced by both economic liberalization and democratization. They are perceived to have been driven by mainly donors rather than “homegrown”. In each of the trends emphasis was placed on accountability, improved service delivery. One significant outcome of the trends is that they show mixed results mainly because public expectations of the state in Africa are fundamentally different while the notions of public service ethos or civil service culture have not changed as envisaged. Perhaps the legacy of the trends is to constrain the public officials to ensure that public expectations provide motive, and building basic public sector disciplines to provide capability. Even though the direct application of the reforms has been limited and has achieved little in African states, they have significantly altered the public management debate both for governments and for development agencies (Manning, 2001).

Taken together, the trends were aimed at retooling public institutions to perform the regulatory functions which the post-SAPs state was to perform.

**Table 2: Phases of Public Sector Reforms in Africa**

Indicators	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Period	1980s-early 1990s	Mid-1990s-2000	2000-date
Objectives	Achievement of macro-economic stability and quantitative	Performance and civil service management	Effective and efficient service delivery
Assumptions	Problems of service provision were the result of price distortion emanating from widespread government subsidies.	Shifted emphasis from the quantity of employees to their quality. To make public sector employment more attractive and decrease the size of the government.	Improve service delivery to citizens, making it more responsive and effective; ii. Effective, responsive and legitimate state is crucial for sustaining market economy

Indicators	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Features/strategies	Reducing size of state, cost-cutting, retrenchment, cost-recovery, privatization.	Features of the NPM: remuneration and promotion policies to reward performance; incentives, skills, motivation, contracting out, public-private partnerships, agencification such as the executive authority model.	Provision of basic services through processes driving pluralization, decentralization and participation; beneficiary surveys, self-appraisal exercises, performance improvement plans by public servants; customer-friendliness and responsiveness; Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans;
Achievements	Marginal reduction in size of public sector, even though it is debatable; cut back on equipment, services and development expenditure.	Marginal improvement in conditions of service	Improved participation of civil society and other stakeholders in some public policies in the formulation of some public policies such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans; improved consultative process; marginal improvement in quality of service.
Challenges/problems	(i) Ignored the historical evidence about the origin of the public sector problem in Africa. Low productivity and inefficiency originated from the economic crisis of the 1970s; (ii) Reforms ignored a basic fact about people and organizations: people make organizations work, therefore, motivated workers are a sine qua non for organizational efficiency. It therefore failed to address livelihood concerns of public sector employees. (iii) Lack of ownership of reform; (iv) real downsizing not achieved	(i) One-size-fits-all approach that ignores country-specific organizational aspects of public organizations; (ii) Created a quagmire for employees, for instance, reduction in government requires that salaries and no-wage benefits remain low; due hiring freezes, the underpaid and poorly motivated workers were being admonished to assume additional responsibility and to lead efforts at improving efficiency. (iii) issue of relativities not addressed; (iv) brain drain continued; (v) lack of ownership	Performance improvement plans and beneficiary surveys have not been properly organized; provision of services for the poor still a far cry; in spite of participation, Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans have not achieved their objectives; quality of service not improved

**Sources:** Olowu 1999; Wescott 1999; Olowu 2003; Crook 2004; Levy and Kpundeh 2004; Aye 2008.

## 5.4 Review of the Literature on Civil Service Reform (CSR)

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### 5.4.1 Literature on the Definition of the Civil Service and its Developmental Role in Africa

The literature review can be divided into two, namely, (i) definition of the civil service and its role in development in Africa; and (ii) the rationale for civil service reform in Africa. Attention has been focused by the literature on the definition of the civil service and its importance to development in Africa. Three main approaches have been used to define the civil service (Lienert 1998; Olowu 1999; Olowu 2003). The first approach conceives of the civil service as a system of employment, focusing on the size of civil services, and rules of the civil service employment as these relate to such issues as recruitment, job evaluation, training and development, performance appraisal, and the role and composition of higher civil service as against the rest of the service. Second, civil services can also be conceived as instruments of governance - institutions that serve as the bridge between the state and specific administrative organs. Third, civil services can be defined in terms of their role in the policy process as “policy authorizers, implementers, fixers, payers, producers, arrangers, and clients and consumers” (McGregor, 1991: 33).

The importance of the civil service to development cannot be over-emphasized. As Olowu (1999: 2) rightly pointed out “central to the notion of an effective state is an effective civil service”. The civil service is regarded as the principal instrument of the state as well as an organ of employment, governance and policy making. It is seen as both a cause and a consequence of economic growth, and as an essential condition for the emergence of the modern state (Jacoby 1976; Migdal 1988; Kiggundu 1998; Lienert 1998). African civil services, originally modeled on their metropolitan precursors, are thus expected to assist the development of the rest of the public sector and non-state actors, that is, the private sector and other civil society organs. Accordingly, critical to the civil service is the higher civil service. Those who operate at these levels must not only be proficient, but must set the moral tone for the civil and other public services as well as other social institutions. The strong attachment to merit (hence meritocracy) ensures that the most competent people are not only recruited but rise to leadership levels in the civil service. This group provides professional leadership and takes responsibility for accountable performance of the civil service and quality advice, in the public interest, to the political leadership (Adu 1964; Caiden 1969; Mutahaba 1995; Quah 1995; Olowu 1999; 2003; Bentil 2004). According to Smith (1984) countries that do not subscribe to the career system operate systems that guarantee the competence, confidence and credibility of their senior civil servants. The role played by the senior civil service has been emphasized in the Japanese development experience by Kim (1996: 5):

*Top civil servants have to bridge the world of administration and the world of politics, and to monitor the traffic back and forth, ensuring that the people reporting to them understand that they have to meet political goals and needs. At the same*

*time, they also have to protect the administrative bureaucracy from day-to-day interventions by politicians who want to, for example, make sure that the new bridge is built in their district or constructed by their relatives' companies.*

However, it is instructive to note that it is at the higher civil service, the most critical level in which African civil services are weakest. Several studies have demonstrated the tendency of African civil services to be “understaffed at the top but overstaffed at the bottom” (UNDESA 1992: 16). It has been pointed out that the combination of economic and political factors has led to the severe hemorrhage of the best and brightest brains from the civil services in Africa. Poor economic performance sets severe limits to how much the state can pay its officials – a factor that led to severe wage erosion. But it is poor politics that aggravates matters as these introduce other pernicious problems confronted by the civil services – severe wage compression, politicization of the most senior positions in the civil service thereby lowering moral and undermining performance of those who work in the civil service and poor accountability regimes at the very top (Hyden 1999; Adamolekun 1999; Lindauer and Numberg 1994; Kiggundu 1998; Benti 2004; Mhone 2003).

#### **5.4.2 Literature on Rationale for Civil Service Reform in Africa:**

The purpose of civil service reform (CSR) is to improve the effectiveness and performance of the civil service and to ensure its affordability and sustainability over time. The ultimate goal is to raise the quality of public services delivered to the population and to enhance the capacity to carry out core government functions. This is essential to promote sustained social and economic development. CSR programmes generally seek to improve core functions (for example, revenue generation, financial management, personnel management, policy formulation, etc.) as well as sector-specific policy, management and organization (Glentworth 1989; Wescott 1999; Kaul 1996; Mhone 2003).

The literature has identified three reasons for CSR in Africa. First, CSR is seen as part of the programme of “rolling back the state”. In the wake of the economic and fiscal crises of the late 1970s, special attention was focused on revitalizing African civil services, originally as a part of programmes of structural adjustment and state cutback. African civil services were perceived as bloated, plagued with corruption, and other misallocation of resources, ineffective service delivery, sum-minimum-wage compensation, the recruitment and promotion of unqualified staff and a drain on the state's scarce resources. Even the state was seen as an obstacle to development. It was an institution that constrained the private sector from unleashing its productive potentials (Kaul 1996; Olowu 1999; 2003; Kiggundu 1996; Wescott 1999). Table 3 shows commonly cited causes of civil service ineffectiveness in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa.

Second, effective CSR is part of good or sound governance, which also includes accountability, transparency and the rule of law. Good governance became the agenda for donor funding from the

late 1980s. In this connection, CSR as part of the good governance agenda requires a commitment to establish a more professional civil service with a stronger emphasis on performance and less influenced by patrimonialism and ethnic loyalties. Sound or good governance is the most important distinguishing success in promoting sustainable human development from failure (Wescott 1999; Adamolekun 1999; Olowu 1999; 2003; Bentil 2004). Third is the changing role of the state. The role assigned to the state in the planning and management of national economic and social activities had undergone fundamental changes and reassessment. Hence in its famous *World Development Report 1997*, the World Bank conceded that economic reforms – structural adjustment – were not enough to bring about sustainable development. The state’s capacity for promoting development needed to be enhanced especially in the face of the relentless pressures towards democratization and globalization. The civil service, recognized as the “core” public service was an instrument of the state whose capacity must be substantially increased. The historical experiences of western industrialized countries and the newly industrializing countries of East Asia were used to highlight the type of strategies needed to boost the performance and capacity of civil service (de Merode 1991; Kiggundu 1996; Kaul 1996; Langseth 1995; Macgregor et. al. 1998; Mhone 2003).

The literature on civil service reform has focused on thematic areas which include mainly seven components. They are: (i) measures to track the existing staff, for instance, payroll and human resource databases since pay and employment data are essential to diagnosing civil service issues and designing reforms; (ii) measures to contain and reduce the number of staff – via retrenchment and layoffs, early retirement, and hiring freezes, which have been the most controversial components of CSR; (iii) compensation reforms deal with pay structures and pensions; (iv) human resource management deals with management of cadres generally and the senior civil service particularly with special emphasis on merit-based recruitment, promotion and discipline, performance management and appraisal systems; (v) organizational component deals with issues such as contracting, creating delivery agencies, and process engineering and organizational restructuring. These are usually based on functional and programme reviews and aim to improve operational efficiency; (vi) demand side reforms focus on the users of services, through service standards, e-government; (vii) training and capacity building (Kaul 1997; World Bank 2008).

**Table 3: Commonly Cited Causes of Civil Service Ineffectiveness in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa**



Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	South Africa
i. Poor morale	i. Poor management of financial resources	i. Highly regimented and militarized	i. Wasteful derived from the establishment of separate bureaucratic and para-statal structures, separate universities and separate technical education for the different racial groups
ii. Poor pay, benefits & incentives	ii. Lack of accountability framework and enforcement	ii. Slow in responding to technological changes and modern organizational methods	ii. Corruption with and “ghost” names
iii. High levels of absenteeism	iii. Lack of good records, data & management	iii. Sycophantic because civil servants feel that it is safer to conform than initiate	iii. Patterns of conspicuous consumption among black civil servants
iv. Inadequate supervision & accountability	iv. Laxity at work	iv. Poor work arrangement, highly hierarchical operational structure, unstreamlined organizational structures	iv. Inadequate capacity especially in the implementation of affirmative action which has led to the shortage of skilled people
v. Ineffective promotion & career development policies & procedures	v. Lack of clear performance targets and standards	v. Lacking in financial and material resources	v. Difficulty to retain experienced black South African professionals in senior position in the civil service because of better conditions of service in the private sector
vi. Poor performance appraisal practices	vi. Job dissatisfaction	vi. Corrupt in virtually all affairs because of insecurity of tenure, poor remuneration and glorification of materialism by society	vi. Affirmative action has become a “numbers game”
vii. Poorly designed jobs	vii. Poor pay, bribery and favoritism	vii. Grossly indiscipline and negative poor ethics	vii. Duplication and unnecessary overlapping of functions
viii. Poor human resources management	viii. Poor management of budgetary flows	viii. Declining efficiency, effectiveness and productivity	viii. Evidence of weak accountability and transparency, notably the persistence of the problem of corruption

Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	South Africa
ix. Hostile environment	ix. Poor management of budgetary flows	ix. Disregard and disrespect by some members of the political class, the business community and other public servants	ix. The Africanization of the civil service led to the increased role of contractors in the delivery of services and lessens the dependence of the government on the civil service in the event of a strike

**Sources:** UNDESA, *Size and Cost* (1992); Etuk, *The Nigerian Public Service: In Search of Creative Excellence*, (1992); Ayece, *“Civil Service Reform in Ghana: A Case Study of Contemporary Reform Problems in Africa”* (2001); Cohen, *“Importance of Public Service Reform: The Case of Kenya”* (1993); Catlett and Schuftan, *“Lessons from Institution Building in Kenya”* (1994); Picard, *“South Africa”* (1999).

## 5.5 Trends, Processes and Dynamics of Civil Service Reforms in Africa

The literature emphasizes that even though the elements of CSR vary from one African country to another, there are key components that have remained prominent and consistent. They can be classified into two broad types, namely, **“core”** and **“non-core”** elements.

### a) *The Core Elements of CSR:*

There are three elements of CSR in Africa. They are (i) Organizational Restructuring; (ii) Personnel Management; and (iii) Budgetary and Financial. These elements have sub-elements.

- *Organizational Restructuring:* Even though organizational reviews and restructuring are popular in most African countries, their impact is seen to be marginal (Ingraham 1996). Restructuring takes three main forms. They are (a) ministerial restructuring which involves the reduction in the number of ministries, departments and agencies; (b) creating or strengthening of central coordinating organs such as the Office of the Head of the Civil Service (OHCS) and its functional directorates; and (c) simplification and flexibility such as the elimination of non-essential functions, unnecessary paper work and regulations and cutting excessive red tape (Olowu 1999; 2003; Wescott 1999; Kaul 1996; AfDB 2005; Ayece 2008).
- *Personnel Management:* It entails four major components. They are (a) improvement of management of personnel, which is necessary to identify ghost workers, ministerial reviews, hiring, freeze and integration of the payroll and personnel records; (b) retrenchment sometimes referred to as *“downsizing”* or *“rightsizing”*, which involves the dismissal of redundant civil servants to make the civil service affordable. Downsizing is to reduce fiscal deficits and thus free up domestic resources for the private sector; to reduce the effect

of the superfluous staff on management time and overhead functions; to reduce public sector productivity by tying personnel levels to adequate and sustainable operations and maintenance; and to limit the role of the state to those tasks that cannot be adequately, willingly or profitably performed by the private sector (Macgregor et.al 1998); (c) ministerial reviews which form the basis for retrenchment and include an assessment of systemic and structural constraints, organization of structures, establishment of staffing levels and management systems; (d) pay reforms, often regarded as the most difficult of CSRs because of the deplorable salary situation in most African countries, with emphasis on the monetization of benefits and wage compression (Olowu 1999; 2003; Wescott 1999; Kaul 1996; AfDB 2005; Ayee 2008).

- *Budgetary and Financial Reforms*: They have three components, namely, (a) enhancement of revenue through identification of additional revenue sources and methods of increasing revenue collections from present sources, broadening tax bases by developing user charges, consumption taxes, and taxes on businessmen and those outside the public sector to supplement their meager direct revenue sources and the creation of revenue administration agencies with substantial autonomy; (b) improvement on the expenditure side to reduce the ratio of the wage bill to government expenditure, so that resources can be released for growth and operations and maintenance activities; (c) reforming systems of financial management and accounting by moving from traditional accounting methods to Zero-based Budgeting and Planning, Programming and Budgeting Systems and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (Olowu 1999; 2003; Wescott 1999; Kaul 1996; AfDB 2005; Ayee 2008).

### ***b) The Non-Core Elements of CSR***

There are three elements. They are (a) strengthening the capacity of policy-making institutions such as the Cabinet as the principal institution for policy making, improving the relationships between ministers and civil servants, the public, stakeholders, the legislature and the office of head of state and head of government; (b) increasing political responsiveness of top civil servants. For instance, in 1988, there was a transformation of permanent secretaries in Nigeria in the Whitehall tradition into director-generals, political appointees who served as deputy ministers and were required to vacate office when the administration that appointed them left; (c) capacity building that is, training of human resources (Olowu 1999; 2003; Wescott 1999; Kaul 1996; AfDB 2005; Ayee 2008).

## **5.6 Phases of Civil Service Reforms**

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There are three phases of CSRs in Africa. Phase one sometimes called “First Generation Reforms” consists of reforms which were undertaken in the immediate post-independence period. They were

premised on the growth, expansion, Africanization and dominance of the public sector within the national economy. This phase is characterized by centralization and degeneration into patrimonial rule (AAPAM 1984; Mutahaba et.al. 1993; UNECA 1996; Wunsch and Olowu 1990; Hyden 2000; Crook 2004).

Phase two or “Second Generation” Reforms, which took place from the late 1970s up to the mid-1980s as part of the first set of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) include the elimination of “ghost” workers, downsizing, privatization and contractorization, departmental restructuring, improved budget expenditure controls and reform of pay and grading – essentially the consolidation of diverse remuneration (Olowu 1999; 2003; Wescott 1999; Crook 2004).

Phase three or “Third Generation” Reforms were designed and implemented from the later parts of the 1980s to date (2009). They involve improved service delivery, marketization of service delivery, electronic governance or electronic government, accountability and transparency, customer satisfaction and other features of the New Public Management (Olowu 1999; 2003; Wescott 1999; Crook 2004).

## 5.7 The Evaluation of CSRs in Africa since the 1980s

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CSRs have had successes and challenges. These are:

### a) *Successes*

First, CSRs succeeded in the quantitative aspects of the reforms, namely, the reduction of number of people who worked in the civil and public services. Between 1986 and 1996, countries reduced their civil services by more than 10%, making Sub-Saharan Africa having the least number of civil servants per population in the world. Compared to other developing countries that have a civil service size per population of three percent, Africa’s declined to one percent by 1996 (Lienert 1998). Most of the reductions were achieved through a combination of early retirements, voluntary retrenchment with generous severance payments, audits and organizational restructurings, wage freeze and attrition (Olowu 2003; AfDB 2005).

Secondly, CSRs have lowered the nominal and real wages in the region. For instance, average wage bill for 32 African countries fell from 7% of GDP to 6% of GDP between 1986 and 1996. The devaluation of the CFA franc led to further decline of the wage bill in the Francophone countries by some 3% of the GDP (Lienert 1998; Schiavo-Campo 1999).

Thirdly, CSRs have helped sanitized the system of human resource and fiscal management in states where the system of accountability had all but collapsed. They placed constraints on the states that perceived their sovereign authority as total and completely unchallengeable irrespective of their performance in governance (Olowu 1999; 2003; Adamolekun 1999).

Fourthly, CSRs put in place systems of performance monitoring for the civil service. They have led to the conduct of audits of civil and public service personnel in countries where the number of those working in the civil services were not known and where these numbers have been deliberately infiltrated with large numbers of “ghost workers (Lienert 1998; AfDB 2005).

Fifthly, staff and organizational audits led to major reorganizations and the privatization of some services that were being poorly performed by government agencies. Sixth, some of the reforms spear-headed governance improvement programmes, for example, helping to decongest the centre through support for devolutionary decentralization programmes to local government units and to executive agencies in Ghana, Uganda and Tanzania (Goldsmith 2000; Olowu 1999; 2003).

