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**Public Administration, Human Resources  
and Social Development Division**

**BUREAUCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA:  
AN AGENDA FOR REFORM**

**PAPER FOR**

**THE CONFERENCE ON  
GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN AFRICA**

**12-16 May 1996  
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## Introduction

Democracy is constrained in post-colonial African states by factors such as poverty, low levels of education, deep ethnic and religious divisions, weak civil society structures etc. (Hyden & Bratton 1992, Ake 1995, Rasheed 1995). The extent to which modern public bureaucracies help to tackle or aggravate these problems remains a moot point.

Yet, the fact that most of the modern African states began as colonial bureaucracies was expected to assist the task of nation-building in countries which were themselves a legacy of the colonial enterprise. Modern public bureaucracies were considered crucial for formulating and implementing programmes aimed at radically transforming economic and social conditions in African countries within a short period of time. Most observers at the time thought that improved socio-economic conditions were the necessary preconditions for the attainment of democratic governance.

As Africans struggle to transform their governance systems from autocracies into democracies in the 1990s, it is becoming ever more apparent that bureaucracies- of civil, military and party variety- may constitute one of the most serious, if not the most serious, obstacle to the realisation of the collective goals of the African people: economic growth, national integration and democratisation. Public bureaucracies have become ready instruments at the service of despots and patrimonial rulers and in a few, extreme cases such as the being witnessed in Nigeria and perhaps in countries in the West African sub-region (Ghana and the Gambia), the military wing of the public bureaucracy has seized political power by force of arms and is increasingly legitimising its near-permanent hold on power.

Several observers have highlighted the fragility of the African democratic impetus. This article goes further to argue that democratic governance is not likely to make much progress except public bureaucracies are transformed from the monocracies which serve the whims of those who control the executive branch of governments in Africa to polycentric institutions whose primary concern is to serve the ordinary people of Africa efficiently, accountably and responsively. The magnitude of the change which this transformation requires will require a reinvention of African governmental systems. A completely different paradigm of political and administrative systems is required.

The paper begins with a conceptual statement of the relationship between democracy and bureaucracy before looking, briefly and analytically at the experiences in the eastern and western African sub-regions.

## I. Democracy and Bureaucracy: A Conceptual Framework

For our purposes in this paper, we confine ourselves to 'political or constitutional democracy' as distinct from economic democracy (Buijtenhuse & Rijnerse 1992, Haldenius 1992, Nwabueze 1985). It is also assumed that while the forms of democracy may vary from one culture to another, its essential principles are universal (Cohen 1995, Hyden & Bratton 1992).

The two most important of these universal principles are institutional pluralism and political equality. (Dahl 1971, Ostrom 1995, Huntington 1992, ECPDM 1992, Buijtenhuijs & Rijnierse 1992). Democracy exists in a country when there is institutional pluralism or when there is a polycentric political order in which state and society organs are allowed to freely interact with one another (Ostrom 1990, Olowu 1995a). The emphasis is not only the equality of political actors but the relative equality of all state and society institutions including such political institutions as political parties; independent legislatures, electoral systems and jurisprudence; active watchdog, research and policy analysis organs and pressure groups etc. All of these ensure that the critical norms of good governance: efficient delivery of services, accountability and responsiveness of public institutions, rule of law and policy pluralism are realised. (Sartori 1987, Hadelnius 1992, Saward 1994, World Bank 1992, USAID 1994, Beetham 1994, E.Ostrom 1993).

A recent review of the expansive literature on democracy states that, democracy refers to 'a particular system of social organization of political forces in which the relationship between the rulers and the ruled is one of symmetry sustained by specific institutions and attitudes that regulate the behaviour between the ruler and the ruled and the manner in which the rules are made' (UNECA 1995:6). Similarly, Beetham (1994: 28-29) in a global review of the principles and indices of democratization lists four major indices of a democracy: a) popular election of the parliament and the head of government; b) continuous accountability of government -directly to the electorate through public justification for its policies and indirectly to agents acting on the people's behalf; c) guaranteed civil and political rights; d) a civil society which is independent and capable of influencing or checking on the exercise of governmental powers and that is committed to democratic values. These characterisations are similar to the ones invoked by B. O Nwabueze (1985:1) on what he refers to as 'constitutional democracy': popular participation, social equality, public welfare as the object of government and ethic or tradition of democratic behaviour.

This definition of democracy - which combines the institutional and the behavioral elements - is very helpful in discussing the theme of this paper- the nature of the relationship between democratic governance and modern public bureaucracies. This is because bureaucracy is the medium by which the government relates to the governed. Modern bureaucracy is expected to possess certain attributes that enables it to function in a very efficient manner. These attributes according to Max Weber include: a system of rational rules, specialisation, precision, hierarchy, written records, routinization, separation between public and private realm, specified delimitation of authority, a career system, meritocracy and strict discipline and control of officials.

Even though Weber was very pessimistic of the long-term implications of bureaucracy for democracy, he placed greater emphasis on the mutually reinforcing linkages between bureaucracy and economic growth on the one hand and bureaucracy and democracy on the other. With respect to the latter, he argued that social and economic equality was one of the conditions for the emergence of a bureaucracy. But bureaucracy was also especially capable of furthering the cause of equality because of its capacity to ensure fairness, equality and the norms

of anonymity, objectivity and neutrality which to which bureaucratic officials subscribe. (Mcurdy 1978, Jacoby 1973).

It took another close student of bureaucracy to call attention to the instrumental nature of modern bureaucracies and the dangers inherent in the monocratic structures they nurture for democratic government. According to Vincent Ostrom (1974), the preoccupation of modern bureaucracies with monocentricity, simplicity, neatness, hierarchy and symmetry does not result in the maximisation of efficiency, measured by least-cost expenditure of time, effort and resources as was generally supposed even in post-industrial democracies because of bureaucratic failure factors. In addition, bureaucracies tend to make it easier for those who exercise political power to exploit such powers to their own advantage to the detriment of others within the same political community. He therefore reasons that what a democracy requires is an administrative system that has as its defining attributes 'diversity, variety and responsiveness to the preferences of the constituents' - in one word a polycentric political/administrative order. In his words:

Fragmentation of authority among diverse decision centers with multiple veto capabilities within any one jurisdiction and the development of multiple, overlapping jurisdictions of widely different scales are necessary conditions for maintaining a stable political order which can advance human welfare under rapidly changing human conditions (ibid.112).

