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SPECIAL ISSUE on the African Public Service and the Challenges of the 21st Century: Part Two

African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM)

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REDYNAMIZING THE CIVIL SERVICE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: PROSPECTS FOR A NON-BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURE

M Jide Balogun and Gelase Mutahaba

Introduction

The classical bureaucracy is, for better or for worse, a major instrumentality for achieving socio-economic ends. In view of its pervading influence, there is a tendency to pay a lot of attention to how it performs, and to the consequences of inaction. Interest in the subject is likely to continue. The focus of analysis is likely to be on the interaction between the bureaucracy and the society in which it operates. The question that needs to be answered is whether the bureaucracy is an independent variable - that is, one that influences, but remains immune to the influence of, the social environment.

This paper represents a departure from the generally deterministic view of the classic bureaucratic theory. It joins an emerging but growing school of thought that traces the impact of entrepreneurial behaviour on the performance of bureaucratic organizations. The paper's underlying thesis is that while change and uncertainty in the external environment dictate the need for the deployment of entrepreneurial skills within organizations, the conditions prevailing at any point in time within each organization may impede the risk-taking and innovative thrusts needed to steer an enterprise away from trouble to prosperity. The question then is how to identify those institutional arrangements which liberate the entrepreneurial energies in an otherwise lethargic, change-resisting, rule-bound, goal-displacing and failure-bound bureaucracy.

The paper begins with a conceptual framework. It then proceeds (with illustrative case studies) to look at the workings of the bureaucratic model in the African public service. In the third section, the paper surveys possibilities for the reconstruction of the public service bureaucracy into creative, information-based, and productive entrepreneurial agents. The fourth and concluding section looks into the future.

I. Paradigms of Bureaucratic Behaviour

Definition of Terms

That the bureaucracy plays a dominant, even if not always development-oriented, role in the life of human beings is beyond doubt. It has facilitated the development of science and technology in some societies while sustaining genocidal and despotic actions in others. The classic model of bureaucracy would certainly claim substantial credit for the welfare gains recorded in the developed economies of western Europe and north America in the 20th century, while the same model or a variant could be implicated in the production and deployment of weapons of mass destruction.

The bureaucracy is therefore a different animal to different people. Yet, if we are to have a fair and accurate picture of its role in development and identify conditions making for its success or failure at any particular time and place, we have to remove semantic obstacles to understanding and define the key terms.

Germane to our present concern are, at least, four concepts, i.e., bureaucracy, entrepreneurship, buccaneering, and corruption or misdirection of authority. Each of these concepts in its different sense reflects current concerns about the workings of the civil service and the directions future reform efforts should follow.

Bureau and Bureaucracy

In its generic sense, a bureaucracy is "government by un-elected, career officials." The term was popularized by Max Weber who associated it with the exercise of "legal-rational", as different from "traditional" or "charismatic" authority. The legal-rational order is preferred by Weber for the simple reason that it proves more "rational" and more "efficient" than any other system of administration - traditional and charismatic included.

As presented by Weber, a "bureau" or bureaucracy organized along "legal-rational" lines has the following attributes, among others:

a) **Rationality**: actions are directed towards the solution of specific problems and the attainment of pre-determined objectives. What is rational is, therefore, relative to the objective in view.

b) **Politics-administration dichotomy**: in an ideal bureaucracy, the politicians determine **what** is to be done, while the career officials concern themselves about **how** to achieve the objectives.

c) **Legality**: since the actions taken within a bureaucracy are goal-directed rather than spontaneous, there can be no room for arbitrary conduct. Bureaucratic actions are thus guided by enabling laws, administrative rules and regulations.

d) **Continuity**: The legal instrument establishing a bureau frequently confers on the bureau the status of "a body perpetual with an eternal seal".

e) **Specialization**: The bureaucracy's pre-occupation with the accomplishment of specific objectives is behind the emphasis most frequently placed on the qualifications and expertise possessed by prospective employees. The merit system is at once a reaction to the negative effects of patronage or nepotism, and a feature distinguishing a bureaucracy from primordial systems.

f) **Hierarchical conformation**: holding the bureaucracy together and ensuring conformity with its legal-rational edicts is an rganizational device termed "hierarchy" - a mechanism for keeping each job under the control and supervision of a higher one.

g) **Accountability**: as a further attempt at promoting unity of purpose and direction and maintaining discipline, a bureau establishes mechanisms for holding individuals accountable for the authority conferred on his/her office.

h) **Specified sphere of competence**: in a classic bureaucratic order, jobs are not only expected to make specialized contributions to the attainment of corporate objectives, but are subject to the "ultra-vires" principle. For instance, a police constable cannot arrest a street trader for non-payment of customs duties as that task belongs within the customs inspectors' "sphere of competence."

i) **Precedents and record-keeping**: if a bureau is to operate in a legal-rational and, therefore, predictable way, it needs a memory - an institutional memory. This it provides for by maintaining an elaborate record-keeping system.

Taken together, the preceding attributes project a bureaucracy as a value-neutral, tight-knit, mechanistic, and predictable institution established to accomplish pre-determined objectives. Does it then mean that the bureaucracy, as a programmed and "fully automated" system, is also self-propelling, self-regulating, and self-correcting? A response to this question is deferred to a latter part of this paper.

Entrepreneurship

Regardless of whether or not homeostatic features are built into the classical bureaucratic model, it is clear that its performance as an entrepreneurial agent has to-date been far from impressive.

The characteristics of a private business "entrepreneur" are fairly well-known. Cantillon depicts the entrepreneur as one driven by a desire for profit and comfortable in the risk of buying cheap and selling dear (Boyett, 1996:36). Jean-Bapstise Say (1827) regards as entrepreneurs individuals who seek opportunities for profit maximization in a period of change and uncertainty.

If entrepreneurship depends on one owning or establishing a business, the public sector (which is not "owned" by any specific individual) will present no opportunities for entrepreneurial interventions. In any case, unlike Cantillon and Say, Schumpeter does not regard ownership of an enterprise as a precondition for entrepreneurial behaviour. According to him (Schumpeter, 1950), the critical element in entrepreneurship is the innovative drive which is reflected in the constant recombination of resources and the adjustment of organization and production structures to maximize market opportunities. This notion of entrepreneurship is slightly modified by Hirschman (1958) who equates it with the search for, and productive allocation of, resources.

A definition which appears directly relevant to the public sector is that offered by Israel Kirzner (1985) and the Austrian school of economics - i.e., the *discovery* of market opportunities by *alert* individuals and the creation of possibilities for the accumulation of profits.

The word "profit" is used rather loosely to encompass the benefits accruing to *political* entrepreneurs whose perceptive judgement, as well as innovative and timely actions produce the intended results in the form of election victories, high approval ratings, and acknowledged solutions to some burning socio-economic problems (Frohlich and Oppenheimer, 1990; Kingdom, 1984; and Balogun, 1996); and Schneider, *et al*, 1995).

The political arena thus serves as the "market" that entrepreneurial leaders seek to capture. Once this market responds favourably to their "sales promotion" efforts, entrepreneurial leaders put together entrepreneurial governments which, according to Osborne and Gaebler (1992:19-20) operate along business lines.

Like their private sector counterparts, public entrepreneurs take risks (political, emotional, and financial), and they assemble teams of managers to implement their innovative ideas and maximize their gains. Unlike the orthodox bureaucrat who cherishes anonymity, the public entrepreneur has a name that can be recalled, a face that can be identified, and a telephone number that can be dialed by "customers" (Dwivedi, 1993:53).

In Weber's analysis (Weber, 1930:281) charisma is that quality of leadership which appeals to non-rational motives. It is precisely because of its "irrational" tendency that he excluded it from his legal-rational model. Yet, the new concern with entrepreneurship in the public sector is beginning to highlight the relevance of charisma not only to politics, but to the implementation of innovative policies (Schneider, et al, 1995). In fact, Kouzmin and Cutting go as far as to argue that the three rationalities identified by Weber (traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational) are, in various combinations, critical to the success of innovative policies and essential to the maintenance of organization equilibrium in a period of rapid change (Kouzmin and Cutting, 1997:2-4).

While charisma is important to our understanding of public sector entrepreneurship, it should be noted that the reference in this analysis is not to that type of charisma often associated with arbitrary behaviour. If the "profits" accruing from public sector entrepreneurial behaviour are to be maximized, it is necessary to tamper the "irrational" impulses of charisma with information - particularly, information on markets and market opportunities, competitors' plans/strategies, internal production strengths and weaknesses, and the potential for management and technological innovation. Indeed, the failure of the classical bureaucratic organizations to "discover" opportunities for entrepreneurial profit and to allocate resources accordingly emanates from the contempt with which these organizations treat data and information.

Buccaneering

We have thus far concentrated on what "entrepreneurship" is. Perhaps a better understanding will be provided by what it is not. Buccaneering is, for instance, a pattern of behaviour which shares with entrepreneurship the desire for "profit maximization", but which, unlike the latter, inverts the means-ends relationship in the process (of maximizing profits). Under the pretext of spearheading change, the buccaneer twists the rule, manipulates established procedures, bends institutions to his/her will, but at the end of the day, falls terribly short on impact and overall value-added.

Buccaneering, or what Barbara Darling (1997:1) terms "entrepreneurial autocracy", indeed parts ways with genuine entrepreneurship at the **value-added** point. While the latter translates market opportunities into a search for perfection and productivity gains, the former is content to corner the market and pocket the profits. Thus, the buccaneer-official ensures that he/she is fully informed about the location of power in an otherwise fuzzy organizational setting. He/she conforms to the stereotype of the ultimate cynic who hankers after authority and, on attaining it, thinks that he/she is now licensed to act "unrestrained by concerns with the rights of others, constitutional checks and balances, or even prudence" (Harrison, 1992:13).

How long the buccaneer-official remains successful depends on whether the organization environment continues to value his/her **"bureau-political"** skills over genuine **professional contributions.**

Thus, in addition to the legal-rational "law enforcers", and the entrepreneurial, risk-taking officials, the bureaucracy frequently harbours the buccaneering type. Signs of buccaneering activities within formal organizations are difficult to trace, but some of the leads worth following up are:

(i) Widening gaps between statutory enactments and substantive administrative action (constant deviation from rules and regulations);

(ii) Emphasis on form at the expense of substance, and on symbols at the expense of corporate impact;

(iii) Excessive legalism (a vast array of rules and counter-rules, supplemented with unpredictable interpretation, and unfair/ inconsistent application);

(iv) Substitution of impressive but meaningless job descriptions for clear performance standards;

(v) Lack of objective performance evaluation instruments;

(vi) Tendency to disconnect performance from rewards, and crime from punishment;

(vii) Prevailing belief that career progression depends on god-father connections" and sponsorship;

(viii) Increasing conflict over promotion and placement decisions and decreasing interest in productivity;

(ix) Frequent overloading of formal and informal grievance systems;

(x) Increasing tendency on the part of organization members to give every decision (technical and administrative decisions included) a political" interpretation; and

(xi) Increasing tendency towards factionalism.

Corruption or misdirection of authority

Buccaneering, like other forms of ethical violations, inevitably results in the distortion of internal rules and procedures. It can even be described as a localized form of corruption - one that takes place **within** the organization, as against other forms involving the external clients of the organization.

The subject of corruption or rent-seeking has received enough attention lately to warrant any further detailed analysis. As a pattern of behaviour with unique "entrepreneurial" and buccaneering attributes, its relevance to this paper lies in highlighting another bureaucratic "ideal-type". The corrupt official is one who, with his/her own set of rules, operates entirely outside the "legal-rational" system. To the corrupt official, the job is another source of private income or prebend - one which opens up opportunities to utilize public resources for private gain (Darling, 1997; Joseph, 1995; Balogun, 1997; Ibrahim, 1997; Coolidge and Rose-Ackerman, 1997).

Bureaucracy and Development: Working Hypotheses

With all these characters (legal-rational, entrepreneurial, buccaneering, and corrupt officials) jostling for positions and/or influence within the bureaucracy, what are the chances that it (the bureaucracy) will acquit itself creditably as an agent of development? There are at least two ways of viewing the developmental role of the bureaucracy. First, it may be assumed that the legal-rational momentum of the classic bureaucracy is strong enough to overcome the dysfunctional effects and thus propel the bureaucratizing systems to growth and development. Second, the classic bureaucracy may be seen as containing the seed of its own destruction - that, by its very nature, the Weberian bureaucracy is incapable of pioneering change or bringing about substantial development. The succeeding paragraphs set out to test the two conflicting hypotheses.

A number of observers besides Max Weber, have detected a positive correlation between the level of industrialization and the pace of bureaucratization (Mouzelis,1969; Blau, 1955, and Lerner, 1958). Indeed, an explanation for the low rates of industrialization growth in the former eastern Europe was the failure of the communist regimes to promote the development of autonomous, purposive, non-political, and merit-based bureaucratic organizations (Beck, 1969). In contrast, the development of the economies of western Europe and north America proceeded simultaneously with the establishment of career, legal-rational public services.

This unilinear view of the role of bureaucracy has, however, come under attack. In place of an institution constantly waxing strong and adding value, some observers (Downs, 1967; Gortner, 1977, and Caiden, 1994) see a creature passing through stages of evolution, notably, those of:

a) Genesis/birth;
b) Growth;

c) Maturity; and
d) Death.

Caiden's J-Curve theory depicts bureaucratization as beginning with "a burst of energy". The acceleration of productivity continues during the growth stage. However, by the time the bureaucracy reaches maturity, age will begin to tell on its performance. At this bureaupathological stage, the originally positive attributes (rationality, legality, hierarchy, specialization etc.) will become inverted with serious consequences for productivity. For example, hierarchy will not stop at holding the organization together but will, with age, begin to stifle creativity and individual initiative. Rules will also start to take a life of their own as they are mechanically enforced by officials who have no clue as to the circumstances under which the rules were enacted in the first place and the purpose they were meant to serve!

Even the "merit system" will not be spared by the aging process. Besides the possibility of specialization turning incumbents of positions into alienated robots, the pattern of recruitment will also reflect the *status-quo* bias of those doing the recruiting. Caiden's (1994) observation is apt:

The career system is a closed system....(Those recruited into it) know no other organization. They gain no other experience....All who enter are socialized to conformity. Those who decide on promotion look for people much like them. The whole system is self-perpetuating. Its quality depends on whom it first attracts and whom it manages to retain."

The stage of maturity is precisely that at which the bureaucracy ought to give serious consideration to how to "re-invent" itself. Yet, the longer the legal-rational order survives, the more the officials are deluded into thinking that the "system is working". Indeed, instead of adapting to change, the mature bureaucracy would tend to hedge its bets on the necessity for a further "hardening" of rules, systems and procedures.

For many bureaucracies, the failure to pick internal and external danger signals can prove fatal. After all, organizations, or units within them, do die. The three possible "causes of bureaucratic death" identified by Gortner (1977) are:

(i) The original functions have declined in importance, but instead of coming up with *new* and *acceptable* initiatives, the bureaucracy keeps recycling old programs and pumping resources into them;

(ii) The old functions remain important but the organization has proved clearly incapable of performing them well;

(iii) The functions remain important but some other organization has proved more effective in carrying them out.