Seventh, CSRs brought an end to practices that were no longer sustainable. These include, for instance, the use of the civil service as an employer of the last resort and the practice of automatic employment in the civil service for graduates of the secondary and higher educational institutions. Eighth, the reforms released substantial inputs – especially manpower and equipment - for tackling substantive problems (Kiggundu 1998).

Ninth, the successes of CSRs have led scholars (Adamolekun 1999; CODESRIA 2002; Levy and Kpundeh 2004), drawing on existing assessments of CSRs in 2004 to classify 29 Sub-Saharan African countries by levels of CSRs efforts into the following four groups (see Table 4):

*Group A (advanced reformers)* consists of four countries, namely, South Africa, Botswana, Mauritius and Namibia that did not experience significant public administration decline because the inherited tradition of merit-based and politically neutral civil service system was maintained and nurtured. They 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; and progressively consolidating democratic political culture, including respect for the rule of law. These developments are considered a “virtuous cycle”. In both South Africa and Botswana, for example, the nurturing of a career civil service remains a priority of the governments despite the introduction of NPM-style appointments in the late 1990s. The government reacted to a new reality in which the fairly decent pay for qualified professional staff in the civil service was lagging behind pay levels for comparable staff in the public sector (Adamolekun 2005; AfDB 2005).

*Group B (committed reformers)* comprised 12 countries that experienced a decline in their public administration system but were seriously committed to rehabilitating their civil service systems. They also embraced the democratization wave of the 1990s but with significantly varying speeds towards establishment of democratic institutions and respect for the rule of law. Because of the strong commitment to reform in the 12 countries, both bilateral and multilateral donor agencies accepted to provide assistance. Such external support, tied to the implementation of SAPs, was largely aimed at reducing the civil service wage bill through staff reduction, freezing of new recruitments and removal of “ghost names”. In addition, the countries have implemented key reforms that resulted in varying degrees of improving efficiency and effectiveness of the civil service. Some of the reforms include enclaving of tax administration through the creation of semi-autonomous revenue agencies, creation of executive agencies out of government ministries or departments and salary enhancements for some groups of civil servants (Adamolekun 2005; AfDB 2005).

*Group C (hesitant reformers)* consists of six countries which have introduced some of the reform initiatives undertaken by “committed reformers” but without any significant success (AfDB 2005).

*Group D (vicious cycle)* consists of seven countries which might be referred to as “beginners” of reforms. They have been caught up in “vicious cycle” of heightened conflicts and weak economies with decaying public administration (Adamolekun 2005).

### ***b) Challenges:***

In spite of the successes, outcomes of CSRs have largely been seen as relatively unsuccessful (World Bank 2008; See also Table 5). First, downsizing or reduction of the size of the civil service is seen as achieving modest results as some of the retrenched workers returned through revolving doors, some new appointments had to be made in the social sectors, and the largest numbers of retrenched staff came from the lower level cadres (AfDB 2005).

Secondly, the reduction affected professionals in skilled categories and not lower cadre officials, who took the opportunity for alternative employment that they could compete for outside the public sector and outside their countries. This made the civil services poorer in terms of human resources as staff reduction and employment freezes created shortages of skilled professionals and technicians throughout the civil, and of front-line workers needed to sustain, improve quality and expand public services in key areas such as education, health and agricultural extension (AfDB 2005).

Thirdly, it has been pointed out that there is no ideal size for a country’s civil service; the actual or optimal size is likely to be dictated by a country’s macro-economic realities, such as the need for fiscal adjustments, the amount of tax revenue available to pay civil servants, and the balance between governments’ wage and non-wage spending. Without taking these factors into account, downsizing

policy has weakened the civil service. The experience of many African countries suggests that such a policy was missing, and this led to reform reversals even in successful countries such as Ghana and Uganda where the size of the civil service rose again (Mutahaba and Kiragu 2002).

Fourthly, there is either lack of political commitment to reform or a discontinuity over the implementation period. In some countries such as Ghana, the government adopted the reform strategies and passed new legislation. But then as implementation started, momentum slowed and delays occurred and the programme completely stalled (World Bank 2008).

Fifthly, changes in political leadership also resulted in decisions to terminate, reverse or dilute more controversial reforms such as downsizing. In a number of countries, the persistence of patronage systems and politicization of the bureaucracy undermined implementation in the review period, particularly those reforms that affect pay, recruitment, promotion and downsizing. In addition, the strength of trade unions in the public sector can subvert downsizing, pay and merit-based reforms in otherwise supportive political regimes (World Bank 2008; Klitgaard 1997).

Accordingly, even though some progress was made in the quantitative aspects of CSR, it was made “often to the detriment of civil service quality” (Lienert 1998). This point was also re-echoed by Haque and Aziz (1999: 101) when they pointed out that “civil service reforms have primarily been concerned with cost cutting and containment. The issue of productivity and the need for appropriate human capital for it has largely been secondary”.

A number of challenges have been identified as contributing to the slow progress at effective African CSRs. They are contained in Box 3. The key ones are the inability of the reforms to address the serious human resource problems confronting civil services, the faulty nature of their diagnosis, prognosis, inadequate institutional environment such as ingrained systems of patronage political appointments, unrealistic expectations by the donor community, ineffective donor coordination, lack of tangible indicators of success since unlike tax reforms where leaders see obvious benefit, the political leadership cannot easily identify tangible benefits of CSRs and inadequate strategies of reform implementation such as the lack of participation of stakeholders (Olowu 1999; 2003; Bentil 2004; AfDB 2005; Ayee 2008; World Bank 2008).

## 5.8 Strategies to Improve CSRs in Africa

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There is no doubt that concern exists about the nature of CSRs in Africa but experiences show that there is no unique solution or approach (Kaul 1996). This notwithstanding a set of key strategies has emerged as major instruments for the implementation of the CSRs process. They include:

- (i) securing leadership for change, that is, the commitment and support of politicians and bureaucrats at the highest level since most successful reforms are politically driven;
- (ii) enhancing policy development capacity and strategic planning within the government by strengthening offices of the president or prime minister and setting up inter-ministerial committees and task forces for special policy issues and national forums involving private and private sectors;
- (iii) improved human resource systems through tailored training, rewarding achievement, establishing a fast track, monitoring results through performance contracts and promoting accountability and transparency and anti-corruption measures, personal contracts and public reporting and redundancy management founded on a culture of realism;
- (iv) review and re-examine structures of government including structuring for efficiency, establishing efficient programme and introducing market testing;
- (v) introduction of quality management and customer-oriented programmes by developing a public sector ethos by creating a working culture based on quality, performance, openness and transparency;
- (vi) improving partnership with NGOs and the private sector by opening up areas of public service to private or NGO suppliers, while standards in areas where consumer choice will have insufficient impact;
- (vii) the use of information technology (IT) and the development and use of internal and external advising skills through the use of IT for revenue collection, financial management and accounting, interdepartmental communication systems, automation of programmes, e-governance and the use of IT to provide better interface with customers by developing “one stop/non-stop” service centres and public information systems; and
- (viii) improving financial management to make it more performance or output oriented. Developments in the area include the provision of efficiency dividends to the departments, the introduction of departmental charges, payments by department for internal government services, shifting from cash to accrual accounting, improving estate management through valuation of land, buildings, equipment and infrastructure owned by the government and public reporting through the strengthened roles for government auditors, the increasing use of value for money reviews, annual audited financial summary statement and consolidated balance sheets; (ix) evolve new arrangements for governing, attracting and retaining scarce category of skills in African civil services as part of the effort of qualitative and quantitative orientation of the civil services which demands the selective reform of the continent’s higher education system and the mobilization and increase in the inputs of civil society and non-state actors in the policy and reform processes (Kaul 1996; Olowu 2003; Bentil 2004; AfDB 2005).



## 5.9 Four major set of factors that affect administrative reform

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The literature seems to be clear on the four set of factors that have affected the process of administrative reform. First, some authors privilege a political perspective. For example, Haggard (1997) outlines a conceptual and analytical scheme that emphasizes the centrality of political and institutional factors in shaping state reform. He conceives of administrative reform as a “process of re-writing the contract between elected politicians and bureaucratic officials” (Haggard 1995: 12), whose outcome is strongly shaped by main variables: the balance of power between the executive and the legislature and the nature of the party system, particularly its degree of party fragmentation and the level of party discipline. At a higher level of abstraction, the reform of the state can thus be seen as a political process of striking a balance between the efficiency gains to be achieved by delegation, the interests of executives and legislators in controlling the bureaucratic agents for political ends, and the need for politicians and bureaucrats to remain responsive to organized interest groups.

Second, other scholars concentrate on a set of economic pressures for or against reform. Fiscal crises and constraints pressure governments directly to reform government bureaucracies, though these pressures do not necessarily translate into reform efforts designed to increase state capacity. More generally, historically and theoretically since Max Weber, capitalism and modern bureaucracy have flourished together. In the current context of increased international competition and volatile capital flows, capitalists have strong incentives to push for administrative reforms that reduce transaction costs (ports, courts and customs); level the competitive playing field (monopoly and trade regulations); and enhance investor confidence through greater transparency in budgets, international reserves and monetary policy (Maxfield 1997; Mahon 1996).

Third, the strategic choices of state reformers, such as policy design and coalition building, shaped the political costs of different types of reforms. The preferences and strategies of state reformers or “change teams” has figured prominently, at least initially, in explanations of reform because the distributional implications of “technical” reforms in the public sector are often not apparent immediately to other political actors (Schneider and Heredia 2003).

Fourth, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have influenced domestic reform initiatives through conditionality in emergency lending and ongoing programme lending. The rapid circulation of ideas on administrative reform constitutes another international factor. A predominant international thinking on administrative reform – called managerialism or NPM – influenced the design of some reform programmes. These four sets of influences include many of the factors thought to affect the politics of reforms of all sorts. As we have seen in the literature and later on in the four country case study, the combination of these factors had the expected intensity or direction of influences on public and civil service reform in Africa.

Beyond these influences, there are two hypotheses which have also impacted reform in Africa. First, the prospects for administrative reform are dimmer in countries where the bureaucratic and political elites are fused. Conversely, when political outsiders come to power, they are more likely to embark on administrative reform. Second, the programmatic commitments of political outsiders matter. Where these commitments require complementary administrative changes, then governments are more likely to sustain investments in administrative reforms (Schneider and Heredia 2003).

**Table 4: Classification of 29 Sub-Saharan Countries by Levels of Civil Service Reforms Efforts**

A. Advanced Reforms ('virtuous cycle')	B. Committed Reformers	C. Hesitant Reformers	D. Beginners and Non-starters ('vicious cycle')
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		

**Source:** Adamolekun, "Reorienting Public Management in Africa: Selected Issues and Some Country Experiences", (2005).

**Table 5: Civil Service and Administrative Reform: Type and Challenges**

Component	Political Risk	Financial Cost	Demanding of Capacity	Successfully Implemented Reforms	Little or no Progress
Pay & employment data	Minimal	Modest	Yes – but capacity building is part of the project	Yemen, Guyana	Honduras, Uganda
Downsizing	High	Significant one time costs for retrenchment	Yes	Russia, Tanzania, India	Bulgaria, Guyana, Uganda, Ethiopia, Yemen, Cambodia, Sri Lanka
Compensation reforms	Yes, in egalitarian cultures, where lower ranks are politicized or where unions are strong	Yes	Yes	Bulgaria, Albania	Guyana, Indonesia, Yemen, Pakistan
Human resource management reforms	Yes, especially in patronage-based systems	Moderate	Yes	Bulgaria, Bolivia and Albania	Ghana
Organizational reforms	Moderate	Modest	Yes	Russia, India, Tanzania	Ghana
Demand-side reforms	Moderate	Modest	Yes	Tanzania, Uganda, India	-
Training	No	Modest	Yes	Ethiopia, Russia, Yemen	Bolivia

**Source:** World Bank: *Public Sector Reforms: What Works and Why?* (2008): 53

### **Box 3: Challenges facing CSRs in Africa**

- i) CSRs are based on the wrong premises – on the idea of “affordable” civil services rather than “required civil services” dictated by the logic of a democratic, developmental state
- ii) CSRs are based on poor diagnosis – that African civil services are over-bloated – a fact that cannot be empirically established for the totality of the African civil service profile. These civil services are poorly structured and concentrated. They have surpluses at the base but substantial shortages at the professional levels. Skilled personnel are also not well distributed in space, as there is a tendency to over-concentration at the centre;
- iii) CSRs constitute a wrong prognosis; they represent the application of a wrong prescription to the problem confronting African countries;
- iv) CSRs have tended to be generally minimally participatory, often excluding the key stakeholders, the civil servants. It was feared that involvement of the stakeholders might slow down the implementation of retrenchment programmes in the civil service
- v) CSRs have tended to focus on the short term gains rather than the long term, because donors, who have provided the impetus for most reform efforts, must come up with immediate results to appease their domestic constituents;
- vi) CSRs are largely disconnected from other political and economic reforms taking place in the countries. With the exception of a few countries like Uganda and Ghana, they do not include critical public sector reform issues such as decentralization, strengthening accountability and improving transparency, which are all cornerstones of reform in the political and economic realms;
- vii) CSRs involve changes not only in structures but also in organizational behavior. Changing behavior takes time to bear fruit, for which some observers have suggested a period of 10 to 15 years. But the donors who provide funds for reform need to show quick results to convince their domestic constituencies. Hence even though African ownership is stressed, the reality of most reform initiatives is the dominance of external timetables and immediate results.

**Sources:** *Olowu 1999; 2003; Wescott 1999; AfDB 2005; Aye 2008*

# CHAPTER VI: Experiences, Innovations and Best Practices in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa

## 6.1 Experiences in Civil Service Reforms in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa:

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Experiences of CSRs in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa have been influenced by the New Public Management (NPM) approach and with the exception of South Africa, the implementation of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). The CSR efforts in the four countries were aimed at accruing savings, efficiency, and effectiveness and were coded as part of the growing international NPM enterprise (Minogue 1998; Hood and Peters 2001; McCourt and Minogue 2001). The NPM, as earlier on indicated, is characterized by its emphasis on reduction and deregulation of bureaucracy, employing market mechanisms or semi-market entities to conduct government action, devolution of responsibility downward and outward in organizations, and energizing the workforce to think in entrepreneurial terms. Importantly, the NPM reformers sought to split policy oversight of public service providing bureaus into smaller manageable units. Scholars regarded the NPM as an international paradigm shift and debated over its efficacy. Still, academic skeptics dismissed the NPM as not delivering on its full promises, especially in developing countries (Polidano 1999; Polidano and Hulme 1999; Caiden and Sundaram 2004; Larbi 1999; McCourt and Minogue 2001).

The NPM was attractive because it was framed as a strategy for empowering citizens and providing room for administrators to be entrepreneurs. Moreover, deregulation, especially in rolling back the “swollen or bloated states” seemed to provide greater choices for consumers of public goods and services. The NPM became a large part of the reform agenda embraced by governments in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. As an agenda, it was juxtaposed on on-going SAPs which entailed improving the performance of the public sectors (Ayee 2008; Olowu 2003; AfDB 2005).

CSRs were externally driven initiatives but implemented in phases beginning from 1987. SAPs affected public administration in various ways. The initiators directly linked CSRs to the successful implementation of other development goals, especially, poverty reduction. To a large extent, how successful the reforms were carried out was seen as a predictor for overall economic development in the three countries and to a lesser extent, South Africa.

Another significant occurrence is that public administration in the four countries was confronted with other ecological forces that included orienting managerial capacity to engage globalization and embrace e-government systems, albeit in a limited form. Briefly, there has been a drive towards computerization of civil service systems, especially in the areas such as payroll, human resource compliment control (Integrated Payroll and Personnel Database System (IPPDS)), tax management, data management and dissemination of information (Olowu 2003; Adamolekun 1999).

Consequently, the CSRs were clearly aimed at reducing the role of the state in public administration in the four countries. The diminished role of the state translated into greater rhetoric support for private sector provision of services that were previously only available through government institutions. No longer was the government the guarantor of security, public health, public education and even jobs. The state's role as monopoly-leviathan was threatened by the overriding SAP regime that called for cost sharing and a thinner and leaner government (AfDB 2005; Olowu 2003; Otenyo n.d).

### **6.2.1: The Ghanaian Experience**

#### **6.2.1.1 The Political and Constitutional Context**

The West African state of Ghana achieved independence from Britain on March 6, 1957. Since then, it had experienced periods of civilian and military rule. Ghana returned to constitutional rule in January 1993 after almost two decades of military rule with the birth of the Fourth Republic. Five elections were held in 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008. The elections of 2000 and 2008 were significant because power alternated between the incumbent government and the minority party. The National Democratic Congress (NDC) as the incumbent government lost the elections in 2000 while the New Patriotic Party (NPP) also lost power in 2008.

The 1992 Constitution, which embodies the guiding principles of the governmental system, is based on a quasi-executive president system of government. However, unlike the US presidential system, which maintains a separation of powers, the Ghanaian Constitution stipulates that a majority of ministers of state be appointed from among members of Parliament. Another salient feature of the Constitution is the guarantee of an independent judiciary distinct from both the executive and legislative arms of government. The hybrid system of government, has, however, undermined the effective accountability by Parliament (Saffu 2007). In the words of Ninsin (2008:76-77) the "executive dominance of the legislature does not enable parliament to exercise its oversight functions effectively in order to protect and enhance the interest of the people. At best it adumbrates the power that parliament is mandated to exercise in relation to the executive".

The economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s led to the introduction of the SAP in 1983 by the military government of the Provisional National Defence Council. The implementation of SAP also led to the introduction of CSR in 1987.

Chapter 14 of the 1992 Constitution identifies the civil service as part of the 14 public services which were created before the coming into force of the 1992 Constitution. Though its functions have evolved over the years, the civil service in Ghana still has responsibility in: (i) helping to get the best value for money spent and the highest professional standards in delivery of services to the public; (ii) helping to plan, prioritize and harmonize the activities of Government within and between agencies; (iii) promoting and facilitating efforts of the private sector to create wealth; (iv) assisting in mobilizing Ghana's manpower and financial resources so as to accelerate national development and to reduce poverty; (v) contributing to the consolidation of good governance and democracy (Republic of Ghana, 2003: 30).

#### ***6.2.1.2 The Ghanaian Civil Service in Historical Context***

The Ghanaian civil service was once regarded as the "finest, most relevant and performance-oriented institutions in Africa" (Nti, 1978: 1). At the time, it was well trained, adequately remunerated and resourced while its size was manageable and security of tenure as well as anonymity and neutrality of the civil servants were guaranteed. All these factors combined to produce an environment which was congenial and thus elicited in most civil servants the highest degree of performance and productivity. However, these good days turned into bad times under which the civil service was described as a "moribund, paper-pushing institution" (Nti, 1978: 2). When the PNDC took over power on December 31, 1981, the civil service was seen to be incapable of implementing government policies and programmes. This was misconstrued by the PNDC as a calculated effort by the civil service to sabotage its policies and programmes. It therefore regarded the top echelons as "allies of imperialism and neo-colonialism which should be subjected to revolutionary overthrow and not mere reforms" (Ghana, 1982: 5-6). In the opinion of the PNDC, the civil service should be reorganized and politicized to ensure that its 'orientation tallies with the objectives of the Revolution" (Ghana, 1982:5). This led to some of the structural changes, including the re-designation of the position of principal secretary to that of Chief Director, who must be appointed based on both merit and partisanship. Consequently, the position of Chief Director, the administrative head of a ministry, was no longer the preserve of civil servants but now open to attract applications from the public service (Ayee 1991; 1993; 1994; Woode 1984).

