

Public Sector Reforms in Africa: A Collection of Essays

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Abstract

This paper provides a compendium of public sector reform in Africa in an analytical and prescriptive manner. It examines the idea of reform and public service reform in Africa up till its recent framework, and showcases institutional framework for making reform, as well as studies on reform experiences and relevant information on best practices, challenges and strategies for improving public sector management performance. This paper employed stratified sampling technique. Africa was stratified alongside its five (5) regions, thereby selecting one (1) country from each of the regions. It relied extensively on secondary sources of data by drawing from documentary sources, such as: books, journals, publications and reports which give official views of reform initiatives and processes in the five (5) selected countries. The generated qualitative data were utilized with the aid of content analysis. This paper revealed the three (3) prominent phases of reform in Africa vis-à-vis its objectives, assumptions, features, strategies, achievements and challenges. It therefore concluded that organizational mechanisms such as decentralization, privatization and performance management should be adopted as reformative measures with a view to improving the responsiveness of governments to public concerns; improving the quality of public goods and services; increasing the efficiency of service delivery; as well as promoting accountability and ethical values.

Key words: Reform; Public sector; Public sector reform; New public management; Good governance

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INTRODUCTION

Public sector, according to Fatile and Adejuwon (2010), has always been the tool available to African governments for the implementation of developmental goals and objectives. It is seen as a pivot for growth of African economies. It is responsible for the creation of an appropriate and conducive environment in which all sectors of the economy can perform optimally, and its basic function, as noted by Haque (2002), is to provide goods and services to citizens based on the “realization and representation of public interests and its possession of unique public qualities compared to business management. Most African countries gained their independence respectively in the 1950s and 1960s. Prior to this period, public sector management in Africa was based on the whims and caprices of respective colonial masters in the numerous colonies. However, the pre-colonial era had no available account of reforms, nevertheless, problems faced were traditionally solved. Thus, since the late 1950s and 1960s, the public sector in most African states has generally been regarded as pivotal to promote socio-economic development.

At the independence, the public sector was not able to perform effectively because of accumulation of excessive power, lack of accountability and representation, indifference towards public needs and demands, official secrecy and inaccessibility, and role in depoliticizing the public sphere (Garnham, 1990; Haque, 1994). This ineffectiveness, coupled with the economic crises of the late 1970s and 1980s, and apparent lessons from international experience of the success of market-friendly

economies, have combined to produce, what some have referred to, as the “redefinition of the role of the state or public sector” (Fiszbein, 2000, p.163).

As a result, earlier public sector reforms aimed at shaping a public administration that could lead to national development, and was based on the same institutional peculiarities inherited from the colonial period (Economic Commission for Africa, 2004). Remarkably, it is important to state that the earlier reforms seem time-bound due to quick resurface of other governmental challenges largely by world-wide decline in public finances and the need “to get more for less” (Caiden, 1988, p.332). The unjust international economic system and persistent public pressures for increased government intervention to reverse the situation have forced governments in Africa and other developing countries to adopt temporary measures. These have resulted in large-scale borrowing, unprecedented public debt, high rates of inflation, frequent currency devaluations, and harsh policies imposed under the pressure of the World Bank and IMF (Hicks & Kubisch, 1984). Governments have had to reduce expenditure on staff, investments and services, and to demand higher productivity and better performance from their sluggish public sectors.

Also, earlier reforms, as an effort to improve African countries’ positions in the emerging world economy, forced governments in Africa and other developing countries to redefine their roles and strategies. In doing so, other problems emanated almost which all have its blames on the “dead hand” of bureaucracy: the poor performance of public bureaucracies, the daily annoyances of irksome restrictions, cumbersome red tape, unpleasant officials, poor service and corrupt practices. The “dead hand” of bureaucracy was to be replaced by a new invigorating concept of public management (World Bank, 1997); coupled with the fact that some African countries began to face political instability owing to *coup d’etat*—just to mention, but the emergence of military administration in Africa, at inception, posed to be a challenge in public administration, however, turned out to have positive effects on the development of some African countries, for example, Ghana, Libya, Nigeria and Egypt.

In the 1980s, the World Bank and other donors in Africa have been concerned with finding alternative ways of organizing and managing the public services and redefining the role of the State to give more prominence to markets and competition, and to the private and voluntary sectors. This informed the popular Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which is based on issues of efficiency, representation, participation and accountability, and sought to create a market-friendly, liberalized, lean, decentralized, customer-oriented, managerial and democratic State in African countries (Economic Commission for Africa, 2004).

Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) is the first ubiquitous reformative measure in Africa due to its large adoption by most prominent African countries, for example, Nigeria, South Africa (in 1990s), Ghana, Tunisia etc. in the context of SAP, civil service reforms were initiated in most African countries among other sector reforms which all formed an integral part of SAP in 1980s (Dia, 1993). The first generation of reforms was merely focused on reducing the public expenditures. The main objectives were to limit the role of the state, to retrench civil servants, and to bring down the size of the wage bill (Osaghae, 1995). During these first generation reforms, it appeared that too much attention was given to financial measures and the reduction of the size of the civil service, while too little attention was given to questions regarding the role of the state and the need for a (qualitative) service delivery. The second generation of civil service reforms, therefore, was focused on reducing the costs of the civil service as well as increasing its quality. The main objectives were professionalisation of staff, transparent and performance-related personnel policies and the improvement of the service delivery (Osaghae, 1995).

Despite the tremendous efforts and resources allocated to SAP reforms in the 1980s, little progress has been made, and many African countries have not come close to their goal of developing and transforming their societies to the same standards as developed countries. Effective health services, education and housing still remain out of reach for many communities. With a few exceptions of successful cases (Botswana and Libya, for example), public sector management remains at a lethargic stage in the 1980s (Economic Commission for Africa, 2004).

The deterioration of public administration in African countries, however, went on *pari passu* with the deterioration of the economy, which to a large extent was caused by the same set of factors like the growth of the public sector in response to political pressure for social services expansion and development following independence, the politicising of both the civil service and macro-economic management, the growing public debt and the decline in budget revenues, etc, all combined to worsen the African public sectors (Lawanson & Babatunde, 2013).

In the 1990s, there was agitation for decolonization and democratic governance in Africa by prominent countries in the continent—this could be exemplified by fighting against apartheid policy and the independence of South African in 1994. At this time, Africa was at the lowest ebb as a result of poor infrastructure, malfunctioning public utilities, a high level corruption, general waste, inefficient state enterprises, soaring inflation and a high unemployment level (NEEDS, 2004). Recognising these failures, the government took a drastic step and embarked on fundamental changes encapsulated in its various reform programmes, most especially, anti-

corruption strategy. Larbi (2003) noted that the past decade has seen the application of some of these practices in some developing and transitional economies. These techniques and practices have been collectively referred to as the New Public Management (NPM). The New Public Management reform trends have been driven by a combination of factors such as: pressure for socio-political and economic, Public attitudes and increasing criticisms as well as growth and use of new information technology. Larbi (2003) described New Public Management as the response to the pressures for change in various African countries which is in different stages, such as: rethinking and reshaping government and its role; restructuring and repositioning organisations; redesigning and improving service delivery; reframing systems of performance and accountability; and revitalising human resource capacity and organisational performance. As observed, New Public Management captures recent trends in African public sector reform agenda. Ferlie et al. (1996) referred to New Public Management as rising body of managerial thought, which Politt (1990) has characterized as an ideological thought system based on ideas generated in the private sector and imported into public sector organisations. The New Public Management is not a homogenous whole, but consists of varieties of practices and techniques. Thus, a major preoccupation of the on-going government reforms, according to Lawanson and Babatunde (2013), is to restore professionalism of the civil service and ensure effective service delivery.