The colonial state in Africa was a bureaucratic, monocratic state. It had three basic defining features. First, all governmental powers - legislative, executive and judicial - were concentrated in the hands of appointed officials. Second, there was no participation or accountability to the governed as appointed officials were solely responsible to the government of the imperial country. According to one scholar: colonial regimes were essentially elitist, centrist and absolutist (Wunsch 1990:23). Thirdly, by imposing the bureaucratic machinery on the traditional institutions, the latter was bastardised- either by removing all the institutional mechanisms for making local chiefs accountable to their people or other chiefs or by creating 'warrant chiefs' where none existed (Adamolekun 1986, Olowu 1996).

Colonial rule laid the foundation for autocratic governments in Africa. Until a few years to their hurried departure, colonial governments in most cases did not build institutions that can constrain executive power such as the legislature, nor did they allow political parties and independent news media organs and other societal organs. Even when these institutions were finally allowed to exist, the period of gestation was so short for these institutions to be fully operational. Hence, many African countries attained political independence with a qualitatively unbalanced structure of government between the bureaucratic arm and the other civic branches of governance- a concern earlier expressed about governance systems in developing countries generally (Riggs 1963). As we show in the next section, this situation paved the way for the suspension or abolition of democratic institutions and structures and the emergence of one-party and military governments in which the bureaucracy served the interests of the ruler rather than the ruled. This situation hastened institutional and economic decline in the continent (Wunsch & Olowu 1990).

## II. Democratic Legacy, Promise and Performance in East and West Africa.

As Table 1 shows, all the countries in these two regions are today poor, and all of them have a per capita GNP that is less than US\$ 500.00. Life expectancy is less than 60 years from birth and primary school enrolment exceeds 80% in only one country-Kenya. What is, however, particularly important from the point of view of this paper is that all the countries have either recently transited from autocracy of one-party or military rule to democracy (4) or are still under military rule (2). Yet, all of them, by the time of they attained independence some thirty years ago, not only had democratic constitutions which had all the trappings of the Westminster/ Whitehall model: rule of law, separation of powers, independence and impartiality of the judiciary, civil service and armed forces; parliamentary supremacy, loyal opposition, popular participation through elections held at frequent and regular intervals, based on the principle of universal suffrage. In addition, these constitutions provided for a prime minister and cabinet and made a dichotomy between the constitutional Head of State and a Head of Government.

All these countries were quite expectant that political independence would usher in a time of economic and social advancement- in line with the clarion call of the Ghanaian leader- seek ye first political independence and all other things would be added to you.

The history of each country is one in which the executive power and bureaucracy became dominant after only a few years of independence. In West Africa, Ghana was the first to become politically independent but it was also the first to abolish its democratic constitution and substitute for it the rule of the party- the Convention Peoples Party in 1958. The Sierra Leone followed suit under Dr. Stevens of the All Peoples Congress when in 1978, by a sham referendum, a one- party system was adopted. Nigeria did not have a one -party dictatorship but came under military rule first for 13 years from 1966 to 1979 and then again from 1983 with another unbroken military rule of another 13 years. Gambia seemed the only odd case in the West African sub-region in that it was able to sustain its democratic heritage until the soldiers mutinied and took power in 1994.

Sierra Leone has recently returned to civil government while Ghana is currently ruled by a leader who originally took power using military instrumentalies and successfully transformed himself to a civilian elected leader in 1992 in an election that was shrouded in much controversy.

Similarly, the three East African countries became independent with all the trappings of the westminster model. Starting with Tanzania, which enacted a new constitution in 1962 to Kenya which introduced an amendment to its constitution in 1964 and Uganda which passed a new constitution in 1966, all these three countries eliminated executive duality and concentrated all executive powers in the hands of the Executive. Indeed, in the case of Uganda, the President's house was attacked and the Mutesa forced into exile where he died. In all three cases, one-party governments were introduced after the abolition of executive duality but it was only in Uganda, that the military bureaucracy took over from the party bureaucracy.

In short, the experiences of all of these countries, without one exception is one in which the democratic structures inherited at independence were eliminated within a few short years in order to pave the way for rule by chief executives who relied either on the civil or military bureaucracy or the party bureaucracy.

One of the unfortunate developments in all these countries has been to eliminate the principles of governmental responsiveness, accountability, transparency and good government. Institutional structures such as legislatures and loyal opposition, independent civil service, judiciary and the military were either suspended, abolished or radically modified to ensure they are not able to serve the interests of the people but only those who exercised executive power.

For instance, under the Tanzanian Republican Constitution of 1962, the President as Head of State and Head of the Government could dissolve parliament and did not have to take advice from anyone or institution in promulgating a bill into law. He could arrest anyone. According to Mhiyo (1994), the curtailments on the powers of the Tanzanian parliament were very many. First, the 1977 Constitution, as the 1962 constitution before it, subordinated parliament to the party and to the Presidency. The latter further had the right to nominate up to 55% of members of the parliament. Moreover, parliament and its members were completely dependent on the government for services both at district, regional and national levels. Even the Speaker of the National Assembly was a part of the central government- who together with his/her auxiliaries were under the control of the central establishment.

In addition, the author lists other major organizational constraints on the parliament: First, the amount of time allocated for deliberation was short. Second, parliament as well as parliamentarians lacked open and free access to information from their constituencies and from the government. They were not immune from prosecution. They were not exempt from official secrets act- government information cannot be divulged to them by any official of government. Thirdly, they lacked the essential facilities and equipment. They were wholly dependent on the executive for such essentials as transport, income, political influence, information etc. Furthermore, parliamentarians were poorly prepared for their jobs. There were no orientation seminars for parliamentarians to improve their knowledge of parliamentary procedures, supplemented by library services and regular information bulletins and newsletters. Finally, they did not even control the reports over their own activities - these are carried out by government officers. In sum, the author concludes that the Tanzanian parliament was a sub-unit of the state machinery rather than a separate organisation capable of independent action. Mwakyembe (1994) refers to the Tanzanian parliament after the 1977 constitutional changes as 'simply a committee of the ruling CCM party'.