The reform by the PNDC of the top personnel of the civil service has led to the politicization of the civil service. One of the results is that some civil servants either campaign on the platforms of political parties, or stand for parties in their primaries or parliamentary elections, or to take up top posts without resigning their positions. The negative effect of this trend on the supposed neutrality of the civil service and its work cannot be overestimated. It has created possible avenues for conflict of interests especially when the Civil Service Code of Conduct enjoins civil servants to exhibit a sense of fairness, selflessness and justice and take decisions solely in the interest of the public (Ayee 2009).



A number of features of Ghana's civil service have been identified as debilitating to its performance. They include: (i) substantial overstaffing, especially at junior levels – lack of manpower planning; (ii) deterioration of real salaries/wages plus a high degree of wage compression; (iii) lack of morale/motivation – incentives problems; (iv) inability of major institutions involved in civil service management to provide policy guidance, direction, and supervision to sectoral/departmental units – defective managerial competence; (v) over-centralization and over-concentration of powers and functions at the national level; (vi) poor physical work environment and poor facilities – logistical problems; (vii) excessive bureaucratization and red tape (e.g., of promotions and appointments to key posts); (viii) lack of political direction and commitment, leading to apathy and inertia; (ix) serious deficiencies in training institutions and programmes; (x) obsolete and rigid rules and regulations resulting from an outdated Civil Service Act (Ayee 1992; 1993; 1994; 1999; 2001; Woode 1984; Nkrumah 1992).

### **6.2.1.3 Ghanaian Civil Service Reforms**

Successive reform efforts have been made to tackle these problems of the Ghanaian civil service. For various reasons, previous attempts to effectively reform the civil service were cosmetic, and most of the recommendations by various commissions and committees were either shelved or only partially implemented. The result of the debilitating features of the civil service was that the PNDC's SAP was introduced in an administrative environment of severe constraints and handicaps that needed to be addressed if the SAP was to be successfully implemented. This situation, however, appeared not to have caught the attention of the designers and financiers of Ghana's SAP until the late 1986 (Ayee 1999).

Hence in 1987 the government incorporated the Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP) as a key component of SAP. It was funded by the Overseas Development Agency (ODA), now called Department for International Development (DfID). The CSRP was designed to contribute to the improvement of human resource management in the civil service, reduce overstaffing and trim redundant civil servants as part of the effort to reduce government expenditure and help achieve macroeconomic stability. Its components included the review of personnel policy and management, incomes policy and salary administration, labour rationalization, revamping of the Management Services Division (MSD) and review of records management (Ayee 1999; Quartey 2007).

The CSRP introduced some important reforms such as the launching of a new staff performance appraisal system, down-sizing of the civil service, and resourcing and equipping of MSD, as well as the training of its staff in various aspects of human resource management. A review of the CSRP in 1993, however, found that the reform was not sufficiently comprehensive and did not cover all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). Besides, it was faulted from not being participative, a fact which tended to undermine the new changes (Adofo 1991; Dodoo 1996; 1997).

In 1994, the government changed the focus of the reforms with the creation of the National Institutional Renewal Programme (NIRP), which was a programme for capacity building under good governance. Its major aim was to encourage institutions under the executive, legislative and judicial arms of government as well as autonomous institutions listed in the Constitution to discharge their functions in a transparent, competent, accountable, and cost effective manner. This was supposed to create an enabling environment for accelerated growth and equitable social development (Aye 1999; 2001).

To achieve some of the objectives of the NIRP, the Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme (CSPIP) funded by DfID was launched in March 1995 to replace the CSR. DfID spent £5 million between 1995 and 2000 on the programme (Quartey 2007). The CSPIP was designed to address the shortcoming of the CSR, especially in ensuring the participation of key stakeholders. Its main objectives were to improve performance of service in terms of its cost-effectiveness and customer focus and response, enhance efficiency and facilitate the development of a proactive and motivated public sector. In other words, it was to develop the capacity of the Ghana civil service to deliver effective, efficient and customer-oriented service. The key objectives, among others, were to (i) ensure that ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) develop performance improvement plans (PIPs), which specify their output and service delivery targets, against which performance is monitored; (ii) motivate civil servants towards results-oriented practice and performance linked to appropriate reward schemes; (iii) improve responsiveness to the needs of the public and private sectors and contribute towards supporting national development agenda; (iv) encourage all MDAs to discharge their functions efficiently and in a transparent, competent, accountable and cost effective fashion (Antwi et.al. 2008).

Designed and executed by the Office of the Head of the Civil Service (OHCS), the CSPIP was perceived as “homegrown” and strengthened the institutional capacity of MDAs and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). In October 1997, Rawlings’ NDC government put into operation the Public Sector Re-invention and Modernization Strategy (PSRMS) to help transform state institutions, their accountability and performance framework and their relationship with the private sector and civil society (Owusu 2006).

When Kufuor’s NPP government assumed office in 2001 it showed little interest in public sector reforms until the beginning of its second term in early 2005. It created a Ministry of Public Sector Reform (MPSR) in May 2005 to provide an institutional home for all public sector reforms and produced a working document on “Towards a New Public Service for Ghana” and “Reference Document on Work Programme to Coordinate the Implementation of Public Sector Reforms” in 2005 and January 2006 respectively.

The methodology of the CSPIP was consultative and participatory aimed at encouraging ownership and sustainability right from the design to implementation. To address some of the shortcomings leveled against the earlier CSRP of 1988-1992, a series of consultative meetings or workshops with stakeholders (that is, civil servants, parliament, industry, civil society organizations and politicians) were organized to solicit views on what kind of civil service they desired. A multi-sectoral technical group was constituted to formulate the ideas together with technical and financial assistance from the DfID and the World Bank. The preliminary blueprint and outcome was piloted for two years: 1994-1996, before the full operational phase commenced in from 1996-2001 (Antwi et.al. 2008). The process approach was adopted for the design and implementation of the programme as featured in the handbook published by the Office of the Head of the Civil (OHCS) (Ghana Republic of 2001).

Among the strategies adopted as part of the implementation process of the CSPIP were: (i) development and implementation of performance improvement plans (PIPs) through self appraisal (SA), that is, internal review; beneficiary surveys (BS) – this was in the form of consultation with clients and independent consultants to interview service beneficiaries of MDAs; diagnostic workshops; and implementation, monitoring and feedback; (ii) communication strategy involving a newsletter and press conferences; (iii) setting and publishing of Service Delivery Standards (SDS) using a similar participatory approach involving the staff of the concerned MDAs, central management agencies (CMAs), key stakeholders and clients; (iv) establishment of Client Services Units (CSUs) and the installation of a complaints system for the civil service; (v) establishment of other components of reform related to incomes, matching of social development issues such as gender in policy formulation and public financial management system; (vi) establishment of a central technical back-stopping and monitoring body at the OHCS, while each MDA had an internal reform group called the Capacity Development Team (CDT) – a mixture of staff from bottom-up; (vii) regular monitoring visits of MDAs and quarterly review meetings consisting of the technical team, stakeholders, DfID UK and World Bank were conducted to re-strategize and chart the way forward; and (viii) an annual review with major stakeholders, press review and report to the office of the President.

#### **6.2.4.1 Some Progress Made by Ghana**

Ghana's civil service reform efforts have produced disappointing results (World Bank 2008; Owusu 2006). Evidence suggests that most MDAs went through the mundane activities of forming Capacity Development Teams (CDTs), conducting BSs, developing PIPs and even implementing it as part of their schedule "job/task process (see Table 6). The CSPIP 'News' and 'Handbook' were published in addition to a new "code of conduct" with 60,000 copies circulated. Service delivery standards were set and mechanically implemented. At both national and regional levels identifiable officers were labeled to indicate the establishment of the CDTs reform Co-ordinator/Member. Performance agreements were signed and evaluated, but not necessarily acted upon. Despite being a core central management agency, and therefore fully aware of the CSPIP under the reform agenda, the Ministry of

Finance and Economic Planning (MOFEP) failed to make budgetary provision for reform programmes of MDAs and hence no incentives for the relatively good-performing MDAs (Antwi et.al. 2008).

In addition, beneficiary surveys were conducted and reported, but the methodology became too mechanical and the facilitators or resource persons had less flexibility. For instance, the crucial system-wide issues of remuneration, decentralization and financial management reforms were not properly dealt with, and this appears to have undermined the CSPIP process. Additionally, the changes in personnel, both politically and technocratically, occasionally led to loss of interest or vice versa. Consequently, while the results on the mechanical routine aspects of the CSPIP were impressive, the actual level of transformation or change that endures and should be reflected in management and staff's attitude and behavior and in the organizational culture is least unacceptable (Ghana, Republic of 2001; 2002).

As rightly pointed by Quartey (2007: 38), the outcome of the CSPIP is "deceptive, with virtually no real improvement in service delivery and efficiency in other tasks performed by the Civil Service". The NPP government itself acknowledged the failure of the CSPIP. It pointed out that even though the civil service is responsible for implementing government policy, it is "demonstrably weak and ineffective. ... Successive governments have been dissatisfied with its level of performance... and the following key issues account for this low level discharge of its responsibilities: (i) inadequate policy planning and analysis; (ii) low capacity for policy and decision implementation; (iii) low capacity for programme and project planning; (iv) insufficient use of research findings and information; (v) weak data retrieval and undeveloped ICT skills; and (vi) limited monitoring and evaluation technique among civil servants" (Ghana, Republic of 2006: 2, 30).

#### **6.2.5.1 The Main Innovations and Best Practices**

Some of the innovations and best practices include (i) the design of a Civil Service Code of Conduct; (ii) the development of standards for service delivery and printed brochures by delivery service delivery institutions such as the Passports Office, Land Title Registry and Registrar-General's Department which explain their services to the public. The brochures contain information about services provided by the institutions, procedures for making use of the services, standards of service to be expected by the public and procedures for making complaints; (iii) the introduction of a high flyer scheme in 1996 which enables young officers who are deemed to have the potential to be given specialized training to enable them to maximize their potential and strengthen the capacity of the Civil Service through accelerated promotion if they were able to demonstrate their worth; (iv) introduction of customer/client orientation through beneficiary surveys; (v) the introduction of performance improvement plans and the signing of performance agreements; (vi) computerization of personnel records; (vii) the introduction of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and the linkage of functional reviews to the implementation of the MTEF; and (viii) separation of policy formulation from implementation

through the creation executive agencies like the Ghana Health Service and Internal Revenue Service, which is reputed to be the first autonomous revenue authority created in Africa.

**Table 6: Summary of CSPIP Achievements in Ghana (1997-2001)**

Institution	Target	CDTs formed	SAs completed	BS Started	BS completed	Diagnostic workshop completed	PIP produced	PIP discussed & validated	PIP implementation started
Ministries	21	21	21	17	16	17	15	10	10
Depts & Agencies	41	41	33	25	14	12	6	5	4
RCCs	10	10	10	10	7	6	4	3	3
MMDAs	110	82	65	18	7	5	4	4	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>

**Source:** Ghana, Republic of (2000; 2002)

**Key:** CDTs, Capacity Development Teams; SAs, Self Appraisal Teams; BS, Beneficiary Survey; PIP, Performance Improvement Plan; RCC, Regional Coordinating Councils; MMDAs, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies).

### 6.3.2: The Kenyan Experience

#### 6.3.2.1 The Political and Constitutional Context

Kenya achieved independence from Britain in 1963. The Kenya African National Union (KANU), which dominated Kenyan politics for decades and was for many years in the post-independence period (until 1992) the only legal political party, developed a highly centralized system. Kenya in the immediate post-independence period adopted a federal constitution that offered legislative powers, financial capacity and executive authority to local and provincial governments in an attempt to undo the legacy of colonial paternalism and centralization (Leys 1975). At the national level, the 1963 Independence Constitution created a bicameral legislature (Senate and House of Representatives), an executive, headed by the prime minister, and a civil service. At the subnational level, the constitution created eight semi-autonomous regions, each with a regional assembly, an executive led by the regional president, and a regional civil service (Khadiagala and Mitullah 2004). However, the 1968 Republican Constitution under Jomo Kenyatta dismantled and eliminated provincial autonomy and federalism. The country became a unitary state. At the centre the two chambers of legislature were merged to form the National Assembly while the positions of head of state and prime minister were combined to create a strong presidency with unhampered powers.

The KANU was the only party between November 1964 to mid 1966 when in the latter year, the former Vice President, Oginga Odinga broke away from KANU and formed the Kenya People's Union

(KPU), which remained in place until December 1969 when it was proscribed. Thereafter, the KANU once again remained as the only defacto party until 1982 when through legislation, it became legally the only party up to late 1991 when multipartyism was resurrected. The clamour that engulfed most of Africa for pluralism, democracy and decentralization compelled Moi to repeal the single-party legislation in 1991 setting in motion constitutional changes from an authoritarian unitary state to a democratic society. The constitutional changes of 1992 led the democratization process, which focused mostly on reform the structure, institutions and political processes of the central government – the presidency, parliament, electoral rules and the civil service. It also resulted in the transfer of responsibility for managing the presidential and parliamentary elections from the civil service, notably the provincial administration to the Electoral Commission of Kenya. Given the history of the provincial administration’s partiality to the ruling party, this change promised to create conditions for free and fair elections. Furthermore, the president is elected for a five year term and the winner of the presidential elections must secure the largest number of votes among all contestants nation-wide, win at least, 25% of the votes among five of Kenya’s eight provinces and be elected Member of Parliament in a constituency (Smoke 2004; Khadiagala and Mitullah 2004).

Kenya held multi-party elections in 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007. The 1992 and 1997 elections that elected Moi to power were regarded as flawed given the level of corruption, despondency, centralization and authoritarianism that had engulfed the country. However, the December 2002 elections were judged as “free and fair” by both local and international observers. Moi’s defeat by Mwai Kibaki of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) was seen as an encouragement for electoral competition within the body politic. However, the 2007 elections were keenly contested as 8 other candidates challenged the incumbent Kibaki, including Raila Odinga of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and Kalonso Musyoka of the Orange Democratic Movement – Kenya (ODM-K). The outcome was disputed by Odinga because there was vote-rigging and he called for a re-run of the presidential polls by an independent body other than the electoral commission. The impasse led to violence and some lives were lost. A Coalition Government is in place under a power sharing agreement under which Kibaki remains president with Odinga serving as prime minister. This political situation portends fragmentation, politicization and patronage for the structure and behavior of the Kenyan civil service. Reforms have the potential of stalling because of divided attention from the political leadership. Therefore committed political leadership which is required in CSRs will be missing.

### ***6.3.3.1 The Kenyan Civil Service in Historical Context***

From the point of view of public administration in Kenya, the prevalence of hierarchy and control-based public administrative systems undermined the possibility of embracing democratic administration. During the colonial period, public administration was essentially to maintain law and order. The Kenyan civil service today may be regarded as a product of the colonial experience. The civil service in Kenya like in any other Commonwealth country was not designed to grapple with development needs of post-independence period. It is from this experience that its strong features, especially cen-

tralism of governmental functions emanate (Oyugi 1995). As the country evolved over time, it was able to shed most of the centralist tendencies by deconcentrating governmental functions up to the district level. The preoccupation of the administration throughout the colonial period had been system maintenance. The civil service proper was weak as an institution for development management. It was highly centralized and compartmentalized. The situation was compounded by the structure of staffing on the eve of independence in 1963. After independence Africanization as a personnel development policy was pursued with great zeal especially during the first five years of independence, so that by “1968, the Civil Service had been Africanized to 98 per cent” (Nyamu, 1974:3). It brought into the service people with little or no experience to count on in handling the challenging decisions they would have to make (Leys 1970).

At independence, the government of Jomo Kenyatta and KANU changed the paradigm of the civil service from maintenance of law and order to incorporate development administration. The civil service became to a tool for cementing nationalism. This was actualized through different strategies foremost of which was to post members of different ethnic groups to serve in different localities. Besides nation building, it was thought stability and development would be achieved through centralization of the civil service. Because of the urgency in giving meaning to independence, the growth of the civil service was remarkable (Leys 1975).

By the late 1960s, the civil service became a bureaucratic oligarchy with strong connections to power centres. Some of the well-connected top civil servants such as Permanent Secretaries and Directors ran their ministries and departments in a manner contrary to established norms and practices. Promotions were not based on merit which resulted in indiscipline and loss of morale (Oyugi 2006). This situation also led the civil service to take sides in political issues thereby compromising administrative efficiency and professionalism. There was no conceptual differentiation between what was political and administrative. Promotion in the civil service was based on one’s loyalty to KANU. By the 1990s, it was obvious that the civil service was not professional in any sense of the word. Public administration lost its linkages to national development as ministries were reduced to appendages of political power elites. The ministries were politicized to the core and political patronage undermined ethical and professional principles (Mutahaba 1989).

The post-independence era saw Kenya undertaking a very complex reform programme of transiting the civil service from a colonial to an independent administration. The main vehicle used for implementing the reforms is the appointment of seven commissions and committees by the government (see Table 7). The Terms of Reference of these committees or commissions invariably included the identification of reform measures that would be taken to improve the efficiency and productivity of the civil service. In addition to these committees, the government also appointed a myriad of task forces, working parties and groups to review certain specific aspects of government operations. For instance, the development of the education system was guided through the work of such groups as

the Kenya Education Commission of 1964, the Ndegwa Commission of 1971, the Wamalwa Report on Training of 1972 and the Working Party on Education and Manpower Training of 1988 (Avedi 1995).

**Table 7: Commissions/Committees on Civil Service Reforms in Kenya**

- The Pratt Commission, 1963
- The Miller-Graig Commission, 1966
- The Ndegwa Commission, 1971
- The Waruhiu Committee, 1979
- The Ramtu Committee, 1985
- The Mbithi Committee, 1990
- The Munene Committee, 1996

*Source: Kenya, Republic of, An Overview of Kenya's Civil Service Reform Programme, 1997, p. 2*

#### **6.3.4.1 The Kenyan Civil Service Reform:**

There is no doubt that CSRs in Kenya were influenced by the changing philosophy which involves a process of matching government's role to its capabilities and resources and moving to improve the government's capacity and effectiveness to perform its defined tasks. This philosophy was reflected in the government's development policies notably through two major Sessional Papers in the 1980s and 1990s. The 1986 Sessional Paper whose theme was "Economic Management for Renewed Growth" introduced SAP that was meant to reduce central control, liberalize the economy, reduce and rationalize government functions, organization and expenditure and recognize the private sector as an engine of growth. Although growth accelerated in the 1980s, by 1994 slow growth cropped back along with high inflation, falling investments and raising deficits. To deal with this new problem, the government issued the Sessional Paper No.1 of 1994 on Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development from 1994 to 2010. In addition to maintaining an enabling environment, the government went on to state that it would concentrate its activities on provision of social services and physical infrastructure, ensure efficient administration of government services and protection of the environment (Kenya, Republic 1994).