The lack of homeostatic features in the classic bureaucratic model impedes the developmental capability of the bureaucracy and points to the need for an entrepreneurial leadership class to fill the void. Yet, it has been argued that leadership, as a concept, is inadequate in explaining the behaviour of social systems. Allen (1995) is of the view that the role of leadership can be understood only when examined "within the appropriate historical sequence". Adedeji (1992) observes that leadership may be a "captive" of the environment. Wilson (1989:227) argues that:

> *"It is not easy to build a useful social science theory out of 'chance appearances (like leadership personalities)".*

The skepticism surrounding the developmental role of leadership has a definitional origin. As pointed out by Balogun (1997:238) leadership can be perceived either as a structure of power and influence, or as a role of deciding where to go and how to get there.

When viewed as a strategic role, leadership ceases to come across as a "chance occurrence", and emerges as a concept with limitless analytic possibilities (Balogun, 1997; Haldenius, 1992; and Lijphart, 1977). One analytical question worth pursuing is that of the institutional setting that is most conducive to entrepreneurial leadership and "opportunity discovery", as against the settings that enable other patterns of bureaucratic behaviour (e.g. legalistic, buccaneering, and corrupt patterns of behaviour) to flourish.

It has, for instance, been argued that when the hierarchical orientation of the classic bureaucracy is combined with the generally static and conformist values of the traditional society, entrepreneurial leadership will tend to find itself greatly handicapped. This is another way of saying the developmental role of both the bureaucracy and of its entrepreneurial leadership class is a function of the prevailing environmental conditions.

There is, however, no conclusive empirical evidence in support of this fatalistic view. One lesson brought out in the next section is that while some public service bureaucracies in Africa have succumbed to environmental influences, others have responded positively to leadership and entrepreneurial initiatives. In any case, systems which give up on the need for, and possibilities of, change are doomed to extinction. Besides, the economies which are most likely to prosper in the next century will be those in which "informed", information-led, and quickly adapting organizations take and implement the critical allocative decisions.

II. The bureaucracy in African public services: a survey of experiences

In external appearance, if not always in substance, the African public service is bureaucratic. Whether the reference is to the civil service, or to public enterprises, local government units, institutes of higher learning and research agencies, the formal attributes of the bureaucracy are discernible - legality, departmentation by purpose, hierarchy, specialization (grouping of activities into specialized compartments and recruitment based on academic/professional qualifications), accountability, specified sphere of competence, continuity, record-keeping and precedents, etc.

However, to say that the bureaucracy is the organizational model adopted in the African public service is not to say that the bureaucratization experiences of the public services are uniform. In fact, a notable feature of the administrative experience of African countries is the difference in the **stages** reached in developing and operating legal-rational bureaucratic systems. While some countries' public service bureaucracies have traversed the four evolutionary stages mentioned earlier (birth, growth, maturity, and death), others are still grappling with the basic rudiments of organization. Yet many others have jumped the stages of growth and maturity and have been pushed (by their own lapses and structural adjustment) to "sudden death". A number of public services are at the same time undergoing fundamental reform. Starting with administrative systems at the earliest stages of "evolution", we examine in the accompanying paragraphs the divergent experiences in the organization of the public service.

Bureaucracies at the traditional stage

One thing is clear, chronological age appears to be irrelevant to the evolution of public bureaucracies in Africa. In fact, if we go by their "dates of birth", only two bureaucracies will qualify as "elders" (Ethiopia and Liberia), and the "toddlers" will include Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa. Yet, in terms of structural complexity and the goal-attainment capacity of institutions, the "elder bureaucracies" of Ethiopia and Liberia are at the primeval stage, and are way behind the newly emerging bureaucracies of Botswana, South Africa and Namibia (Incidentally, the Liberian bureaucracy is just beginning to pick up the pieces after being sent adrift by years of civil war).

With specific reference to Ethiopia, Asmeron (1993:2-5) advances the thesis that the origin of a bureaucracy and the purpose it was required to serve at the time of birth are crucial in determining the evolution of the bureaucracy over a period. According to Asmeron, the Ethiopian public service began as an extension of the Imperial household. It soon developed into a patrimonial system.

Emperor Menelik - a modernist by imperial standards - laid the foundation of the centralized and patrimonial bureaucracy. He appointed his relatives, trusted courtiers and powerful generals to key offices. Complete loyalty to the Emperor was a major condition for survival in the imperial court and for progress within the bureaucracy.

Although the 1974 revolution got rid of the monarchy, the succeeding socialist regime inherited and probably reinforced the patrimonial bureaucratic system. Deference to authority, hierarchy, and inflexible application of bureaucratic rules conspired against innovative impulses in the bureaucracy, and curtailed the tall industrialization ambitions of the then revolutionary government. Routine administrative decisions continued to be based on personalities rather than on precedence and/or systematic guidelines. Buccaneering and corrupt activities appeared to be alien to the bureaucracy, but so was entrepreneurial behaviour. Caution, meticulous observance of rules, and pre-occupation with survival were among the recipes of success mastered by the average civil servant in Mengistu's Ethiopia.

When the Marxist-oriented Derg regime was itself replaced in 1991 by the EPDRF (Ethiopian Peoples Democratic Revolutionary Front), the issue of how to re-orient the bureaucracy in the direction of change featured prominently on the new Administration' agenda. The government's concern was understandable. It had wide-ranging plans for the modernization of the socio-political and economic institutions, but the bureaucracy which it had to rely on was still years behind in human and institutional capacity as well as in operational procedures. Getting an import cleared through customs often required scaling many obstacle courses, collecting multiple signatures at different layers of authority, and waiting for interminable periods for the final approval.

In November 1994, the Government invited the UN Economic Commission for Africa to collaborate in the design and implementation of various schemes of administrative reform. One of the projects focussed on the rationalization of the procedure adopted in delivering services to clients. According to the project synopsis, the situation to be rectified was one in which requests from members of the public remained unattended by civil servants unless and until the applicants appeared in person at the scene of administrative action. The cumbersome procedures adopted in processing the various categories of applications also needed to be critically reviewed.

The agencies requiring members of the public to appear in person to follow up their requests/applications (or to wait until long and complicated processes were exhausted) include those responsible for:

a) **product/service-delivery**: emergency relief, water pipe connections and maintenance, electricity connections and reconnections, telephone cable repairs and maintenance, maintenance of government-owned housing units, etc.);

b) **regulatory and related activities**: vehicle licensing, issuance and renewal of driving license, passport issuance/control, business registration, immigration and exit clearance formalities, etc.);

c) **revenue/bills collection**: (merchandise valuation and customs clearance, settlement of electricity, water, and telephone bills, payment of rent on government housing units).

The project's strategic objective was to evolve a new system of public administration which would place higher premium on the quantity, quality, and promptness of service than on informal relationships and face-to-face contact (See box 1).

Box 1: Objectives of procedure rationalization project

Project aims at changing decision system	
From one that is...	**To one that is...**
* Illogical,(unpredictable)	– logical, predictable
* based on personal whims of decision-maker	– self-regulating
* dependent on human interventions/kick-starts	– automated
* prone to individual	– regulating/reforming distortions
* closed to external scrutiny	– accountable to clients/auditors
* shrouded in secrecy	– transparent
* open to arbitrary interpretation	– predictable, consistent
* unchanging/inflexible	– responsive/dynamic
* self-justifying	– open to external criticism

The procedure rationalization project was one of many embarked upon as part of the effort to bring the public service to the level desired by the Government. It was to be undertaken simultaneously with other reform measures, notably, the restructuring of central government institutions, privatization of state enterprises (together with the management of the retrenchment "fall-out"), the establishment and strengthening of regional administrations, financial management reform, design and installation of new service delivery systems, establishment of mechanisms for the enhancement of ethics and accountability at all levels, and the design of a comprehensive training program (Beyene, 1997).

The priority nonetheless lies in the Redynamizing the bureaucracy to support the government's liberalization program. The success of the reform hinges, among other things, on the extent to which:

(i) on-going governance reform measures succeed in empowering the citizen sufficiently to begin to demand and exercise his/her right to quality service from public institutions;

(ii) institutional mechanisms coupling the exercise of authority with individual responsibility are installed and operated;

(iii) individual employees are "empowered" to render quality service to members of the public (this entails substantial delegation of authority and a departure from the predominantly hierarchical and centralized system currently in place);

(iv) the notion of administration as a *cooperative* action is institutionalized (it was not uncommon, particularly, under the Derg regime, for subordinates to challenge their superiors' interpretation of bureaucratic rules, or to interpose ideological variables which managers would rather leave out of administrative and technical decisions);

(v) the idea that no system is perfect is accepted, and that the logic, sequence, and cost-effectiveness of motions need to be constantly reviewed and improved;

(vi) a system is developed enabling information to be quickly retrieved, processed, and transmitted to decision points and service counters;

(vii) a fault-reporting and client evaluation procedure is introduced across-the-board;

(viii) the quality of supervision is improved through formal and informal on-the-job training; and

(ix) the public service is seen as an institution encouraging "opportunity discovery", creativity, and innovativeness.

We have so far concentrated on one type of bureaucracy operating in Africa. The succeeding paragraphs examines the experience of another category of public service bureaucracies.

Bureaucracy in rapid transition

One fatal error that bureaucratic organizations tend to commit is to begin to feel secure **before** attaining what Downs terms the "initial survival threshold" - i.e., the stage at which it has grown large enough, and developed sufficiently routinized, and if one may add, mutually acceptable, relations with clients and resource providers. As noted by Downs (1967:9),

> "Whatever its origin, a fledgling bureau is most vulnerable to annihilation by its enemies immediately before it attains its initial survival threshold."

The bureaucracies in rapid transition belong under the heading of "fledgling". They are mostly stubborn, self-satisfied, rule-bound entities. As institutions with colonial roots, they have warded off efforts at tailoring their processes to post-independence requirements and transforming them into agents of socio-economic development.

Their mistake most frequently lay in their ambition which exceeded their human and institutional capacity. Although they expanded rapidly (in terms of the number of institutions, the size of their work-force, the level of public expenditure, and the tasks the agencies set out to perform), and despite the outward appearance of "routinized" relations with their environments (as reflected in the elaborate set of rules and procedures governing the performance of bureaucratic tasks), these organizations had barely started to crawl before deeming themselves capable of flying. In other words, they ignored Caiden's warning (Caiden, 1994:30-31) that:

> "...if the bureaucratization process is carried too far, if it is **hastily** pursued, and if it is **misapplied**, then the virtues (of the legal-rational model) turn into vices."

Unlike the Ethiopian public service with traditional, monarchic roots, the majority of the public administration systems in sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Cameroon, Gabon) were inherited by modern political and administrative elite from the former colonial regimes. While the nomenclature adopted in describing organization units differed from one country to another, and after making allowance for the differences between Anglo-phone and Franco-phone countries, it is still possible to recognize the basic features of the classical bureaucratic model in the structure of the public services established on the attainment of independence. Ministries and departments were organized functionally (by broad areas of activity), and hierarchically (by classes and/or grades). Red-tapism waxed strong - driven by a complex set of rules and procedures. Heaps of documents were kept in archives. Professionalism co-existed with ethnic calculus and political considerations as criteria for recruitment into the public service. As "permanent" legal entities, the public services conferred "security of tenure" on career employees. In a number of cases, the status and role of the bureaucracy were minutely described in enabling laws or "entrenched" in constitutions.

In the early years of independence, the public service was almost invariably looked upon by policy makers as the basic instrument of modernization. Hence the huge amount of resources invested in the expansion of public service institutions, staffing, and staff training (Mutahaba *et al*, 1993; Lindauer, et al, 1986; UNDTCD/DAD, 1991). However, conflict soon arose between the political heads of department and the senior cadres of the career public service. The former tended to distrust the "politically neutral" advice offered by the latter, and the career officials, in turn, frequently mounted a rear guard action to "insulate" administration from politics. In a number of countries (particularly those with "one-party" constitutions) the politicians held sway as laws were enacted systematically bringing the career service under direct political influence and control.

Where the bureaucracy was able to stave off systematic politicization, elements within it engaged in activities which were inconsistent with the "legal-rational" intentions of Max Weber. New institutions were established and additional posts created with little regard for productivity, but with dire fiscal, and subsequently, macro-economic, consequences. Rules were deliberately elongated and "hardened" to widen "opportunities" for buccaneering and ethical violations. "Modern" budgeting and personnel techniques were installed with little impact on service delivery. Ambitious development plans were released but the bureaucracy lacked either the motivation or the capacity and resources to implement them.

A few case examples will show how the public service bureaucracy passed up opportunities to join intelligence-based organizations' march to progress. An agency responsible for the propagation of innovative management techniques is itself organized and run along pure bureaucratic lines. The agency's experts operate within a tight hierarchical structure, and are subject to the constraints imposed by civil service rules and procedure. The agency's records and archives services are still at the pre-independence stage with no immediate plans for computerization.

A ministry responsible for trade development in country X maintains a highly centralized trade registration system requiring those intending to establish business enterprises to complete a series of forms (supported with "tax clearance certificates") and to travel long distances to submit their applications and to answer "routine" questions. The complex procedure has opened up "opportunities" for process expediters not only in the trade ministry but also in the tax-clearance issuing offices. A few officials of the trade ministry believe that their jobs could be made more interesting if the ministry was plugged in to the global trade information network. As at the time of writing, there appeared to be no plans to supplement the basic (and grossly inefficient postal and telephone services with fax and e-mail connections or internet access. Trade-related papers continued to be shuffled around desks while global opportunities were passing the country by.

The mission statement of another ministry in country Y requires it to "promote the development of science and technology". It was on this basis that a parastatal body approached the ministry officials for information on where to find organizations or individuals that could be contracted to produce and supply communications devices conforming to certain specifications. Prompt came the reply from the science and technology ministry: communications technology was still at a "rudimentary" stage in the country. Perhaps the parastatal would like to contact the ministry of planning with a view to exploring external technical assistance sources. It later turned out that within local universities and institutes of technology were researchers who were working on exactly the same project which was of interest to the parastatal but who were handicapped by lack of finance. Apparently the information system in the ministry of technology was still years behind developments in "information technology" and in the local science and technology community.

Civil service reform and bureaucratization

To be sure, efforts have been made to revitalize the slow-moving bureaucracies. In a number of countries, high-powered administrative reform commissions were inaugurated partly to refocus civil servants' loyalty (Wamalwa and Balogun, 1992), and partly to halt the precipitate decline of the inherited administrative systems (Adedeji, 1972). Examples of the public service review commissions established in the late 1960s and the early 70s are those headed by Ndegwa and Waruhiu (Kenya), Mills-Odoi (Ghana), Udoji (Nigeria), and Wamalwa (Swaziland).