This paper becomes significant based on its intent to provide an in-depth information on the reform experiences of African countries and illustrate how such experiences have helped African countries to improve public sector performance and enhance the effectiveness of the delivery of services as well as examining studies on reform experiences and providing relevant information on best practices, challenges and strategies for improving public sector management performance. It is against this backdrop that this paper provides a collection of essays on public sector reform programmes in Africa. This paper is divided into ten (10) sections, following this introduction. Section two deals with the methodology, namely, sources of data collection and reasons for the choice of the five countries in African as fields of this study. Section three defines the five major concepts or terms used in the study. It is designed to enable the reader gets a clearer picture of the trajectories and dynamics of public sector reform in Africa. Section four outlines theoretical driver of public sector reform initiatives in Africa. Section five analyses the public sector reforms vis-à-vis its broad rationale, trends and status quo of the subject matter in each of the selected five (5) countries. Section six provides phases of public sector reforms in Africa alongside its assumptions, features, and its objectives. Section seven itemizes the strategies of public sector reforms in Africa. Section eight highlights challenges to public sector reforms in

Africa. Section nine forecasts the future of African public sector reform. Section ten contains recommendations and conclusions.

1. METHODOLOGY

This paper relied extensively on secondary sources of data. First, this paper amasses the literature on public sector reforms in Africa, by selecting the five countries, namely: Nigeria, Kenya, Guinea, Tunisia and South Africa to enable analysis of the trends, processes, relevance, major phases and strategies, challenges as well as future implications. Secondly, it draws on documentary sources such as books, journals, publications and reports which give official views of reform initiatives and processes in the five countries. The generated qualitative data were utilized through content analysis.

The rationale behind the selected five countries was instructive by employing stratified sampling technique. Africa was stratified alongside its five regions namely: Northern, Southern, Western, Eastern and Central Africa Regions. Thus, each region represents a stratum in which balloting system was used to select one country at a random in each region. Tunisia represents Northern region; Namibia is chosen in the Southern region; Nigeria represents Western region; Kenya in Eastern region; and Guinea in the Central Africa region.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents a review of relevant concept derived from extensive review of previous researches and analysis of scholarly works. The review of the literatures covers the concept of Reform, Public Sector, Public Sector Reform, New Public Management, and Good Governance with special focus on Africa.

2.1 Reform

Since the 1960s, reform was very popular and was aimed at the transformation of third world bureaucracies to enable them to accommodate new development demands (Olowu, 1992). Caiden (1969, p.6) argues that the old colonial bureaucracy with its rigid Max Weber-type of administration could not supply the needs of the post colonial state, therefore the third world bureaucracies had to be reformed in such a way that they would be capable of playing a leading role in the more intensive social reform and in the unstoppable changes which third world communities had to undergo, hence reform programmes have been the most popular devices for improved public administration both in developed and developing countries (Anazodo et al, 2012).

However, attempts have been made by various scholars over the years to define the term reform but without much success. Farazmand (1999, p.806) explains that there is a lack of consensus among scholars on the

meaning of reform, arguing that it means one thing to politicians and another to administrators and academic scholars. This entails that reform has different meanings in the different nations with different political systems. Farazmand (1999, p.806) defines reform in developing countries as “attempts to modernize and change society by using the administrative system as an instrument for social and economic transformation”. Farazmand (1999, p.806) further defines reform in developed nations as “a process of changes in administrative structures or procedures within the public services because they have become out of line with the expectations of the social and political environment”.

However, Bayat and Meyer (1994, p.250) defines reform as efforts to induce fundamental changes in public administration systems through system-wide reforms or at least through measures for the improvement of one or more of its key elements. Wallis (1989, p.170) contends that reform means induced, permanent improvement in administration. On the other hand, C. Zhang and M. Zhang (2001, p.4) describes reform as a process whereby government adjusts its internal and external environment change by redesigning and reinventing its culture, function, structure, procedure and its management style for the purpose of enhancing effectiveness of its governance.

In conclusion, although literature has shown that there is no universally accepted definition of reform, there is fundamental agreement among scholars of public administration that reform is meant to improve administrative capability and capacity, particularly in the developing countries, for the purpose of achieving national goals effectively. Anazodo et al. (2012) concurs and posits that reform is intended to enhance the administrative capacity of public administration which is considered a scarce commodity and, almost universally, a limiting factor in the achievement of national development goals. Caiden (1969, p.65) echoes this statement saying reform is meant to enhance and increase the quality of public services and deliver such goals and services to citizens more economically, efficiently and effectively. In other words, it is meant to encourage an effective administration capable of bringing about economic, political and social development. Furthermore, it is essential to explain why reforms are embarked upon and developed in African public administration so as to provide a clearer understanding of this concept.

2.2 Why Reform in Africa

Public administration in Africa is the principal state machinery to implement the public policies and to carry out the activities of the national development. Therefore, an efficient, effective, competent, transparent, and accountable civil service can only work to achieve the goal of national development. However, public administration in Africa is generally criticized for

being too complex, centralized, bureaucratic, rigid, and incompetent (Brunsson & Olsen, 1993, p.15).

Bureaucrats are also criticized for sitting on files, delaying in decision-making, and adhering to rules and regulations. Therefore, there should be continued reforms in the public sector to overcome these malpractices. According to Pollitt and Geert (2000, p.6), reform is necessary for improving quality of public services, making the operations of government more efficient, implementing public policies effectively and making public expenditure cost effective.

Reform is necessary in an organization for its adaptation in the changed environment. Therefore, it is a continuous process and is undertaken in order to work in the changed context, time and public demand. Reform is a means to make the administrative system a more effective instrument for maintaining equality, bringing justice and for creating economic growth (Turner & Hulme, 1997, p.106). There is widespread agreement among governments regarding the need to reshape the public sector in order to increase efficiency and improve public services (Brunsson & Olsen, 1993, p.27). Therefore, reform is necessary for bringing change in established bureaucratic practices, behaviours, and structures.

2.3 The Development of Reform in Africa

Olowu (1992) states that there are two determinants which initiate the process of reform in developing countries. Firstly, when the functioning of the bureaucracy becomes such a problem that political leaders cannot make their influence felt, they will bring about change. Secondly, political leaders introduce reform when the risk of not retaining the existing power base is too great.

Zhang et al. (2001, p.4) state that reform is initiated when governance cannot meet social, political, economic, environmental change or citizen expectations. In addition to these, Caiden (1969, p.131) outlines the following circumstances that would give rise to reform:

- When the existing administrative structures and functions are unable to satisfy the demands of the society;
- When they are not capable of satisfying additional demands and services, although adequately satisfying present demands;
- When the administration is powerless to meet the demands of the future. This problem is particularly inclined to crop up when changed circumstances have an unexpected impact on the administrative system and provision has not been made for the development; and
- When the administrative system has not adopted the latest procedures and is not adapting to new demands and procedures.

Caiden (1969, p.131) identifies the above aspects as the phase of need-consciousness and will therefore be a phase leading to the initiation of reform. The fundamental

objective of reform is the improvement of administration. Caiden (1969, p.136) states that in the majority of instances, reform is tackled in order to solve structural problems in the bureaucracy. Administrative rigidity has often been the main factor giving rise to reform programmes.

In conclusion, it can be deduced that reform is initiated in order to overcome the numerous anomalies and undesirable elements which hinder the institutionalization of the modern managerial system in the public sectors around the world.

2.4 Public Sector

The public sector has become a commonplace term since the end of the Second World War in 1945. Partly because of the expansion of governmental activity; and partly because it is associated with a socialist attitude to economic and social activity that is positive and directional, as distinct from the laissez-faire approach of individual self interest, which is conventionally associated with private enterprise. The public sector thus represents a group of institutions, which have in common some reliance on the power of the state, from which they can justify their activities; and a political belief which accords greater merit to collective over individual action (UN, 1961; Thornhill, 1985). More important to note is that African public sectors are colonial legacies.