Yet, the Tanzanian parliament was rated by many observers as one of the best in Africa at this time- in spite of its problems (see Tordoff 1977, Olowu 1993). The Kenyan and the Ugandan parliaments were not in any way better. An indication of the excessive powers of the executive over the legislature for instance was borne out by the ease with which Prime Minister Obote pushed through the controversial 1967 Ugandan constitution. According to Mujaju (1994: 37):

On April 15, 1966, Dr. Obote convened an emergency meeting of parliament to which he introduced entirely new rules of the game, the revolutionary constitution which made him executive President and curbed royal privileges in kingdom areas. But what is more, there was no debate on the document; Mps voted on it without even looking at it since it was waiting for them in their pigeon-hole. They saw it after the swearing in ceremony of Dr. Obote as Executive President. Rather than being called a constitution, this revolutionary document in the view of this writer must be viewed as a decree, such as all coup leaders promulgate to legitimise their conquest of power.

This constitution made the President completely independent of the cabinet or the parliament. The President was further empowered to exercise legislative power under this decree when the national assembly was 'in recess or had been prorogued or dissolved'. The Nigerian parliaments, in the pre-military and post-military periods functioned in about the same manner (Adamolekun 1979).

One of the principal explanations for the surge in democratic renewal in Africa in the 1990s is that African centralised governments have not advanced public welfare- either in terms of economic growth, national integration or democratic governance. The reasoning is that a restoration of democratic governments may advance these interests. But the new democracies in Africa labour under a dominant executive which has the bureaucracy as its ally against other fledgling organs of the state and the society. The ruling party for instance remains disproportionately powerful in countries such as Ghana and the three East African states. The Kenyan bureaucracy continues to perceive itself as an agent of the ruling party, KANU especially in the districts. ( Barkan & Chege 1989). In the West Africa, the military is yet to accept the supremacy of the civilians to rule although a wonderful turn-around in this respect has recently been experienced in the Sierra Leone. In Nigeria (less so in the Gambia), military rulers continue to believe in their capacity to fashion out lasting democratic institutions after several failures but in reality continue to prepare to pursue the Rawlings' option of transiting from military to civilian Presidents.

Besides the ease with which African bureaucracies are manipulated by those who control executive power at the center and the relative ease with which the military wing of the public bureaucracy can usurp power due to its organizational characteristics, its monopoly of violence, a number of other factors militate against the African public services facilitating democratic governance in Africa. Four of these are particularly critical.

First, the public sector has grown quite rapidly after independence in many African countries whereas during the same period, the institutions which should make them accountable to the public were either abolished or repressed in some form. There is thus a severe imbalance between the executive and its bureaucracy on the one hand and the state and society organs that can hold these structures accountable. The subject of imbalance among political institutions receive considerable attention in the 1960s but has hardly been broached in recent writings on democratic renewal in Africa.



Secondly, political life in Africa as in several other Third World countries, is characterised by patron-client relationships. The public sector becomes an instrument for building public support for factions that are competing for power. This gives those in position of power an advantage over the society that is expected to control them. The public sector is therefore dysfunctional in serving the public but critical to the survival and sustenance of those who wield executive power. (see Joseph 1977, Hyden 1983, Balogun 1995, Adamolekun 1995, Ashmelash & Ootobo 1995). Moreover, because of the extreme concentration of wealth in the public sector and the extensive corruption and mismanagement in public life, those competing for power see the public office as the only way to social and economic improvement. According to Haldenius (1992: 136) 'when so much is at stake in political life, there is no scope for the tolerance and peaceful competition which democracy requires- for the difference of result between gain and loss is so great. Politics instead assumes the nature of a relentless zero-sum game'.

A third factor is that as a result of the factors earlier enumerated, the public service lacks even the basic meritocratic features of efficiency, productivity and other universalistic values. As can be seen from Table 2, many of the states in the region are characterised by a relatively stolen and systemically inefficient public sector. In fact, most of them do not measure efficiency of their various units. Staffing within the civil service is lopsided. For instance, the Sierra Leone civil service has a total of 59,000 civil servants in 1992. But over half of this number were either daily paid labourers and another 10% of the total figure were found to be ghost (or) non-existent workers. On the other hand, the compensation levels were so low that the civil service could not attract senior executive and high level technical officers - hence the large number of vacancies at this level. The private sector enterprises paid 20 times more for these positions than the civil service paid (World Bank 1993). A similar problem exists in all the seven countries in our sample.

Similarly, the military bureaucracy is large (judged by the resources invested in it relative to other sectors, see Table 2), but it is not a professional organization. The military, poorly paid and equipped, has become highly politicised especially in countries that have witnessed military usurpation of political power. Military intervention in a country's political life poses three major types of problems for democratic prospects.

First, it undermines the democratic fabric of the society- because of its unconstitutionality and the tendency to rule by exception- a situation that makes any form of tyranny and personal rule possible. Second, military rule actually increases the propensity to misgovernance and corruption, the breakdown of law and order, economic mis-management and ethnic and religious division in society. In fact, the experience judging from the West African experiences (Nigeria and Ghana) is that military rule heightens tensions between the various groups in the society. Finally, there is a more serious problem of how any succeeding civilian government relate to the military- especially in respect of past breaches of the law by the military. This is often a serious dilemma- to prosecute these cases could lead to a backlash- with the military seizing power again. On the other hand, to do nothing would be perceived as condoning breaches of the rule which would undermine the democratic system and its sense of fairness and justice.

It is significant, however, that military intervention is itself strongly correlated to economic underdevelopment. According to Huntington (1995:15) 'countries with per-capita GNPs of \$1,000 or more do not have successful coups; countries with per capita GNPs of \$3,000 or more do not have coup attempts. The area between \$1,000 and \$3,000 per capita GNP is where unsuccessful coups occur...'

The implication of the above from the point of view of our discussion is that poverty enhances the chances of military intervention in political life, a development which only worsens the prospects of economic reform and revival. Yet, poverty was also often the major excuse for keeping an unprofessional public service.

This brings us then to the fourth and final consideration - the wrong-headed public sector reforms. It is possible to divide administrative reforms in two broad groups in Africa: those before 1980 and those undertaken after this date. The pre-1980 reforms sought to strengthen the hands of the executive branch- rapid indigenisation of personnel, politicisation of the public services, nationalisation of private sector enterprises and imposition of central controls on local governments effectively transforming them into local administrative units. The post-1980 reforms because of their preoccupation with economic and fiscal balance, sought to reduce the public service rather than to redynamise it. They also completely overlooked the critical need to build capacity in the public service and neglected the political dimension to administrative reform and preoccupied themselves with cutting back on the public sector with very little success (Dia 1993, World Bank 1995).