An assessment of the impact of the review bodies reveals that whatever fundamental change might have ensued from their recommendations was in fact "nullified by political indifference and by bureaucratic chess moves" (Wamalwa and Balogun, 1992). Civil servants hastily implemented measures relating to salary increases, but parried those with far-reaching implications for ethics, accountability, and service delivery. The politicians for their own part could not see the political relevance or "pay-off" of administrative reform. Terms such as "cost-consciousness", "productivity", and "delegation" and "decentralization" might read well in the reports of reform commissions, but they do not address the direct and immediate concern of rulers - how to capture and retain power!

In any case, what the administrative reform commissions failed to accomplish in a "civil" manner the structural adjustment programs (SAPs) shoved down the throat of the public service. Taking a cue from Riggs's "prismatic" theory (Riggs, 1964), SAPs proceeded to clip the wings of the powerful and over-grown but largely unproductive bureaucracies, and sought to empower the hitherto neglected socio-economic institutions, notably, the formal and the informal private sector, and non-governmental organizations. The specific measures taken in pursuit of this de-bureaucratization and balancing objective include: reduction in the size (if not always in the cost) of government, privatization of state-owned enterprises, gradual dismantling or virtual elimination of price controls and price subsidies, devaluation of currency, and trade liberalization.

Opportunity-discovering bureaucracies

Containing the fall-outs from SAPs and spearheading change has been a major pre-occupation of the public services in recent years. Indeed, the magnitude of the problems which came in the wake of the cost-cutting measures (retrenchment and redundancy, morale and motivation, productivity, customer-service and other related problems) introduced a sense of urgency into civil service reform and made the otherwise conservative institution receptive to change.

Not content with leaving their fate in the hands of external policy advisers, a number of civil services are beginning to respond positively to internal leadership and entrepreneurial initiatives. Apart from Ethiopia whose experience has been discussed above, the countries in which far-reaching bureaucratic reforms are currently being implemented include Ghana, Uganda, and Tanzania.

Ghana's effort at Redynamizing the bureaucracy was an off-shoot of the Government's strategic thrusts (Dodoo, 1996). On the inauguration of Ghana Vision 2020, a civil service reform program was designed comprising the following elements:

- resuscitation and/or adaptation of the basic ethos of professionalism, loyalty, dedication, accountability, and transparency);
- restructuring and streamlining of central government agencies (to ensure that they are very well-focussed, customer-oriented, as well as cost- and time-conscious);
- review of personnel policy and practices (with emphasis on introduction of new performance appraisal systems, up-dating of personnel rules and administrative instructions, and launching of an integrated Payroll and Personnel Database project);
- rationalization of pay and grading structures, and the introduction of performance- and productivity-related pay;
- labour redeployment and redundancy management;

- improvement of records and information management systems.

The centre-piece of Uganda's reform program is the establishment of institutional arrangements fostering a positive customer-orientation in service delivery agencies (Kyarimpa, 1996). In pursuance of this objective, substantial powers were delegated and resources were transferred to lower-level institutions. Human and institutional capacity building projects were also launched to inculcate client-oriented attitudes in service-delivery agencies and their staff. Above all, watch-dog institutions were established to handle public grievances against bureaucratic abuses or ineptitude.

In Tanzania, the Government set up a Civil Service Reform Committee (with a full-time secretariat) to coordinate measures such as:

- organization and efficiency reviews
- personnel control and management
- pay reform (and the introduction of performance-related pay)
- redeployment of retrenched personnel and redundancy management
- decentralization (Ntukamazina, 1996).

In addition, the Tanzanian Government established a Presidential Commission of Inquiry (the Warioba Commission of Inquiry Against Corruption, 1997) which brought out cases of bribery and abuse of office in agencies responsible for education, health, trade, employment, lands, energy and minerals, as well as works and communications. The Commission identified two types of corrupt public official - those "who receive bribes as a means of supplementing their meagre incomes...", and "high-level officials and public servants whose involvement in corrupt practices (is as a) result of excessive greed for the accumulation of wealth."

Bureaucratic Best Practices

After all that has been said about the African public services, reference to bureaucratic "best practices" will undoubtedly sound hollow. Yet, the civil services mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, possessed at one time or the other, some redeeming features. The Uganda civil service, for instance, was at independence a paragon of efficiency, probity and dedication - that was before it succumbed to the negative influence of despotic rule and institution decay. When political instability degenerated into a full-scale civil war in Nigeria, it was the bureaucracy that stepped in to provide the much-needed continuity. After the civil war, an entrepreneurial class within the same bureaucracy supervised the implementation of the reconstruction, rehabilitation, and development programs initiated by the Gowon regime. With the knowledge of hind-sight, one may now conclude that it was their innovativeness, their growing influence, and their constant departure from the bureaucratic norms of "anonymity" which drew public attention to them and made them objects of envy and calumny.

Besides the civil services whose evolution was interrupted by external and internal factors, there are those which have maintained a steady pace of growth over the years. Examples are the Botswana and the Mauritian civil services. In the case of the former, stable but development-oriented political leadership has served as a key factor in administrative development. The civil service of Mauritius, by contrast has, despite changes of government, managed to preserve the inherited ethos of loyalty, professionalism, and political impartiality. The successful implementation of the structural adjustment program initiated by the Government of Mauritius in the early 1980s also depended to a large extent on the innovative and entrepreneurial push within the career civil service.

A public service to watch is that of South Africa. While struggling with the legacies of apartheid, and without forgetting the growing incidence of corruption in the dying days of apartheid, the bureaucracy exhibits features which other civil services will need to study more closely. Taking the processing of VAT claims as an example, an observer cannot but be struck about the deft combination of administrative order with client-focused efficiency. Thus, in contrast to other countries where claiming VAT refunds can be a terrifying experience for foreign visitors, the South African authorities have made life easy for qualified outward-bound passengers by asking them to have their export items verified and their invoices stamped at the VAT refund desk prior to proceeding to airline check-in counters. As soon as the goods are checked to their destinations, the passengers concerned can, with their stamped invoices, claim their refunds in Rand or in another convertible currency from a bank which is not far from the departure gates at the Jan Smuts airport.

III. Towards a service- and change-oriented bureaucracy

The underlying objective of the classical bureaucratic model is rationality. Unlike institutions established to uphold tradition and block change, a legal-rational bureaucracy is most frequently created to achieve specific, change-oriented objectives. Yet there is something about the bureaucracy which calls into question its receptivity to change.

If the bureaucratic model is contrasted with the market model favoured by economists, one begins to see the limitations to the bureaucracy's rational thrusts. In a free market, rational behaviour emerges as a result of the frequent interplay of supply and demand forces. This is not always the case in a bureaucracy. The "goods" and services produced by the bureaucracy - that is, the public bureaucracy - were, until recently, rarely based on "demand". In other words, until the policy of structural adjustment transferred resources from the public to the private sector, the former tended to operate independently of the "demand" forces in the external environment.

At the time the bureaucracy was insulated from its environment, rationality tended to be defined in narrow, bureaucratic terms - that is, in terms of how the organizational bits and pieces fitted together to make for a "unity of direction". However, instead of fostering a sense of common purpose, the inward-oriented view of rationality produced sub-cultures with conflicting rationalities. So it is that in a typical bureaucratic organization, it is possible to find individuals that are oriented towards traditional, conformist values, as against those impatient with the *status-quo*. Shuttling back and forth - between the static and the dynamic poles - are the buccaneers and the crooked officials with flexible loyalties.

The mechanical analogy used in an earlier section provides a clue as to how to proceed in converting the bureaucracy into an engine of growth and development. As is already well-known, the gear shift plays an important part in the movement of mechanical systems. Depending on whether the forward or reverse gear is engaged, it is possible to determine the **direction** and **speed** of motion. As conceived by Weber, every part of the bureaucracy is expected to contribute to the system's forward thrusts - rationality, politics-administration dichotomy, legality, continuity, specialization, hierarchy, accountability, specified sphere of competence, precedents and record-keeping.

Yet, we know from experience that when the human factor is introduced, the forward gear might be shifted to "neutral" as a prelude to movement in the reverse direction.

The bureaucracy tends to move in the reverse direction where the external stimuli to action are lacking. As long as the bureaucracy sets its own objectives, and draws up its own implementation plans, it will tend to be pulled in the directions dictated by the dominant groups or forces. Thus a bureaucracy controlled by the law-and-order, policing types will perceive rationality in legal and legalistic terms, and will spend a disproportionate amount of time verifying minor administrative details, pursuing "law breakers", and frustrating genuine agents of change. A bureaucracy harbouring too many buccaneers will be busy turning out fake progress reports and promoting undeserving causes and candidates. One in which corruption is a way of life is by definition a place where individual members use their offices for private gain.

To transform inward-looking, and possibly, self-serving bureaucracies into agents of change and of public service, it is essential that each and every bureaucratic attribute be redefined with the clients/customers/consumers in view. The erstwhile disconnection of "demand" from "supply" is precisely what enabled public bureaucracies to survive for so long without entrepreneurial effort or concern for productive combination of resources. Under the proposed dispensation, the bureaucracy will be anything but distant and "bureaucratic". Specifically, the new institution will, in its structure and operational methods:

(a) **focus on the citizen**: rather be completely diverted by rules, procedures, and protocol, the bureaucracy will regard the citizen-consumer as the "king" whose tastes and demands will form the basis of rational behaviour.

(b) **take risks and cope with uncertainty**: besides advising on choices among policies and programs that show promise of responding to tastes and demands, officials will constantly explore innovative *means* of realizing policy objectives and mobilizing needed resources; experimenting with new service delivery modalities, and operational procedures is critical to the success of the citizen-oriented bureaucracy;

(c) **see problems from broader socio-political angles:** the new bureaucracy rather than being uncomfortable in the circles of politicians will forge partnerships with external bodies whose support is critical to the realization of objectives;

(d) **maintain highest professional standards in the management of human, material, financial, and information resources**: to meet increasingly complex challenges, excellence, constant search for perfection, and value-for-money should underpin management practices;

(e) **respect the rule of law but not hide behind legalism**: the difference between respect for the rule of law and legalism lies in the "ultra vires" doctrine incorporated in the former, and the latter's tendency towards inflexible application of rules which otherwise allow a measure of discretion;

(f) **renew its mandate in line with changing priorities**: an agency or a unit within it will no longer be a "body perpetual with an eternal seal", but one whose survival hinges on its continued relevance and effectiveness;

(g) **promote internal vitality through cross-breeding and competitive selection**: to counter the negative effects of careerism and organizational incest, recruitment policies and practices need to create room for new entrants - enterprising "immigrants" - who might otherwise be repelled by the xenophobic attitudes of "settlers" and long-timers;

(h) **substitute management accountability for routine hierarchical control**: instead of hierarchy for its own sake or for the sake of oiling the internal patronage machine, superior-subordinate relationships will now be based on the accomplishment of specific tasks, and the delivery of specific services;

(i) **integrate the needs of individuals and informal groups with formal organizational designs**: in recognition of the conflicting aspirations of individuals and groups within organizations, it is essential that interest aggregation and conflict resolution mechanisms be built into the "new bureaucracy" right from the beginning; the issue of "internal democracy", particularly, of how to promote high degrees of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness of decisions affecting the careers and well-being of staff, also needs to be addressed;

(j) **operate with homeostatic control**: the new bureaucracy will not only pay significant attention to data collection, storage, retrieval, and transmission, but will aspire to higher levels of rationality by ensuring that decisions (having implications for steps [a] - [i] above are based on knowledge and up-to-date information. This is what defines the "new bureaucracy" as an "intelligent" and learning organization.

IV. Towards a 'non-bureaucratic' bureaucracy: a Summation

The bureaucracy which will meet the challenges of the 21st century will be one that is citizen-oriented rather than self-serving; innovative rather than rule-bound; capable of forging constructive partnerships with outside groups rather than being insular; professionally competent rather than being patronage- or corruption-ridden. It will also operates within the limits set by law rather than resort to legalisms. It will constantly subject programs to relevance and effectiveness tests rather than being complacent. The bureaucracy which can face the challenges of the 21st century will renew itself by welcoming "immigrants" into its ranks instead of degenerating through in-breeding. It will use hierachical control as a means of strengthening management accountability rather than as a device for stifling initiative and creativity. Above all it will enlist information in the service of policy and program implementation. It will be a truly purposive, results-oriented, time- and cost-conscious institution rather than one constantly slowed down by hierarchy, protocol, and cynical interpretation and application of rules.

Is there anything on the horizon that suggests the imminent arrival of the dream bureaucracy? If we go by the three perspectives discussed in this paper, it will take quite a while to reconstruct what is essentially a law-and-order institution into a customer-oriented body. The bureaucracies with feudal and traditional roots appear to be too slow to respond to the momentous changes taking place within and around them. Those inherited from the colonial regimes, by contrast, seem to be running faster than they were originally designed to do, and have mostly confused the creation of "modern" structures with substantive change. Even the so-called "best practices" are still grappling with miscellaneous human and institutional capacity problems, and are years behind in terms of the stated attributes of the citizen-focused and service-rendering bureaucracy.

Indeed, bringing the "new bureaucracy" into being depends largely on one precondition - i.e., reordering the governance arrangements in such a way that the attention of public institutions begins to shift from juggling with internal structures to serving the citizen and meeting the latter's demands. The key, as stated in an earlier part of this paper, lies in leadership - notably, purposeful, citizen-oriented, and entrepreneurial leadership. Where a leadership class is committed to turning the bureaucracy into a genuine instrument of public service, measures will be instituted along the lines suggested in the preceding paragraphs.

In contrast, where political power is conceived as an avenue to riches and fame, the bureaucracy will remain essentially an instrument for rent extraction - the usual democratic pretences notwithstanding.

** The views expressed in this paper are the authors' and should not be attributed to the official position of either the United Nations or the Commonwealth Secretariat. Neither of the two organizations should be held liable for residual errors.

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AFRICA'S ECONOMY UP TO THE YEAR 2020:
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

V.M. Mwaka-Nakiboneka

Introduction

The term "economy" refers to a network of activities, organizations and institutions through which a society patterns the flow of goods and services (Hurst, 1974). Human values and human intervention together create what economists call "utility", that is, what is added to resources when they are converted into something useful to humankind. Through manufacturing, humankind adds form utility; through storage, time utility is created and through transportation place utility is added. Taken together, these efforts at making the natural environment more amenable to exploitation creates an economy that performs two basic functions namely, production of goods and services, and secondly the distribution of these goods and services among the users.

Our prosperity depends on the availability of natural, human and technological resources, and the quality of the environment. Yet economic activities in developed, and increasingly in developing, countries are depleting natural resources and degrading the environment. This poses a few critical questions: How did we get into this situation? What can we do to effectively manage resources and protect the environment? If the whole world starts consuming more and expanding their economies, can the planet earth stand the strain?

As the world's population continues to grow, increasing demands are placed on the environment. Unchecked population growth exerts pressure on resources besides increasing the ecological and environmental pollution hazards. Already, problems have been encountered supplying fresh water to the world's billions. Burgeoning populations are draining water from rivers and lakes. Vast underground aquifers are steadily being depleted. What will the human race do when these natural underground tanks are empty?