To define the public sector in institutional terms, we should be clear about the meaning of the term “public”. In this study, it is simply used to imply the invocation of the power of the state. By extension, the public sector is deemed to comprise of bodies, the existence or powers of which rely on the authority conferred on them by the state, in varying degrees, through some formal process. Their ability to invoke, to a greater or lesser degree, the compulsive power of the state brings them within the public sector. In so far as that power exists, it is dealt with through recognized processes of political control in a democracy (United Nations, 1961, 1975; Thornhill, 1985).

The endowment of state power varies from one institution to another; though three broad groups can be identified. First are those bodies, which are readily recognizable, as obviously exercising governmental functions: ministries, departments, agencies, local government units and similar public bodies. These are clearly governmental bodies in the fullest sense, most with long histories (United Nations, 1975; Fernandes, 1986; Powell, 1987).

Secondly, there are bodies such as state enterprises, boards and corporations, “parastatals”, such as electricity and water enterprises, the governmental sanction of which lies in the legislation which determines their institutional structure, finances, powers and duties; but whose external façade rests on long established professional or technical personnel and practices, and which mainly began life

as private ventures. Generally, the compulsive power inherent in this group relates to the enforcement of a monopoly or a sole duty. Their jurisdiction is limited to a particular area, as in the case of electricity corporations; or, to a particular service, such as railways. The institution may thus be a monopoly supplier of different kinds of services serving the same social or economic purpose. The provider of a sole duty is a monopoly of kind. A water corporation, in respect of environmental and sewage services, is such an example, in that it is the sole provider in its respective area of service, and is financed by public money. It is the only body in that particular area providing services out of public funds; but it is not a monopolist in the true economic sense since there is competition from private suppliers (Pozen, 1976; Fernandes, 1986; Powell, 1987).

Thirdly, there are many institutions whose activities concern citizens pursuing their individual personal interests, but which can enforce certain of their decisions by sanction of a governmental power conferred on them. The best examples of this group are professional regulatory bodies; in which state power is usually conferred to enable a body to have an ultimate enforcement role, considered to be of public benefit. Thus professional regulatory bodies are given the power to prescribe the training required for members; to regulate the conduct of members; and to prohibit the unqualified from practising. In a similar way, a number of bodies are endowed with compulsory powers to regulate various kinds of activities in the public interest (Pozen, 1976; Fernandes, 1986; Powell, 1987).

2.5 Public Sector Reform

Public sector reforms were initiated against the background that the government required a departure from its old traditional method of running administration and the urgent need for a renewed public sector to propel government in its quest for sustainable socio-economic, political, and technological developments. So, there is a need for structural re-engineering of the public sector with the infusion of new spirits, values, professionalism, accountability, responsiveness, and focused sense of the mission for maximum efficiency of the economy (Omoyefa, 2008).

In the view of Minogue (1998), the public sector reform is the final aspect of the New Public Management (NPM). According to him, although public sector reform may form part of a broader program of institutional and political reform, when associated with NPM, it is more likely to focus on the basic issue of internal organization with reference to size, recruitment, remuneration, career management, and promotion. In many ways, public sector reform incorporates aspects of deconcentration and management decentralization. As with other aspects of NPM, public sector reform spreads to the developing world through the influence of the World Bank, and the

“Northern” states who had undertaken similar policies. Public sector reform has become a global phenomenon, but it has had its most significant impact in Africa. World Bank studies shows that between 1987 and 1996, 64% of all public sector reform operations were conducted in the African states (Kiggundu, 1998).

Public service reform is a planned intervention to raise the level of public service performance. It must have carefully defined goals and a strategy to attain these goals. The ultimate aim of the public service reform is to see remarkable improvement in the public service outputs, such as more effective and responsive service deliveries. This is the driving force behind the public service reform (Kpundeh, 2004). To Schacter (2000), the public sector reform is about strengthening the way that the public sector is managed. Omoyefa (2008) sees it as the total overhauling of the government administrative machinery with the aim of injecting real effectiveness, efficiency, hard core competence, and financial prudence in the running of the public sector.

The public sector reform in Uganda, for instance, was conceptualized as soon as the National Resistance Movement (NRM) captured the state power on January 25, 1986. The NRM’s argument for this reform was to improve its performance and to deliver the promises of the protracted people’s revolution. Also, the reform was intended, in an accountable and transparent way, to enhance the performance of the public service to achieve good governance and optimum resource utilization that were in scarcity due to the misrule of the past regimes (Yasin, 2007).

In his contribution to the conceptualization of the public sector reform, Omoyefa (2008) argued that:

Whenever we mention public sector reform, it is often the case by many researchers to have a myopic view of it within the government administration machinery. It goes beyond that. For a meaningful public sector reform, both the private sector and the civil populace have to be embedded in it. The tripod cannot be separated if any meaningful change would have to take place in a country. For it is an incontrovertible fact that the need for reform in the public sector derives its impetus from the perceived success of the private sector. Also, the citizens, who constitute the end users of the products of the reform, are deriving both the public and private sectors. In essence, what would have been the appropriate name for public sector reform is “body polity reform”. The wrong understanding of foundation meaning of public sector reform accounts for the erecting of defective edifice for the reform programs (p.113).

In Africa, most of the post-1980 public service reforms were initially in the framework of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) and were mainly, if not entirely, externally generated (Balogun & Mutahaba, 1989). Public service reform has come to include the plank for restructuring the government/central administration to create an effective instrument to manage the affairs of the nation in this new institutional environment. Questions related to the nature of the modern public service and its

role, as well as the skill and expertise required, have had to be addressed (Klitgaard, 1994).

All public service reform initiatives and programs are to ensure that the objective of the Economic Recovery Strategy for the Wealth and Employment Creation are to be achieved and in the process. The country progressively achieves the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The government will undertake the reform initiatives in a comprehensive manner through the development of public sector reform strategy validated by key stakeholders. It is instructive to note that while there have been different views and different definitions with regard to the meaning of the public sector reform, the fact remains that many scholars see it as the attempt, by the government of a particular country, to change ways of doing things.

2.6 New Public Management

New Public Management (NPM) is a label used to describe a management culture that emphasizes the centrality of the citizen or customer, as well as accountability for results. It is a set of broadly similar administrative doctrines, which dominated the public administration reform agenda of most OECD countries from the late 1970s (Hood, 1991; Pollitt, 1993; Ridley, 1996). It captures most of the structural, organizational and managerial changes taking place in the public services of these countries, and a bundle of management approaches and techniques borrowed from the private-for-profit sector.

NPM shifts the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management, pushing the state towards “managerialism”. The traditional model of organization and delivery of public services, based on the principles of bureaucratic hierarchy, planning and centralization, direct control and self-sufficiency, is apparently being replaced by a market-based public service management or enterprise culture. NPM has provided for a future of smaller, faster-moving service delivery organizations that would be kept lean by the pressures of competition, and that would need to be user-responsive and outcome-oriented in order to survive. These organizations would be expected to develop flatter internal structures (i.e. fewer layers) and devolve operational authority to front-line managers. With a downsized number of staff, many services would be “contracted out” instead of assuming that in-house provision is best.

According to Hood (1991), the major NPM doctrines of what must be done are that:

- (a) Direct public sector costs should be cut and labour discipline raised so as to improve resource use;
- (b) Private-sector-style management practices applied to increase flexibility in decision-making;
- (c) Competition in the public sector (through term contracts and tendering) increased, as rivalry is the key to lower costs and better standards;

- (d) The public sector disaggregated and decentralized to make units more manageable and to increase competition among them;
- (e) Controls shifted from inputs to outputs, to stress results rather than procedure;
- (f) Explicit standards and performance measures established, because accountability requires clearly stated aims and efficiency requires attention to goals; and
- (g) Managers given powers to conduct hands-on professional management, because accountability requires clear assignment of responsibility, not diffusion of power.