Quite clearly a different type of institutional redesign is called for if the current political reforms are to lead to redynamisation of Africa's public services. We examine the issues in greater detail in the next and final section.

### III. Proposals for Consolidating Democracy in African Countries.

Four issues are key to the consolidation of democratic governance in the region under discussion. First, democracy and economic growth must be linked within the framework of public policy. Economic growth must accompany democracy in Africa, otherwise democracy would soon have to give way to authoritarian alternatives, due to popular disaffection with the perceived performance of democracy as a system of governance. Paradoxically, a democratic governance regime would seem to enhance the prospect of economic growth given the failure of autocratic alternatives thus far. Secondly, fundamental public sector reforms which will make the armed and civil bureaucracies more amenable to civilian control must be undertaken. Thirdly, the capacity of civil society institutions must be enhanced to enable them to impact more effectively on state bureaucratic institutions. Finally, there is a need to build professional military services that are capable of supporting the new democratic regime rather than constitute a perpetual threat to it.

All of these lead in the direction of an alternative conception of the organisation of the public sector building on the community structures which exist in virtually every African country and providing greater opportunities for

the existence and functioning of several organs of the state and society- i.e a polycentric political and administrative order.

### 1. Establishing A Linkage Between Economic Growth and Democratization

There are at least three schools of thought on the relationship between economic growth and democracy in developing countries. First, there are those who subscribe to the conventional argument that some modicum of economic growth is essential for the sustenance of democracy, democracy being a system of government that presumes that there is some surplus to be shared. This was the position of early theoreticians on political development including Huntington who therefore recommended some form of authoritarianism to bring about economic growth before democratisation could occur (See Huntington 1968, Emerson 1971). Unfortunately, the African experience to date is yet to present a case of successful economic growth resulting from authoritarian governments. According to Anyag Nyong'o (1991:3):

After thirty years of independence, there is no convincing correlation between dictatorships or authoritarian regimes and higher levels of economic growth or development in Africa. If anything, the more repressive regimes have done much poorer than the more liberal ones.

Generally, it would seem that there is substantial support for the argument that economic growth provides a favourable condition for the development of democracy but its absence does not vitiate the adoption of democratic processes. On the contrary there are examples of highly countries that have high economic growth rates that are not democratic: the best examples in the contemporary world are the Gulf States.

The second school of thought are those who believe that some form of democracy is required for economic growth and that once secured the two become mutually reinforcing. Several reasons are advanced for this position even though it flies in the face of the historical experiences of today's industrialised democratic countries. First, democracy enables independent economic power bases to prosper outside the state. This encourages the development of autonomous power centers which are capable of compelling the state to be accountable and therefore more frugal in the use of public resources. Secondly, independent institutions enable people to practice the art of self-governance and this citizenship processes itself stimulate a process which creates and sustains institutions that support a broad variety of physical and social infrastructures which are the essentials for economic growth and development (Chantornvong 1988, Oakerson 1988, Olowu & Wunsch 1990).

Finally, there are those who have argued that democracy is valuable in itself and should not be judged either positively or negatively on the basis of its impact on economic growth (Mkandawire 1991).

Democratic institutions are likely to contribute to economic growth prospects in Africa because of three important reasons. First, they provide an opportunity to build on institutional structures that are familiar to the people- what are referred to as primordial structures and values. Some countries (e.g

Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria) have shown the possibilities of how traditional institutions may be adapted for modern usages. There are studies also such as those conducted by the World Bank that point in this direction (Dia 1995). Within this framework, people are able to build on the social infrastructure through linkages and reciprocity systems- which can provide a framework for social progress.

Secondly, democratic structures help to foster institutions that hold those who exercise state power accountable. The African experience to- date seems to underscore the fact that Africa is yet to produce leaders who can combine self-restraint with vision and intense patriotism in tackling state matters. Thirdly, democratic institutions release the peoples' social energies by emphasising the role of the individual in the society and by helping to build networks across several social (including state and society ) institutions which set to work a tremendous social synergy for development (E. Ostrom 1996).

None of these possibilities are automatic, however. They are possibilities. Deliberate effort has to be made to ensure that these possibilities are translated into realities in each African country. To this end, three types of measures are required.

First, public sector organisations should be built from the level of the community organisational infrastructures which exist in virtually every African country. The success of these efforts in the face of the massive failure of central organs and solution indicates that they hold potential for economic growth and the democratisation of political structures. If they are made the building blocks of the local government their performance will clearly be better than the present structures which are perceived primarily as state administrative organs.

Secondly, there is the need to emphasise institutional pluralism- recognising and creating political space for the operation of five critical types of institutions- political subsystem institutions (the executive, legislature, judiciary, and quasi-judicial structures); economic subsystem institutions (formal and informal organisations); civil society subsystem institutions (independent professional bodies, trade unions, political parties and NGOs etc); international subsystem institutions and the public administration subsystem institutions- the civil service, public enterprises, local governments and specialised agencies such as police, teachers and decentralised organs. It is important that each of these institutions have competence- that is have a clear mission recognised by other actors, possess sufficient independence to be credible and must have the capacity to interact freely with other institutional actors through contestation, competition, cooperation or conflict.

Thirdly, actors in the public sector must be made aware that the primary purpose of the public sector is to provide the enabling policy environment for economic growth through the following types of activities:

- Provision of physical, institutional and financial infrastructure for the growth of a fledgling private sector;
- Development of human resources through major investments in educational and health infrastructure;

- Efficient management of key strategic industries which have backward linkages to the mass of small- scale and informal sector operators; and
- Support for economic and political reforms- especially in nurturing institutions for the advance of democratisation and decentralization.
- Promotion of regional economic opportunities especially in the area of trade.
- Mobilisation of Productive and Financial Resources, the stimulation of competitiveness in the global market and reduction/elimination of waste and of the debt profile .

## 2. Enhance the Capacity of Civil Society Institutions

Civil society institutions have been repressed in many countries in Africa and it is time to reverse this trend. There are three specific ways that civil societies organs can be fostered in Africa. First, they should be granted the political space to operate as independent entities to assist the democratic process. For instance, voluntary agencies should be allowed to operate schools, health centers and hospitals, private electronic and print media, research and policy analysis centers - all of which could assist the democratic and developmental processes in several African counties. Many countries in the region drove private and voluntary agencies out of these fields in the pre-democratic era. Secondly, the capacity of these societies themselves need to be enhanced - especially in terms of their personnel, institutional practices -such as accounting and leadership methods etc- Thirdly, the inputs of institutions in the civil society should be sought in the governance processes especially in the following areas:

- consensus building about development alternatives and plans;
- monitoring of the activities of independent governmental agencies such as electoral commissions, watch -dog organs, ombudsmen, auditors-general, civil and public service commissions, code of ethics bureaus etc.
- development management etc (See Rasheed & Demeke 1995, Mohidin 1996).