The perception of a swollen state which needs to be rolled back by the NPM was manifest in the numbers of civil servants in Kenya. For example, in 1963, the number of employees in the Kenya civil service (excluding teachers) stood at about 60,000 with a corresponding national population of 8 million hence the ratio of 133:1. Between 1963 and 1991, employment in the Civil Service grew annually at 5.5% reaching 274,000 employees in 1991 (Grindle 1996; Kenya, Republic 1994). This growth surpassed the average population growth thus leading to a population to employee ratio of 85:1 in 1991.



While implementing the SAP, the government realized that there was progressive decline in efficiency and effectiveness of the civil service and that the quality and scope of services rendered by government ministries had rapidly deteriorated (Odhiambo 2005). SAP necessitated strict budgetary controls and reductions in public expenditure. To meet this objective, the government terminated thousands of public service employees in phases beginning 1997-8. The second phase of the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VERS), which was introduced in 2004, retrenched 20,000 civil servants. The government of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) borrowed over 15 billion shillings from the International Monetary Fund to implement the second scheme. Initially, the political cost of doing so was high because the administration wanted to fulfill its promise of creating rather than cutting jobs. But the reality was that the earlier retrenchments did not provide resources for public service delivery (Otenyo n.d.).

Against this backdrop, the CSR started in August 1993 with the launching of the Civil Service Reform Programme and Action Plan. Its principal goal is to realize enhanced delivery of services and goods to the public and productivity. Specifically, the CSR is to (i) reduction budget deficit; (ii) increase efficiency and productivity; (iii) rationalize government ministries; (iv) downsize or trim the lower levels Job Groups A-G to make the service more responsive to the needs of the public in the face of budgetary constraints. The idea is that a trimmer civil service, better remunerated and motivated will be a sure bet in offering high quality service; (v) enhance supervisory capacity; (vi) promote management information systems; (vii) reduce staff cost by putting in place better methods of payroll management; (viii) develop a clear work ethics by revising existing code of regulations and designing a Code of Conduct (Oyugi 2006).

The CSR was designed to be implemented in three phases:

- Phase I (1993-1998) focused on cost-containment;
- Phase II (1998-2001) focused on performance improvement; and
- Phase III (2003- to date), which focuses on refinement, consolidation and sustenance of reform gains.

Phase I ushered in Phase II reforms towards mid-1998. However, Phase II reforms only gained momentum following the National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government in 2003. Phase II was redesigned and reformulated on the basis of experience gained under Phase I. Consequently, the Civil Service Reform Medium Term Strategy 1998-2001 was published in 1998 and outlined the strategies for CSRP II. Some of the specific objectives include improving the quality and timeliness of the delivery of public services, through improvements in the competence and management of civil servants, reduce overlaps and duplications within and between ministries and improve pay and benefits of civil servants with a view to enhance performance, productivity and efficient delivery of services. It

has four components, namely, (i) redefinition and rationalization of government functions; (ii) staffing and management of the wage bill; (iii) pay and benefit reform; and (iv) training and capacity building (Kenya, Republic of 1994).

Phase II reform witnessed a series of ministerial and sectoral initiatives. In addition, governance reforms were also launched. They include justice, law and order sector reforms; judicial reforms; capacity building and training; e-governance; results based management; participation in quality awards and reintroduction of performance contracts (Marwa and Zairi 2009).

#### **6.3.5.1 Some Progress Made by Kenya**

Like the Ghanaian case, the CSRs in Kenya have the following achievements: (i) First, it led to a reduction in the size of the civil service with the introduction of the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VERS). Over 45,000 people retired while a cost containment measure abolished over 30,000 vacant positions. The additional 45,000 posts that were vacant as a result of the VERS were frozen and no ministry was authorized to fill them; (ii) Unique personal numbers for civil servants were designed and introduced in order to assist in the improvement of establishment control and maintenance of payroll integrity including the eliminating ghost workers; (iii) computerization of all the personnel records through the development of an integrated payroll and personnel data base system (IPPD); (iv) to sensitize and psychologically prepare retirees under the VERS, a resource handbook on Entrepreneurship and Small Scale Enterprises was prepared and distributed to retirees to encourage and guide them on starting and managing small scale and income generating projects; (v) rationalization of five target ministries in service delivery (agriculture, health, finance and planning, water development, roads and public works); (vi) the establishment of a “Change Team” also referred to as “Dream Team” in July 1999. It comprised six top rate Kenyan professionals drawn from the parastatals and private sectors inside Kenya and from international organizations. It was specifically mandated to clean the civil service of its inefficiency and corruption and to develop and begin to implement an economic recovery programme.

By December 2000, the team had produced an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), adopted and progressively implemented transparent and competitive procurement reform measures, remove poor performers from some key civil service and parastatal positions and replaced them with competent and honest professionals and strongly supported the serious anti-corruption measures of the Kenyan Anti-Corruption Authority (KACA) that included the prosecution of corrupt public officials. The work of the Change Team came to abrupt end in March 2001. This is because the “Dream Team” was made up of people understand the politics of the bureaucracy as well as the operations of the service. It took them time to settle, as they encountered resistance from the career civil servants who were by-passed on the insistence of the development partners (Kenya, Republic of 1997; Adamolekun 2005; Kpundeh 2004; Kenya, Republic of 2005).

In spite of the achievements, the reform initiatives have not produced remarkable changes in service delivery. This is because Kenyans continue to grapple with problems of inefficiencies, corruption, and largely dysfunctional civil service; poverty and inequality, environmental degradation, stagnation and unemployment; and development programmes have not been taken seriously. In addition, some of the achievements were reversed such as the downsizing of the civil service as well as the truncation of the work of the “Dream Team”. Specifically, the constraints include (i) the implementation of the VERS was done before undertaking a staff analysis to determine staffing levels of all cadres in job groups A-G. This analysis would have assisted MDAs to set up their retrenchment targets; (ii) lack of sound deployment and redeployment procedures and practices contributed to the uneven distribution of lower cadre staff, job groups A-G in the service; (iii) due to lack of reliable personnel information system, deletions of staff who separated with the service were at times not promptly done by MDAs; (iv) the reduction of staff through natural attrition without replacement and voluntary early retirement scheme imply that the remaining civil servants should put extra time and effort to maintain the workload. The remaining civil servants were not appropriately compensated and this constrained the improvement of efficiency and productivity; (v) MDAs do not have internal capacity to carry out ministerial rationalization; (vi) vested interests and internal conflicts in the existing organization set-up, and reluctance by some ministry staff to view the exercise from a purely objective standpoint have resulted in resistance to change; (vii) the expectations of civil servants are that a reforming civil service implies improved terms and conditions of service and a move towards paying a living wage. However, there has not been substantial improvement in pay and benefits and this impinged negatively on attempts to sustain reform gains (Kenya, Republic of 1997; Adamolekun 2005; Kpundeh 2004; Kenya, Republic of 2005).

#### **6.3.6.1 The Main Innovations and Best Practices:**

Some of the innovations and best practices include: (i) computerization of personnel records; (ii) the establishment of a “Change Team” also referred to as “Dream Team” in July 1999 to clean the civil service of its inefficiency and corruption and to develop and begin to implement an economic recovery programme; (iii) the publication of a resource handbook on Entrepreneurship and Small Scale Enterprises to prepare retirees to encourage and guide them on starting and managing small scale and income generating projects; and (iv) the design of a code of conduct.

### **6.4.3 The Nigerian Experience**

#### **6.4.3.1 The Political and Constitutional Context**

Nigeria gained independence from British rule in October 1960. Since then it has had brief spells of democratic civil rule (1960-1966 and 1979-1983) as well as a relatively long spell of democratic rule from 1999 to date. Despite being under military rule for almost 30 years of its 49 years of independence, Nigeria has a history of constitution-making (1960, 1963, 1979, 1989, 1995 and 1999), a vibrant and active civil society and a culture of democracy.

After 16 years of military rule, the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) headed by General Abdulsalami Abubakar held presidential elections on February 27, 1999. The elections were won by General Olusegun Obasanjo's People's Democratic Party (PDP) which defeated the other two parties, the All People's Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD). The outcome of the elections was contested in court but was dismissed by the Federal Appeal Court. This paved the way for the handing over of power from military rule to the winner of the elections, General Obasanjo and his party, the PDP on May 29, 1999. Two elections were held since 1999 but their results especially that of 2007, which brought President Yar-Adua to power, were disputed and led to the loss of some lives.

Authoritarianism has manifested itself in Nigeria through years of military rule marked by absence of debate, intimidation, disregard of civil rights, and nonchalance about due process and the rule of law. This has left an intolerant environment, in which the language of politicians is still militaristic and people still use violence to settle issues. It is in marked contrast to a democratic culture where the people freely debate issues and help to build their own future, free from unwarranted interference by the state and other individuals (International IDEA 2001).

The 1999 Constitution stipulates that the state structure should be a federal republic, with three-tiers of government, namely, the federal government, states and local governments units. The federal structure was adopted in 1954, when Nigeria was still under colonial rule. The federal structure evolved from three regions to four in 1963, and then to 12 states in 1967, 19 in 1976, 21 in 1987, 30 in 1991 and 36 in 1996. The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and the seat of government, Abuja designated as such in 1976, have an autonomous status (Otobo 1999).

The form of government is a federal presidential system of government. The president exercises the executive powers, combining the roles of Head of State, Head of Government and Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. The appropriate distribution of powers between federal and state levels of government is an issue that has been at the centre of debate over the constitutional framework. There is also the problem of separation of powers between the three tiers of government. One critical area is the division or allocation of fiscal powers between the three levels of government (International IDEA 2001).

The Constitution stipulates a "federal character" principle with a view to ensuring that appointments to public service institutions fairly reflect the linguistic, ethnic, religious and geographic diversity of the country. The practice has resulted in a confused balancing of the merit principle and a quota system with a heavy dose of arbitrariness. This has had adverse consequences for both morale and performance in the civil service.

The Federal Civil Service Commission is a constitutional body, established under Section 153(1d) of the 1999 Constitution. It is empowered to (i) appoint qualified candidates to man the different Minis-

tries/Extra Ministerial Departments in the federal civil service, make recommendations to government on personnel policies aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the civil service and ensure that personnel decisions reflect the stated policies and interests of the government (Nigeria, Federal Republic of 1999). Moreover, the powers, objectives and composition of the Commission are informed by the desire to acquire and retain the highly capable human resource that will propel the country towards attaining its national objectives, namely, to firmly establish Nigeria as a “united, strong and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy, a just and egalitarian society, a land of bright and full of opportunity for all citizens and a free and democratic society” (Nigeria, Federal Republic of 1995: 10) through non-partisanship, adherence to rules and regulations and best practices.

One major stipulation in the Constitution is the separation of the Office of Head of the Civil Service of the Federation from that of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation ostensibly to reduce politicization of the service.

#### **6.4.4.1 *The Nigerian Civil Service in Historical Context***

The Nigerian civil service evolved from the colonial service which was established by the British authorities as the administrative machinery of the country. The civil service has been subjected to three political influences: the colonial, civilian and military. These three influences retain certain common commitments, albeit in varying degrees – for example, career orientation for civil servants and the use of the Federal Civil Service Commission for promotion, discipline and rule enforcement for the civil service. But each of these influences bequeathed different legacies. An important inherited legacy from colonial rule was the attributes of political neutrality, anonymity and impartiality. Post-independence civil regimes sought to reinforce the role of the civil servant, especially higher civil servants as confidential advisers to ministers – the political heads of ministries (Otobo 1999).

Some of the inherited legacies were not sustained under military regimes. For example, during the first phase of military intervention, 1966-1979, two patterns emerged in regard to the role of higher civil servants. Between 1967 and 1975 the higher civil servants dominated the policy process, leading to the virtual loss of their attributes of political neutrality, anonymity and impartiality. By contrast, between 1975 and 1979, the role of civil servants in the policy process became less pronounced (Adebayo 1981; Adamolekun 1986). This trend, which has since continued, is attributable to three factors. First, the mass dismissals or “purges” of civil servants in 1975/76 and 1984/85 made higher civil servants more circumspect and less likely to take a high profile role in public policy making. Second, the appointment of advisers to government with strong technical skills in various disciplines had reduced governments’ reliance on civil servants. Third, economic reforms, especially privatization and commercialization of public enterprises, have also reduced the opportunities for the appointment of higher civil servants to the boards of state enterprises, thus curbing their influence (Otobo 1999; Agagu 2008).

The size of the civil service has grown and contracted in response to political as well as economic factors. The transition from colonial rule to sovereign independence led to the first wave of expansion in the civil service. Whereas as colonial rule had focused on the limited objectives of maintaining law and order and relied partly on traditional rulers for governance in the “indirect rule” system, the attainment of independence compelled the government to pursue broad socio-economic development objectives – requiring expansion in the numbers and mix of civil service personnel. A second contributory factor in the expansion of the civil service was the increased revenue from oil, especially in the 1970s, which enable the government to fund various programmes and projects, most of which were initially linked to post-civil war efforts of reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation. These projects were administered mainly by civil servants (Gboyega and Adamolekun and Abubakar 1989; Otobo 1999; Briggs 2007).

The size of the federal civil service thus grew from less than 30,000 at independence in 1960 to 45,154 in 1970, leaping to 98,877 in 1974 and to 213,802 in 1988, peaking to 273,392 in 1990 and in the mid-1998 the civil service was about 200,000 strong. The contraction of the civil service since the mid-1980s is traceable to the “purges” in 1984/85 and the retrenchment exercise undertaken in the context of the economic reforms initiated by the federal government since 1986 (Otobo 1999; 1998; Philips 1988; 1989; 1990).

#### **6.4.5.1 The Nigerian Civil Service Reforms**

CSRs have been conducted in Nigeria dating back to the pre-independence era to date (see Table 8). The reforms before 1972 contributed mainly to improvements in salaries and wages, grading structure and strengthening management responsibility. They include the Gorsuch Commission Reform of 1956 that created the existing structure of the Nigerian Civil Service and the Newns Committee of 1959 which integrated the executive agency-type departmental structures with the ministerial ones thereby giving Permanent Secretaries the status of Managing Directors of companies in the private sector (Olaopa 2009c).

Three reforms which have shaped CSRs in Nigeria for a long time will be examined. They are the: (i) The Public Service Review Commission (the Udoji Commission, 1972-1974); (ii) 1988 Civil Service Reforms; (iii) 1994 Review Panel on Civil Service Reform called the Alison Ayida Panel. Before these reforms were implemented the civil service in Nigeria was considered tradition-bound, somewhat ponderous and showed signs of deterioration and several undesirable characteristics of which the following were the most prominent: over-centralization, incessant conflicts between the cadres, little emphasis on results and concrete performance, counterproductive separation of authority from responsibility at the topmost hierarchy, dangerously low staff morale and productivity and inappropriate staff development practices (Adegoroye 2006; Babura 2003).

#### **6.4.5.1.1 Udoji Reforms, 1972-1974:**

The Commission introduced a number of key innovations in the civil service, notably the opening of the post of Permanent Secretary to both administrative and professional/specialist staff; the harmonization and unification of job grading and salary systems through the service; the introduction of the merit system as a basis for reward; the replacement of the confidential reporting system by the open system of reporting; and the introduction of a new code of conduct for all public officers. Even though the Commission was known for the salary increases it gave public servants, its goal of introducing modern management style, techniques and culture to the Nigerian civil service was not achieved (Otobo 1999; Babura 2003; Adegroye 2006).

#### **6.4.5.1.2 The 1988 Reforms:**

The 1988 CSRs were largely inspired by the economic reforms launched in 1986. The objectives were to: (i) enhance professionalism, decentralization and delegation of functions; (ii) institute checks and balances; (iii) promote general modernization; (iv) enhance the combination of responsibility with authority; (v) align the civil service with the spirit of executive presidentialism; and (vi) enhance efficiency, effectiveness and speed of operations (Phillips 1990; 1989; 1988).

Some of the highlights of the Reforms were: (i) the merging of ministerial responsibilities and administrative controls and their investment in the Minister as chief executive and accounting officers; (ii) replacement of the designation of Permanent Secretary with Director-General, whose tenure will terminate with the Government that appointed him/her and who will serve as Deputy Minister; (iii) greater responsibility in the appointment, promotion and training and discipline of staff; (iv) vertical and horizontal restructuring of ministries to ensure overall management and effectiveness; (v) permanency of appointment as every officer is to make/her career entirely in one Ministry; and (vi) abolition of the pool system, which allows professionals and administration officers to move around various ministries instead each professional being expected to spend his or her career in one ministry (Nigeria, Federal Republic of 1988a; 1988b; Igbozor 1998; PAC 1999).

In reality, however the 1988 CSRs led to the (i) conscious and deliberate politicization of the civil service; (ii) misuse and abuse of power by ministers and Directors-General who saw their ministries as a separate entity and run them as personal properties; (iii) increase in the cost of running the civil service due to the imposition of uniform structures on ministries, the proliferation of parastatals and increase in personnel without a corresponding increase in productivity; (iv) absence of a coherent and systematic training policy throughout the civil service; (v) glaring shortage of skill manpower, especially in the technical and professional cadres in virtually all the ministries; (vi) prevalence and virtual institutionalization of corruption; (vii) disregard of the rules, regulations and procedures resulting in arbitrary decisions and general loss of direction; and (viii) complete emasculatation of the Federal Civil Service Commission regulatory role in the appointment, promotion and discipline of federal civil servants (Nigeria, Federal Republic of 1995; 1997; PAC 1999).

Thus, the 1988 CSR despite its lofty ideals of efficiency, professionalism, accountability and checks and balances, did not achieve its desired objectives. In fact, “the harm done during the reforms was so much and so deep that it would take time, patience and determination to restore the lost glory of the Service” (Ayida, 1998: 115).

#### **6.4.5.1.2.5 Alison Ayida Panel Reforms, 1994:**

The Ayida Review Panel on the CSRs was inaugurated on November 10, 1994 to, amongst others, re-examine the 1988 reforms. The report of the Panel was highly and constructively critical of the 1988. It reversed most of the reforms of 1988 as the government began to implement incrementally in 1997. Specifically, the reforms recommended that the: (i) civil service should revert to the system that is guided by the relevant provisions of the Constitution, the Civil Service Rules and the Financial Regulations and Circulars; (ii) the ministers should continue to be the head of the ministry and should be responsible for its general direction but he/she should not be the Accounting Officer. Instead, the Permanent Secretary should be the Accounting Officer of the Ministry; (iii) the title of Permanent Secretary should be restored. She/he should be a career officer and should not be asked to retire with the regime that appointed him/her; (iv) the post of Office of the Head of the Civil Service should be re-established as a separate office under the President and a career civil servant should be appointed to head the office; (v) the pool system be restored for those professional and sub-professional cadres that commonly exist in ministries/extra ministerial departments; (vi) ministries/extra-ministerial departments should be structured according their objectives, functions and sizes and not according to a uniform pattern as prescribed by the 1988 reforms. Each could have been between two to six departments; (vii) personnel functions in the civil service should be left to the Federal Civil Service Commission with delegated powers to ministries; (viii) financial accountability in the civil service should be enhanced through strict observation of financial rules and regulations; (ix) recruitment into the Federal Civil Service at the entry point should be based on a combination of merit and Federal character, but further progression should be based on merit; (x) Decree 17 of 1984 which empowers government to retire civil servants arbitrarily should be abrogated; (xi) the retirement age in the Civil Service should be 60 years irrespective of the length of service; (xii) government should harmonize the pension rates of those who retired before 1991 and those who retire after 1991; and salaries, allowances and welfare packages of civil servants should be substantially reviewed upwards and should be adjusted annually to ameliorate the effects of inflation and discourage corruption (Nigeria, Federal Republic of 1995).