The key components of NPM may be put into two broad strands—those that emphasize managerial improvement and organizational restructuring, and those that emphasize markets and competition. The basic foundation of the NPM movement is the drive for efficiency and the use of the economic market as a model for political and administrative relationships. In addition, the institutional aspects of NPM derive from the “new institutional economics” movement, which has a theoretical foundation in public choice, transaction cost and principal-agent theories. These generated public sector reforms themes are based on ideas of market, competition, contracting, transparency and emphasis on incentive structures as a way of giving more “choice” and “voice” to service users and promoting efficiency in public service delivery. Improved efficiency is now the overriding aim of public sector reforms in most African countries. It is thought that the State’s capability—its ability to promote and undertake collective action efficiently—is overextended. Therefore, reductions and a refocusing of the State’s activities are needed to improve macroeconomic stability, as well as the implementation of stronger incentives for performance. Furthermore, increased competition in service provision, both with the private sector and in the public sector itself, is required in order to raise efficiency.

These “traditional” measures are still on the reform agenda. However, in the current debate, it is the institutional view that informs most of the actual reform initiatives, and it is NPM concepts that inspire many reform measures as far as accountability is concerned. One concerns the NPM-inspired measure to introduce performance management. However, other instruments have emerged, such as Citizens Charters, and service delivery or user surveys.

2.7 Good Governance vs Public Sector Management Reform

From the late 1980s, the debate on good governance and its requirements has provided an impetus for new approaches to public sector management reforms. Some of the changes that have taken place have been aimed at tackling some of the worst forms of governance abuses

and failures in Africa: the personalized nature of rule in which key political actors exercise unlimited power; systemic clientelism; misuse of State resources and institutionalized corruption; opaque government; the breakdown of the public realm; the lack of delegation of power and the withdrawal of the masses from governance (Hyden, 1992, 2000; Bratton & van de Walle, 1992).

Good public management and administration, with emphasis on accountability and responsiveness to customer needs, has been seen as an aspect of good governance by donor agencies supporting reforms in developing countries. To the World Bank, good governance consists of a public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable, and an administration that is accountable to the public.

The World Bank elaborates on four elements of good governance (World Bank, 1989, 1992):

- Public sector management emphasizing the need for effective financial and human resource management through improved budgeting, accounting and reporting, and rooting out inefficiency particularly in public enterprises;
- Accountability in public services, including effective accounting, auditing and decentralization, and generally making public officials responsible for their actions and responsive to consumers;
- A predictable legal framework with rules known in advance; a reliable and independent judiciary and law enforcement mechanisms; and
- Availability of information and transparency in order to enhance policy analysis, promote public debate and reduce the risk of corruption.

It is apparent from the above conception of “good governance” that there is some emphasis on improving public-sector management systems. Thus, in the good governance prescriptions, one finds public management reforms as a key component pointing towards market and private sector approaches to public sector management, under the guise of New Public Management (NPM).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section carefully provides a framework for understanding and explaining the essence of reform in every political system. The theory underpinning the study is the open system theory of Katz and Kahn. It is worth noting that the concept of reform is viewed as a process towards achieving a desired end. For this reason, this study was informed by the open system theory which concerns itself with conceptualizing ways to improve the administrative techniques needed to realise policy goals. The policy goals of the administrative reform taking place in African countries, for instance, are to improve service delivery. The open system theory is thus consistent with the fact that “many developing countries have put in place

the reforms in order to handle and achieve this important goal of meeting its citizen's needs" (Mokhothu, 2006, p.2).

The open system theory is one of the organisation theories of public administration. Ridley (1996) describes an organisation as an instrument rationally and logically designed to meet certain purposes. Hood (1991) defines a system as a collection of interdependent parts which form some whole. According to him, the major characteristics of an open system are:

- They receive inputs from the environment;
- They convert these inputs to outputs; and
- They discharge their outputs into their environment.

As quoted by Dzimbiri (2009, p.78), Katz and Kahn identified several subsystems of an organisation like:

- Production or technical subsystem—concerned with the accomplishment of basic tasks of the organization;
- Supportive subsystems—systems which procure the inputs and dispose the outputs of the production subsystem;
- Maintenance subsystems—concerned with the stability and predictability of the organization;
- Adaptive subsystems—concerned with what the organisation might become: they deal with issues of change in the environment; and
- Managerial subsystems—these deal with managerial functions of planning, coordination and control of the total system.

Katz and Kahn maintain that an organisation be looked at as an open system which continuously interact and depends on its environment Dzimbiri (2009, p.79). The open system theory emphasizes on openness, interaction, exchange of inputs and outputs between organisations and their environments. Organisations are not closed systems, but are open to and depend on flow of personnel, other resources and information from outside it. The link between the study and the theory is about creating public institutions that are open to change, institutions that are ready to embrace change so that those obstacles that continuously deter reform efforts might be removed thereby improving delivery of services which is the core business of reform.

4. PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS IN AFRICA: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

This section explores public sector reforms in Africa, specifically in the five (5) selected countries. It provides an overview, trends and processes in their various reforms. The empirical studies on public sector reforms in Africa are numerous, but this paper will, again, summarise those that deal with the rationale for public sector reforms; discuss public sector reforms in the five selected countries; and look at the phases of the

public sector reforms in Africa, as well as the strategies deployed.

4.1 Broad Rationale for Public Sector Reforms in Africa

The literature identifies the drivers for public sector reforms (PSRs). They include (a) inability by many governments to balance the budgets; (b) incapacity of governments to adequately respond to public demands; (c) the internationalization of many issues that previously were solely domestic; and (d) the over expansion of the scale of government and its intervention in all spheres of society, even where it has no competence and track record, leading to overload problems (ECA, 2010; UNECA, 2004; AFDB, 2005). Attention to PSR has therefore emerged because the quality of the public sector—accountability, efficiency in service delivery, transparency, and so forth—correlates strongly with long-term growth and poverty reduction (Aye, 2008). Indeed, inadequate state capacity is seen as the failure of the public sector to perform its functions (AFDB 2005). Accordingly, public sector reform addresses four problems constraining developmental progress in Africa, namely, (a) over-centralized government; (b) recurrent personnel costs that consume large amounts of scarce budgetary resources; (c) large budget deficits; and (d) declining administrative capacity (ECA, 2010; UNECA, 2004; AFDB 2005).

4.2 Public Sector Reforms in the Five Selected Countries

This segment discusses reforms in the selected five countries in Africa:

4.2.1 Nigeria

For decades the civil service has mainly served the interests of bureaucrats and those engaged in the accumulation of public resources for private gain. To this extent, the London based Economic intelligence unit has rated Nigeria as one of the world's highest risk business locations, behind Iraq and Russia. Some Economists suggest that corruption in Nigeria constitutes up to 10% of the country's GDP. At the grass-roots level, officials and administrators ask for gifts of "Dash" or "Bread" for conducting even the most basic paperwork. Despite the increasing reported cases of corruption in the Civil Service, sanctions are not effectively implemented. Based on the afore-mentioned maladies in the Nigeria civil service, various reforms have been introduced by different military regimes and civilian administrations in Nigeria to ensure better management, effective service delivery and accountability of public service.

The ultimate goal is to raise the quality of services delivered to the population, support economic and social development, enhance the capacity to carryout core government functions-revenue generation, financial management, personnel management, policy formulation

etc.. To achieve the above, according to Anazodo et al. (2012), Nigeria had embarked on many post independence civil service reforms. Among the most important ones are the Adebo Commission (1971), Udoji Public Service review commission (1974) Dotun Philips Civil Service Reforms (1988) and Allison Ayida Commission (1995).