In the process of improving our conditions, we have embarked on economic growth and development strategies which almost invariably lead to the consumption of vast amounts of resources that took millions of years to accumulate, e.g., coal, oil, natural gas, fishery, forests, electricity and fossil fuels. Our ability to burn up these resources at a rate faster than they could be created or replenished has upset the natural balance.

While the resources are limited, human demands on them are boundless. The countries of the industrialized north that accommodate 20 per cent of the world's people consume about 80 per cent of the resources (UNEP/WMO, 1995). Indeed, if every one of the world's billions consumed as much as the north, there would not be enough vital resources to go round. How can we meet these growing needs when the world is already under so much pressure? Before attempting to answer this question, it is necessary to clarify our notion of what constitutes the "environment".

Defining the Environment

The term "environment" refers to all the conditions, circumstances, and influences surrounding and affecting the development of an organism or a group of organisms. Therefore, when investigating implications of changes in the environment for Africa's economy, there is need to place our discussion within the context of the human ecosystem. The human ecological framework provides a basis for analyzing the relationship of human beings with, and their adjustments to, their environment. By focusing on the socio-economic, political and cultural conditions prevailing at any point in time, the ecological approach further helps in assessing the capacity of the available stock of resources to meet basic needs and sustain human existence (Moller and Schlemmes, 1983).

The human ecosystem comprises five major components, i.e., the natural, the human constructed, the human behaviour, the human environed unit, and the international/external components.

The Natural Environment

The natural environment is formed by nature with time-space, physical, and biological components. The total earth system from the centre of the planet to the outer edges of its atmosphere can be described in terms of a number of systems. The simplest classification consists of two types, namely:

I. The geosphere, including the inanimate lithosphere (rocks) the redosphere (soils), hydrosphere (liquid water and ice), atmosphere which stretches from the troposphere (up to 10 km) from the earth's surface, and the stratosphere (10-50 km) and higher layers;

II. The biosphere comprising the integrated living and life-supporting system which is made up of the peripheral envelope of planet earth together with its surrounding atmosphere, so far down and up as any form of life exists naturally (Friedman, 1985:20).

The Human Constructed Environment

The human constructed environment is that environment that is altered by human beings and by their activities in the process of utility formation. It is a reflection of decisions taken at the family, community, state, and international levels. The human constructed environment constitutes the transformed or altered physical (geosphere) and biological (biosphere) environment.

There are a number of forces driving humankind's role as an agent of biospheric and geospheric change. These interrelated forces include the distribution and the rates of growth of human populations and economies; as well as differences in human attitudes to economic growth and resource management.

In order to understand present and possible future patterns of human activities, it is necessary to take a longitudinal view of the history and development of all these forces. Besides human transformation of the biological and physical environment, other social and cultural constructions such as educational, political, religious systems need to be analyzed. These systems are a product of human intellectual and social-cultural capacities (technology) and of degree of adaptation to the natural environment to meet economic, physical and socio-psychological needs.

The Behavioural Environment

The human behavioural environment exists because human beings themselves constitute environments for other human beings. It is an environment of socialized human beings and their interrelated behaviour, be it biophysical, psychological, social, cultural, religious, political or gender. Most political animosities, gender or race discrimination, and social oppression are a product of the behavioural environment. Inequitable sharing of the economic and environmental resources can fuel negative behavioural environments.

The Human Environed Unit

The human environed unit refers to the family or other units in which members share feelings of affinity, common destiny and identity. Decisions made in such units (particularly, at the household or community level) can spill over to, and influence, the human constructed and behavioural environments.

The International/External Environment

The external/international environment constitutes elements over which one individual environment has little direct control. For example, in the 1970s and 1980s many countries (including those in Africa) were exposed to the negative impact of developments in the global economic environment, e.g., soaring oil prices, rising interest rates, the slowing down of trade in primary commodities, the sharp fall in commodity prices, and worsening terms of trade. The structural adjustment programs which were instituted at the height of the economic crisis might have helped to rectify fiscal imbalances but the impact on the poor and the vulnerable was by and large devastating.

Africa's Economy and Environment

Sub-Saharan Africa relies mainly on its natural environmental resource base. About two-thirds of the population lives in rural areas and derives its income from agriculture. In countries like Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Uganda, the rural population makes up more than 80 per cent of the total. Agriculture accounts for between 20 and 40 per cent of the GDP and a major share of the value of total exports (World Bank 1996:11). Arable soil is in short supply, and farmers depend heavily on rain-fed agriculture. The cultivated land per capita varies considerably across Africa but on average it is lower in Africa than in China. It stood at about 0.3 hectare per capita in 1987. In Kenya, an extreme case, the cultivated land is 0.1 hectare per capita is (Cleaver and Schreiber, 1994).

This paper's underlying thesis is that economic development is inextricably bound with environmental enhancement. People cannot achieve improved standards of living without economic development. However, the quality of life cannot be improved through economic development unless the environment is preserved/conserved and sensibly managed. Therefore, Africa's future economic and social welfare and its environmental quality will highly depend on the effective and efficient use and management of physical, biological, human and technological resources.

Already the indications are that Africa is confronted with a series of crises, such as desertification and desert encroachments, dwindling forest cover, eroded soils, overgrazed range lands, polluted lakes and rivers, toxic waste dumping, and garbage disposal constraints. The problem is compounded by the growing population, wasteful consumption habits, the tendency to prop up life styles that can only be sustained by illegitimate income and corrupt earnings, destructive and wasteful military expenditure.

The image of Africa (as portrayed in the global media) tends to be negative. Any time the continent is mentioned, what come to mind are pictures of wars and civil disturbances, refugees, poverty, drought, famine, high-level corruption, political repression, violation of human rights, the AIDS pandemic, fiscal deficits, balance of payments crises, and the debt over hang. While some of these problems tend to be blown out proportion, that they exist in different forms cannot be denied. Besides, they reflect in varying degrees the lack of harmony between Africa's economy and the environment. The imbalance constitutes a challenge to present and future generations.

Poverty, for instance, is both a cause and an effect of environmental degradation (United Nations, 1997). The link between poverty and environmental degradation may be perceived as an outcome of decisions made at the household, community, national or even international levels. The environment does not exist as a sphere separate from human needs, desires, and activities. Any attempt to protect the environment without regard for human needs and aspirations may well have the opposite impact. The converse is also true. An economic growth policy which neglects the environmental consequences is headed for disaster. The environment is where human beings live, and development represents human kind's effort to improve its living condition. Both (environmental and economic welfare) concerns are closely linked.

The experience of developing countries illustrates the relationship between economic growth (or lack of it) and the state of the environment. During the past decade, both agriculture and industry expanded at an annual rate of more than 3 per cent in developing countries. However, about 1.3 billion people (almost 30 per cent of the total population) live below the poverty line.

Tables I and II provide an indication of the level of poverty in Africa compared to other areas of the world. While the developed countries recorded a per capita GNP of US$19,310 in 1995, Africa's figure for the same period was a mere US$ 630. The only exceptions were South Africa (US dollars 3,160), Mauritius (US$3,380), and Botswana (US$3,020). Of the 30 poorest countries in the world, 22 are African. By the year 2000 the number of the poor in Africa would have increased to 265 million, nearly 40 per cent of the continent's total population (World Bank, 1996).

Table I: Urbanisation and GNP in selected regions and countries 1995

Region/Country	% Urban/Pop density	Per capita GNP in US dollars
World	43	4920
Developed countries	74	19310
Less developed	36	1120
Africa	31	630
Sub-Sahara Africa	26	510
Northern Africa	46	1110
Western Africa	24	330
Eastern Africa	21	210
Middle Africa	33	540
Southern Africa	53	2970
Egypt	44	790
Burkina Faso	15	230
Ghana	36	390
Nigeria	16	260
Burundi	6	160
Kenya	27	280
Ethiopia	15	100
Tanzania	21	120
Mauritius	43	3380
Uganda	11	240
Zimbabwe	31	540
Botswana	27	3020
Lesotho	16	770
South Africa	57	3160

Source: UNDP (1995) human development report

Table II:

Country	Per capita GDP at 1994 Dollars		% Change
	1980	1995	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	374	205	-45
Liberia	836	479	-43
Niger	291	174	-40
Zambia	548	379	-31
Madagascar	277	197	-29
Togo	332	243	-27
Guinea	736	539	-27
Malawi	157	120	-24
Sudan	458	355	-22
Rwanda	234	198	-15
Ethiopia	110	94	-15
Mali	206	179	-13
Sierra Leone	215	189	-12
Angola	524	468	-11
Somalia	145	133	-8
Burundi	136	142	+4
Tanzania	79	85	+8
Mozambique	86	93	+8
Burkina Faso	254	288	+13
Uganda	174	220	+26
Lesotho	329	440	+34
Chad	100	147	+47

Source: UNCTAD, 1997 .

One of the fundamental issues of resource development in Africa is thus the magnitude and depth of poverty. Absolute poverty is predominant in the rural areas, although a significant proportion of the urban populations is also unable to meet the basic needs. Absolute poverty in Africa is characterized by inadequate access to food, shelter, clothing, drinking water, sanitation, health services, educational facilities, and employment opportunities. Often, poverty creates insecure and unstable relationships between people and their governments, and between resource allocation practices and environmental capacity.

Environmental degradation and stress have sometimes been interpreted as the result of the growing demand for scarce resources and of the pollution generated by the consumption habits of the relatively affluent. At the same time, it should be noted that poverty and hunger have the effect of polluting and destroying the environment in different ways. Those who are poor and hungry will often exploit and destroy their immediate environment in order to survive. They will cut down trees, overuse marginal lands, threaten marine life, and over-run the already congested urban centres. The poorer and hungrier a population becomes, the greater the threat to the environment and to peace and stability. (The World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Poverty above all impairs the capacity to respond to ecological disasters and to operate early warning mechanisms.

The External Environment: Balance of Payment Problems

Beginning from the 1980s, the developing world has had to grapple with the debt crisis. In 1995 alone, many highly-indebted low-income countries paid one billion dollars more to IMF than they received from it. Countries are having to set aside an increasing percentage of their export earnings to repay external debt (New Internationalist, Jan/Feb. 1997). The debt of developing countries soared from US$658 billion in 1980 to US$1375 billion in 1988 and to US$1945 billion in 1994. The increasing debt servicing obligations constitute an obstacle to development. This is because fresh loans are frequently needed to service existing debt rather than for productive investment (Independent commission on Population and Quality of life 1996:45).

The contemporary liberalization trend may also have an impact on economic policy and environmental balance in the developing economies of the world. These countries are being dragged, kicking and screaming, into a global trading arrangement in which only the fittest will survive. As of now, the fittest are almost invariably the transnational corporations. A staggering 70 per cent of world trade is controlled by a mere 500 corporations (State of World Economy Report Jan/Feb. 1997:7). The fate of the developing world is increasingly being determined in the boardrooms of these companies rather than by national governments. A fundamental question is how, and at what level, such corporations are to be regulated.

The process of globalization (which is anchored on free market principles) is likely to exacerbate the gap, as well as the tension, between the rich and the poor. It is evident that the conflict between the winners and the losers in the globalization race has ominous implications for environmental balance. The divergence between the interests of the rich and those of the poor will, everything being equal, reflect on the socio-economic policy decisions and, consequently, on the way the environment is treated or managed.

Africa's Economy and Environment Up to the Year 2030

Since 1950, the world population has more than doubled, and within the same period, the demand for energy has quadrupled (Jacobson and Prince, 1991). Yet economic growth has not been uniform throughout the world, nor has it resolved the substantial disparities in material conditions which persist both within and among states or even communities. In fact economic growth has often exacerbated these disparities. At the same time the demographic, economic, cultural and technological driving forces have altered components of the earth's physical, chemical and biological systems, as well as the interactions among them.

Table III contains the projections of world population up to the year 2025. Over the next three decades, population growth, migration and settlement patterns will dramatically change the face of Africa. If current trends continue, Africa's total population could reach between 1.2 billion and 1.4 billion in 2025 (World Bank 1996: 36).

Table III: Current and projected world population size and growth rate (by region)

	Population(Billion)			Annual Growth Rate %		
REGION	1985	2000	2025	1950-1985	1985-2000	2000-2025
World	4.8	6.1	8.2	1.9	1.6	1.2
Africa	0356	0.87	1.62	2.6	3.1	2.5
Latin Am.	0.41	0.55	0.78	2.6	2.0	1.4
N.America	0.26	0.30	0.35	1.3	0.8	0.6
Europe	0.49	0.51	0.52	0.7	0.3	0.1
USSR	0.28	0.31	0.37	1.3	0.8	0.6
Oceania	0.02	0.03	0.04	1.9	1.4	0.9

Source: Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (1986) World Population Prospects. Estimates and Projections as Assessed in 1984, New York - United Nations.

In the absence of dramatic growth in the economy, the population increase threatens to upset the precarious environmental balance. The situation is not likely to be helped by the wasteful consumption habits - habits patterned after those of the advanced economies. In an era of economic decline, such habits may lead to over-exploitation and rapid depletion of resources. Although African governments may firmly be committed to the wise management of the environment, these natural resources are being depleted at a much faster rate than they can regenerate.

Land, Soil Degradation and Insecurity

Land and soil degradation are caused by unsustainable, destructive and wasteful agricultural practices. According to the New Internationalist (1997), the main causes of soil degradation are overgrazing (35 per cent), deforestation (30 per cent), other agricultural practices, especially mechanized farming (28 per cent), and miscellaneous factors (8 per cent). The world is losing almost 10 million hectares of forest reserve each year. This rate of destruction has remained unchecked despite international initiatives like those emanating from the Earth Summit.

Deforestation is itself a consequence of the search for more agricultural land, fuel, timber and other wood products. Overgrazing, and bush fires are a product of over-stocking and misinterpretation of the value of livestock. Environmentally unsound clay and sand mining, as well as stone quarrying and brick making deprive the population of would be useful agricultural land. The results of the above-mentioned practices are poor agricultural yields and ecological degradation.

In any case, steps need to be taken to plug the widening food deficits. Assuming a consumption growth rate of 3.3 per cent per year, the demand for food would be more than triple from 1990 to 2025. By rough estimate, food supply could be increased about 60 per cent by 2025, about half from intensification and half from expansion of land (World Bank 1996:38).

The Saharan countries and other areas where rainfall is meagre and unreliable form the core areas of food insecurity in Africa. Food insecurity is also common in countries torn by civil strife, e.g., Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Burundi and parts of Uganda. Other vulnerable areas are those with poor infrastructure as well as those reeling in poverty.

Therefore, any attempt at addressing the problem of food shortage or even famine must distinguish between areas in which chronic food shortage is caused by crop failure, and areas facing economic crises and/or civil strife. Each will need different types of intervention. In poor households, women and children are more susceptible to malnutrition which suggest the need for interventions designed to reach specific vulnerable groups.

Water Resources

The significant changes which have occurred in the water resource situation in Africa since the early 1970 are in respect of supply for domestic use and in the fisheries sector.