#### **6.4.5.1.2.6: The Obasanjo Civil Service Renewal Programme, 1999-2007**

When the Obasanjo administration assumed office on May 29, 1999 after years of military rule, it identified a civil service in crisis occasioned by inefficiency in service delivery, insensitivity to general welfare, indifference to the norms guiding the conduct of public officials and rampant corruption (Olaopa 2009c). Faced with the challenges of transforming a totalitarian state to a democratic one and a global context of administrative reform, the government launched its Civil Service Renewal



Programme (CSRP) in 2003, whose aims are contained in Table 8. The programme was articulated in a new framework for the Federal Government Reform Agenda called the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS).

The activities of the reform were designed to focus on the core functions of government, namely, policy making, service delivery, value orientation and accountability. These culminated in nine areas of reform, namely, civil service, pay, integrated payroll and personnel information system, public expenditure management, SERVICOM-service delivery, monetization of fringe benefits, pension and anti-corruption (Olaopa 2009c).

The Yar'Adua administration which took over from the Obasanjo regime in 2007 is building on the foundation laid by its predecessor. In this connection since taking over, President Yar'Adua has promised a commitment to the rule of law, national restoration and to leadership by example. Accordingly, one of the ways of achieving this commitment is to develop a long-term National Strategy for Public Service Reforms (NSPSR), which has four pillars, namely, creating an enabling government and institutional environment; an enabling socio-economic environment; public financial management reform; and civil service administration reform (Olaopa 2009).

#### **6.4.5.3 Some Progress Made by Nigeria:**

Some accomplishments include the following: (i) waste curtailment through monetization of fringe benefits as happened in Ghana and Kenya, the introduction of a national health insurance scheme and public expenditure management through MTEF, the alignment of expenditure pattern with key sectors for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), procurement reform and the passage of a Fiscal Responsibility Act to ensure prudent management of resources; (ii) promoting the effectiveness of the civil service through organizational restructuring of the Federal Capital Territory Administration, Federal Ministry of Finance, National Planning Commission and the State House; rightsizing or "service cleansing" through the retrenchment of Grade Levels 01-06 consisting of cleaners, gardeners, drivers, messengers and clerical assistants who form 70% of the core civil service made up of 161,000 officers; (iii) review of rules and regulations; service-wide capacity building, for instance, the repositioning of existing training institutions such as the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Badagry and the establishment of the Civil Service College in Abuja to focus on both middle level management and executive management training and development; tracking corruption through setting up anti-corruption units in all MDAs directly linked to the Anti-Corruption Agencies such as the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC); establishment of service charters and institutionalization of compliance enforcement; and the setting up of the Bureau of Public Sector Reforms (BPSR) as the institutional framework for sustaining the reform; and the introduction of tenure system for the positions of Permanent Secretaries and Directors (Adegroye 2006; Babura 2003; Agagu 2008).

In spite of these accomplishments, there are challenges. They include (i) building consensus on reform as there are differences of opinion between the political actor drivers of reform and the bureaucracy regarding the scope, strategy and implementation modalities of the reform process; (ii) passive resistance from central agencies such as the Office of the Head of the Civil Service, the Federal Civil Service Commission, the National Assembly and the Judicial Service Commission to reform and reassure them that reform, rather than erode their statutory, constitutional and concessionary powers, can in fact strengthen them to effectively discharge their regulatory and oversight functions; (iii) prevalence of “ghost” workers symptomatic of poor personnel records and payroll control systems;; (iv) a highly centralized, hierarchical and rule-driven system which stifles individual initiative and muffles corporate accountability; (v) erosion of professionalism and esprit de corps; (vi) capacity gaps at all levels due to absence of systematic training, needs identification and serious commitment towards updating skills; (vii) the preponderance of unskilled staff in the service – 70% of the entire workforce is constituted by officers of Grade Levels 01-06 while only 1.7% is made of officers in the strategic thinking directorate cadre (GLs 15-17); (viii) even though the federal civil service emphasizes uniformity, standardization and transparency in recruiting competent applicants, the recruitment process lacks equity and transparency, making it difficult, if not impossible, to recruit the best qualified applicants for available jobs in the service. This relates more to the level of professionalism and patronage-inspired corruption; (ix) low quality service as manifested in long lag periods in obtaining responses to inquiries in MDAs; delays in attending to the public; and (x) a lack of customer orientation in public service delivery, which is exacerbated by the failure to undertake client surveys to measure citizens’ (customer/client) satisfaction or to publish guidelines to elicit citizens’ comments on proposed changes in service delivery (Briggs 2007; Adegoroye 2006; Babura 2003; Agagu 2008).

#### **6.4.5.4 The Main Innovations and Best Practices:**

The main innovations and best practices include the following:

- (i) tracking corruption through the setting up anti-corruption units in all MDAs directly linked to the Anti-Corruption Agencies such as the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC);
- (ii) the setting up of the Bureau of Public Sector Reforms (BPSR) as the institutional framework for sustaining the reform; and (iii) introduction of MTEF.

**Table 8: CSRs in Nigeria from 1945-1994**

Commission/Review/Reform	Recommendations
i. Tudor Davis Commission, 1945	Reviewed wages and general conditions of service
ii. Harragin Salary Review Commission, 1946	Reviewed wages and general conditions of service; divided the civil service into “Senior Service” and “Junior Service”
iii. Gorsuch Commission, 1956	Reviewed remuneration and structure of the service and noted absence of viable middle category and created 5 main grades
iv. Newn Committee, 1959	Proposed integration of ministries and departments
v. Mbanefo Salaries and Wages Commission, 1961	Reviewed salaries and wages
vi. Morgan Commission, 1963	Reviewed salaries/wages of junior staff of Federal Government and private establishment; introduced for the first time the minimum wage on geographical basis
vii. Elwood Grading Team, 1969	Examined anomalies in the grading of posts and proposed uniform salaries for officers performing in identical duties
viii. Adebó Salaries/Wages Commission, 1971	Proposed the establishment of a Public Service Review Commission to examine the role of the Public Service Commission; structure of the civil service; conditions of service and training arrangements
ix. Udoji Commission, 1972	Focused on the issue of increasing efficiency and effectiveness within the context of meeting the challenges of a development-oriented society; improve structure and system of the civil service; open reporting system for performance evaluation; unified grading and salary structure covering all posts in the civil service; created a unified Senior Management Group for Administrative and Professionals/Specialists for central management of career; harmonization and unification of job grading and salary systems; and introduction of merit principle and code of conduct for all public servants
x. Dotun Phillips Reform, 1986	Enhanced professionalism, alignment with presidential system of government, decentralization and delegation, combination of authority with responsibility, enhanced accountability, enhanced checks and balances, general modernization and enhanced effectiveness, efficiency and speed of operation

Commission/Review/Reform	Recommendations
1988 Reforms	To ensure a virile, dynamic and resulted-oriented civil service. Recognized the politicization of the upper echelon of the civil service; Office of Head of the Civil Service abolished; the Minister in addition to being the Chief Executive also became the Accounting Officer in place of the Permanent Secretary; the post of Permanent Secretary abolished and a new political post of Director-General, who holds office at the pleasure of the President was then created in its place and would vacate office with the Government which appointed him unless reappointed by the incoming administration; civil service to be professionalized to stimulate specialization and expertise and an office to make a career in a particular ministry or department; each Ministry to be divided into department, division, branch and section; abolition of the pool system
Review Panel on Civil Service Reform, 1994 (Alison Ayida Panel)	Re-examine the 1988 reforms; highly and constructively critical of the 1988 reforms and therefore reversed most the reforms. Recommended the Personnel Management Board in each ministry and devolution of authority to incur expenditure to certain categories of senior management staff, specifically to the level of assistant director and above; upward review of pay and other incentives for civil servants to reduce corruption; recruitment into the civil service, especially at the entry grades of the professional cadres, should as much as possible, be based on a combination of merit and federal character such that the best candidates from each state are selected on a competitive basis; strict sanctions to be applied to civil servants found to have engaged in corrupt practices
The Obasanjo Civil Service Renewal Programme, 1999-2007	(i) To reprofessionalize the Civil Service to create a new generation of officers and technocrats with sufficient skills; (ii) To monetize fringe benefits and reduce waster and inefficiency within an incentive structure that supports competitive private sector development; (iii) Operate a fiscal rule and budgetary reforms in the context of a mover towards a medium term expenditure framework; (iv) Set clearly the organizational and personnel objectives with a concern with results rather than process and expenditure; (v) Conduct rigorous and systematic evaluation and reporting of programme performance to make policy makers accountable for resources used and for results; (vi) Re-engineer existing processes to make them faster, modernize and more efficient using ICT; (vii) Strike the balance between direction, control and the autonomy energy of department and public managers through reforms of central agencies; (viii) Create a process in policy work to encourage decision makers to periodically look at the longer and wider issues; (ix) Change the mind sets of officers so that they are conditioned by strong professional ethics

**Source:** *Compiled by the author.*

## 6.5.4 The South African Experience

### 6.5.4.1 The Political and Constitutional Context:

After several years of apartheid rule and 45 years of operating a de facto one-party state with a party-dominated bureaucracy, the National Party (NP) was defeated by Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) to become the non-racial president and government respectively in the May 1994 elections and the inauguration of the Government of National Unity (GNU). The return to non-racial rule was influenced by a combination of normative and structural factors. They include resolutions by both the United Nations and then Organization of African Unity (OAU), the national consensus by both whites and blacks for a negotiated settlement within a power-sharing framework as result of the rising violence, killings and looming economic downturn, the end of the Cold War and the "de-ideologization" of foreign policy that accompanied the collapse of the Soviet Union, the material and ideological pains of patron-bereavement suffered by the ANC<sup>5</sup>, the global wave of democratization in the early 1990s favouring political systems featuring multi-party democracy, respect for human rights, and market-oriented, open economies and the achievement of Namibia of its long-delayed independence in 1990 ( Furlong 2001; Evans1996).

The negotiations that led to the abandonment of apartheid, the introduction of a new constitution in 1993 and the South Africa's national democratic election in April 1994 were the result of a compromise between the National Party (NP) and the ANC. By the late 1980s, powerful elements within the NP government's support base recognized that white domination and apartheid were no longer tenable (Friedman and Atkinson 1994). The NP government was strong enough to remain in power and was never in any danger of being overthrown by revolutionaries but was not strong enough to restructure apartheid to facilitate a sustainable political economy. The opposition represented by the ANC in exile and the United Democratic Front (UDF)/Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) inside South Africa, was not strong enough to overthrow the NP government. The ensuing stalemate was finally broken by the forced retirement due to ill-health of P.W. Botha and his replacement by F.W. de Klerk (Skweyiya and Vil-Nkomo 1995). In February 1990 the de Klerk government released jailed leaders of the ANC, including Nelson Mandela, unbanned opposition political parties, including the ANC, and began the long process of negotiation that would eventually lead to the new constitution. These negotiations began in December 1991 at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and were continued by the Negotiating Council, which was convened in March 1993 (Ottaway 1993; Pycroft 1996).

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5 The ANC was compelled after several months of hesitation to renounced armed struggle and agreed to work towards negotiations because communist regimes were collapsing in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union had too many problems to continue underwriting the expensive ANC campaign, while the harsh realities of politics suggested that the West was far more interested in helping Eastern Europe than in assisting black liberation. In addition, many old friends of the ANC such as Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, faced angry citizens tired of economic devastation and corruption and demanded an end to one-party rule. See P.J. Furlong, "South Africa", 2001.

Non-racial rule resulted in the formation of four parties, namely, the African National Congress (ANC), the National Party (NP), the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the Democratic Party (DP). Elections were held in 1998, 2002, 2006 and 2009, which were all won by the ANC.

South Africa is a parliamentary democracy with a quasi-federal system of governmental system with a central government and subnational governments at the provincial, municipal and local levels. The President is elected from the National Assembly and ceases to be a member of the Assembly when elected. The President is stipulated to select the Deputy President and any number of ministers from among the members of the National Assembly while he may select no more than two ministers from outside it (South Africa, Republic of 1996).

Chapter 10 of the 1996 Constitution is devoted to the basic values and principles governing public administration. According to the Constitution, public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles, including (a) a high standard of professional ethics; (b) efficient, economic and effective use of resources; (c) be development-oriented; (d) services provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias; (e) people's needs must be responded to, and the public trust be encouraged to participate in policy-making; (f) accountable; (g) transparent by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information; (h) good human resource management and career-development practices to maximize human potential; (i) be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation (South Africa, Republic of 1996).

#### ***6.5.5.1 The South Africa Civil Service in Historical Context:***

The ideology of apartheid which formed the foundation of the pre-democracy government had been described as a crime against humanity by the UN, OAU and many democratic forces in the world. With the democratization of South Africa in 1994, the new government had no choice but to reform the system it inherited. It sought to not only transform the country, but also the state machinery (civil service) it inherited and needed very badly to implement its election promises of a better life, which was encapsulated in the Reconstruction and Development Plan.

Prior to 1994 the public and civil services were highly centralized. The Commission for Administration (the predecessor of the Public Services Commission (PSC) had extensive powers. This included the setting of salaries, responsibility for disciplinary authority, pensions, leave, promotions and evaluated staff qualifications and requirements. It was also responsible for the grading of posts, the setting of wages and salaries and regulations of conditions of work (Cameron 2009). This centralization resulted in bloating of the entire public sector, which consisted of about 2 million people out of which 800,000 belonged to the civil service by 1994 (Picard 1999; Fraser-Moloketi and Robertson 2003).

During the apartheid era, the South African public and civil services were isolated and out of touch with international developments and in the process the civil service got bloated in an attempt by the racist regime to prove that separate development worked. The attempt to prove that separate development worked was a lame response to immense pressure from within and outside the country (Thornhill 2008; Horwitz 1994). During the transition in the early 1990s very little work was done by the ANC on the nature of post-apartheid administration change. As Fraser-Moleketi, a former Minister of Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) stated “Public Service Reform was not seen as a sexy topic” (Cameron 2009: 5). It was clear what needed to be done. There needed to be a fundamental transformation from an apartheid-driven bureaucracy towards a more democratic public service which puts citizens first (Fraser-Moleketi and Salojee 2008).

Bardill (2000: 103) argues that civil service reform in South Africa was influenced by growing global competition, the failure of the centralized state-dominated development strategies, the worsening economic crisis in the developing world and the impact of IMF/World Bank SAPs. This involved a reappraisal of the role of the state. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was the major policy initiative of the ANC government after the 1994 elections. It was an integrated coherent socio-economic programme. It attempted to integrate development, reconstruction, redistribution and reconciliation into a unified programme. It was intended to be a vision for the fundamental transformation of South African society (Republic of South Africa 1994: 7). The RDP was intended to be a social democratic vision for the country with emphasis on welfare rights and the poor. The adoption of the government’s Macro-Economic Strategy for Growth and Employment (GEAR) in 1996 committed the government to more orthodox fiscal policies (Seekings and Nattrass 2006: 347-349). The GEAR was a macroeconomic strategy primarily aimed at reducing the government budget deficit, albeit within a broader growth and development strategy. The government did not abandon the RDP but public sector investment remained low during a period of financial consolidation (Hirsch, 2005: 257-258).

It was argued that adoption of the GEAR in 1996 led to the implementation of public sector reform in a more budget-driven paradigm with an emphasis on goals such as cost-cutting, rightsizing and privatization (Bardill 2000: 106-107). The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service in 1995 laid down the national policy framework for the transformation of the public service. Many of its recommendations were in line with “international best practice” although the White Paper warned against the uncritical adoption of NPM framework (Bardill, 2000: 105).

#### **6.5.6.1 The South African Civil Service Reforms**

Between 1994 and 1998, three issues dominated debate over the public sector: (i) affirmative action; (ii) the role of government; and (iii) the size of the civil service. All three featured prominently in the public service reform efforts embarked upon by the government since the transition from apartheid to nonracial rule in 1994. Unlike Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria whose CSRs were influenced by SAPs,

those of South Africa were shaped by experiences of both developed and developing countries and the NPM. They were drawn on public debates on the desirable features of a new public service that began in the transition period and continued after the 1994 elections. The Minister of Public Service 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 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 in learning about good practices to adapt for use and bad practices to avoid (Adamolekun 2005). This is understandably given that during the apartheid era, the South African public service was isolated and out of touch with international developments in public and civil service reforms (Thornhill 2008; Maphunge 2003).

The fundamental principles of CSRs after 1994 are enshrined in the 1996 Constitution, which was further elaborated in the 1997 Public Service Act. In addition to the Constitution and the Public Service Act, the legal framework for running the civil service include the White Paper on Public Service Education and Training (1997), Skills Development Act (1997), Code of Conduct for Public Servants (1997), White Paper on Affirmative Action (1998) and Employment Equity Act (1998). This legal framework for running the civil service is seen as arguably the most comprehensive in Africa (Adamolekun 2005; Picard 2004).

According to the Constitution, public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, must be development-oriented, and must be accountable. The overall objective, as stated in the Public Service Act, is “the creation of a people-centred public service which is characterized by equity, quality, timeousness and a strong code of ethics” (South Africa, Republic of ). The following are among the specific issues to be addressed as set out in the White Paper on the transformation of the public service: (i) restructuring and rationalizing the public service; (ii) transforming service delivery; (iii) enhancing accountability; (iv) human resource development and training; (v) improving employment conditions and labour relations; and (vi) the promotion of a professional service ethos (South Africa, Republic 1995). These objectives are some of the tenets of the NPM. Richard Levin (2004: 12-13) argues that public sector reform in South Africa has been shaped by the tenets of NPM, including a strong focus on decentralized management of human resources and finance. However, Fraser-Moleketi, a former Director-General of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DSPA) stated that the reforms were not influenced by the NPM but rather the government wanted to borrow NPM skills and techniques to modernize the public service without buying into the ideological framework. There was, however, the acknowledgement that some NPM reforms had been introduced (Cameron 2009).