Public service reforms (1963-1999): Morgan salaries and wages commission (1963): This Public Service Reforms (1963-1999) was directed towards the review of salaries and wages of workers because of an unbearable high cost of living in the country. The commission recommended a review of grading of officers and corresponding salary structure to take care of the discrepancies in various parts of the country on an ununiform salary grade level, conditions of service and uniform remuneration for officers performing the same duty in different parts of the country. It also recommended the award of a minimum living wage although; this was turned down by the government. Because some of the commission's recommendations were turned down, and the implementation of the accepted ones did not achieve the intended goal the Civil Service continued to perform poorly (Anazodo et al., 2012).

The Adebo Commission (1971): The commission studied and reformed the Civil Service. It made a number of recommendations on the structure and organization of the Civil Service. It reviewed the salaries and wages of workers and recommended that a public service commission should be put in place to take up the responsibility of effectively reviewing the salaries and wages (Anazodo et al., 2012).

Udoji Public Service Review Commission of 1974: The Udoji Public Service Review Commission of 1974 during Gowon's regime, over-hauled the entire public service. The basic reason for setting up the Udoji Commission was to ensure the development and optimum utilization of manpower for efficiency and effectiveness of the service. The review commission was tasked to examine the organization, structure and management of the public service; investigate and evaluate methods of recruitment and conditions of employment; examine all legislation relating to pension, as regarding all post; establish scale of salaries corresponding to each grade as a result of job evaluation, etc. The commission made a number of recommendations that led to the adoption of a "New Style Public Service based on Project Management, management by objective (MBO) and Planning Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS)". The Commission opined that the absence of these modern management techniques greatly hindered the ability of the Civil Service workers to achieve desired results. Other recommendations included a unified grading structure to embrace all posts in the Civil Service, salary

to depend on job content and performance, promotion to be based on merit, public sector composition to be in line with that of the private sector, finance and personnel management to be modernized, introduction of code of ethics, motivation of workers, man power development, the term administration to be changed to management etc. The Udoji Public Service Review Commission attempted to achieve a "New Style Public Service based on result oriented management which would be capable of meeting the challenges of development". However institutional and cultural problems combined to weaken the effectiveness and efficiency of the Civil Service reform and this led to a drastic reduction of the workforce in which about 12,000 public servants lost their jobs in 1975, culminating to low morale of the workers which adversely affected productivity in the service (Anazodo et al., 2012).

Dotun Philips Civil Service Reform Commission 1988: Still trying hard to re-engineer the Nigeria Civil Service for effective service delivery, the Dotun Philips Civil Service Reform Commission of 1988 was set up by the Babangida regime, under the chairmanship of Dotun Philips. The Commission was set to study the structure, staffing and operations of the federal Civil Service. This reform did more harm than good as it encouraged corrupt practices in the state bureaucracy. The highlights of the reform were that, the minister was made both the chief executive and the accounting officer of his ministry. But before the reform of the permanent secretary was the accounting officer of the ministry. The permanent secretary's appointment was made political as its duration/tenure was left for the pleasure of the president or governor by making their position non-permanent any longer. They were meant to retire with the president or governor. The permanent secretary had a choice whether or not to accept the post. The review commission professionalized the Civil Service, because every officer whether a specialist or generalist made his career entirely in the ministry or department of his choice. Each ministry was made to undertake the appointment, discipline and promotions of its staff and the ministries of finance and national planning were merged etc. (Anazodo et al., 2012).

Allison Ayida Civil Service Reform (1995): Barely a decade of operation of the 1988 reform General Sani Abacha came into power and introduced another reform following the opposition raised by the top Civil Servants on the politicization of the post of permanent secretaries. The reform panel was chaired by Allison Ayida in 1995. The Abacha regime discovered that the Nigeria Civil Service was dying gradually due to the effects of the 1988 reforms. The panel was meant to examine and properly define the role of the Civil Service as an executive arm of government, examine various provisions of the Civil Service Decree NO. 43 of 1988 and make recommendations on how to improve

performance, efficiency and commitment in the service, make appropriate recommendations on how to raise the morale of the workers, examine the problem of co-ordination and accountability in the ministries and make recommendations, examine the abolition of the office of the head of service and the pooling system etc. after studying the above issues, the Ayida committee recommended that for effective economic management of the Civil Service, the ministries should be structured according to their objectives, functions and sizes and not on uniform pattern, and that the minister should continue to be head of the ministry only and the permanent secretary the accounting officer so as to re-introduce checks and balances (Anazodo et al., 2012).

Present State of the Civil Service: The Nigerian Civil Service has undergone several organizational and structural reforms, both before and after independence as we have x-rayed above, yet there is no tremendous improvement in the quality of service provided to the citizenry. Corruption still rears its ugly head again after many years of military exit in governance. There is weak national consciousness due to earlier introduction of the Nigerianization and regionalization policies that encouraged ethnicity and sectionalism in the rank and file of staffers in the service. There is multiplicity of classes and grades which brought about over bloating of the number of Civil Servants resulting to high re-current expenditure to the peril of infrastructure development. There is still a uniform centralized control of the Civil Service as was put in place by the colonial masters (Anazodo et al., 2012).

4.2.2 Kenya

The government of Kenya currently regards its public sector transformation strategy as a dynamic and focused process designed to fundamentally reshape the Public Service to accomplish its role in the achievement of Vision 2030 (Isahakia, 2010, p.5). This transformation strategy is also seen as representing a transition for the public service and the beginning of a more cohesive, long-term approach to reform (Isahakia, 2010). The efforts to create an efficient government and engender a culture of performance and quality service delivery across the entire Kenyan public sector has a lengthy history, beginning as early as 1965 when the government set forth an institutional framework for reform through its *Sessional Paper No. 10* (OPM/PSTD, 2010, cited in Isahakia, 2010). However, although the Kenyan civil service operated effectively since that time, and was seen as one of the best in sub-Saharan Africa, it began declining around the end of the 1970s (World Bank, 2001). The “problems that developed in tandem with expansion included excessive employment with attendant overstaffing, and declining productivity, service levels, pay, morale, discipline and ethics” (World Bank, 2001, p.2). Oyugi (2006, p.41) has further observed that “by the late 1970s the situation had

gone out of control” quoting the then Head of the Civil Service who lamented that “the problem of indiscipline in the Service was such that it posed a challenge to the future of the Service”. This state of affairs was attributed to the fact that, over time, the powers and responsibilities of the statutory appointing and disciplinary institutions had been eroded and usurped by powerful forces with influential connections to the apex of power. Several decades later, beginning in 1993, the government returned to a specific focus on public sector reform and transformation. Those efforts, since then to date, can be classified into four periods (Hope, 2002). The first period either covers the years 1993-97 according to World Bank (2001); 1993-98 according to Republic of Kenya (2008) and Marwa and Zairi (2009); or 1993-2000 according to Oyugi (2006). From this author’s perspective, it covered the years 1993-98. Nonetheless, this period evolved when the government launched the Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP) I in 1993 to enhance public service efficiency and productivity. The focus was on cost containment (OPM/PSTD, 2010), and the program was influenced largely by the fiscal need to reduce the size of the mainstream civil service (World Bank, 2001). Implementation was driven through a Steering Committee at the national, provincial and district levels and in each Ministry with a national Secretariat as its operational arm (Marwa & Zairi, 2009). There were five broad policy areas examined under the CSRP I:

- **Civil Service Organization**—The streamlining of organizational structure to reflect better defined ministerial and departmental functions, including clear definition and specification of the internal functions of ministries and departments, clear hierarchy of authority and span of control, and more accurate job descriptions.
- **Staffing Levels**—Including downsizing of the service; establishment of appropriate staffing levels for all cadres in the service; and improving staffing control mechanisms through computerization of the establishment and improvement of the payroll system.
- **Pay and Benefits**—The achievement of compensation levels that were geared towards attracting and retaining professional and managerial talent in a competitive market economy as well as monetization of allowances.
- **Personnel Management and Training**—Including the rationalization of personnel management policies; identification of inadequacies in the existing personnel planning and vacancy management; improvement of disciplinary systems; promotion; and capacity development.
- **Financial and Performance Management**—Including transparency and accountability in financial management; institutionalization of control

systems including computerization; management of the national budget; clear standards against which performance can be accurately measured; perfection of performance evaluation instruments; and use of performance evaluation to impinge upon personnel replacement, training, discipline and rewards for enhanced productivity (Nzioka, 1998).