Indeed, the possibility of ensuring that some of these civil society organs are represented in the parliament should be sought.

## 3. Reinvent Public Sector Organs.

There is a need to build public sector organs that are controlled by the public and therefore sensitive to the public interest rather than to simply to those who wield executive political power. Six major strategies are suggested with this end in view. They include the following:

#### **A. Make Public Services Directly Accountable to the Public and their Customers.**

Besides the traditional accountability of the public services to the law and the legislature, it is being proposed that the African public services should be directly accountable to the public and their customers. There is no doubt that this will be easier at the level of local governments and public enterprises. Thus reinforcing the case for genuine decentralisation which is made below.

Some interesting international examples may constitute important object lessons for Africa. One interesting development is the movement in favour of 'reinventing government' in the United States and of the 'Citizens' Charter' (CC) under the 'Next Steps programme' in the United Kingdom. The latter has led to new management structures which give greater autonomy to chief executives of various departments who are designated as agencies. These CEOs take full responsibility not only for the use of resources but also for results. The results include the articulation and publication of a citizens' charter which helps to inform the public of the standards of performance they should expect from the agency and what they can do if the agency fails to live up to its own charter. It is said that nearly 64% of all public service activities are currently being carried out through these agencies with extraordinary improvements to public service productivity and efficiency. Several other countries within and outside the Commonwealth are already adopting this innovation (Osborne & Gabler 1992, Manning 1995, Thomas 1996).

African countries should be encouraged to adopt citizens' charters. The principal objective of the Charter is to raise the effectiveness with which public services are delivered in African countries by forging direct relationships of accountability between public sector service providers and the citizens in their role as consumers and taxpayers. As much as possible each public sector organisation will be allowed to work out what constitutes the standards the public can expect of it and how it will treat its customers. This commitment to high quality service means that performance targets will be aligned and provide employees in these organizations a clear message of what is to be achieved while the agency itself has a fair standard of measuring the performance of the whole agency and individual employees through its performance monitoring system. While the Charter attempts to strengthen direct accountability between service providers and the consumers, the intention is to utilise this to complement rather than displace or replace the present forms of indirect accountability through the law, legislative and judicial and executive authorities.

#### **B. Enhance the Capacity of the Legislature to Exercise Oversight Over the Executive and the Public Service.**

The legislature - which is expected to have oversight responsibilities over the executive and the public service- remains one of the weakest institutions of governance in most countries in the region. This is because legislatures have suffered many years of repression and/or suspension from past governments. Unfortunately, even in countries that are undergoing political reform, the legislatures' oversight role is poorly and, in many cases not, being carried out in many countries at all.

The first step towards enhancing the capacity of the legislative branch is therefore to assert its constitutional requirement of existing as a separate branch of the government -complete with its own personnel, infrastructure and independent information system- the most important of which is an up-to-date library and information service. Secondly, there would also need to be a close review of all laws that constrain the effectiveness of the legislature - especially those which limit their power to have access to government department information or to criticise government. In some countries parliamentary immunity is either not given to legislatures or are severely constrained (Barkan 1979, Mohiddin 1996). Indeed, the legislature can be encouraged in the various countries to review these laws.

Thirdly, given the relatively lower educational status of members of the legislature in several African countries it is surprising that few training programmes for legislators exist in the continent. To this end, African governments will need to create or identify special centres for developing training programmes and appropriate training modules for legislatures in each country. Where one country cannot afford the appropriate institutional mechanism, there should be opportunity to team up on a regional basis. The focus of such training should be improving the knowledge base, skills and integrity of parliamentarians- both for those in the government and the opposition.

Fourthly, there is the need to review the procedure for the approval of government budgets. The legislature is required to approve the annual budget of the government on the basis of annual audit reports on each unit of the government and is also expected to be involved in the economic management issues- especially in matters connected with debts and debt reduction plans. Unfortunately, audit institutions in very many countries in the region have all but collapsed. To this end, there is a need to review the accounting and auditing processes so that the legislatures have access to ample information upon which they can base their budget approvals. As much as possible, budgets should only be approved on the basis of demonstrated performance of each agency. Agencies that fail to make their mark in terms of expenditure and physical outputs should be sanctioned and possibly closed down if this poor performance trend is sustained while agencies that perform creditably should be rewarded. Hence, the audit institutions should be strengthened as well as the capability of the parliaments to enforce sanctions and rewards on various agencies.

Finally, each parliament should revitalise its public accounts committee which should be headed by the leading member of the opposition in parliament. In addition, each parliament should have a special committee on the public service. The responsibility of the latter committee is to monitor the level of efficiency of the various units of the public service on a continuous basis. How these indicators of efficiency should be derived are discussed below but they could be based on a combination of objective and subjective indicators. The public service committee will work very closely.

### **C. Strengthen the Policy Analytical Capacity of the Central Civil Service Organs and Develop Indicators for the Measuring Public Service Efficiency.**

Instead of attempting to directly deliver services, the primary mission of the central civil service is to gather and analyze relevant information to

improve the analytical competence within the public sector. To this end, it should specialise in information-gathering and analysis, strategic planning and review, building of coalition among stakeholders around specific policy matters while it at the same time monitors productivity throughout the public service.

All of these require a redefinition of the roles of the central civil service, a renewed commitment to excellence and recruitment and retention of top skills in the civil service. There will also be a renewed commitment to performance related remuneration systems.

Many African countries do not measure the efficiency of their public agencies. As a result there are no comparable statistics over time or among the different countries. Institutions charged with measuring PAS efficiency or productivity in the few countries where they exist are denied critical resources and do not have a clear idea of their mission (Olowu 1995b).

One place to begin to work towards correcting these defects is to clarify the mission of African countries' PAS around the seven major clusters of responsibilities identified above. Every African country will have to adapt these to suit its own peculiar conditions. The articulation of mission must form the basis of setting up efficiency indicators and measurements. Each agency of the government should identify its mission within this framework of these national guidelines. It should form the basis of their resource requirements and their charter with the citizens.