As part of the reform, the Personnel Expenditure Review was undertaken in 1999, which led to the following: (i) review of determination of conditions of service for Senior Management Staff (SMS), promotion system and pay progression with a view to introducing a performance-based system; (ii) review of macro benefits in the public service with special focus on medical aid, housing and pension with a view to ensuring efficiency, adequacy, equity and administrative justice; (iii) review of collective bargaining structures in the public service to define roles and responsibilities and issues to be negotiated at national and sectoral or departmental levels; (iv) amendments and adoption of certain laws to facilitate civil service reform; (v) move towards the developmental state and promotion of economic growth and social objectives; (vi) move towards the single public service; (vii) introduction of affirmative action: race, gender and disability; (viii) focus on improved service delivery and taking government to the people (Kuye 2006).

#### ***6.5.7.1 Some Progress Made by South Africa:***

A number of achievements have been recorded. They include the following: (i) the move towards the developmental state to simultaneously promote economic growth and social objectives such as poverty reduction which facilitate state intervention in the market. This entails a stronger public sector to improve service delivery and poverty reduction. This has led to centralized move such as the provision for a single public service encompassing local government to ensure vertical coordination between various spheres of government and pointing to the dangers of excessive decentralization. This is supported by the international literature. For instance, the UNDESA (2005: 52) points out that as governments have begun to question the value of the NPM model, there has been the acknowledgement of too rapid decentralization of HRM functions which may lead to a decline in the professionalism of the core civil service; (ii) Like in Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya, downsizing or rightsizing was undertaken through the introduction of voluntary severance programme in 1996 to encourage existing staff to voluntarily retire. There was a decline in the number of personnel, although not to the anticipated levels. Total employment in the public service declined from 1,267,766 in September 1995 to 1,031,594 in December 2000 (Cameron and Milne 2000; Hohls and Peroff 2000); (iii) The creation of Senior Management Services (SMS) on the recommendation of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) incorporating managers between the ranks of Director and Director-General, with a flexible remuneration system and a competency based management framework in 2001 on mostly three-year contracts. Since its inception in 2001 there were 4,623 employees in the top 4 levels, namely, Director-General, Deputy-Director, Chief Director and upwards and risen to 8592 in 2008 (Cameron and Milne 2008); (iv) Contract appointments were made involving hiring people on contract often outside the public sector and entailing terminating the contracts of those who do not perform. It brought in new people and ideas as well as facilitating the departure of weak heads of department. It reduced complacency, led to change and innovation and facilitated the displacement of poor performers (PSC 2008); (v) an open employment system was introduced whereby all posts would be filled by competition. The move towards an open employment system was partially influenced by the NPM ideology but it also derived from the political situation in South

Africa. It was a key aim of the new government to create a representative public service. The ANC government introduced a policy of affirmative action for blacks, women and gender. There is, however, some evidence that suggests that patronage appointments in the public service have grown substantially since 1994. There is the influence of the controversial deployment policy of the ANC, which deploys party members to senior management positions in the public sector, many of whom lack experience (Picard 2005; Cameron and Milne 2008); (vi) The Public Service Law Amendment Act of 1997 and the Public Service Regulations of 1999 introduced performance management under which senior managers who were not head of departments would enter into performance management contract with his/her immediate supervisor, while in the case of the Director-General it would be with his/her minister. The objectives are to provide a reliable and balanced measure to assess the manager's performance, to determine whether they are performing their functions effectively and to improve the political-administrative interface between politicians and senior management (Miller 2005); (vii) The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery commonly called the "Batho Pele" (People's First) aimed at making service delivery a priority in the public service (South Africa, Republic of 1997). It entailed a shift away from bureaucratic systems, processes towards a new way of working which was faster and more responsive and which put the needs of the public first (Ncholo 2000). "Batho Pele" comprises 8 principles, namely, consultation with citizens on the level and quality of services; the setting of service standards; equal access; courtesy and consideration; provision of information on eligibility; openness and transparency regarding costs and responsibilities, priding redress and value for money (South Africa, Republic of 1997). Consequently, Multi-purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) now called "Thusong Centres" were created in 1999 to deliver services of all spheres of government from a single location. As of 2007, 96 centres were in operation while the number rose to 125 in 2008 (Cameron 2009).

In spite of the achievements, there are problems. They are: (i) the large number of lower-level personnel who could not be redeployed and did not apply for voluntary service programmes (VSPs) because of limited marketability. Rightsizing targets were only prepared to offer a limited number of posts for abolition and the VSPs led to the departure of skilled and experienced personnel and the retention of non productive employees. In addition, even though there was a reduction in personnel bill, the wage bill continued to increase (Hohls and Peroff 2001; Ncholo 2000: 98); (ii) The SMS is politicized since the President is the appointing authority while the procedure for appointment of the Director-General ensures that they are appointed largely on the basis of political affiliation (DPSA 2008). Consequently, the British system of professional career head of department has largely been replaced by a combination of political and contract based appointments (PSC 2008); (iii) the contract appointments led to high turnover of Director-Generals as result of the politics-administration interface given that relationship rather than competence that determines their tenure. It also led to the premature termination of contracts because the best person is not necessarily appointed. This also affected institutional memory and organizational knowledge and discouraged suitable candidates from applying (Cameron 2009); (iv) attempts to create a more flexible employment system have contributed to slower appointment

procedures. One of the unintended consequences of adverting posts nationally has been to create a recruitment system which has been just as slow if not slower than the old public administration system. In addition, contrary to the NPM feature that non-performing staff can be dismissed, in the case of South Africa the inflexible labour legislation makes it difficult to dismiss non-performing staff (Cameron 2009); (v) there is low level of compliance with guidelines on performance management being erratic and inconsistent while performance appraisals fail to show an adequate correlation between the performance of the head of department as an individual and the overall performance of the department for which they are responsible. Furthermore, performance management has not improved any significantly the performance of senior managers; (vi) uneven performance of service delivery or mixed results of service delivery (DSPA 2006; Cameron 2009; South Africa 1998).

#### **6.5.8.1 The Main Innovations and Best Practices:**

Some of the innovations and best practices include: (i) the introduction of MTEF; (ii) the creation of executive agencies such as the South African Revenue Service (SARS); (iii) the implementation of merit-based recruitment and promotion taking into account the need for gender representation; (iv) the creation of Senior Management Services (SMS) along the lines of the US and UK; (v) the assumption of the Minister of Public Service as cabinet-level champion of public service reform; (vi) stakeholder participation in reform through nation-wide consultative process in the form of workshops and learning from the experiences of other countries; (vii) comprehensive legal framework for running public service; (viii) contract appointments; (ix) more systematic application of NPM elements than any of the four countries; (x) setting up of CPSI to promote innovations.

## **6.6 Modest Innovations and Best Practices from the Experiences of the Four Countries:**

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It is clear from the experiences of the four countries that they all implemented CSRs with NPM features. Even though the countries have witnessed reversals in some of the progress made, one can see evidence of some modest innovations and best practices gleaned out of the experiences of the four countries (see Table 10). They are: (i) indigenizing and mainstreaming programme leadership and management; (ii) building an incentive framework under severe budgetary constraints; (iii) integrating civil service reform processes; (iv) radical reorganization of government; (v) building smart partnerships with a variety of stakeholders; (vi) effective and efficient delivery of public services; (vii) performance management agreements with senior civil servants; (viii) promoting accountability and transparency; (ix) e-government; (x) capacity building; (xi) reducing corruption; (xii) enhanced remuneration for civil servants; (xiii) institutional framework for innovation; (xiv) annual civil service monitoring and evaluation (AfDB 2005; Antwi et.al. 2008; Rugumyamoto 2004; Caiden and Sundaram 2004).

It should be noted that of the four countries, South Africa is ahead of the other countries in terms of major innovations and best practices (see Table 9). A major innovation in the four countries is e-government, which refers to the use of information technology application to perform government functions with maximum efficiency and at minimum cost. It enables governments to deliver information and in some cases, services to citizens, business and other government agencies. The goals of e-government are: better service delivery to citizens, improved services for business, transparency and empowerment of the citizens through information and efficient government purchasing (AfDB 2005). The four countries have government websites from which one can download information on activities of MDAs. In addition, the sites have created a “one stop shopping” points where citizens can carry out a variety of tasks, especially those that involve multiple agencies without requiring the citizen to initiate contacts with each agency individually. The e-government of South Africa is more developed than the others because of its Centre for Public Service Innovation.

South Africa has made much progress than the three other countries in the table of innovation and best practices in mainly two areas. First is the creation in June 2001 of a Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) with a motto “Unlocking Innovation”. Its mandate is to facilitate, advocate for and champion innovation in the public sector as well as partnering with public sector organizations in identifying innovative solutions and developing an environment that supports implementation and sustainability of innovations. In line with its mandate the CPSI developed a pocket guide for use by public servants at all levels and other stakeholders working towards achieving ideals of a better life for South Africans (CPSI 2003; n.d).

The second innovation is the initiation of the South African Public Service Commission (PSC) with the motto “Custodian of Good Governance” in 2000 of the Transversal Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation System (TPSM&ES). The TPSM&ES looks at the extent to which Departments comply with the nine principles for public administration prescribed in Section 195(1), Chapter 10 of the 1996 Constitution. It involves analyzing departmental performance against a performance indicator for each principle. Table 10 shows the performance indicator(s) used for each constitutional principle as well as the applicable policies and regulations. Since the inception of the TPSM&ES in 2000 to 2007, the PSC has assessed 53 departments, 16 national and 37 provincial departments.

The evaluations through the TPSM&ES, which take 18 weeks involving document analysis, interviews and desktop research, are an important level used by the PSC to contribute to good governance and service delivery improvement. The TPSM&ES in essence attempts to achieve the following: (i) identify and address problem areas that need the department’s attention; (ii) encourage learning by identifying and promoting good practice; (iii) communicate critical areas in public administration to departments so that they align their priorities, resources and energy accordingly; and (iv) held departments to reflect on their own performance and achievements (PSC 2007).

## **6.7 Influence of some External Forces on Innovations and Best Practices:**

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Four sources have also influenced innovation and best practices either directly or indirectly in the four countries. They are the: (i) International Financial Institutions; (ii) Charter for the Public Service in Africa; (iii) the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and (iv) Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management (CAPAM).

### ***6.7.1 The Influence of International Financial Institutions:***

The significant impact of external actors, especially the international financial institutions on public sector reforms in Africa in the 1990s cannot be glossed over. These external influences began in the 1980s in a few countries like Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya but became more widespread and continuous in the 1990s, all in the context of external funding of economic reform programmes, especially the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). From a preoccupation with the cutback management or downsizing (reduction of staff numbers and wage bill) dictated by the need to reduce budget deficits from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, the development partners moved to support a broader approach that includes attention to strengthening public administration capacity and improving the quality of service delivery through the adoption of the New Public Management (NPM) initiatives. Box 4 summarizes the key elements in civil service reform agreed upon by Special Programme of Assistance (SPA) in November 1995, which has become the guiding principles of civil service reform programme (CSR) in Africa. The SPA was a group of aid agencies that met to coordinate balance-of-payments and other support to African countries undergoing economic reform programmes (Wescott 1999).

### ***6.7.2 The Charter for the Public Service in Africa:***

The Charter for the Public Service in Africa was adopted at the third Pan-African Conference of Public Service Ministers in Windhoek, Namibia in February 2001. It contains 29 articles enunciating a set of principles to achieve the fundamental principles of the Public Service. The Charter affirms the imperative of professional values of the Public Service in Africa and redefines the objectives and missions and specifies the fundamental conditions required for strengthening Public Service role, competence, ethical values and image; and prescribes a code of conduct for African Public Service employees. The Charter defines the framework to guide African countries in taking such legislative, regulatory, technical and practical measures as may be required to strengthen and ensure the proper functioning of their public services as well as to improve the quality of service delivery.

For most African countries, the Charter has since become a reference point for measuring the adequacy and performance of their public service. The Commonwealth Secretariat, under the auspices of its Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD), is assisting African countries to achieve the objectives of the Charter on the platform of the Commonwealth Forum for African Heads of Public Service which meets every July (Adegoro 2006).

### **6.7.3 The New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD):**

NEPAD was adopted in July 2001 at the African Union Summit in Lusaka, Zambia and is a home-grown or an African-led initiative with an African agenda to address African problems (Asante 2006). Its broad goals include eradicate widespread and severe poverty, promote and accelerate growth and sustainable development and adopt and adhere to best practices in political and economic governance. Under NEPAD, the reform instrument is the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), a self-monitoring instrument voluntarily acceded to by member states of the African Union to measure progress in the attainment of the objectives of NEPAD in four thematic areas: (i) democratic and political governance; (ii) economic governance; (iii) corporate governance; and (iv) socio-economic governance (Hope Snr. 2002).

The APRM has become the reform tool kit driving some of the CSR initiatives in the four countries. Accordingly, an All-Africa Public Sector Innovation Awards have been instituted and the targeted beneficiaries are public servants, policy makers, politicians, CSOs, and citizens in Africa. There are three categories of awards, namely, (i) innovative service delivery improvements, (ii) innovative partnership between government, private sector and CSOs and (iii) innovations in systems and processes of governance. The selection criteria require that all projects nominated for awards satisfy the conditions of an innovative idea or concept, the idea or concept must have been successfully implemented within the public sector in Africa and should be new for the country or community (Ghana, Republic of 2006). In addition, African countries are also expected to celebrate in their individual countries an All-African Public Services Day at which awards will be given to MDAs which have excelled in innovation and best practices.

### **6.7.4 The Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management (CAPAM):**

The CAPAM is an international not-for-profit membership organization which is committed to promoting and advancing good governance and public administration among the 53 Commonwealth countries. The organization was established in 1994 by public service practitioners for practitioners and is headquartered in Toronto, Canada. Some of its objectives include: (i) interacting with politicians and administrators on administrative issues and also creating a political interface among members to promote effective governance; (ii) identifies important new trends in public sector development and appropriate CAPAM responses; (iii) organizes with member countries conferences, seminars, workshops and any other platform to promote sharing of good practices in public administration and management; (iv) consults senior public servants as practitioners responsible for administrative and managerial functions, as well as donor agencies and institutes and schools of Public Administration and Management to devise and develop high level programmes to enhance the capabilities of political office holders and senior public managers to perform their respective functions effectively; and (v) promotes close collaboration between academics and practitioners in public administration.

In this connection, it organizes conferences once in every two years at which member countries share experiences on best practices and innovations (CAPAM 2007). CAPAM has also a bulletin, *Commonwealth Innovations*, which is published four times a year and is dedicated to building networks for better governance and public administration among member countries. In addition, CAPAM has also instituted International Innovations Awards, which are designed to highlight and recognize examples of positive change in the public service. The Awards attract a large number of applications biennially. For instance, in 2004 and 2006, there were 250 entries from across the Commonwealth and applicants submitted outstanding projects in the areas of ICT, housing, conservation and environment, transportation, taxation and health care (CAPAM 2007).

## **6.8 Summary of the drivers of CSRs:**

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The experiences of the four countries show that reforms became a major concern because of a combination of two or more of the following reasons: (i) economic reform and the need to reduce budget deficits through improved economic performance; (ii) the need to respond to global challenges (communication and information revolution, international trade and finance); (iii) social pressures for better quality services; (iv) good governance through democratization, political liberalization and the nurturing of competent, accountable and honest administration; and (v) external pressures (donors and supranational obligations) (Adamolekun and Kiragu 1999).

## **6.9 Pockets of Effectiveness, Productivity or Success:**

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According to Robert Daland (1981), 'pockets of productivity' refers to public organizations that are reasonably effective in carrying out their functions and in serving some conception of the public good despite operating in an environment in which most public organizations are ineffective and subject to serious predation by corruption, patronage, etc.

Reform of a country's civil service as a whole as is extremely difficult and rare. The broad civil service and state downsizing reforms seek to alter the negative institutional contexts within which many public sector organizations work. Yet throughout Africa, there are organizations that perform relatively well, despite daunting unfavourable contexts and despite overall poor public sector performance (Grindle 1997). Consequently, instead of condemning the whole CSRs as failures, the current trend in the four countries and other African countries is to study ministries, departments and agencies that have been successful in their operations. The objective is to study why some public organizations have performed and are performing much better with respect to delivering public services to citizens than most others. Three key questions are addressed in a study on pockets of success. They are (i) How and why did the selected public organizations become "Pockets of Effectiveness"; (ii) How did

these organizations manage to persist in a context of weak statehood and poor governance; and (iii) Do these organizations have the potential to trigger or inspire positive transformations of other public organizations or even the environment in the near future?

#### **Box 4: Guiding Principles for Civil Service Reform Programming**

Purposes:

- Improve efficiency and effectiveness of the civil service;
- Ensure its affordability and sustainability over time;
- Raise quality of public services delivered to the population;
- Enhance the capacity to carry out core functions and sector-specific management and organization;
- Promote sustained economic and social development;
- Alter the rule and functions of the civil service;
- Promote macroeconomic stabilization;
- Promote professional development: integrity and accountability.

Prerequisites:

- Leadership and commitment;
- Development of enabling environment;
- Good governance.

Programme Design:

- Diagnosis and preparation;
- Vision and Strategy;
- Sequencing and timing;
- Process Approach;
- Strengthening core functions;
- Ministerial structuring and decentralization;
- Downsizing;
- Pay incentives;
- Capacity development.

Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Management of reform;
- Service delivery surveys, tracer studies;
- Aid management;
- Policy Dialogue;
- Selective Conditionality;
- Flexibility.

**Sources:** “Guiding Principles on Civil Service Reform” by Special Programme of Assistance for Africa (SPA) Working Group on Civil Service Reform. Based on Case Studies from Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana, Central African Republic, Benin and Burkina Faso, November 1995. See also Wescott 1999.



**Table 9: Innovative and Best Practices of the CSRs in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa**

Innovation and Best Practices	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	South Africa
i. Indigenizing and mainstreaming programme leadership and management:	CSPIP homegrown, participatory and consultative with meetings and workshops with stakeholders (i.e. civil servants, parliamentary, industry, CSOs, politicians). Technical assistants from outside. Reform lacks political leadership and commitment.	Not homegrown, participatory and consultative; largely imposed by donors.	Homegrown, participatory and consultative. Largely the result of commissions or enquiry reports.	Careful design of the reform programme including learning from the lessons of reform experiences in both developed and developing countries. Emergence of reform champions, especially at the cabinet level and at the leadership level of the civil service and in parliament.
ii. Building an incentive framework under severe budgetary constraints:	Pay reforms to attract skilled staff but longer term pay policy to achieve living wage problematic.	Pay reforms to attract skilled staff but longer term pay policy to achieve living wage problematic.	Pay reforms to attract skilled staff but longer term pay policy to achieve living wage problematic.	Pay reforms to attract skilled staff but longer term pay policy to achieve living wage problematic. Competition from private sector.
iii. Integrating civil service reform processes:	Reform interventions were running as disparate programmes and projects with minimal links and virtually no coordination.	Reform interventions were running as disparate programmes and projects with minimal links and virtually no coordination.	Reform interventions were running as disparate programmes and projects with minimal links and virtually no coordination.	Reform interventions were running as disparate programmes and projects with minimal links and virtually no coordination.
iv. Radical reorganization of government:	Rationalization of government institutions, roles and functions, decentralization, institutional pluralism in service delivery, agencification.	Rationalization of government institutions, roles and functions, decentralization, institutional pluralism in service delivery, agencification.	Rationalization of government institutions, roles and functions, decentralization, institutional pluralism in service delivery, agencification.	Rationalization of government institutions, roles and functions, decentralization, institutional pluralism in service delivery, agencification.
v. Building smart partnerships with a variety of stakeholders:	Vigorous public private partnerships, civil society, cabinet, politicians, industry, etc.	Less Public private partnerships, civil society, cabinet, politicians, industry, etc.	Less public private partnerships, civil society, cabinet, politicians, industry, etc.	Vigorous public private partnerships, civil society, cabinet, politicians, industry, etc.