The Deputy Director of the CSRSP Secretariat at the time (see Nzioka, 1998) noted that there were some achievements recorded under the CSRSP I. They included: (a) the success of the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VERS) with the government attaining its target number of retirees; (b) the abolition of more than 26,000 posts in addition to the freezing of posts that fell vacant due to the VERS; (c) the development of an Integrated Payroll and Personnel Database (IPPD) system; (d) decompression of pay scales; (e) development of a training policy; and (f) design and introduction of unique identification numbers for civil servants to assist in the improvement of establishment control and maintenance of payroll integrity including elimination of ghost workers. However, despite these achievements, many of the activities in this CSRSP I did not contribute significantly to the improvement of wider public sector performance. This was so because they were not anchored in a coherent strategy for reforming the role of government writ large. For example, the World Bank (2001, p.3) observed that: Although the initial civil service retrenchment exercise proceeded quickly, its cost containment objectives were rapidly contradicted and frustrated by the awarding of a huge pay rise to the Teachers' Service and the politically motivated hiring of a large number of additional teachers in the run-up to the 1997 elections.

The CSRSP II spanned the years 1999-2002 and was the second period of public sector reform and transformation. The priority reform areas under the CSRSP II were identified as:

- **Rationalization of Ministerial Functions and Structures**—The undertaking of a comprehensive assessment of ministerial functions including identifying overlapping and duplicating functions as well as functions that can be commercialized, contracted-out and privatized; reviewing of organizational structures; determination of optimal staffing levels; and the updating of job descriptions, re-grading of posts and introduction of a new performance appraisal system.
- **Staff Rationalization and Management of the Wage Bill**—Improvement of the design and implementation of the VERS; developing an overall structure for the establishment and payroll; developing and implementing a new IPPD system; and a ban on recruitment except in critical and essential services.

- **Pay and Benefits Reforms** – Including increasing the housing allowance for all civil servants and teachers; enhancement of salaries and allowances for civil servants and the security forces; undertaking a comprehensive job evaluation and re-grading exercise; establishment of a Permanent Public Service Remuneration Review Board (PPSRRB) to address, among other things, salaries and benefits for all public servants in a holistic and rationalized manner; and implementing a pilot program on a performance-related pay system.
- **Performance Improvement Initiatives**—Including formulation of a strategy for performance improvement in the public service; introduction of results-based management (RBM) in the public service to shape organizations and work activities for the achievement of pre-determined outputs/results and re-orientate the goals and objectives of the workforce towards cost-effectiveness and responsiveness to customer demands and needs; and developing a modern performance appraisal system.
- **Training and Capacity Building**—Undertaking a training needs assessment to determine the existing performance gaps in terms of the skills requirements; addressing issues of succession management in the public service; retraining of civil servants to cope with the increased job demands and improve operational flexibility by extending the range of skills through multi-skilling; and strengthening the Kenya Institute of Administration (KIA) in providing high quality market-oriented training courses to current civil servants and retirees (OP/PSRDS, 2005, cited in World Bank, 2001; & Oyugi, 2006).

The foregoing areas were established by the government to be the priority areas for CSRSP II. However, there were a number of additional areas that were also pursued. They included development and implementation of a Medium-Term Expenditure Framework; strengthening of government finance and accounting functions; and legal and judicial reform (World Bank, 2001). The CSRSP II was deemed to have suffered the same fate as the CSRSP I to the extent that it failed to arrest declining public confidence in public sector management standards and conduct or deteriorating public satisfaction with government services (OPM/PSTD, 2010 cited in Isahakia, 2010). In fact, the World Bank rated the overall performance of both the CSRSP I and CSRSP II as unsatisfactory. This outcome rating was derived from the Bank's finding that both its own role and that of the government implementation performance were unsatisfactory (World Bank, 2001). A number of exogenous and endogenous factors have been determined to have affected the implementation and outcome of the CSRSP II. With respect to the exogenous

factors (those outside the control of government), the main argument here seems to have been that the economy was weak due to bad weather which affected productivity and, hence, government revenues. That, in turn, influenced government spending decisions, or became an excuse for such, including not accessing already available World Bank credit for the CSRP. This was reflected in long delays in the processing of payments and a slow public procurement process time was 25 days longer than usual (World Bank, 2001).

In December 2002, a new government was elected on a platform of reforms and, among other things, committed itself to do business differently. This was Kenya's first transfer of power through elections since independence, and this newly elected government wanted to quickly exhibit its reformist credentials and stamp them on the nation. With the country facing challenges that required urgent attention, the government announced its socio-economic blueprint in 2003, entitled *Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation 2003-2007* (ERS 2003-2007). The ERS 2003-2007 also kick-started the new government's public sector reform efforts which covered the years 2003-07 and were Kenya's third period of public sector reform and transformation. The ERS 2003-2007 had, as a fundamental pillar, the strengthening of institutions of governance. It noted that "the Government is convinced that good governance underpins sustainable development" (Republic of Kenya, 2005, p.ix). In that regard, the ERS 2003-2007 outlined various reforms in, among others, public administration, further noting that: Improving public administration is essential to economic recovery. The sector is excessively large thereby absorbing inordinately large amount of national resources. The sector is also characterized by wastefulness and inefficiency. Consequently, the sector has become a bottleneck in the overall development of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2005, p.11). Furthermore, the ERS 2003-2007 announced that "the government is committed to accelerating the Public Service Reform to create a leaner, efficient, motivated and more productive Public Service that concentrates public finance and human resources on the delivery of core government services" (Ibid.). The reforms were to also focus on providing adequate incentives to attract and retain skilled personnel to achieve a pay structure and size of the civil service consistent with both macroeconomic objectives and a sustainable wage bill. The key elements of this civil service reform strategy and activities, and which were envisaged for implementation by June 2004, included the following:

- Accelerating the on-going ministerial rationalization and developing strategic plans for ministries/departments in order to allow proper utilization of resources on clearly identified core functions, determination of appropriate staffing levels,

objective appraisal of staff, and better and improved methods of supervising staff based on achievement of set targets, among others;

- Developing, introducing and institutionalizing performance-based management practices in the public service;
- Undertaking job evaluation to form a basis for determining a rational grading structure and terms of service for civil servants;
- Undertaking service delivery surveys in all ministries/departments and developing and installing service charters with clear service benchmarks and standards in order to enhance efficiency, transparency and accountability in service delivery;
- Developing a clear recruitment and training policy aimed at ensuring proper supply and development of skills in the civil service and pegging promotion on both performance and training; and putting all Permanent Secretaries and Chief Executives of parastatals on performance contracts (PCs) (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

Concerned with the slow pace of implementation of its reform initiatives, the government took a Cabinet decision in September 2004 to formally prescribe Results-Based Management (RBM) as its strategy for changing the culture and *modus operandi* of the public sector (OPM/PSTD, 2010, cited in Isahakia, 2010). RBM is a program approach to management that integrates strategy, people, resources, processes, and measurements to improve decision-making, transparency, and accountability (CIDA, 2009). It focuses on achieving outcomes, implementing performance measurement, learning, adapting to change, as well as reporting performance. It is not a management tool, but rather a way of working that looks beyond activities, processes, and outputs to focus on actual results—the outcomes of RBM projects and programs. To operationalize the RBM strategy, a rapid results approach was adapted by the government as a structured methodology for building and practicing RBM. This led to the introduction of a rapid results initiative (RRI). The RRI was introduced to cultivate a strong focus on results and was used to attempt to fast track improvements in service delivery and/or working conditions by several public sector institutions. According to OPM/PSTD (2010, p.3, as cited in Isahakia, 2010), "many RRIs succeeded in delivering tangible results to citizens and helped consolidate support for reform". It was further deemed that some of the building blocks for institutionalizing and mainstreaming RBM had been put in place. They included strategic planning, performance contracting, annual work plans, and service delivery charters (OPM/PSTD, 2010, cited in Isahakia, 2010).