Water for domestic use is obtained from local depressions, lakes, swamps and rivers (wetlands) and underground. Many of the local depressions have become either filled with erosion sediments or have been cultivated. The natural waterways to some of these depressions and man-made dams have been cultivated so that less than adequate water reaches these reservoirs. The result is that even the depressions can no longer hold water from one rainy season to the next. For example, the shores of lake Kyoga in Uganda are so choked with erosion sediments that lake water is hardly accessible. (Omara-Ojungu, 1992).

Many swamps are now reclaimed for the cultivation of rice and vegetables, as well as for dairy farming and brick making. With increasing population and the absence of cheap alternatives, people have resorted to use of local building materials such as timber, papyrus, grass, murrum and clay bricks. In addition to destroying swamps and agricultural land where clay and murrum are mined, a lot of firewood is consumed in the brick making process.

It is possible that the reclamation of swamps will accelerate the lowering of the water table and the drying up of wells and swamps. Water bodies as well as soil, and air are polluted from diverse sources, principally from agricultural chemicals, industrial effluent and other hazardous materials. Increasing use of fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals to enhance livestock and agricultural production has increased the risks of environmental pollution.

The water hyacinth is another hazard to water resources. This seemingly beautiful plant is now a threat to the fishing industry, to water transport, as well as to the generation of hydro-electric power and aquatic ecosystem. Lake Victoria, Kyoga and the River Nile are the most affected.

These problems notwithstanding, the water supply situation seems to have improved slightly in recent years. Two decades ago, less than half the people of the developing world had access to safe clean water. Now, over two-thirds have access to this fundamental resource. Thus, in contrast to 1975 when 40 per cent had access to safe clean water, the per centage rose to 68 in 1995 (The New Internationalist, 1997:31) See also Table IV on access to safe water and sanitation.

Table IV: Access to safe drinking water and sanitation in africa, 1980 - 1995 (by country)

Highest percentage of Urban population without drinking water		Highest Percentage of urban Population without access to sanitation	
Mozambique	83%	Lesotho	97%
Central African Republic	82.0	Togo	87.8
Mali	64.0	Zaire	72.2
Zaire	63.0	Egypt	77.0
Guinea Bissau	62.0	Guinea Bissau	76.0
Swaziland	59.0	Angola	74.0
Cameroon	58.0	Somalia	59.6
Niger	54.0	Liberia	51.0
Uganda	53.0	Madagascar	50.8
Chad	52.0	Burkina Faso	50.0
Somalia	50.0	The Gambia	50.0
Malawi	48.0	Nigeria	49.0
Burkina Faso	47.1		
Lesotho	43.0		
Liberia	42.0		
Cote D'lvoire	41.0		

Source: UNEP (1998) Change of Habitat in Our Planet, The UNEP Magazine for Sustainable Development, Vol. 8, No. 1.

Forest and tree Resources

In the non-industrialized regions of Africa, trees are inextricably woven into the rural and household economy. Trees are used to provide fuel, fodder, food and medicine. They increase soil fertility and provide shelter from the wind. They provide timber for housing, as well as many of the products used in making mats, baskets, and other household items. Trees and forests provide many rural women in Africa with a source of personal income.

Statistics on deforestation and desertification rates means little to rural households in Africa. What matters to them is the long walk required to fetch fuel wood. As scrubland becomes depleted and the environment deteriorates and as increasing number of people compete for diminishing resources, households find it difficult to collect enough fuel wood. It is the over-dependence on fuel wood that prompts Williams (1993) to assert that:

> *.... If in 64 years (our) young grandchildren look out over the Uganda landscape and see a treeless wasteland, it will be because the National Environmental Action Plan has not succeeded in changing the way Ugandan households cook their meals today.*

Close to 98 per cent of the trees mown down in Uganda are used for housing and other domestic purposes. Over 17 million tons of firewood was burned into charcoal at the rate of 1 ton a year for every man, woman and child in Uganda. Deforestation in Uganda serves as a good example of the pressure being put on the environment by a rapidly growing population. The forest cover has been reduced considerably, from an estimated 31,000 Km^2 in 1900 to 23,000 km2 in 1930. By 1985, only 6,000 km2 remained (Hamilton, 1988).

The volume of burned wood would not matter if the forests were growing fast enough to replace the wood harvested for fuel. However, the rate of wood consumption alone is said by the Uganda Forestry Department to exceed sustainable yield by 17 per cent. At this rate of depletion, 161 million tons of trees would disappear by the 2058. This trend is typical of most African countries.

Bio-Diversity and Climatic Change

Biological diversity, the source of enormous economic, medicinal and cultural value, will be threatened by rapid climatic change. A warming of 1 to 3.5^{0}C over the next 100 years would shift current climate zones pole-wards by approximately 150-155 Km and vertically 150-550 meters in the mid-latitude regions (New Internationalist, 1997). At the same time, habitats will be degraded and fragmented by the combination of climatic change, deforestation and other environmental pressures. Species which cannot adapt quickly enough may be extinct - an irreversible loss. Forests adapt slowly to change conditions. Observation, experiments and models demonstrate that a sustained increase in just 1°C in the global average temperature would affect the functioning and composition of forests. A typical climatic change scenario for the 21st century shows a major impact on the species composition of one third of the world's existing forests. Entire forest types may disappear while new combinations of species and hence new ecosystems may be established. This trend is already noticeable in Africa (UNEP, Climate Change Information Sheet, January 1997).

Urbanization

Urbanization centres are the areas through which modern social attributes and economic opportunities are diffused. Therefore, urbanization and environment are closely linked. Deteriorating conditions in the rural areas (especially, as regard access to social services) and changing life styles, have contributed to the increasing rate of urbanization in Africa. Urbanization is bringing about one of the most significant transformation of human habitat in history. By the year 2030, half of humanity will be living in urban areas.

What are the implications of this new phenomenon for human settlement policies? It is clear that efforts to improve all aspects of the living environment must be focused on urban areas. That is where a significant proportion of the people will live and work, where most economic activity will take place and where the most pollution will be generated and most natural resources consumed. The urban agenda will therefore be the most pressing challenge facing humanity in the 21st century (UNEP, 1996)

Due to urban decay, at least 600 million people, mostly in developing countries, live in health- and life-threatening situations. Up to 30 per cent of urban dwellers are cramped in sub-standard housing. At least 250 million urban residents have no access to safe, pipe-borne water, and 400 million lack sanitation facilities. Women and dependent children are the main victims of deterioration in urban conditions.

Environmental Pollution

Within the past two decades, African countries have witnessed a significant amount of growth in the various sectors of the economy. This has increased the threat of environmental pollution. The major sources of environmental pollution are:

(i) Oil spillage and sea-bed pollution;
(ii) Industrial pollution and green house emissions;
(iii) Pollution from domestic sources; and
(iv) Pollution from agro-chemical sources.

In East Africa, the problem of oil pollution is increasingly becoming entrenched because the Indian Ocean serves as a major route for super tankers carrying crude oil from the middle East to Europe, the Americas and Africa. Oil pollution is especially evident at the ports and harbours of Mombassa, *Dar-es-Salam* and Beira, because of routine discharges and occasional spills from visiting vessels and from local refineries. Such spills even from local tanker traffic can severely affect water quality and marine life. Oil spillage in Mombassa, *Dar-es-Salaam* and Motala (Mozambique) have destroyed large areas of mangrove forest (UNEP, 1982).

The use of pesticides also threatens the environment and public health in developing countries. Without a concerted international effort and ongoing commitment, the damage to the environment will be irreversible and the effect on human health, catastrophic. The United Nations estimates that there are more than 100,000 ton's of absolute pesticides in developing countries. There are in addition pesticides that can no longer be used because they have deteriorated through prolonged storage, or have been banned while still in store.

The stock includes large amounts of highly persistent organochlorine compounds such as DDT, dieldrin, and HCH as well as highly toxic organophosphorus compounds. They are now regarded as hazardous waste (UNEP, 1997). There are estimated to be some 20,000 tons of them in Africa alone. Some stocks are over 30 years old and are kept in poor conditions with few or no safety precautions. A significant part of the unusable pesticides (especially in Africa) are leftovers of the stock obtained under aid agreements.

Pollution from domestic and agro-chemical sources is the most obvious in Africa. Industrial pollution tends to be minimal, due to the relatively low level of industrialization. With increasing population and urbanization growth and the expansion of unplanned settlements, pollution from domestic sources poses a great challenge for the future. The most obvious problem relates to inadequate collection and treatment of composite wastes. Domestic waste disposal contributes enormously to pollution by organic substance, nitrogenous compounds, phosphates and other inorganic salts. Improper disposal of night soil leads to dangers of bacteriological infections and cholera outbreaks.

Through surface run-off and rivers, chemicals and garbage reach water bodies, compounding the effects of mineral salts and other pollutants from domestic sources. There is little information about the level of agro-chemical pollution but if the current trend continues, Africa will be at great risk because, there is practically no strategy being put in place for the mitigation and treatment of water effluents.

The Coastal Habitats

The coastal areas of Africa especially those of East Africa are very important habitats for coral reefs and coastal fisheries. Coral reefs are threatened with permanent destruction because of continuos and widespread use of explosives (dynamite) in fishing. As a result of persistent use of dynamite, as well as poisoning and trampling by fishermen, coral reefs around *Dar-es-Salaam* have been badly damaged, and fishermen are moving northwards and southwards from the city in order to dynamite fresh coral habitats (Omara-Ojungu, 1992:142). Together with crude methods of harvesting coral species for curio markets, the direct extraction of coral for production of limestone and poor trawling methods have significantly destroyed fish habitats and lowered the beauty of the coastal landscape. The construction of ports and harbours, cement factories, and oil depots also has a destructive impact on the environment. Other contributory factors are mangrove swamp reclamation as part of town expansion programs in coastal areas, and the establishment of industries, as well as the construction of hotels and access roads. Beaches and lagoons have in the process been transformed into mud flats especially around high growth towns such as Mombassa and Dar-es-Salaam.

Environmental Refugees

We are increasingly hearing about environmental refugees. These are people who can no longer live in their homelands because of drought, soil erosion, desertification, mineral exploration, and other environmental problems, aggravated by pressures of population and poverty. Depending on the gravity of the situation, each or a combination of these ecological disasters may sometimes force a community to leave their familiar surroundings and seek sanctuary elsewhere. Many tend to be internally displaced within their own countries while others are pushed to completely foreign environments. There are at least 10 million environmental refugees today. The figure is an under-estimate since many governments take little formal account of this unconventional category of refugees. (IPPF, IUCN, UNFPA, WWF, 1994).

Global Environment Change

Human activities are increasing the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases which tend to warm the atmosphere, and in some regions, aerosols, which tend to cool the atmosphere. These changes in green house gases and aerosols taken together, are projected to lead to regional and global changes in temperature, precipitation, soil moisture and sea level. Some of these changes may have serious consequences for the future habitability of the earth, especially because many of these changes are occurring at rates unprecedented in human history. These changes could threaten life and cause or intensify conflict. Global environmental changes could accelerate even more rapidly as the world's population continues to grow, and as people throughout the world, especially in developing countries, achieve improved standards of material welfare.

The atmospheric changes are likely to be aggravated by human acts of omission or commission. For example when we burn coal, oil, natural gas, bio-mass, we send huge amounts of carbon-dioxide into the air. When we destroy forests, the carbon stored in the trees escapes to the atmosphere. Other activities, such as excessive cattle breeding, emit methane, nitrous oxide and other green house gases.

If emissions continue at current rates, it is almost certain that the atmospheric level of carbon dioxide would double in the 21^{st} century - that is, up from pre-industrial level. If no steps are taken to slow down greenhouse gas emissions it is quite possible that the level will triple by the year 2100 (UNEP/WMO, 1995). The most direct result, according to the scientific consensus, is likely to be a global warming of 1.5° - 3.5° over the next 100 years.

Global warming is likely to hit sub-Saharan Africa especially hard. Cereal production could be cut by 9 to 12 percent below what it would otherwise be, and cereal prices could rise anywhere from 10 to 100 per cent (The independent Commission on Population and Quality of Life 1996:34). The number of people menaced by hunger could rise with climatic change.

Planet wide precipitation should become more erratic, and new patterns of water flow, soil moisture, and rainfall may emerge. There would be changes in crop production with a doubling of carbon dioxide levels, rice yields could fall by between 2 and 5 per cent, and maize production might fall by 15 to 24 per cent (The Independent Commission, 1996). However, there is need to differentiate between climatic change and climatic variability. Climatic change is the long term change of any or all of the climatic elements - including wind, temperature, precipitation, atmospheric pressure (Magezi, 1993). Climatic variability, by contrast, is the short-term variation in meteorological elements. In Africa climatic variability is the most common problem. The impact of climatic change in Africa has yet to be felt, although some indications have been noticed.

Globally most people equate climatic change with global warming or temperature increases. However, in Africa rainfall is a more important parameter and its variability is every one's concern, more so, as Africa's agriculture is basically rain-fed.

In Uganda, daily rainfall records dating back to between 30 and 90 years were examined from 15 stations throughout the country. In all these stations, a high incidence of recurrent drought was observed and has been confirmed to appear at 3- to 5-year intervals (Magezi 1993). Countries in the Horn of Africa including Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and those of southern Africa including Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe have faced drought spells and intermittent famine.

Desertification

Deserts are likely to become more extreme in that with few exceptions, they are projected to become hotter but not significantly wetter. The impact on water balance, hydrology and vegetation are uncertain. Desertification is more likely to be irreversible if the environment becomes drier and soils become further degraded through erosion and compaction. Adaptation to drought and desertification will depend on the development of diversified production systems.

Human Health

Climatic change is expected to disturb the ecological balance, put undue strain on natural resources, exert pressure on sanitation and other infrastructure services, and cause social and economic dislocations.

These trends will expose more people to diseases transmitted by insects, water, and other vectors. They could promote infectious diseases such as diarrhea, malnutrition, lung ailments, asthma and other allergic disorders. Warmer temperatures would enable insects and other diseases to expand their range. Organisms such as malaria-carrying mosquitoes will be positioned to spread to higher altitudes. For example, around 300 million new malaria infections now occur every year, resulting in 2,000,000 million deaths. Approximately, 45 per cent of the world population presently lives in the climatic zones where mosquitoes transmit malaria. Models predict that these will increase to about 60 per cent by the latter half of the next century (UNDP, 1997).

Women and the Environmental Crisis

It is the view of some observers that women are responsible for between 60 per cent to 80 per cent of food production, processing and marketing activities. The food crisis in Africa or any other crisis that exists (energy crisis, population explosion, famine) cannot be adequately addressed without reference to women. The majority of African women depend on the natural resources of their countries for their households' survival. Reference has been made to their role in obtaining wood for fuel and other domestic uses. It is thus clear that resource depletion and degradation can undermine women's ability to maintain their own health and that of their families.

Envisioned Challenges up to the year 2020/2030: Environmental Management

The underlying causes of environmental problems (such as land and soil degradation, deforestation, unsustainable agricultural practices, overgrazing, drainage and over-exploitation of wetlands, pollution, over-fishing) are many, complex and inter-linked. Some of these causes are:

i. Poverty;
ii. Lack of comprehensive national policies and legislative framework on environmental management;
iii. Weak institutional framework for effective environmental management;
iv. Weak database and lack of up-to-date information on natural resources;
v. Lack of trained personnel in environmental management;
vi. An ever increasing population with constantly rising expectations;
vii. Cultural values and traditions which militate against the adoption of novel but needed reform.(The Uganda National Environmental Management Agency 1993 Vol. No. 1 June, 1993).