While each agency will monitor its own performance, Productivity Units should be set up to monitor these measurements across- the- board and report periodically to the executive branch as well as the audit unit which will render its report to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and the Legislative committee on the Public Service as recommended earlier and to the public at large.

The data generated should form the basis of deciding on which units of the government should continue to operate and which ones should be closed down. Organizational, personnel and financial audits should be integrated and both the executive agencies and the legislature as well as the citizens should be involved in these processes. This will help to restore the PAS capacity for self-regulation and to monitor its own performance.

In addition, as much as possible, a comprehensive audit of government activities- monetary, personnel and organizational audits - should be undertaken and reported to the legislature (through the PAC or the Committee on the Public Service). To be able to carry this through there will be a need to strengthen or create Audit Departments with considerable independence and other resources to enable them discharge their responsibilities within each PAS institution. None of these institutions will be able to fully fulfil their missions without a renewed commitment to the principle of rule of law within the polity as a whole. This should be an important component of training for all actors in the political system, but most importantly for the public servants.

One of the most important prerequisites for carrying out these efficiency-boosting measures in African countries will be the need to undertake a review of public sector compensation systems. Case-studies on African civil services



indicate that the human resource capacity of African PAS have fallen steadily over time especially in the last decade. One principal reason for this is the low compensation levels- vis- a-vis what is paid in the private sector, the level of inflation and international salary structures (Adedeji et al 1995). The problem is not an easy one because without an appreciable increase in the level of economic production, as earlier noted, salary levels are likely to remain stunted. One proposal however is that salary levels in African PAS should be made to reflect market values and each agency and individual's compensation should reflect the productivity of that unit / person as measured by independent indices within the organization and also by the customers/citizen users of these services. Some countries within and outside Africa are already making major changes to their compensation systems using this approach. Botswana, Zambia, Cape Verde and Lesotho have undertaken salary decompression schemes aimed at attracting and motivating top officials, Gambia, Lesotho, Zambia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe are paying 'scarcity' and 'retention' allowances to rare professionals while the new South African government is seeking to ensure that its civil service is both meritocratic and reflects the diversity of the total population. Several other countries in the region (Ghana, Mauritania, Kenya) are undertaking other reform measures to restore a meritocratic civil service system that is able to attract and retain the best. (Commonwealth Secretariat 1995, Manning 1995, Wescott 1996).

Closely linked to this is the need to have a policy on training and retraining for all public officials. This training policy should have four critical elements. First, it should articulate the case for mandatory training which should be tied to career development prospects. Second, a proportion (between 5- 20%) of personnel emoluments should be set aside for mandatory training and retraining. Thirdly, the policy should incorporate appropriate mechanisms for imparting work-related training within and outside the PAS. Finally, the training institutions themselves are to be autonomous so that they compete for their clientele and be self-sustaining rather than depend on annual subventions.

#### **D. Strengthen the Capacity of Decentralised Agencies.**

Decentralization often conjures images of the transfer of resources and/or responsibilities from the centre to the periphery but within the African context it also incorporates empowering local community organs into the framework of governance. Three forms of decentralised institutional systems deserve urgent attention in African countries at the present time.

a) Field Administration Agencies: Within the civil service for instance, field administration agencies are weak in terms of all the critical resources- personnel, finance, materials and discretionary authority. Yet, these are the institutions which make direct contact with the public. With respect to the distribution of personnel, it is not unusual to find most of the senior personnel concentrated in the headquarters in many African countries. One result of this are long delays in obtaining approvals for actions that are expected to be taken in the regions. Another result is the less than full utilization of officials who are concentrated in the center whereas their services are required in the regions. One study in particular has noted the congestion of officials at the

center existing side by side with the dearth of skilled personnel in several African countries (United Nations 1993).

Some countries- especially in all East African countries and Ghana in the West Africa region - undertook some deconcentration programmes designed to move substantial proportions of their civil service personnel to the regions but the level of success in these experiments have not been high- because of lack of sustained political commitment, the resistance from central government officials and the tendency to confuse deconcentration with devolution.

In contrast, in most developed countries of the world, majority of the civil servants actually work outside the capital cities in the regions and districts. The proportion for countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and France are as follows: 88 %; 80 % ; and 75% respectively. The figures for most African PAS, with but a few exceptions, reflect the exact opposite- yet a larger majority of Africans live in rural scattered communities which are even more difficult to reach from a central point (Smith 1967, 1985, Rowat 1990, Wunsch & Olowu 1990).

b) Horizontal Delegation within the Civil Service: Furthermore, some countries have already begun to experiment with horizontal restructuring which involves the creation of locally based organizational units, each of which is 'capable of providing a broad range of services', broad delegations of authorities to cost and profit centres which are required to achieve agreed goals within an agreed framework of accountability; and the contracting of assets and public services to private and non-governmental organizations. In all these cases what is required is the delegation of financial and personnel management to managers at lower levels who exercise their autonomy within the framework of broad guidelines from the center (Manning 1995:281-282). None of these ideas have yet been tried in Africa and they should be.

c) Local Governments or Devolved Agencies : This is the most important organizational challenge confronting many African countries. African countries have the least developed systems of local government - either in terms of the personnel capacity of the local governments or the level of expenditure decentralization. A 1982 survey of the human resource capacity of different government levels showed African local governments with a proportion of total public sector employment of only 6% whereas the figures for other regions were 21%, 37% and 57% for Latin America, Asia and OECD countries respectively (Heller & Tait 1982, Rowat 1990). A more recent survey of expenditure decentralization shows that African countries in the sample of countries had a ratio of only 7%, much below the figures for the sample of all developing countries (15%) and the industrialized nations of the world (35%) (United Nations Development Programme 1993: 69-73).

Yet, it is widely recognised that strengthening local governments will not only empower the citizens but also increase the level of government's overall effectiveness. Firstly, local governments tend to invest in small-scale projects which will have a higher multiplier effect because they are more likely to engage local contractors. Genuine decentralization to responsible local organs is noted to lead to better priority ratios and 'increased efficiency..as a result of lower costs, better maintenance, closer monitoring and supervision' (ibid, 7).

Besides, such investments- e.g. rural roads, rural water supply, basic health and education, - all help to address the problem of poverty either directly and indirectly and to contribute cumulatively over time to the build up of social and physical capital.