Performance contracting in the public sector has been in place in Kenya since 2004 and the process was

revamped in 2011 when a Policy Steering Committee on Performance Management was established by the government and given overall responsibility for the management and coordination of performance management in the three arms of government, including oversight of the implementation of reforms in the performance contracting system. Performance contracts represent a state-of-the-art tool for improving public sector performance. In fact, they are now considered important instruments for enhancing good governance and accountability for results in the public sector. In Kenya, performance contracts are freely negotiated agreements between the government and the management of a public entity. It is a freely negotiated performance agreement between the Government, acting as the owner of a public agency, and the management of the agency. The performance contract specifies the mutual performance obligations, intentions and responsibilities of the two parties. Each performance contract quite clearly specifies the intentions, obligations, as well as the responsibilities and powers of the contracting parties (OPM/PCD, 2010, cited in Isahakia, 2010). It also addresses economic, social and other tasks to be undertaken for economic or other desired gain. The expected outcomes of the use of PCs in Kenya include:

- Improved efficiency in service delivery to the public by ensuring that holders of public office are held accountable for results;
- Improvement in performance and efficiency in resource utilization and ensuring that public resources are focused on attainment of the key national policy priorities;
- Institutionalization of a performance-oriented culture in the Public Service;
- Ability to measure and evaluate performance;
- Ability to link reward for work to measure performance;
- Instilling accountability for results at all levels in the government;
- Ensuring that the culture of accountability pervades all levels of government;
- Reduction or elimination of reliance on Exchequer funding by public agencies;
- Ability to strategize the management of public resources; and
- Recreating a culture of results-oriented management in the Public Service (OPM/PCD, 2011, cited in Isahakia, 2010).

Kenya has been undertaking public sector reform and transformation since the mid-1960s. This suggests the country has taken cognizance of both the need for such on-going reforms and transformation as necessary and essential to bring about governance improvements that are needed for sustainable poverty reduction and development, and the application of current best

practice in public sector reform and transformation for a performance-oriented public service culture.

4.2.3 Namibia

Namibia gained independence in 1990 & the reforms were undertaken immediately after independence to:

- Rationalize the eleven ethnic administrations inherited from the former colonial regime into one national public service;
- Enhance the legitimacy of new institutions;
- Improve performance of the public service;
- Inculcate ethics and professionalism in the Public Service; and
- Improve service delivery to the service users.

The Namibian public sector reforms are spearheaded by the office of the Prime Minister from 1990 till date. These reforms are:

Rationalisation Process (1992)

- Undertaken in 1992; aimed at restructuring public service to provide more efficient & effective service; Process was taken forward in 1996 with adoption of Wages and Salaries Commission recommendations (WASCOM).

WASCOM (1996)

- Improving pay policy & pay levels, 54 recommendations were made; by 2001, only 8 recommendations were not implemented & are being considered as part of ongoing reform initiatives.

Outsourcing (1998)

- Identification of core & non-core activities; essential & non-essential functions for possible outsourcing. 73 areas were identified, for possible outsourcing. The outsourcing policy was not operationalised but was carried out on a project basis in an ad hoc manner.

Public Service Charters

- Addressing issues of ethics & professionalism in Public Service; taking into account the African Charter, Namibian Public Service Charter & Customer Service Charters. Every Office/Ministry/Agency (OMA) must have a Customer Service Charter.

Namibian Public Service Charter (NPSC)

- Consists of 9 General Principles (under review) & NPSC translated in Braille to make it accessible to the visual impaired persons.
- NPSC is being reviewed to ensure alignment with the draft African Charter on the Values & Principles of Public Service.
- Draft reviewed NPSC to be presented to key role players for input & endorsement.

Customer Service Charters

- Functional Areas for CSCs increased from 52 in 1998 to 105 by August 2009; and Out of 105 functional areas, 91 CSCs have been developed.

- Have Charter focal persons in O/M/As.
- “How to draw up a Charter Guide” has been developed to serve as a guideline to O/M/As.

Public Awareness Campaign

Undertaken by way of:

- Publication of newspaper inserts and participation on Radio/TV programmes;
- Facilitating the production and availability of videos on e.g. Service Delivery-2003, Performance Management System-2004, e-Governance -2005, Anti-Corruption-2006 and Perceptions on Implementation of Government Policies and Service Delivery-2008; publication of the articles distribution of posters & other information materials; celebrating the Africa Day of the Public Service and Administration on 23rd June; and exhibitions at the Trade Shows/Fairs.

Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR)

- Aimed at streamlining processes & procedures in O/M/As in order to have a Public Service that is efficient, effective and accountable to reach Vision 2030; BPR is implemented on pilot basis.
- The Public Service is busy with the implementation of re-engineering measures in nine (9) service areas of the more than 50 service areas identified for BPR.
- More than 90 officials trained on BPR & core team established for Public Service.

Performance Management System

The Office of the Prime Minister coordinates the Performance Management System Project. To be able to manage performance:

- All O/M/As & Regional Councils are requested to have 5 years strategic plans drawn up to achieve the objectives outline in the National Development Plans. Strategic Plans take into account budgetary availability as outlined in Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF); and
- Implementation of strategic plans requires O/M/As to have annual plans cascaded through to individual performance plans (Performance Agreements) and Personal Development Plans.

Public Sector Reforms Initiatives (PSRIs) Review:

- No evaluation was done to determine the effectiveness of Public Sector Reforms introduced in the Namibian Public Service; and
- The review of all Public Sector Reforms is being planned.

(Source: Kakololo & Aipinge, 2011).

4.2.4 Guinea

Overview of Public Institution Reform in Guinea, 1985-1997

- Launched in the mid-1980s to address the national economic crisis that emerged in the early 1980s:

balance of trade deficits, rising inflation, budget deficits, growing national debt, unemployment.

- Commenced with the transformation of trade activities of government organizations into state corporate structures, which were subsequently privatized. Corporatization entails the removal of the non-core government activities into corporate structures with: (a) clear roles and objectives; (b) minimal controls—corporate freedom; agreed performance measures and controls; and incentives.
- Later in late 1980s, extended to non-trading activities, including public personnel management.
- In the corporatization programme of Guinea: (a) departmental heads (chief executives) are appointed on contract, provided with resources and autonomy, and judged by results; (b) civil servants compete with private sector professionals for appointment to the state corporate agencies.
(Source: Adamolekun & Kiragu, 1999).

4.2.5 Tunisia

Public Sector Reform Experiences in Tunisia, 1979-1997

- 1980: Creation of an Efficiency Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister.
- 1980-1997: Downsizing of the civil service and privatization of nationalized industries. This led to a reduction in the number of permanent civil servants from 735,000 to 482,000, a 34% reduction.
- 1982: Establishment of the Audit Commission to watch over the efficiency of local governments and the National Health Service.
- 1983: Improved auditing capacity through the establishment of a National Audit Office.
- 1988: “The Next Steps Initiative” —creation of the first executive agencies to run the “executive functions of government as distinct from policy advice”. By mid-1997, 130 executive agencies were established, employing 384,000 civil servants, about 74% of the total staff strength.
- 1991: “Competing for Quality” —promoting customer responsiveness by means of a Citizen’s Charter (several other charters have followed, including charters for patients, taxpayers, parents and job seekers.
- 1994: Establishment of a standing committee on standards in public life.
- 1995: Creation of the Office of Commissioner of Public Appointments (to uphold the principle of selection on merit to positions in non-ministerial administrative agencies).
- 1996: Establishment of a Senior Executive Service.
- 1997: Devolution—steps toward the establishment of regional assemblies to be followed by the transfer of functions and resources.