Innovation and Best Practices	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	South Africa
vi. Effective and efficient delivery of public services:	Ineffective and inefficient delivery of public services.	Ineffective and inefficient delivery of public services.	Ineffective and inefficient delivery of public services.	Ineffective and inefficient delivery of public services.
vii. Performance management agreements with senior civil servants:	Progress made but more room for improvement.	Progress made but more room for improvement.	Progress made but more room for improvement.	Progress made but more room for improvement.
viii. Promoting accountability and transparency:	Self-appraisals, beneficiary surveys in the form of consultation with clients, diagnostic workshop, establishment of client services units and the complaints system; communication strategy involving newsletter and press conferences.	Little consultation with clients and customers of MDAs; lack of communication strategy involving newsletter and press conferences; little information sharing between MDAs and public.	Little consultation with clients and customers of MDAs; lack of communication strategy involving newsletter and press conferences; little information sharing between MDAs and public.	Centre for Public Service Innovation influences behavior and change work practices. It engages with stakeholders, determine areas of potential action.
ix. E-government:	Some progress made to establish e-government through creation of websites government institutions.	Some progress made to establish e-government through creation of websites government institutions.	Some progress made to establish e-government through creation of websites government institutions.	Rapid progress made to establish e-government through creation of websites government institutions. Integrating service delivery with a special focus on e-government.
x. Capacity building initiatives:	Little progress made.	Little progress made.	Little progress made.	Little progress made.
xi. Reducing corruption:	Some progress made to reduce corruption.	Some progress made to reduce corruption.	Some progress made to reduce corruption.	Some progress made to reduce corruption.
xii. Enhanced remuneration for civil servants:	Poor remuneration package of civil servants.	Poor remuneration package of civil servants.	Poor remuneration package of civil servants.	Poor remuneration package of civil servants.

Innovation and Best Practices	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	South Africa
xiii. Institutional framework for innovation:	Ministry of Public Sector Reforms established to coordinate public sector reform in 2005 to provide an institutional home. No institution for innovation.	National Steering Committee assisted by the Civil Service Reform Secretariat was established in 1999 to be the overall coordinating body for reform initiative in the civil service.	Bureau of Public Sector Reforms established in 2003 to initiate and coordination action plan on reform at all levels. No institution for innovation.	Centre for Public Service Innovation established in June 2001 to actively identify innovative solutions to service delivery challenges and support innovators. It produced a pocket guide to innovation in the South African Public Sector.
xiv. Annual civil service monitoring and evaluation:	Not done.	Not done.	Not done.	Since 2000 the Public Service Commission initiated the Transversal Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation System (TPSM&ES) to see how Departments comply with the 9 principles of the Constitution.

Source: Compiled by the author

**Table 10: South African Public Service Commission TPSM&ES  
Performance Indicator and Applicable Policies/Regulations Per Principles**

Constitutional Principle	Performance Indicator	Applicable Policies and Regulations
1. A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.	Cases of misconduct where a disciplinary hearing has been conducted, comply with the provisions of the Disciplinary Code and Procedures for the Public Service.	(i) Disciplinary Codes and Procedures for the Public Service; (ii) Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 2 of 1999 as amended by PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2003; (iii) Code of Conduct for the Public Service.
2. Efficient, economic and effective use of resources.	(i) Expenditure is according to the budget; (ii) Programme outputs are clearly defined and there is credible evidence.	(i) Public Finance Management Act, Act 1 of 1999, Sections 38 to 40; (ii) Treasury Regulations Part 3; Public Service Regulations, Part III/3. Strategic Planning; (iii) Treasury Guidelines on preparing budget submissions for the year under review; (iv) Treasury Guide for the Preparation of Annual Reports of departments for the financial year ended March 31; (v) National Planning Framework.
3. Public Administration must be development-oriented.	The department is effectively involved in programmes/projects that aim to promote development and reduce poverty.	Section 195(c) of the 1996 Constitution.
4. Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.	There is evidence that the Department follows the prescribed procedures of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA) when making administrative decisions.	(i) Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act No. 3 of 2000; (ii) Regulations on Fair Administrative Procedures, 2002; (iii) Departmental delegations of authority.
5. Peoples' needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making.	The Department facilitates public participation in policy making.	White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele).

Constitutional Principle	Performance Indicator	Applicable Policies and Regulations
6. Public Administration must be accountable.	(i) Adequate internal financial control and performance management is exerted over all departmental programmes; (ii) Fraud prevention plans, based on thorough risk assessments are in place and are implemented.	(i) Public Finance Management Act, / Act 1 of 1999; (ii) Treasury Regulations, Part 3: Planning and Budgeting; (iii) White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele); (iv) Public Service Regulations. Part III/B. Strategic Planning.; (v) Treasury Guidelines on preparing budget submissions, 2002; Treasury Guide for the Preparation of Annual Reports of departments for the National Planning Framework.
7. Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.	(i) Departmental Annual Report complies with National Treasury's guideline on annual reporting; and (ii) Access to information: the Department complies with the provisions of the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA).	(i) Public Finance Management Act, /Act 1 of 1999; (ii) National Treasury's guideline for the preparation of Annual Reports; (iii) the Department of Public Administration guide for an Oversight Report on Human Resource; (iv) Public Service Commission, Evaluation of Departments' Annual Reports as an Accountability Mechanism, October 1999; (v) White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele); (vi) Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000, Act 2 of 2000; (vii) Departmental delegations of authority.
8. Good human resource management and career-development practices, to maximize human potential, must be cultivated.	(i) Recruitment: Vacant posts are filled in a timely and effective manner; (ii) Skills Development: The Department complies with the provisions of the Skills Development Act.	(i) Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended; (ii) Public Service Act.
9. Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.	The Department is representative of the South African people and is implementing diversity management measures.	(i)Part VI Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended; (ii) Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998; (iii) White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service – 15/11/1995; (iv) White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service, 2001.

**Source:** Public Services Commission, *Fourth Consolidated Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation Report, October 2007:* 3-4.

# CHAPTER VII: Challenges Facing Civil Service Reforms and Strategies for Addressing them

## 7.1 Major Challenges Posed to Effective Civil Service Reforms:

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A number of country-specific challenges are identified below. It is also instructive to note that even though the challenges are country-specific, they resonate in CSRs in the four countries.

### *7.1.1 The Ghanaian Experience:*

The outcome of the CSPIP has been influenced by the weaknesses inherent in the design and implementation process. They include the following: (i) Too many reform activities going on concurrently, with inadequate sequencing that seemed to have overburdened the same people and did not exploit the synergies of the various reform dimensions such as public financial management reform programme, legal reform and decentralization. As is usually associated with change, turf battles ensued, but were not properly dealt with by the National Institutional Renewal Programme (NIRP) and the OHCS, which were supposed to provide coordination and oversee the process in order to enhance the reform success; (ii) key service-wide constraints relating to budget reform, pay and reward reforms were not undertaken, thereby serving as a major disincentive to employee morale. For example, people kept asking “what is in it for me?”; (iii) it targeted too many organizations, 180 MDAs in all (see Table 6) and hence support was thinly spread, which reduced its intended impact; (iv) Service Delivery Standards and Client Services Units that were established did not receive the necessary financial backing and logistical support to function as anticipated; (v) support for the reforms at the highest level (both political and bureaucratic) was cosmetic; (vi) the reform methodology became too mechanistic. For example, the Ministries of Agriculture and Health, that were relatively advanced by virtue of their past sectoral reform exercise could have by-passed certain stages of the process; (vii) the expected skills transfer did not take place because the programme was aimed at meeting targets, a situation that is supported by the literature. Donors tend to treat public sector reform as an “engineering problem”, a phenomenon to be addressed through textbook solutions and hence favour mechanistic interventions featuring quantitative targets (Antwi et.al. 2008; Schacter 2000).

### *7.1.2 The Kenyan Experience*

Some of the reasons that led to the disappointing outcomes include: (i) lack of adequate planning before the implementation of the CSRs. The reform agenda was not set carefully and prioritized while

inadequate time and resources were not allocated; (ii) reform process and rationalization were not fully internalized, owned and homegrown for eventual implementation and sustainability because reforming MDAs did not fully comprehend the way forward and therefore fully involved in the development of the action plan for implementation; (iii) no acceptance of reform was built among top managers in the service; (iv) lack of adequate funds to mount demand-driven training programmes for all cadres in service led to capacity problems (Kenya, Republic of 1997; Adamolekun 2005; Kpundeh 2004; Kenya, Republic of 2005).

### ***7.1.3 The Nigerian Experience***

Some of the factors are: (i) increasing pressures for employment, utilization of informal sources of recruitment, long military era, federal character principle, lack of independence of the Federal Civil Service Commission and delegation of recruitment function have affected recruitment in the civil service; (ii) job description and standard personnel requirements are not adequately used in the recruitment process, especially at the lowest category of grade levels; (iii) the key contributory factor to weak service delivery include poor incentive structures for staff, capacity depletion and a very limited application of management information system technology; (iv) institutionalized corruption as a result of the inability of anti-corruption agencies to perform their functions; (v) long years of military rule and its effects on the development of a democratic culture or ethos; (vi) inadequate public service culture or tradition which is value-based, which cannot draw from universal public service values such as public trust, impartiality, equity, transparency, ethical standards and selflessness (Otobo 1999; Agagu 2008).

### ***7.1.4 The South African Experience***

Some of the reasons are: (i) Performance management contract has been undermined by the lack of a substantive performance culture in the South African public service; (ii) there is the question of organization culture. The working environment of civil servants and other public servants has impacted negatively on “Batho Pele’s” effectiveness. Management’s failure to act decisively on ethical transgressions and alleged corruption coupled with a general wave of materialistic greed undermine the promotion and application of professional ethics and constitutional values (DPSA 2007: 13, 47); (iii) McLennan (2007) argued that “Batho Pele” has created a framework for treating citizens as customers which has arguably created a self-interested rather than professional culture within the public service; (iv) the achievement of the developmental state goals became unrealistic because even though the public service is highly educated in terms of tertiary qualifications, there is still a problem of poor skills level within the service. According to Butler (2008: 2-3), South Africa does not have the skills base that the East Asian developmental states enjoyed. Southall (2006) states that a meritocratic public service forms the basis of these developmental states; (v) given the historical injustices of the past, one of the major priorities of the ANC government is to promote a more representative workforce.

The ANC therefore introduced a policy of affirmative action for blacks, women and gender (Ncholo 2000). There is evidence to suggest that patronage appointments in the public service have grown substantially since 1994. There is the influence of the controversial deployment policy of the ANC, which deploys party members to senior management positions in the public sector, many of whom lack experience (UNDP 2004; Picard 1999; 2005); (vi) there are still staff shortages in the public service leading to the introduction of Occupational Specific Dispensations (OSDs) for specific professions such as health and education in order to retain skilled staff; (vii) there is brain drain from the civil service to the more lucrative private sector (Cameron and Milne 2008). A PSC Report of 2005 stated that there was not enough skilled managerial staff. Heads of Departments have indicated the failure to retain skills in the government as the major reason government departments outsource projects instead of implementing them with their internal staff. This suggests that outsourcing was undertaken for pragmatic rather than ideological reasons (PSC 2005).

### ***7.1.5 Evidence of Reversal of Elements of Civil Service Reforms in Some African Countries***

Even though civil service reforms have some successes, there is evidence of reversal of some of its elements in some areas and countries. A key area that has suffered reverses is downsizing. Downsizing was done without putting in place a policy of ensuring that a sufficient, motivated and competent workforce remains in the civil service. The experience of many African countries is that such policy was missing, and this led to reform reversals even in successful countries such as Ghana and Uganda where the size of the civil service rose again (AfDB 2005).

Excessive or inappropriate downsizing in several African countries has constrained the capacity of the state to perform and deliver services effectively. Staff reduction and employment freezes have created shortages of skilled professionals and technicians throughout the services, and of front-line workers needed to sustain, improve quality and expand public services in key areas such as education, health and agricultural extension. Often, retrenchment has concentrated on labour in the lower echelons – drivers, messengers and daily paid workers. Wages saved from such retrenchments are substantially insufficient to achieve the desired targets. Freezing of employment also contributed to the ageing of the civil service, with implications for pensions payments as the older civil servants retire (AfDB 2005).

## **7.2 Civil Service Reforms and Poverty Reduction in the Four Countries**

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Poverty and inequality continue to be pressing problems facing African countries. Reforms were therefore meant to build the capacity of the civil service to enable it perform its functions. Fundamentally, the ability of government to legitimately tax and govern people is premised on its capacity to deliver a wide range of services required by its population which no other player will provide. Even



though civil service reforms in Africa were not specifically targeted to poverty reduction, the unstated underlying assumption was that once the civil service was capable of providing value for money public services, this will cascade down to other state institutions at the local level to build the necessary capacity to be able to provide services for the poor. Unfortunately, civil service reforms in the four countries were not able to reduce poverty through the provision and delivery of public services to the poor. Furthermore, much poverty in rural areas in Africa goes unperceived as public and civil servants concerned with bringing development perpetuate biases which overlook and misunderstand the nature and extent of poverty.

As a result of the inability of reforms to deal with poverty, the donor community especially the World Bank and IMF asked countries to design poverty reduction strategy programmes (PRSPs). In addition, the four countries are far from meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which have become a priority.

### **7.3 Point at which the Countries are Addressing the Challenges**

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There is growing concern by governments and their citizens in the four countries over the slow pace of reforms. Accordingly, the four governments have taken some steps to grapple with the challenges of sequencing and the pace of the reforms. Some of the measures taken include the following: (i) more political and bureaucratic commitment and support to reforms through treating them as a priority in the allocation of service budgetary resources both by the government and development partners; (ii) situating or placing the reform efforts more closely in the context of country specificity by acknowledging that successful and sustainable economic reform cannot take place without a competent public administration; (iii) the recognition that the reforms are a continuous exercise that have tended to develop their own momentum that successive political leadership teams as well as successive administrative leadership teams will deepen, in varying degrees, depending on prevailing circumstances within and outside the countries; and (iv) the decision of the governments to involve more stakeholders in the reform process through the appointment of some representatives of the legislature and selected stakeholders from the private and civil society sectors at the reform design stage to enhance its credibility and the chances of successful implementation.

# CHAPTER VIII: Conclusions, Findings, Lessons and Policy Recommendations

## 8.1 Conclusion

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The strategies adopted by the four countries are on-going. The four countries have realized that CSRs are difficult to implement and take a long time to achieve and therefore patience is needed given their specific country political, economic, and social as well as cultural environments. They have also understood the reform experiences must be viewed as learning opportunities and corrections made as one moves along. Against this backdrop, a number of strategies have been designed to deal with the challenges. They include (i) Linking civil service reforms to other public sector reforms and ensuring that there is coordination and harmonization of efforts; (ii) capacity building efforts through training needs assessment and holistic training of staff tailored measured to be relevant to the operations of the MDAs; (iii) improving conditions of service through compensatory reforms to retain and attract skilled staff; (iv) improved commitment and support on CSRs from politicians and senior bureaucrats even though there is more room for improvement; (v) designing and enforcing code of conduct for public servants to ensure the development of a public service ethos or culture; (vi) passing legislation to streamline procurement, accounting, auditing procedures, encourage whistle-blowing and right to information and thereby promote accountability and transparency; (vii) inter-country sharing of CSRs experiences marked by visits of the Heads of Civil Service and Minister for Public Service; (viii) adoption and adapting the requirements of the Charter on African Public Service, NEPAD and APRM and ensuring that as much as possible, the requirements are met; (ix) continuing redefinition of the role of the state through initiatives of not only encouraging greater competition and service provision but also providing the facilitative and regulatory framework; (x) increasing recognition of the value of neutrality of civil servants, and of the need to secure a degree of autonomy of public personnel management from extraneous pressures in order to safeguard high quality performance (Olowu 199; 2003; AfDB 2005; Ayee 2008).

## 8.2 Findings: What works and what does not in Civil Service Reforms in Africa:

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The paper has shown that there is an active ongoing search in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria South Africa and other African countries for ways of creating an effective, efficient and sustainable public sector reform strategy. The search has been led by the donor community. Indeed, in the four countries, with the support of the donor agencies – especially the World Bank – have experimented with various re-

form strategies since the 1980s. Although there have been marginal success in reducing the size of the public sector, in many cases this has left a demoralized and unmotivated personnel largely incapable of performing basic functions (Mutahaba and Kiragu 2002). Several reasons have been advanced for the apparent failure of these policies (Nunberg 1999). More importantly, however, the mixed record of the reform efforts has compelled African governments and the international community to re-evaluate the policies. The result has been a sober realization that improving the performance of public organizations is difficult and multi-faceted task that must include strategies to change the “rules of the game” fundamentally. It also requires long-term, high-level commitment and extensive support by civil servants, national leaders and the international community (Stevens and Teggemann 2004).

The failure of reform efforts has led to a number of studies arguing that engagement with public sector reforms in isolation from the broader civil service culture would have only limited effect, and stressing the need for understanding the context as it affects the “enabling environment” for capacity development. Booth et.al (2005), for instance, uses a “drivers-of-change” approach to analyze how change occurs, the power relationships at stake and the structural and institutional factors underlying the often-observed “lack of political will” behind the reform process. These studies are important in explaining why reforms in some countries succeed, while they fail in others (Stevens and Teggemann 2004). However, they ignore the question of why different organizations within the same context sometimes respond differently to reforms.

Given the foregoing, the on-going search for effective strategies to transform the public sector in Africa should concentrate on the differential performance of organizations within a country. Even though public sector reform policies have been based on the premise that all public organizations are ineffective, there is evidence that it is not all public sector organizations that have performed poorly since one can identify some that have performed relatively well (Grindle 1997). Consequently, an analysis of the causes of differences in performance in the public sector could have a significant impact on policy. In addition, the concept of organizational culture needs to be flagged as every organization has a culture and therefore any strategy for reform should include efforts to change the culture (Owusu 2006).