Secondly, the geographical and psychological proximity of these institutions to the citizens also make various forms of co-production possible between the producers of services and the citizens. It is much easier for the latter to provide resources by way of information, cash or labour contributions to services produced locally. Due to all of these reasons, these institutions have a considerable potential for contributing to poverty alleviation programmes. (Esman & Uphoff 1984, Ake 1990, Olowu & Smoke 1992, E. Ostrom 1996).

Thirdly, the involvement of local governments in the programmes of national economic development also reduces the potential for governmental corruption in one important sense- by placing these resources at levels where it is much easier for the citizen to demand accountable and responsive performance (Olowu 1992, Balogun 1993).

Fourthly, local governments can also mobilise community resources to build infrastructures which are critical for economic recovery and development. By raising financial resources from sources such as property taxes, progressive local income taxes or automobile taxes, local governments, especially in Africa's rapidly growing urban centres are capable of shifting the burden of financing infrastructures from the poor to the rich and well to do. Finally, local governments can also help in tackling the problems of environmental degradation through tree planting programmes, community health inspection etc. (World Bank 1989)

Unfortunately, however, formal local governments are usually incapacitated in performing the roles expected of them because they lack the critical resources - discretionary authority, personnel, finance and effective systems of accountability. In some cases, some of them have had to be dissolved for corruption and poor performance. Only recently has it become evident that these problems arise from a poor design of the institutions by the central authorities which created them and a political environment of authoritarianism and centralism. African local governments in virtually all African countries are enmeshed in a vicious circle of poor quality political and administrative personnel, low resource base, low performance, weak accountability, public apathy and the withdrawal of their responsibilities to other central government controlled agencies. (Adedeji 1973, Cochrane 1984, Smith 1985, Olowu 1988, Olowu & Smoke 1992, Balogun 1993).

The general failure of formal local governments, with but a few exceptions (Olowu & Soke 1992) contrasts with the relative success of the community based informal local governments. Several observers have suggested that these might be better candidates for building local government structures from below. (Esman & Uphoff 1984, Olowu et al 1991). Indeed, some countries in the region have led the way in creating new structures of local government which actually devolve substantial legal, financial and administrative responsibilities to locally elected bodies ( Botswana, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Ethiopia, South Africa and Cote D'ivoire) and other countries in the region can take a cue from them. In all

these countries, local governments have been constituted into effective self-governing organs.

There is in particular, the special case of Africa's growing urban centres. United Nations estimates indicate that African countries will be transformed from predominantly rural to urban population within the next quarter of a century. Yet, many of these cities do not have any effective systems of urban governance. They are forced to rely on government grants to finance their infrastructures. At a time when many central governments in the region are financially distressed, the result has been the collapse of infrastructures which are critical to economic and social development. But most of these cities have not developed revenue sources such as the property tax which could bring in much needed resources to finance and/or at least maintain their infrastructures as they do in other countries of the world (See Stren & White 1989; Bahl & Lin 1992, Bird 1995, Olowu 1996a).

African countries should therefore seek to enhance the capacity of their urban governance/finance systems where this has not been done. The potential for economic and social improvement is great not only to sustain infrastructures but also to address such social problems as mass unemployment, street children, gang and drug culture and care for the aged and youths.

#### E. Reaffirmation of the Critical Ethical Norms of the Public Service

Many African countries politicised the topmost layers of their civil services in the pre-democratic era. The most important justification for politicisation is that in a single-party (or no-party, military) state, the notions of objectivity, neutrality and anonymity seem to undermine the desire of the political executive for the absolute loyalty of senior officials to their political masters. As representatives of the people with an urgent and ambitious developmental mission, African political leaders thought they could not afford to have obstacles placed in their way by higher civil servants on the basis of commitment to norms of neutrality. Unfortunately, in many countries, the political executive pursued private rather than public agendas. What further complicated matters was the highly subjective nature of the cleavages among the politicians- usually along the lines of ethnicity and religion rather alternative methods of attaining socially desired goals. All of these led to ethical confusion among both political and administrative officials in terms of responsibility and further dampened morale among the permanent officials. However, now that most countries are returning to democratic governance systems, it is essential that these ethical principles be restored.

The most important of these principles is the notion of a politically neutral and professional civil service. While different countries in the region may have to adopt different approaches based on their history, culture and resource situations, there is need for a commitment to the idea of a professional civil service in all countries. African countries should, in addition, be guided by the critical functions expected of their higher civil servants and appropriate international experiences.

Higher civil servants are charged generally with three major types of responsibilities. First, they provide confidential advice to their political executives or ministers. Second, they manage departmental resources and account for the use of these resources. Finally, they programme the implementation of policies and in that position serve as the link between the political and administrative personnel.

The practice in most West European countries is to allocate the responsibility for policy making to politicians whereas public servants provide (confidential) advice and implement the policies. The detailed experiences of each country may vary but, in the main, political masters in all these countries accept the doctrine of ministerial responsibility- that is they take full responsibility for their respective departments or ministries, including the action of their civil servants, and answer all queries emanating from the parliament or the public. On the other hand, civil servants are expected to be objective, politically neutral and anonymous.

These norms are so fundamental that several institutional mechanisms are put in place to ensure that they are functional. One of these mechanisms is the requirement that public servants- especially senior public servants - be denied some aspects of their political rights other than voting at elections- in order to sustain the confidence of the public. The public servant is expected to put himself or herself in a disposition in which he/she can serve any political party that wins an election. He/she serves as a junior partner to the minister in the policy process. Another mechanism was that of career service. By virtue of long service, appointed officials have a stronger commitment to the institutions they serve rather than to particular political regimes. However, the idea of career service is giving way in many countries to contract service with greater emphasis on professionally relevant qualifications and performance on the job.

The other principles of objectivity and anonymity flow from the requirement that the public servant be politically neutral. The senior official is expected to objectively put forward arguments in favour of a particular policy as forcefully as possible -based on the facts of the case- in selecting among alternative choices. However, once the Minister has decided the appropriate policy choice, he/she is expected to implement this policy with as much enthusiasm and dedication as if it was the alternative he/she favoured but was rejected. For this reason, he/she does not take blame or praise for government policies. The political officials do. (Smith 1984, Adamolekun 1986).