The NEAP Concept

Applying the principles of environmental economics is one key response to the challenges facing Africa. This is the essence of NEAP (National Environmental Action Plan). In 1987 only a few countries were part of the NEAP initiative. By 1994 August, 38 countries were already involved. The Earth Summit in June 1992 called, in its Agenda 21, for the preparation of country-driven sustainable development strategies.

At any rate, the success of NEAP hinges on:

- Integrating environmental concerns in the policy process;
- Focusing on key development and environmental issues;
- Promoting synergy between environment and development;
- Estimating the benefits and costs of policy options;
- Maximizing the use of on-the ground personnel and
- Using prices and incentives to achieve development and environmental sustainability goals.

Conclusion

The concept of sustainable development requires human kind to learn how to alleviate poverty and improve the welfare of growing numbers of people without destroying the natural environment. The trick will be to find methods for living well while using critical resources at rates not faster than that at which they can be created or replaced.

Given the prominence of the concept of sustainable development in the discourse on global environmental change, it is important that the underlying issues and the way ahead be seriously investigated by multi-disciplinary groups - groups comprising social and natural scientists from different parts of the world.

It goes without saying that citizen empowerment and community participation are critical to the success of sustainable development strategies. This in turn entails enhancing the capacity of individuals and groups to participate in decisions affecting their life and welfare.

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THE CIVIL SERVICE REFORM: THE KENYAN EXPERIENCE AND VISION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

A. K. Sawe

Introduction

Since Independence in 1963, the Kenya government has endeavored to improve the standard of living of its people. This aspiration has consistently been reflected in various government policy documents such as sessional papers and development plans. One major developmental objective has been to achieve high and growing per capital incomes equitably distributed among the citizens. Even though some progress towards this end was achieved in the 1960s and early part of the 1970s (with growth rates of over 5 percent), the country was unable to sustain this pace of development during the 1980s and early part of the 1990s when population growth gradually began to exceed GNP growth rate.

The decline in economic growth started to be felt in the mid-70s. By the late 80s the economy was unable to create jobs at a rate to match that of the growth of the nation's labour force.

The decline in economic growth in the mid-1970's was triggered by the first international oil price crisis of 1973. The onset of the oil crisis revealed serious structural constraints within the economy. Agriculture, which is the mainstay of the economy, experienced a slowed growth. In addition, growth in industry declined due to various internal as well as external factors. This situation was worsened by the second oil price crisis of 1979 and the severe drought of 1984 leading to slower growth, high inflation and a deterioration in the balance of payments.

By the mid 1980s it had become clear that structural constraints had emerged within the economy that were preventing it from achieving the high economic growth rates of the 1960s and early 1970s. It was realized that part of the reason for this poor economic performance was Kenya's own structural rigidities. This led the Government to adopt Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) through the Publication of Sessional paper No. 1 of 1986 on *Economic Management for Renewed Growth.*

Civil Service Reform and Capacity Building in Kenya

As Kenya entered a period of significant structural change, it became clear that there would be need for flexible and responsive management, and strengthened analytical as well as policy making capacity. To achieve this, a Civil Service Reform Program and Action Plan was approved by the Government in 1992.

The Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP) was subsequently launched in August, 1993 with the main objectives of improving the efficiency and productivity of the civil service. The immediate objectives, however, are as follows:

- Rationalization of organization structures;
- Reduction in the number of civil servants;
- Rationalization of civil service pay (including the monetization of benefits the adoption of measures aimed at enhancing motivation in the service);
- Increased funding for operations and maintenance;
- Introduction of proper work ethics; and
- Control of establishment levels.

The Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP) has five major components. These are:

Civil Service Organization

A major component of the CSRP is the review of the organizational structure with the aim of sharply redefining and streamlining ministerial and departmental objectives. This entails clarifying the internal functions of ministries/departments, defining hierarchical and accountability relationships, and drafting accurate as well as up-to-date job descriptions.

Staffing Levels

This involves a substantial downsizing of the service, the establishment of staffing norms and staffing levels for all cadres in the service. To improve on existing staffing control mechanisms, the reform program included the computerization of establishment and payroll administration system.

Pay and Benefits

Besides the "monetization" of allowances and the institution of other morable-boosting measures, the reform program sought to establish compensation levels capable of attracting and retaining professional and managerial talent in a competitive market economy.

Personnel Management and Training

As human capacity building was deemed critical to the success of the reform program, much emphasis was placed on the rationalization of personnel management agencies, and the identification of any inadequacies in the existing personnel planning and vacancy management system. Attention also focused on improving disciplinary systems, promotions, and establishment control with a view to institutionalizing modern personnel management practices in the service.

Financial and Performance management

This aim of this is to ensure a measure of transparency and accountability in financial management. Among the measures undertaken are the establishment of a financial control system, the computerization of key processes, the management of the national budget; the establishment of standards against which performance could be accurately measured, the redesign of the performance evaluation instrument, and the application of performance evaluation in taking major personnel decisions such as placement, training, discipline and rewards for enhanced service delivery.

Institutional Framework for the Civil Service Reform Program

The government established the National Steering Committee (NSC) of the Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP) as the highest body to direct the implementation of the reform program. The Civil Service Reform Secretariat (CSRS) under the Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM) was established as the operational arm of the NSC. Beside these organs, reform committees were established at the ministerial, provincial and district levels.

Staffing in the Civil Service

Background on Staffing

The staffing function in an organization involves recruitment, selection, placement, deployment, promotion and retention of staff. In the civil service, this function is undertaken by the Public Service Commission, Directorate of Personnel Management, Ministries/ Department, Provinces and Districts.

The civil service that Kenya inherited from the colonial regime in 1963 was relatively small and had the limited objective of maintaining law and order. At independence, new demands were placed on the civil service to perform social and economic roles. These new demands resulted in the expansion of the scope of government services and operations, and the increase the number of civil servants. Among the factors contributing to the accelerated growth of the service in Kenya are the following:

i. The assignment of developmental role to the state: After independence, the government assumed the responsibility for the development of the economy and the provision of jobs. This was deemed essential in circumstance where the private sector was unable to create adequate employment opportunities to meet labour market expectations.

ii. Prevailing industrial relations arrangements: The Government initiated and was obliged by Tripartite Agreements to increase the number of its employees by 10 per cent in 1969 and also in 1979.

iii. Absorption of employees of the Income Tax Department in 1973 and other services in 1977 who were formerly in the East African Community.

iv. Absorption of long-serving local employees of donor-assisted projects (e.g. in ministries of Natural Resources, Water, Works) at the end of project lifecycles.

Implementation of Staff Reduction Measures

The government has since 1992 instituted measures to reduce and control the size of the civil service. These are:

- Full operationalization of the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme for Civil Servants in Job Groups "A" to "G".
- Abolition and freezing of vacant posts in Job Groups "A" to "G".
- Ban on recruitment in Job Groups "A" to "G" except in critical areas.
- Change in the retirement policy to allow civil servants in Job Group "H" (as opposed to Job Group "L") and above, who are 40 years old (as opposed to 45 years) with at least 10 years of pensionable service to retire voluntarily or be retained by the government.
- Strict enforcement of the mandatory retirement under the 55 years rule.
- Withdrawal of guaranteed employment to university and pre-service training graduates.
- Reduction of government ministries from 30 to 22 in January 1993; and
- Control in recruitment by ministries/departments through implementation of new personal (identification/index) numbers which are centralized in the Directorate of Personnel Management, thus making it impossible for ministries/departments to recruit without authority.

Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VERS)

The Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme is one of the priority initiatives under the CSRP. Initially the Scheme was designed to reduce the civil service by 30,000 civil servants in the lower cadre over a period of three years. However, the design of VERS did not initially take into account the staffing needs of ministries/departments at different levels, nor did it identify areas of staff surpluses/deficits in the service. The rationale for targeting lower cadre staff was based on the assumption that these levels, constituting about 84 per cent of the service were over-staffed as compared to the number of staff in the higher job groups. All officers in the lower cadres were eligible to apply and retire under the scheme.

Since the inception of VERS in 1994, a total of 35,632 civil servants have been allowed to retire as at 30th June, 1997. Consequently all the 35,632 posts so far vacated under the scheme have been frozen. The scheme has cost the Government, in terms of safety-net payments, a total of Kshs.6.8 billion (approximately US$ 106.3 million) while the annual saving accruing as a result of foregone salaries and allowances in Kshs. 1.7billion (approximately US$ 26.6 million).

During the financial year 1997/98, a further 4,500 civil servants in (Job Groups "A" to "G") are being retrenched at an approximate coast of Kshs. 1 billion (approximately US$ 15.6 million). By June 1998 the government was expected to have retrenched 40,132 officers.

Natural Attrition

Since the inception of the CSRP, natural attrition has reduced the size of the civil service by 24,146 positions as at 30th June, 1997. The posts vacated under natural attrition were abolished if they remained vacant for more than six months. The cumulative savings accruing as a result of the natural attrition measure amounts to Kshs. 1.8 billion (approximately US$ 28.1 million) as at June, 1997. In order to maximize attrition in the civil service, the government has put in place mechanisms to enhance capacity in ministries/departments to handle disciplinary cases promptly and firmly.

This initiative is expected to maximize attrition through prompt dismissal and termination of unproductive workers. Further, the government is enforcing the mandatory retirement age by ensuring that officers who have attained the retirement age are not granted extension of service.

Ministerial Rationalization Programme

The Ministerial Rationalization component of the CSRP focuses on the interface between structure and functions in the operations government ministries. It seeks to clarify policy mandates, streamline organizational structures, and establish control in personnel budgeting systems and procedures. It further attempts to develop staffing norms, improve management and utilization of human financial resources in the civil service, improve management information systems in ministries/departments, encourage delegation and promote a sense of responsibility and accountability among civil service managers. Above all, it endeavours to improve efficiency and productivity through re-examination of systems, processes, and procedures in ministries and departments.

Ministerial rationalization entails the implementation of the following reform initiatives at the Ministry level:

- An overall organization review to re-examine and identify areas for improvement;
- A review of personnel management practices;
- Development and implementation of staffing norms;
- Improving establishment control;
- Improving Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budgeting procedures;
- Strengthening each ministry's decentralization initiatives at provincial and district levels;
- Conducting and assisting in implementing a series of management reviews; and
- Examining the mandate, inputs, outputs and overall efficiency of key ministerial units.

The rationalization program is being implemented in four (4) phases. Phases one and two comprise the first twelve (12) ministries to undergo the Rationalization process. Policy and Organizational Review studies have already been undertaken in all the 12 Ministries. The government is in the process of implementing the recommendations.

The third phase comprising another six ministries was scheduled to commence in January 1998, while the fourth phase covering the remaining eight (8) ministries/departments was commence in April 1998.

Reconciliation of Personnel Records

The government carries out an impact assessment of the various staff reduction measures notably VERS and natural attrition. The impact assessment revealed glaring weaknesses in the management of personnel information in the civil service.

Consequently, an exercise termed Reconciliation of Personnel Records (Head count) has been undertaken in all ministries/departments and the final report is expected by January,1998. The expected benefits from this exercise are:

- Rationalized and accurate payrolls of Ministries/ Departments;
- Marked improvement in the management of staff records;
- Availability of personnel data as inputs into the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Database (IPPD) system;
- Provision of data for the assessment of the nature and levels of skills in the civil service;
- Provision of an up-to-date record of staff deployment (by administrative/geographical region) and utilization of same in the civil service;
- Provision of an up-to-date record of working facilities in the civil service; and
- Ability to determine with a degree of accuracy the actual civil service strength.

Integrated Payroll and Personnel Database (IPPD) System

The government approved the introduction of an Integrated Payroll and Personnel Database (IPPD) System whose objective is to improve personnel information processing, storage, and retrieval. The System networks the three personnel functional areas namely; complement control, salaries and estimates in Ministries/Departments and connects ministries/departments to the Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM) and DPM to Government Computer Services (GCS). The IPPD system is being implemented in three phases, namely: system design and development; pilot/test run; and full implementation in the entire civil service.

The implementation of the first phase which involves the design and development of the system has been completed. It covered the following activities: problem definition; sensitization of the system users in ministries/ departments; user requirement analysis; system requirement analysis; acquisition of hardware and software for the pilot ministries; and system design and construction. The second (i.e., pilot) phase has started in six ministries undergoing Ministerial Rationalization and in the Directorate of Personnel Management. The activities under this phase include: design and implementation of the training program for system managers and operators; system testing; data conversion to IPPD System; data capture and cleansing; networking of complement control, salaries and estimates sections; and connecting the pilot ministries to DPM and DPM to Government Computer Services (GCS).

The third phase involving rolling on the IPPD system to the entire Civil Service was scheduled to commence in May, 1998. The expected benefits from the system are:

- Provision of prompt and accurate personnel information to the civil service managers for quick decision making;
- Provision of access and query facilities in ministries on bio-data of civil servants and on the state of either ministerial or service-wide establishment levels in order to allow production of ad-hoc reports;
- Networking complement control, salaries and estimates sections with a view to improving personnel data consistency, integrity and reliability;

- Elimination of chances for introducing irregular payments and unauthorized entries into the payroll;
- Production of reliable Personal Emoluments budgets; and
- The physical space currently used to keep the complement control cards and/or personal files will be freed for other uses.

Training and Capacity Building in the Civil Service

Since independence, the government has accorded human resource development a high priority. In this regard, the government has over the years allocated a substantial proportion of its annual budget to educate and training. However, as more development challenges continued to emerge, government priorities have been constantly reviewed. The budgetary allocations for the training of civil servants have been limited leaving the bulk of training to be donor funded.

In an attempt to supplement budgetary provisions for training, cost sharing measures have become necessary and have thus been introduced over a period of time. Specifically, those undergoing training have been required to contribute towards their own training expenses. The cost sharing measures which are in place include the 20 per cent training levy and direct fees.

The government civil service training policy and the institutional framework for conducting the training has been developed, over time, in three (3) different overlapping phases. During the 1960s, the government's main concern was institution building and Kenyanization of the civil service. The primary objective of the policy then was to quickly prepare a cadre of local administrators to take over from the departing colonial civil servants. The second phase covered the 1970's, when the government needed to change the civil service from a tool of maintaining law and order to that of realizing national development. The third phase covered the 1990's when the Government was faced with the challenges of consolidation and rationalization. We are now in the fourth phase, at which the Government is facing the challenges of declining productivity, low civil service morale, coupled with rising unemployment.