Civil Service Reforms (CSRs) in the four countries tend to compel recipient countries to produce target bound “so called” best practice cases. What would appear to be the reality with regards to reforms in the countries suggests the need to recognize that:

*The central focus of public service reform rightly remains the transformation of the conditions of employment of career public officials, who occupy key positions in government organization so as to enable public authorities to attract, retain and reward talented professionals and make them more responsive to citizen needs and expectations. Once the citizen see the evidence of administrative reform in*

*the form of improvements in service delivery and administration, the virtuous cycle of political acceptance and effective implementation will gain momentum (Caiden and Sundaram, 2004: 383).*

Based on the experiences of the four countries, a framework for re-thinking civil service reform suggests three broad areas of concerns that have to be recognized in future civil service reform (see Figure 1). The central argument of the framework is that first, there are critical success factors that need to be considered and consciously incorporated into any reform process. Seven such factors have been identified. They are (i) wholehearted political leadership commitment; (ii) wholehearted bureaucratic leadership commitment; (iii) thoughtful synergistic planning/preparation; (iv) patience for implementation and evaluation; (v) capacity to convince, neutralize and /or accommodate reform-phobias and critics; (vi) sustainable financial and technical resource availability; and (vii) conscious nurturing of general public support (Antwi et.al. 2007; Caiden and Sundaram 2004; Olowu 1999; 2003; Ayee 2008).

Secondly, one should look at the challenges confronting institutions and their operatives, that is, public and civil servants and technocrats given the growing public skepticism of government and its agents. There is the perception that individuals inside or outside government have become incapable of altruism, that is, people seek their self interest and not the public interest. This has been buttressed by the study of Keen et. al (2005) which argues that rigid institutional structures can disengage organizations from becoming co-learners with external players or actors. In the public sector organizations this situation leads them into four-institutional traps, namely, (a) the *administrative-trap* where institutional arrangements become inflexible and driven by narrowly defined management or efficiency considerations that are unable to take into account new information, different interest or diverse values; (b) the *competency-trap* under which bureaucracies become very good at what they do, but are unable to innovate and respond to new challenges requiring different approaches; (c) the *bureaucratic-trap* where planning processes become captured by bureaucratic hierarchies and are unable to integrate internal inputs into the decision-making frameworks; and (d) the *legitimacy-trap* under which bureaucratic processes become focused on maintaining legitimacy by servicing the interests of a narrow range of interest groups ((Keen et.al. 2005; Reschenthaler and Thompson 1988; Gruening 2001). Thus citizens see public sector institutions as too big, costly, wasteful, unproductive, inefficient, ineffective and unnecessarily bureaucratic, coupled with the complaint that public sector operatives, that is, civil and public servants are equally too: parasitic rent seeking, incompetent, rude, officious, mean, abusive and corrupt as indicated in the institution and operators challenges dimension (see Figure 1). It is thus crucial for reformers not only to focus on the critical success factors but also to understand civil society concerns and address them accordingly (Antwi et.al. 2008; Caiden and Sundaram 2004; Olowu 2003; Adamolekun 2005; AfDB 2005).

Thirdly, reform in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will hardly succeed without contextualizing reform efforts within country specific realities including its history, culture, politics, economy, sociology, ideology and values. In the words of Brian Levy (2004:11) "... a principal reason for the limited success of reforms was the implicit presumption that the weakness of public administration as managerial and could be remedied in a straightforward manner through a combination of organizational overhaul and financial support to procure the requisite specialist technical advice, training and hardware. By contrast, a central lesson of experience .... is that public administrations are embedded in a complex, inter-dependent system. This system incorporates not only the bureaucratic apparatus as a whole, but also political institutions and social, economic, and political interests more broadly".

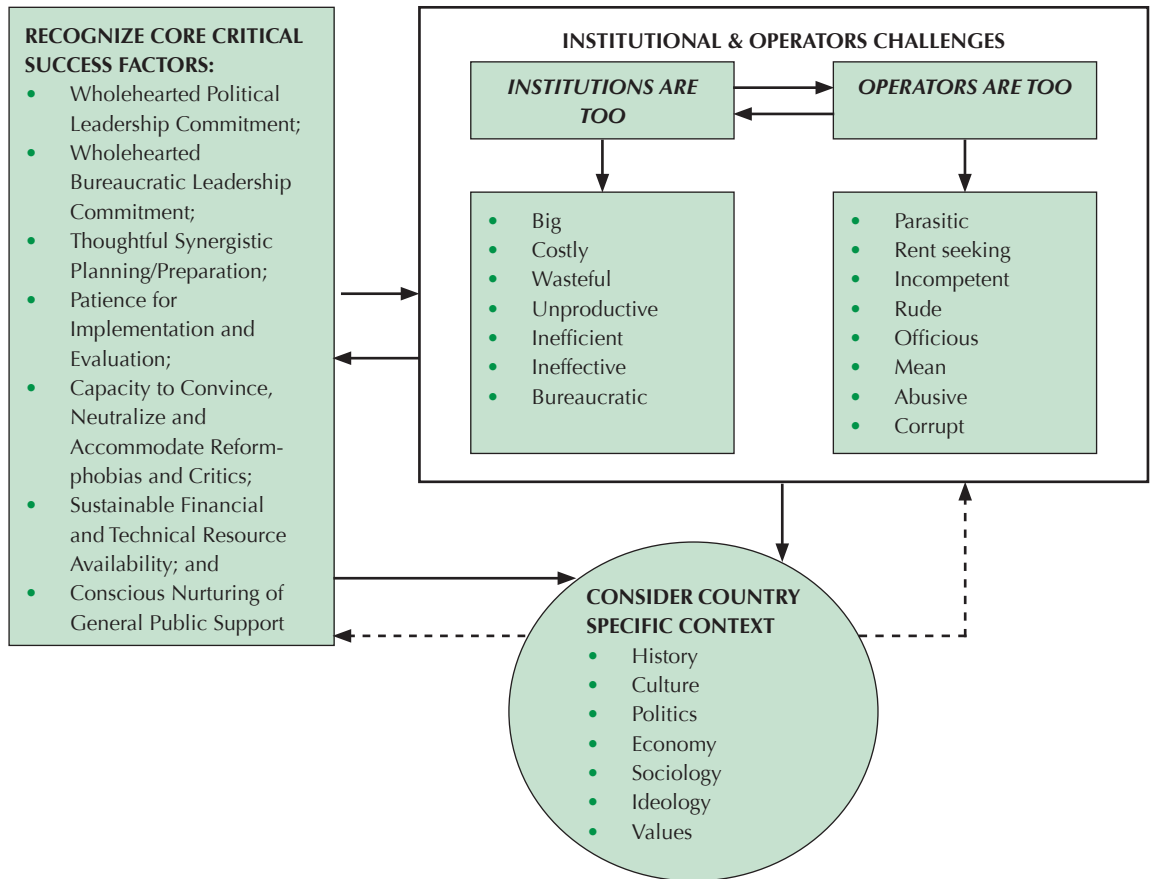
Fourthly, civil service reforms in the four countries have been largely externally-driven, which has contributed to some of the challenges facing the reforms. Accordingly, premium needs to be placed on internally-driven reforms which stand a better chance of success.

### **8.3.1 Lessons**

The following lessons can therefore be learned from public and civil service reforms in Africa:

- Reform efforts should be guided by a holistic vision, shared by all key stakeholders, as public and civil service reforms require champions and political commitment from the highest levels of government and society;
- Institution building, development-oriented leadership and committed workforce play an important role in nurturing a well-functioning civil service system;
- Reform is a continuous exercise and it tends to develop its own momentum that successive political and administrative leadership teams would deepen, depending on prevailing circumstances within and outside the country;
- Sound economic policies and a vibrant public service are key ingredients for keeping a country in a "virtuous" cycle zone of governance and public administration continuum;
- Civil service reforms (CSRs) must be linked to such components as financial management, decentralization and sector-wide approaches. A long term, system-wide approach to civil service and public sector reforms must be adopted. A selective introduction of NPM ideas and practices should be adapted;
- African governments need to build a vibrant public service capable of understanding the challenges of development, analyzing development policy proposal and designing and implementing effective policies in a changing domestic and global environment. An efficient and effective public service requires not only cost containment and staff retrenchment but also incentives to attract and retain highly skilled administrative officials. When the incentive structures in the public and civil services remain poor, its efficiency as well as ability to effect policies will remain very low (AfDB 2005).

**Figure 1: A Framework for Re-thinking Public Service Reform**



*Source: Antwi et al. "Public Sector Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa" (2008): 262.*

## 8.4 Policy Recommendations

There is no doubt that CSRs will continue to be a major preoccupation of governments in Africa given the crucial role the Civil Service is expected to play in the development process. Accordingly, for future reform efforts to be successful the following policy recommendations are being made:

### **8.4.1 Reforms Should Focus not only on Management but also on Leadership:**

Leadership is central to successful implementation of CSRs. Public and civil service reforms as implemented have focused on improving the management of organizations. But the problem of many public sector organizations is the lack of effective leadership to institute the changes necessary for

creating effective organizations. Kotter's (1996) distinction between management and leadership is apt here. According to him, management involves a set of processes to help keep the complicated system of people and technology running smoothly, including planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling and problem-solving. Conversely, leadership involves a set of processes that create organizations in the first place or adapt them to significantly changing circumstances. Leadership defines what the future looks like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen, despite obstacles.

Lack of visionary leadership is a serious problem, particularly most African countries where a poor incentive system, lack of resources, and excessively bureaucratic rules and regulations make it extremely difficult to attract and retain such people. The often constraining civil service environment in many African countries can, and does, frustrate many reform-minded and visionary leaders. However, there are examples of effective leaders who have succeeded in transforming some public institutions, what one might call "pockets of success or productivity". Although there is often the need to improve the management of public organizations, it is equally critical for all public organizations to have a "collectively created" common frame of reference which can be effectively created only by a leader or manager (Mahler 1997).

A revolutionary breed of leadership that consistently promotes efficiency, honesty, productivity and public offerings while fiercely standing against illegitimate political forces is critical. Meritocracy rather than ethnicity or tribalism or indeed political party patronage must continue to reign supreme in civil service appointments. Acceptance of reforms should be built amongst top-level managers so that reforms can succeed (Marwa and Zairi 2009).

#### ***8.4.2 Tailor Reform Policies to Specific Organizations***

More attention should be paid to country-to-country studies to provide a more sophisticated understanding of political and social systems, incentive structures, and sources of leadership and to incorporate this understanding into the design of reform policy (DAC Network on Governance 2006). Taking the argument forward, one should avoid "one-size-fits-all" reform strategies and tailor reform policies to specific organizations. Since different organizations – even those in the same country or in the same sector – could have different cultures, it is critical that one takes each organization's culture or cultures into consideration in designing reform strategies. Indeed, the World Bank (2002: 17) has conceded that one should "start with a thorough understanding of what exists on the ground and emphasize 'good fit' rather than any one-size-fits-all not of best practice". Understanding what exist on the ground requires an understanding of the culture of each organization. Organizational change therefore entails a good understanding of the nature of the culture, an assessment of the culture – including the multiple subcultures – understanding the different cultural forms, and using those forms to facilitate change, where necessary (Owusu 2006; Grindle 1997).

### ***8.4.3 Cultural Change***

Cultural change is a long-term process, as such, it must be tempered with ‘quick wins.’ Initiating sustainable reform requires the full commitment of national political and bureaucratic leaders and the international community, and the support of employees (World Bank 2005). Changing organizational cultures as a way of improving the performance of public organizations is no exception. Lack of commitment by politicians and bureaucrats often results in lapses in policy implementation. The short-term demands of the donor community also “have sometimes compromised longer term goals of institutional building, with negative long term impacts (World Bank 2000: xiii). The commitment of public sector employees to the reform effort is also necessary to create a sense of ownership and to diffuse so-called “reform fatigue”. A better understanding of the enabling environment for capacity building and development and using the knowledge of designing reform policies is critical in all cases. In addition, instituting ‘quick wins’ can be helpful in making such a long-term approach to public sector reform acceptable to political and administrative leaders. ‘Quick wins’ are a way of providing a positive face to public sector reform by demonstrating that reform is not just about sacrifices and pain; it also involves significant improvements in service delivery. Moreover, in situations where the enabling environment makes comprehensive reform unfeasible, it may be expedient to professionalize the public service one agency at a time, responding to the most urgent needs for capacity (World Bank 2005; Grindle 1997; AfDB 2005).

### ***8.4.4 Reforming the Incentive System is a Prerequisite for Cultural Change***

The importance of adequate salaries and a transparent incentive system in promoting efficient public sector organizations cannot be over-emphasized. Increasing employee remuneration would not only stem the outflow of workers from the public sector but also reduce corruption. Discussions on salary reform must be open and honest; however, they must be based on dialogue between the government and the other stakeholders, especially the unions. Such a dialogue would help educate the stakeholders about the budgetary constraints faced by the government as well as providing an opportunity for the government to impose upon the stakeholders the need for increased effectiveness as way of justifying higher wages (Owusu 2006; Olowu 2003; AfDB 2005; Adamolekun 2005).

### ***8.4.5 The Creation of a Pan-African Administrative Space***

Similar to the European Administrative Space of 1997 is imperative to identify common principles, strategy and actions of public administration that may be 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 on the Ministers of the Public Service held in Namibia in 2001.



The principles are: (i) principle of equality of treatment; (ii) principle of neutrality; (iii) principle of legality; and (iv) principle of continuity. The principles and criteria to be adopted would, however, need to have a broader orientation, including issues of economic management, accountability and transparency and administrative competence (Adamolekun 2005).

#### **8.4.6 The Move towards the New Public Service:**

African countries should move towards what is called the “New Public Service” (NPS), which involves a set of ideas about the role of public administration in the governance system that places citizens at the centre (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000). It is one which will “serve rather than steer” and enables public and civil servants to help citizens articulate and meet their shared interests rather than attempt to control or steer society. It is built on work in democratic citizenship, community and civil society, organizational humanism and discourse theory (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000). Accordingly, public and civil servants should focus on their responsibility to serve and empower citizens as they manage public organizations and implement public policy. In other words, with citizens at the forefront, the emphasis should not be placed on either steering or rowing the governmental boat, but rather on building public institutions marked by integrity and responsiveness. The features of the New Public Service are contrasted with the old public administration and new public management (NPM) (see Table 11), which have been practiced in Africa with limited success. Indeed, the NPS is to replace both the old public administration and the NPM (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000).

#### **8.4.7 Developing African Benchmarks for Civil Service Reforms**

Developing African benchmarks for innovations and best practices in Civil Service Reforms it is an uphill task to develop uniform benchmarks for innovation and best practices in civil service reforms given the diversity of the African countries. Benchmarking involves the setting of minimum standards “floors” whose performance should not be permitted to fall below and then benchmark performance within/without with best practice whose performance exceeds such floors. The civil service should benchmark performance against the best in class to provide choice in both sources of service and delivery means. In this way, benchmarking will foster competition, attract potential private investors and raise the cost of harbouring poor performance to the delight and benefit of all citizens.

Benchmarking innovations and best practices in Africa should take into account the following three areas: (i) **Public Service Management and Accountability:** The Public Service is the largest organization in terms of employment, budget and impact on society. Effective administration of this large and complex enterprise is an essential element in the development and growth of African countries. With the diversity of circumstances and socio-economic situations, fundamental principles of good management, leadership and transparent accountability require innovative adaptations for effective implementation; (ii) **Government Services and Programmes:** The fundamental role of the civil service

is to enhance the welfare of its citizens. Services and programmes range from strategies to control disease, extending health care and educational services, to facilitating routine transactions with government organizations. With limited human and financial resources, optimizing government investments for the greatest public good will require innovative policies, pioneering strategies and inventive implementation; citizen dialogue to foster mutual understanding and to mediate decisions. With the plurality of citizen interests based on geographical, societal and economic differences, maintaining an open dialog with citizens and sustaining effective democratic processes require innovative strategies and processes; (iii) **Use of Technology in the Public Service:** Despite decades of advancements in information and communications technology (ICT), their rate growth is still accelerating. While there have been many successes in adapting these technologies to serve the Public Service, there have been many spectacular failures. Innovations are needed to manage these technologies to harness their potential for effective public service operations.

Benchmarking innovation and best practices in civil service reforms in Africa should include the five criteria: (i) **The Innovation:** The element(s) of the idea that makes it new, unique and innovative; how the idea has changed thinking and perception about a problem and its solution; how this new understanding translate into useful practices that are of benefit to the public service and its citizens; (ii) **Appropriateness to Context:** how appropriate is the initiative to local or national socio-economic conditions; strategies that are adopted to adapt the innovation to local circumstances; the lessons learned and approaches used to overcome difficulties in the implementation process; (iii) **Effectiveness:** Not all innovations and best practices have enduring benefits. One should therefore look at whether sufficient time has passed to demonstrate results. In this regard, it is important to deal with independent assessments on the results achieved from the innovation and the costs of implementation and quantifiable benefits achieved; (iv) **Long Term Significance:** does the innovation change how specific challenges and opportunities are perceived?; Are there opportunities to adapt or expand the innovation to other domains; Has the innovation changed the understanding and analysis of similar challenges; and the potential benefit of the innovation for the country; (v) **Transferable Lessons Learned:** What lessons are learned in the identification, formulation and implementation of innovations. Are there valuable insights into the innovation process in the process and what strategies were designed to maximize risks in the implementation of new ideas and change in the public service (CAPAM 2010).

**Table 11: Comparing Perspectives: Old Public Administration New Public Management and New Public Service**

Criteria	Old Public Administration	New Public Management	New Public Service
Primary theoretical and epistemological foundations:	Political theory, social and political commentary augmented by naïve social science.	Economic theory, more sophisticated dialogue based on positivist social science.	Democratic theory, varied approaches to knowledge including positive, interpretative, critical and post-modern.
Prevailing rationality and associated models of human behavior:	Synoptic rationality, “administrative man”.	Technical and economic rationality, “economic man” or the self-interested decision maker.	Strategic rationality, multiple tests of rationality (political, economic, organizational).
Conception of the public interest:	Politically defined and expressed in law.	Represents the aggregation of individual interests.	Result of a dialogue about shared values.
To whom are public servants responsive?	Clients and constituents.	Customers.	Citizens.
Role of government:	Rowing (designing and implementing policies focusing on a single, politically defined objective).	Steering (acting as a catalyst to unleash market forces).	Serving (negotiating and brokering interests among citizens and community groups, creating shared values).
Mechanisms for achieving policy objectives:	Administering programmes through existing government agencies.	Creating mechanisms and incentive structures to achieve policy objective through private and non-profit agencies.	Building coalitions of public, non-profit and private agencies to meet mutually agreed upon needs.
Approach to accountability:	Hierarchical – administrators are responsible to democratically elected political leaders.	Market-driven – the accumulation of self-interests will result in outcomes desired by broad groups of citizens (or customers).	Multifaceted – public servants must attend to law, community values, political norms, professional standards and citizen interests.
Administrative discretion:	Limited discretion allowed administrative officials.	Wide latitude to meet entrepreneurial goals.	Discretion needed but constrained and accountable.
Assumed organizational structure:	Bureaucratic organizations marked by top-down authority within agencies and control or regulation of clients.	Decentralized public organizations with primary control remaining within the agency.	Collaborative structures with leadership shared internally and externally.
Assumed motivational basis of public servants and administrators:	Pay and benefits, civil service protections.	Entrepreneurial spirit, ideological desire to reduce the size of government.	Public service, desire to contribute to society.

**Source:** Denhardt and Denhardt, “The New Public Service: Serving Rather than Steering”, *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 60, No. 6: 554.

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