In the main, there would seem to be three major possibilities for every African country in this regard. First, there may be a partially neutral civil service. Non-civil servants may be brought into civil service positions. These should, however, not be overwhelming and as much as possible such persons must possess qualifications that will enable them to perform their tasks of policy analysis and advocacy. This is a variant of the American practice. Secondly, some countries might wish to return to the system they inherited at independence whereby the civil service was wholly neutral politically and therefore was able to serve different teams of political power holders. At best, each party in power may appoint Special Advisers who will assist the political executive and provide independent information and advice as the case may be. Such advisers

will serve for short periods of time which are coterminous with the tenure of the political executives that appointed them.

The third variant which was practised in many African countries in the period from the mid-1960s to the late-1980 period, is the wholesale politicisation of the civil service. Members of the civil service were required to be card-carrying members of the ruling party. The problem is that this model is unworkable in a multi-party democracy in which there is a good chance of any of the parties in opposition assuming power through the elections. This is the model that, it is hoped, no African country will select. But more importantly, all the old laws and practices that went with this model have to be jettisoned as well- the requirement that civil servants join political parties or take directives from the ruling parties. These vestiges of the old order which are still manifest in many African countries must be identified and destroyed.

Certain political conditions are required to sustain the above-mentioned arrangements. They include the following. First, a political culture of government and opposition in which the opposition party(ies) has(ve) a good chance of competing and winning popular elections. Second, a political culture of restrained partisanship- on the side of the government and opposition to compete within the framework of the constitution. Third, adherence to a code of conduct which respects the concept of political neutrality of public servants and the idea that public servants are (junior) partners in the policy-making process. Finally, adherence to rule of law and the existence of institutions to enforce the law and codes of conduct for public officers- both administrative and political. African countries will need to pay particular attention to these requirements and seek all avenues to institutionalise these practices through training programmes and the enforcement of codes of conduct for public officers if the idea of multi-party democracy is to be sustained in the continent.

These codes should emphasise the sacredness of public trust, the expectations of the highest levels of rectitude from public officers, the requirement to disclose sources of wealth and underscore the neutrality of public officials.

#### **F. Renew Commitment to the Idea of A Professional Military Service and Reduce Resources Devoted To Defence.**

This is likely to be one of the toughest measures to adopt in any African country. Nevertheless, it is important that the subject be tackled. It is heartening in fact that countries such as Uganda, Ethiopia and South Africa are already bravely confronting the subject. There is a need to instill professionalism in Africa's military formations. The elements of military professionalism include the following: a) a high level of military professionalism and recognition by military officers of the limits of their professional competence; b) the effective subordination of the military to civilian political leaders who make the basic decisions on foreign and military policy; c) the recognition and acceptance by that leadership of an area of professional competence and autonomy for the military; d) as a result, the minimization of military in politics and of political intervention in the military. (Huntington 1995:9-10). To this end, therefore, several of the

recommendations made in respect of the public services apply to the military bureaucracy.

More importantly, there has to be a deliberate effort to demobilise a large proportion of the people in the military and replace them with military reserves drawn from the civilian population-under some form of military service for secondary school graduates. Building on the doctrine that every citizen should be a soldier and every soldier a citizen, these formations should be trained centrally but managed and deployed at the level of community or local governments. They should also have responsibility for community security. One implication of this is to reduce the strength of the standing army and therefore reduce the amount and level of resources devoted to maintaining a military which in many African countries has become part of the problem of security rather than a solution. This indeed could be Africa's own democratic dividend.

#### 4. Possible Roles for International Agencies and Actors

Agencies in the international institutional subsystem could assist this effort to humanise or democratise Africa's public sector bureaucracies in three critical but related areas: general support for the initiatives, and research and documentation on African public services. In view of the importance of external actors in African development, the support of international financial and development institutions as well as donor agencies for these initiatives will be critical. Moreover, given the serious dearth of comparative statistics on African governments and their public services- the manpower strength of their various units, their levels of decentralization, and practically no measures of efficiency, or sense of costs of services delivered and in what quantum research and documentation, the support for research and documentation on these matters - very much along the lines of the social and economic data currently being compiled by organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF. . It will not be easy to develop such a data base but it is definitely not a mission impossible.

To this end, a data bank on African public services and governance institutions should be established, drawing on the resources of international organizations that are active in Africa to generate a country by country information on African public services. Such information should be published on a two- , three- or even five-yearly basis. This idea has several merits- including helping Africans to know more about themselves, the governance systems or extent of institutional pluralism and different strategies that are being utilised to raise efficiency in the different agencies -at central and local government levels- in various countries in the region. This will also be a great boost to policy research and development on public service matters.

#### CONCLUSION

It is important to emphasise that these reforms make a case for a different approach to the organization of the public sector and of the relationship between state and society institutions and their subsystems. We have suggested that the logic of democratic governance make these imperative. More important than the reform agenda as spelt out here is the strategy for

bringing the reform on the policy agenda in African countries. While the national governments may take the initiative as part of their economic and political reforms as the Ugandan case mentioned below demonstrates, there might be the need for civil society actors- including professional and pressure groups to lobby for these reform agenda if the democratization processes are to be sustained and consolidated in Africa. Each country will also have to prioritise the relative importance of these reform items, based on its own peculiar characteristics.

In order to demonstrate that the agenda is not an impossible one we close with a brief review of the Ugandan public sector reforms of the 1990s which represent the genre of reforms articulated in this paper. Uganda's recent past history together with the determination of the political leadership and inputs from donor and international financial agencies have been the crucial considerations. Its civil service reform programme had six components: Rationalization of Ministries and Districts; Strengthening of the Capability of the Ministry of Public Service to Manage and Champion the Reform; Monetization of Benefits; Job Grading; Code of Conduct and Discipline; and Information Program and Communication Strategy for the Reform. Table 3 gives a sense of the vision of the new Ugandan civil service adopted by the government of Uganda.

In order to ensure that civil service reform succeeded, it was recognised that actions in the wider public serves were also required. To this end, five other distinct initiatives were embarked upon which included: a) constitutional reform- to democratize the national political system; b) economic reform, including the rationalization of the public services and the adoption of a minimum living wage; d) decentralization - designed to increase the powers of democratically elected local authorities; liberalization and privatization-to reduce state control of the economy; and an e) army demobilization program. (See Langseth 1995). Recent evaluations of this initiative have generally been positive and demonstrates that Africa's state institution are reformable.

The Ugandan case is unfortunately relatively recent, dating only from 1991. Yet it points in the direction that the reform programme counselled in this is not unattainable and that they represent efforts in the direction of building a variety of institutions which are critical to the consolidation of polycentric structures of governance.



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