In the 1990s and beyond, training policy and capacity building for the civil service will need to address the following challenges:

- Over-establishment of some cadres in the civil service as a result of over- recruitment of pre-service trainees and lack of clearly defined staffing norms;
- Inadequate co-ordination of training activities resulting in duplication of effort in different training institutions as well as idle capacity in others;
- Minimal impact of training on the entire economy as a result of over-emphasis on public service training and less attention to the demands of the private sector;
- Increasing cost of training and the subsequent burden on the exchequer;
- Inadequate capacity and capability to undertake human resource development planning or to forecast the manpower needs of various branches of the entire economy;
- Inadequate capacity and capability to undertake effective training needs assessment in the civil service;
- Inadequate capacity and capability to evaluate various training programs in order to ensure that only relevant training is offered;
- The diminishing donor support for training, especially in-service training; and
- The inadequate capacity in the government training institutions to respond to the challenges created by the Civil Service Reform Program.

The government is addressing the above challenges under the on-going Civil Service Reform Program. The government policy on training for the 1990s and beyond will, therefore, have to encompass the following:

I. Recognizing the importance of the training function in government and providing adequate funding from the national budget to every ministry and department;

II. Strengthening mechanisms within the Directorate of Personnel Management, Ministries, Departments, the Provinces, and Districts as well as in the training institutions for adequate utilization of all available resources and physical facilities;

III. Ensuring that education and training programs provide the country with adequate skilled human resources for both the public and private sectors;

IV. Ensuring that periodic surveys on human resource requirements by the Directorate of Personnel Management are undertaken;

V. Introduction of an equitable cost sharing system within the training process; and

VI. Developing within the government a mechanism for direct financing of training activities from revenue generated through cost sharing.

VI. Pay and Benefits

Since the launching of the CSRP, the government has undertaken measures to improve terms and conditions of service for civil servants. For example:

- In 1994, the government monetized out-patient medical allowance which is paid monthly to all civil servants and is non-taxable. This allowance was raised by 50 per cent in 1995;
- In 1995, the government revised the rates of privately rented and owner-occupied house allowance payable to civil servants and approved an upward revision of 20 per cent and
- As one way of improving civil servants' morale and attracting and retaining competent staff in the service, the government approved salary increases as follows: 10 per cent to 30 per cent with effect from July, 1997; and 10 per cent across the board with effect from November 1997.

As a follow-up to the above-mentioned salary increases, the government is studying the Report of the 1996/97 Presidential Committee appointed to Review Terms and Conditions of Service for the civil service.

Performance Management

The performance management component of CSRP aims to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of civil servants in the performance of their duties through target setting and harmonizing organizational and individual objectives. Besides the revision of the performance evaluation instruments, training programs on performance management and target setting have been undertaken for twelve (12) ministries undergoing rationalization. This exercise will be continued until all ministries/departments are covered. Ministerial work plans and schedule of duties will also be revised with a view to making them more realistic. The intended benefits of these initiatives include:

- An objective performance appraisal system;
- Improved skills in performance management and target setting; and
- Clear schedule of duties and actionable work plans.

Financial Management

The financial management component of CSRP aims to promote and enhance efficiency, effectiveness, economy and accountability in the mobilization and allocation of budgetary resources in ministries/departments. To this end, studies conducted under the auspices of CSRP have revealed that the recurrent budget is skewed in favor of personal emoluments. This has resulted in decreasing amount of resources going into operations and maintenance. This has in turn contributed to lack of working tools, equipment and low productivity of civil servants. In view of these problems, a Task Force has been formed with the following Terms and Reference:

- Comparative analysis of pay levels and packages and development of a medium-term pay policy for civil servants;
- Analysis budget estimates and out-turns for personnel positions and expenditure;

- Evaluation of the impact of the rationalization program on the budget;

- Development of personnel and O&M (Operations and Maintenance) budgeting procedures;

- Development of retrenchment and pension policies and costing mechanisms;

- Cost savings through improved supplies management;

- Capacity building in budgeting and expenditure control; and

- Development of targets, time frames and action plans for improving civil service remuneration packages, improving operating and maintenance provisions and overall public sector employment adjustment program.

The Vision for the 21st Century

The prosperity of Kenya in the next decade and beyond will depend on the country's ability to embrace change and create a civil service that is capable of motivating every employee to attain the highest standards of efficiency and effectiveness. It will have to be a civil service that is capable of adopting a strategic integration approach to management, that is an approach made up of the following elements:

- Management of change;

- Performance management;

- Motivation of civil servants to understand their role and be responsible for their own personal development through learning;

- Development and retention of core skills in the civil service; and

- Commitment to common values.

The civil service of the 21st century will have to be one which recognizes, encourages and rewards good performance. This means that emphasis must shift towards *motivation* and leadership as opposed to *control* and *direction*. This new shift in personnel management requires that three conditions be fulfilled, namely:

- Investment in the development of Civil Servants;

- A new drive to raise skill levels and awareness of staff at all level across the service; and
- The creation of an environment that gives individual civil servants confidence and ability to be responsible for their own development through learning.

The civil servant of the next century will need to be fully aware of the developments in service, engineering and technology (especially information technology) sectors. Such a civil servant will inevitably have to be one who is *motivated enough to learn and upgrade his/her skills and knowledge to operate successfully in a rapidly changing environment.*

Conclusion

The success of the reform measures outlined in the preceding paragraphs can be measured using a number of bench marks, among them:

- Rationalization of government functions, to avoid overlap and duplication, the creation of smaller, better focussed, and more efficient units, and substantial decentralization of authority and transfer of resources to lower-level bodies;

- Establishment of staffing norms for all cadres, with significant implications on *establishment control and budgetary allocation*, especially for operations and maintenance. This should enhance the ability of the Government of Kenya to attract and retain high quality technical and managerial talent within the civil service:

- More efficient resource allocation;

- An increasingly competitive, performance-related, as well as sustainable pay and benefits package in the Civil Service;

- Recognition and compensation of high flyers and possible adoption of a high flyers' scheme;
- A code of ethics to deal with conflict interest and other types of ethical violations; and
- Adoption of a personnel management system in which recruitment, promotion, discipline and career-related decisions are based on objective criteria.

POLICY MANAGEMENT CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: FUTURE OPTIONS

F. O. Williams

Introduction

As the 20th century winds down, the approaching 21st century is viewed with hope in some regions of the world but with great foreboding in others. With the technological advance recorded in the recent past, and the strategies outlined to cope with future challenges, the developed countries tend to be upbeat about the outlook for the next century. In contrast, most African countries are still struggling to come to terms with the realities of the present. As such, they are hardly prepared for the challenges and the uncertainties of the 21st century. In any case, whether or not they are prepared, they cannot stop the match of time, and for that matter, the multiple and increasingly complex challenges of the next century. The question before the African continent is not whether, but *how,* to enter the new century. It can walk with confidence into the century, or be dragged by forces beyond its control.

We in Nigeria believe that a lot could still be achieved within the remaining years of this century. After all, the lessons learned from wasted efforts, the unrealized aspirations, the lost opportunities, and the limited achievements could be turned round to launch the African continent into the 21st century. How to achieve this herculean task is the focus of this paper.

The paper is divided into five sections. The first section focuses on factors affecting the development of the African continent. Section Two examines the African situation in the 20th century, and endeavors to identify the various constraints inhibiting the continent's progress, particularly, in the area of public sector management. Efforts made at removing the constraints are discussed in the third section. Section Four illustrates the African policy management dilemma with the Nigerian experience. Section Five concludes with suggestions on appropriate strategies to be adopted to accelerate the development of African countries in the 21st century.

I. Factors in African Development

How to engineer sustainable development has been Africa's major dilemma. The various countries' notions of 'development' have invariably determined their approaches to the development process. In situations where the concept was wrongly interpreted, there were bound to be unrealized aspirations. In rare situations where the concept had been realistically defined, we have witnessed some significant achievements. What then is the accepted meaning of the word, "development"?

It is generally agreed that the concept of development is elusive. Gant (1979:5) has argued convincingly that the concept is perceived not only as a condition of life but also as a goal to be attained, and as the capacity to grow, to change and make progress in some fairly well-defined areas. These three concepts of (growth, change, and capacity) are critical to our understanding of development. The conditions of underdevelopment are frequently reflected in terms of hunger and starvation, inadequate housing, the barest of clothing, and the shabby state of health care services.

It must be noted, however, that development is not an absolute condition. There is no fixed point at which a people, a region, or country can be said to have passed from a state of underdevelopment to a state of development. Viewed this way, development, takes a relative and ever changing form - it fluctuates according to what is needed, what is desired and what is achievable giving the prevailing circumstances. It should also be noted that development potential increases with the growth and application of knowledge and technology.

A country which fails to meet the expectations of its population may be said to be undeveloped. These expectations are a function of access to information, particularly, information about the conditions prevailing within a country and without. Development is in any case relative to the aspirations of the people and to how these aspirations are defined and with what determination they are pursued.

Capacity is another concept that is crucial to our understanding of development. In the private and the public sectors, capacity may be viewed as the cluster of systems, methods, processes, and activities by which development policies, programs and projects are carried out to accomplish the specific goals of development. It is thus one thing to articulate development goals, but quite another to have the institutionsthat are endowed with the necessary technical and managerial "know-how". That is not all. The capacity to develop includes the will, the motivation and the entrepreneurial as well as technical competence of the individual human beings operating the institutions. In fact, no matter how well structured the institutions are, development cannot take place in the absence of individuals capable of engaging in risk-taking activities and implementing decisions that have beneficial impact on the life of the people. Development, therefore, can be measured in terms of the delivery systems, and the capacity that exists in the social, economic, and political institutions. Processes and capacity which are effective and responsive should take people where they choose to go.

It is now generally agreed that people's wellbeing should be at the centre of the development effort. This is what prompts Lakshmanan (1982) to observe that improving the living condition of the citizenry is the central focus of the development concept.

Development goals must thus be defined in terms of the progressive reduction and eventual elimination of malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, squalor, unemployment and inequalities. Joseph La Palombara's view on the development concept throws more light on the prevailing conventional wisdom. He sees development as "self-sustained growth; a continuous process of growth which is produced by forces within the system and which is absorbed by the system. It is the ability to absorb varieties and changing types of political demands and organization" (La Palombara, 1967).

The preceding observations are pertinent to the theme of this Roundtable conference. The unhappy situation in which the African continent still finds itself at the dawn of the 21st century compels a critical review of past strategies and the mapping out of a willed future. The task becomes particularly urgent when viewed against the experience of the developed economies in which, among other things, strategies have already been outlined to exploit the resources of outer space. Africa cannot afford to allow the train of progress to leave it behind. Even with international goodwill, the basic responsibility for raising the living standards of its people still lies with it. This is the essence of the strategy of sustainable development advocated in this paper. However, as the next section indicates, implementing the strategy successfully requires that we appreciate the nature of, as a steps towards eliminating, the past constraints.

II. The 20th Century and Africa's Development Constraints

It is necessary to state from the beginning that the economic problems of African countries could not be blamed solely or entirely on colonialism. While colonialism can be said to account for Africa's initial development setbacks, the experiences of such countries as Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, the 'Asian Tigers', and four decades of independence are enough to put to rest the bogey of colonialism.

According to Gant (1979:6) among the urgent tasks which faced the new African states at independence are the following:

(a) Creating nation-states out of diverse and disparate social, tribal, and ethnic groups in the population.

(b) Devising a system to translate the aspirations and demands of the population into viable policies and programs.

(c) Correcting inequalities and injustice in the society.

(d) Recruiting and training personnel to operate institutions responsible for initiating and managing development programs and projects.

It goes without saying that independence fuelled expectations of economic and social progress, and sustainable development. Democracy, good governance, respect for human rights, commitment to justice and the rule of law – all these were part of the dream of the immediate post-independence period. Unfortunately, the capacity to attain the lofty economic and political ideals was lacking. This lack of capacity explains the gap between the initial high expectations and the subsequent performance shortfalls. Despite the determined efforts of national governments and external donor agencies over the past four decades, the development objectives have remained largely unrealized.

The disappointing performance of African countries since independence notwithstanding, the past forty or so years cannot be totally dismissed as wasted years. Visible progress has been achieved in specific sectors such education, health transportation, communications, and small-scale manufacturing. However, where progress was achieved, it has proved difficult to sustain.

Several factors account for this, among them, defective macro-economic policies, inadequate technological and scientific know-how, and shortage of financial resources. The failure to achieve sustainable development objectives is reflected in the depth and severity of the economic crisis facing African countries over the past two decades.

The contemporary economic crisis in African countries has prompted the adoption of new economic management measures. Thus at the instance of the IMF and the World Bank, and with the backing of multilateral institutions and donor agencies, a number of African countries began in the 1970s and the 1980s to implement stringent Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs). The main elements of the policy reform are trade liberalization, currency devaluation, elimination of subsidies and price controls, privatization of public enterprises, and reduction in the size of government.

After taking into account the experience of various countries under structural adjustment, the emerging consensus is that the implementation of the program is not a sufficient condition for economic recovery. It is now agreed that the prospect for economic recovery and sustainable development hinges on human and institutional capacity. It is increasingly stressed that capacity building in all sectors is necessary to meet the challenges of sustainable development. All African governments and donor communities are therefore currently intensifying their capacity building efforts by implementing projects on human resource development, and the revitalization of macro-economic and sectoral institutions.

An area where additional emphasis is required is that of policy analysis and management. There is need to enhance the capacity of the public service to analyze policy options, to advise government on new strategic directions, and to manage programs effectively and efficiently.

III. The Need for Capacity Building in Policy Analysis and Management

The capacity for the analysis and management of public policy is accepted as a necessary pre-condition for sustainable development. Even if the substance of policy is sound, relevant, and appropriate, it will remain unrealized if capacity for public policy management is low. If this capacity exists both in quantity and quantity, then there will be available competence to analyze, formulate, implement, evaluate, and review public policies.

While the need for capacity building in the policy management process is accepted, there is no consensus on the aspect of the policy process that should be accorded greater focus. So far, three approaches to capacity building have been articulated. One is the approach favoured by the European Centre of Development Policy Management which is more task-specific. It regards the entire area of development policy management as one in which capacity was needed. Second is the approach of the African Capacity Building Foundation which places emphasis on the development of capacity in the area of economic policy and its management. Finally, there is the approach of the African Association of the African Association of Public Administration and Management which sees a close link between policy management capacity and the implementation of sustainable development goals. AAPAM's approach is comprehensive and focuses on all functions associated with the policy process – e.g., options identification, information management, impact and cost-benefit analysis, institution design, management improvement, and human resource management.

Focus On the Human Capacity

The area in which AAPAM could play a leading role is that of human capacity development. The focus of activity in this area should be the design of a comprehensive training program which views the policy process as a cluster of interrelated activities directed towards a specific goal. This comprehensive approach is expected to strengthen both institutional and human capacity in order to enhance the impact and cost-effectiveness of public policy. In specific terms, the approach will develop in public officials, the competence to identify environmental opportunities and threats, construct and test scenarios, propose strategic options, analyze the costs and benefits of courses of action, assess strengths and weaknesses of institutions (including the supporting rules and regulations), and implement change management projects. As the bureaucracy of the 21st century will be expected to build partnerships with external actors, the program should further target the participants' public/customer relations and coalition building skills. Above all, the skills needed to set targets, monitor performance, raise standards, and eliminate obstacles to improved service delivery should be developed.

The Institutional Dimension

In addition to human capacity, there is need to establish or strengthen the institutions responsible for the different aspects of public policy – e.g. interest articulation and aggregation, agenda setting, analyses of options and consequences, consensus building, policy/legislative drafting, policy adoption, implementation, monitoring, and review. Some of these functions will undoubtedly be carried out by bodies external to the civil service. The interest articulation and aggregation role, for instance, belongs within the province of political parties, lobby groups, professional associations, and civil society organizations. How effective these institutions will be in performing the role will depend to a large extent on the resources they set aside for policy analytic and strategic planning studies. The chambers of commerce, for instance, cannot make useful inputs into the industrial policy or budget formulation process unless they have adequately researched the issues and come up with information and proposals which no serious-minded government can ignore.

With specific reference to the civil service, the quality of public policy and of its implementation will be greatly enhanced if systematic arrangements for the analysis and review of policy are instituted in place of ad hoc, hit-or-miss approaches. This is probably the rationale behind AAPAM's advocacy of policy analysis and review units (PARUs) as an integral part of the policy formulation and implementation process in government (Shellukindo, 1992). Based on the conclusions reached at a series of seminars on policy management, AAPAM recommended the establishment of units which would, among other things, undertake in-depth as well as multi-disciplinary analyses of sector and macro-economic policies, propose new strategic options, and utilize outside resources as occasion warranted. As information is critical to the success of public policy, the unit would be required to install and operate a system capable of storing, retrieving, and up-dating data on the appropriate subjects.

IV. Policy Management Constraints: A Review of Nigeria's Experience

It is obvious that the public sector cannot face the challenge of sustainable development alone, that is, without the support of the private sector and of civil society at large. It should, however, be noted that the success of the private sector in discharging its own role depends to a large extent on how far it is able to promote innovation and, in the process, enhance its international competitiveness in the areas of product design, packaging and pricing. Besides, if the African countries' industrial manufacturing objectives are to be achieved, it is essential that the indigenous private sector take steps to transform itself from the net importer (or consumer) of capital which it currently is, into a net exporter of goods and services which its counterparts in the Newly Industrializing Countries are.

In adopting measures aimed at increasing the manufacturing value-added and productivity, the private sector will itself need the support of the public sector. For one thing, productivity drives in the private sector will yield little or no results if the public sector sets a bad example through the retention of cumbersome, time-consuming, and stifling procedures (Balogun, 1997). But even more important than the "demonstration effect" of public service efficiency is the destructive impact of such inefficiency on private sector performance. This underscores the importance of measures aimed at enhancing the policy management capacity of the civil service.

Within the specific context of Nigeria, public sector performance has proved to be a restraining factor in private sector development. Evidence in support of this conclusion is provided by the persistently low efficiency levels attained in the delivery of services hitherto considered a monopoly of the public sector (Balogun, 1997). These services may be grouped under the following headings:

(a) **Law enforcement and security:** This is a subject which has received the attention of succeeding governments in Nigeria, particularly, because of its direct impact on personal security and on the will to invest in the economy. The "combat-readiness", alertness, and the integrity and professional ethos of law-enforcement agencies/ officials are thus relevant to discussions on the country's strategic thrusts.

(b) **Enforcement of regulations and controls:** From time to time, government deems it necessary to regulate individual and group behaviour for the good of the public. In the area of immigration, there are the visitors'/tourist visas, employment permits, and residence authorizations. There are also regulations, ordinances or bye-laws requiring corporate bodies and/or individuals to register their businesses with designated public agencies, observe environmental standards, tender tax clearance/payment certificates before enjoying certain privileges, and conduct their affairs as prescribed by the laws of the land. The courtesy displayed by the enforcers of the various regulations, the promptness with which they attend to members of the public, and the cost effectiveness of the regulatory regime can affect private sector development for good or ill.

(c) **Tax and Revenue Collection:** Another category of "service" which brings the public sector in direct contact with private citizens and corporate bodies is tax and revenue administration. There is therefore a necessity to establish customer-oriented standards like courtesy, timeliness and promptness of service delivery, customer comfort in the location and layout of service centres, and establishment of one-stop, time-and-cost-saving procedures.

(d) **Provision of Incentive Schemes:** This is a service the efficient administration of which is likely to spur private sector growth. Examples are tax holidays, visa exemptions, limited or unrestricted rights of residence and establishment, duty free access to the domestic market, and provision of infrastructure amenities.

(e) **Institutional Support/Back-up:** The public service could also facilitate private entrepreneurship development through the provision of technical advice and information on investment opportunities at home and abroad, local and overseas business contacts, the working of the investment code, capital market operations, credit and financing options, research and development possibilities, product design, packing and distribution, and international market competition strategies.

(f) **Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Development:** The thrust of efforts in this area is towards the development of air, road, and sea linkages, with particular reference to the improvement of airport operations, the rehabilitation of road networks, and the upgrading of berthing and port handling facilities. The establishment and management of Export Processing Zones (EPZs) should also be given due consideration.

(g) **Fuels and Lubricants for the "Engine of Growth"**: If the private sector is to function properly as an "engine of growth", it needs to be powered by an adequate supply of energy, and maintained with top-grade lubricants. Unfortunately, the agencies responsible for the supply of energy (National Electric Power Authority, and the petroleum refineries), and for keeping the component parts of the private sector machine in good working condition (Nigeria Postal Service/NIPOST, Nigerian Telecommunications Company/ NITEL, and the water supply under- takings managed by the federal and state governments) have to-date proved inadequate to the challenge.

(h) **Social Welfare:** As a result of the implementation of structural adjustment reforms, budget allocations to the social sector (health, education, rural and urban water supply) were drastically reduced. Yet, unless investment in human capital is accorded the importance it deserves, measures geared towards sustainable development will not entirely succeed.

V. Conclusion

There is no doubt that the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in the areas mentioned above hinge very much on the elimination of policy, institutional, management, and attitudinal weaknesses. Indeed, meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century and attaining national strategic objectives requires that policy, institutional, and management reforms, and in particular the reform of work-related culture, be instituted. Among the specific measures that need to be undertaken in anticipation of future challenges are:

i) **Policy Analysis, Formulation, and Review:** The key questions here are: Where are we with regard to the scope and adequacy of the different classes of services? What are the constraining factors? How can we eliminate barriers to growth? In how many ways can each service be offered with maximum impact at minimum cost? What are the costs and benefits of the various alternative service delivery modalities? What should be the balance between public and private contribution to the supply and administration/management of each service? What financing and cost-sharing options should be explored? How can government's tendering and contract arrangements be re-oriented towards the development of indigenous capacity in fields such as civil and mechanical engineering, water and irrigation development, energy generation and distribution, manufacture of transport and communications spare-parts/ components?

ii) **Institution Review and Revitalization:** Within the public sector, which agency is best equipped to handle which category of services? What is the optimum level of autonomy that the agency should enjoy in financial resource allocation, personnel management, and contract awards? What should be the vertical and horizontal links between and among public sector agencies? In how many ways can duplication and inter-agency conflict be avoided? What measures should be instituted to ensure the accountability of each agency to the tax payers, to their "customers", and, if necessary, to central government authorities? How frequently should each agency's Mission Statement be up-dated?

iii. **Improvement of Management Practices:** How does each manager approach his/her leadership role? How does he/she reconcile formal organizational goals with individual expectations? Does he/she set performance standards, train his/her subordinates on the job, mentor/ guide faltering staff members, focus on tasks and productivity, regard staff motivation as essential to the success of the organization? How frequently does he/she review work process, the lay out of work places, and design of forms, that is, with an eye on "customer satisfaction"? Does he/she know what actually goes on behind the service counter? Dose he/she make it his/her business to know? What institutional mechanisms has he/she developed to monitor performance, sift through customer complaints, and control cases of corruption within his/her unit? Where does he/she stand in intra-organisational conflicts? Does he stand as an impartial arbiter and organizational unifier, or as a faction leader and/or member?

iv. **Attitude change and cultural reform:** What factors shape the attitude and orientation of the average public servant? What policy, institutional, and managerial measures need to be instituted to curb the incidence of in- attentiveness to duty, conflict of interest, and corruption? How can anti-corruption gains be sustained over time?

Finding realistic and credible answers to the preceding questions requires the design and implementation of a comprehensive program of capacity building, a program that targets policies, institutions, management practices, and, above all, that critical factor in the development of civilizations - the human factor (Balogun, 1997)

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BOOK REVIEW

Feminist Debates: Issues of Theory and Political Practice,
by Valerie Bryson, London, Macmillan, 1999, pp. 267

As a newcomer to the field of gender studies, the reviewer is greatly handicapped. He is neither an authority on the language, nor a participant in the politics, of feminism. He is, however, fortunate to have access to a book that addresses not only the established scholar's concern for rigour, insight and meaning, but also the beginner's need for tutorial assistance.

The book in question is Valerie Bryson's **Feminist Debates** which succeeds in combining erudition with a step-by-step guide for novices in the area of gender. A number of questions - some of them fundamental - remain unanswered. This, however, has nothing to do with the focus or the depth of Bryson's analysis. The problem, as any discerning reader of this admirable book will discover, lies at the root of the subject variously referred to as feminism, gender, women studies, and women empowerment.

The first and second chapters of the book take the reader through the constantly changing and sometimes perplexing routes of feminism to the core gender issues and concepts. A point that comes out clearly in these two chapters is the diversity in approaches to feminism. Instead of a coherent and logically consistent body of knowledge, feminism emerges at best, as a field desperately looking for a theoretical anchor, at worst, a loosely defined creed that appeals to adherents of sharply conflicting persuasions.

Bryson's analysis in particular highlights the identity crisis that would need to be surmounted to promote a healthy dialogue on the subject. She also notes that the crisis is not likely to be resolved any time soon. How, for instance, does one bridge the divide between on the one hand, those who affirm the possibility of 'truth' and 'reason', and, on the other, the skeptics? Indeed, it is only in the feminist field that unlikely coalitions would appear to have been forged, e.g., between positivists and negativists, moral absolutists and linguistic analysts (post-modern relativists), neo-liberals and structuralists, individualistic free-market advocates and state interventionists. Suffice it to say that the gender-based alliance has been characterized by tension. Even more worrying is the fact that the diverse orientations among feminists may find refuge in the analysis of a single feminist who is then left with the unenviable task of reconciling the irreconcilable.

This indeed is the challenge with which Bryson herself has had to wrestle. From the cacophony of feminist voices, she attempts to flag the unifying themes. Yet what passes for a convergence of views - male dominance and oppression - is, as she concedes, still a hotly debated subject. The controversy among feminists becomes even more difficult to resolve when the topic changes to the action to take to "put an end" to patriarchy and its "disagreeable" features. Feminist ideas abound as to how to topple men from leadership positions, but to-date, none enjoys a ringing or universal endorsement. Some of the options so far identified by feminists tend to be mutually contradictory – e.g., the banishment of hierarchy, granting women equal access to hierarchical power, subversion of the institution of marriage and the male-centred norms of marital fidelity, censorship of pornographic material, unilateral declaration of sexual independence, adoption of alternative lifestyles, and implementation of affirmative action policies.

Bryson introduces another dimension in chapter 3 when she flags the issues of race and class. She explores the ways in which gender might conflict with the considerations of race and class. She confirms what policy analysts have known all along - i.e., that an affirmative action meant to redress one wrong - gender inequality - might produce another form of oppression – racial inequity.

Chapter 4 focuses on the legal angle. It specifically questions whether the law could be used to achieve feminist goals or whether the law is by its nature biased in favour of men. While arguing that uncritical pursuit of legal equality could be counter-productive, the book concludes that "feminist engagement with the law can produce important practical results."

The issues of politics and political organization are discussed in chapter 5. It is in this chapter that the author eloquently dispels the notion that the state is essentially and monolithically patriarchal. According to her, state welfare could be "provided in forms that empower women and enable them to live as independent citizens, rather than as economic dependants."

Chapter 6 (on the family and paid employment) asks whether demands for equal career opportunities are really what women want. Proceeding from the underlying premises that gender-based favouritism demeans the candidature of otherwise qualified women (besides standing the "concept of fairness on its head"), the chapter places great emphasis on changes in employment practices and family life. In particular, women would like to see the adoption of family-friendly employment policies, the abolition of informal networks by recruitment bodies, the use of open advertisements coupled with the adoption of genuinely transparent selection practices, and the amendment of rules that deny women promotion prospects because of family-induced career breaks.

Chapter 8 turns attention to pornography and questions whether sexual orientations and practices are purely personal matters which should be left to the individual, and whether heterosexuality is inherently part of men's elaborate design to enslave and oppress women.

The last chapter must have been added as an after-thought. It focuses on the "the man question." This chapter is significant not for what it says about men, but what it leaves out. While conceding the possibility that men might be oppressed, its central concern is the oppression of women. It thus fails to explore the mutual and reciprocal relationships between the two sides of the gender divide.

In general, this is a book that must not escape the attention of those taking gender related decisions. It is further recommended to students and researchers in the area of women studies.

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Government by The Market? The Politics of Public Choice
by Peter Self, London, Macmillan Press Ltd, 1993, pp 303

During the last few years a powerful new paradigm has been dominating the thinking of governments all over the world. This paradigm holds that governments should in general do less; that they should reduce or relinquish their involvement in economic activities; that they should privatize the public enterprises and public services; and that they should restructure their economies and administrative machinery in accordance with market concepts of competition and efficiency. These beliefs rest upon the propositions that the market system is inherently superior to a system based on central planning and government intervention.

This book discusses the intellectual foundations of these ideas in the context of countries like Britain and USA (particularly during the Thatcher and Reagan years). It examines the numerous public policies that have been and are being followed in the Western world within the framework of these ideas to reduce the scope, range and costs of government and to drastically change the methods of public administration and service delivery.

The book discusses the respective capacities of the market and political systems to satisfy individual wants and aspirations and the impact of market ideology upon public policies. Following this discussion, it points out how the market theories fail to offer any tenable concept of the "public interest" or to satisfy basic criteria of individual rights and social justice. The author attempts to search for a new policy paradigm that could enable democratic governments to realize social values which markets cannot satisfy.

He draws our attention to a political issue which is now crucial for the life and future of democratic societies: how far must or should significant social goals be sacrificed in order to comply with the criteria of economic efficiency imposed by the workings of the international market system? One lesson from this work, according to the author himself, is that "governments, whether acting individually or collectively, need to recover more room for manoeuvre in the service of social goals".

Although this book by Peter Self (Emeritus Professor of Public Administration, London School of Economics where he taught for over thirty years) will be of interest to all those concerned about current world problems, the senior public servants and policy makers in Africa should find it particularly enlightening, as the discussion of major political and economic issues undertaken in this book is of great relevance to their continuing concern for redefining the role of the state, restructuring of government machinery and redefining the state-market relationship in the context of economic as well as political and social considerations. The students of politics and economics will get further insight into the "public choice" school perspective (which can be seen as application of economics to political science) in the analysis of public policies.

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