(Sources: Adamolekun & Kiragu, 1999).

5. PHASES OF PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM IN AFRICA

Reforming the public sector in Africa is divided into three phases, namely, (a) the reforms from the 1980s to early 1990s, which focused mainly on macro-economic stability and were mainly “quantitative”; (b)

the reforms of the mid-1990s to 2000, which focused on performance and civil service management; and (c) reforms from 2000, which focused on service delivery as a result of the publication of the *World Development Report 1997*. Table 1 below presents an overview of the aims, features, achievements and challenges of the phases.

Table 1
The Aims, Features, Achievements and Challenges of the Phases

Indicators Period	Phase 1 1980s-early 1990s	Phase 2 Mid 1990s-2000	Phase 3 2000-till date
Objectives	Achievement of macro-economic stability and quantitative.	Performance and civil service management.	Effective and efficient service delivery
Assumption	Problems of service provision were the result of price distortion emanating from widespread government subsidies.	Shifted emphasis from the quantity of employees to their quality. To make public sector employment more attractive and decrease the size of the government.	i. Improve service delivery to citizens, making it more responsive and effective; ii. Effective, responsive and legitimate state is crucial for sustaining market economy.
Features/strategies	Reducing size of state, cost-cutting, retrenchment, cost-recovery, privatization.	Features of the NPM: remuneration and promotion policies to reward performance; incentives, skills, motivation, contracting out, public-private partnerships, agencification such as the executive authority model.	Provision of basic services through processes driving pluralization, decentralization and participation; beneficiary surveys, self-appraisal exercises, performance improvement plans by public servants; customer-friendliness and responsiveness; Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans.
Achievements	Marginal reduction in size of public sector, even though it is debatable; cut back on equipment, services and development expenditure.	Marginal improvement in conditions of service.	Improved participation of civil society and other stakeholders in some public policies in the formulation of some public policies such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans; improved consultative process; marginal improvement in quality of service.
Challenges/problems	(a) Ignored the historical evidence about the origin of the public sector problem in Africa. Low productivity and inefficiency originated from the economic crisis of the 1970s; (b) Reforms ignored a basic fact about people and organizations: people make organizations work, therefore, motivated workers are a sine qua non for organizational efficiency. It therefore failed to address livelihood concerns of public sector employees. (c) Lack of ownership of reform; (d) real downsizing not achieved	(a) One-size-fits-all approach that ignores country-specific organizational aspects of public organizations; (b) Created a quagmire for employees, for instance, reduction in government requires that salaries and no-wage benefits remain low; due hiring freezes, the underpaid and poorly motivated workers were being admonished to assume additional responsibility and to lead efforts at improving efficiency. (c) issue of relativities not addressed; (d) brain drain continued; (f) lack of ownership	Performance improvement plans and beneficiary surveys have not been properly organized; provision of services for the poor still a far cry; in spite of participation, Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans have not achieved their objectives; quality of service not improved.

Source: Olowu, 1999; Olowu, 2003; Levy & Kpundeh, 2004; Ayee, 2008; cited in ECA, 2010.

6. STRATEGIES OF PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM IN AFRICA

Specifically, the literature has identified nine strategies that have largely been used in public sector reforms (World Bank, 2008; Turner & Hulme, 1997; Collins, 2000; Ayee,

2008). They are as follows:

(a) Civil Service and Administrative Reform: It involves all aspects of the management and organization of personnel. It includes programmes to downsize the civil service and reforms to the personnel information system (including civil service censuses), career paths, pay grades

(decompression), other aspects of the incentive system and the organization of the ministries (Olowu, 1999; Olowu, 2003; AFDB, 2005).

(b) Public Expenditure Analysis and Management concern the management of money through the entire budget cycle. This includes budget planning and execution, in particular, financial management information systems and medium term expenditure frameworks (MTEFs), procurement, auditing and monitoring and evaluation. It also includes the implementation of reforms arising from country financial accountability assessments and country procurement assessment reviews and the strengthening of key budgetary accountability institutions, such as public accounts committees of the legislature and supreme audit institutions (World Bank, 2008; AFDB, 2005).

(c) Revenue Policy and Administration involves tax administration reform and includes the key aspects of revenue administration, particularly the institutional setting and development of operational processes, including automation and interaction with taxpayers (actual and potential). Some of the trends in tax administration reform are reorganization of tax departments along functional lines, establishing a comprehensive system of tax-payer identification numbers, computerization, granting autonomy to tax departments and establishment of large taxpayer units. Their objectives are to ensure proper planning and budgeting of public expenditures, effective and efficient administration of government revenues, proper use of budget resources, effective control of public expenditure, accounting and reporting on public finance and full accountability for all public spending (World Bank, 2008).

(d) Anti-corruption and Transparency to combat corruption and improve transparency across the public sector. Some of the initiatives include mainstreaming anti-corruption in country analysis, helping countries to curb corruption in such key areas such as extractive industries, preventing fraud and corruption such as fiduciary controls and contributing to efforts to fight corruption (Kpundeh, 2004).

(e) Decentralization has been considered by many as one of the most important strategies in public sector reform. This is because donors and governments in Africa have considered decentralization as a strategy that will bring service delivery closer to consumers, improve the responsiveness of the central government to public demands, improve the efficiency and quality of public services and empower lower units to feel more involved and in control. It is also meant to reduce overload and congestion at the centre and speed up operational decision-making and implementation by minimizing the bottlenecks associated with over-centralization of powers and functions at just one or two points in the hierarchy of a public service organization or ministry. Consequently,

decentralization seeks to increase the operational autonomy of line managers and agencies, leaving only broad policy guidelines to be worked out at the centre (Smith, 1985; Olowu, 1992, 1997; Olowu & Wunsch, 2004; AFDB, 2005).

(f) Legal and Judicial Reform involves the computerization of the judiciary, continuing legal education and providing a conducive legal environment to facilitate the development of the private sector. One of the outcomes is the setting up of special courts such as commercial courts and “fast track courts” to dispense justice expeditiously. The emphasis has been on a law-based state, respect for the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary and the creation of the enabling environment for private sector development by reducing the costs of doing business (Adamolekun, 1999; Ayee, 2008).

(g) Sectoral Institutional Building involves the building and maintaining the capacity of institutions in all sectors and skills areas to provide value for money services. This entails the ability and capacity to attract staff and retain them. Accordingly, emphasis is placed on Human Resource Management (HRM) and Human Resource Development (HRD) issues. HRM focuses on selection, recruitment, appraisal, reward and career opportunities within institutions while HRD refers to the organizational activities directed at improving the skills and capacities of the workforce through training, development of interpersonal skills, mentoring, participative management styles and providing performance feedback (Dror, 1976; AFDB, 2005; Turner & Hulme, 1997; Ayee, 2008).

(h) Public Enterprise Reform entails a combination of objectives such as ensuring profitability by avoiding trading losses, avoiding liquidity crises and rising debts, removing the dominance of unproductive investments, creating a favourable investment climate for both local and foreign investors, providing institutional arrangements and operational guidelines that would ensure that the gains of the reform programme are sustained in the future and ensuring wider share ownership, especially among lower income groups. The two common types of state enterprise reform are privatization and commercialization. Privatization involves the partial or total transfer of ownership of a State Owned Enterprise (SOE) to the private sector while commercialization involves making SOEs more efficient with the capacity to make contributions to the treasury. In some cases commercialization could involve the change of the relationship between the management of the SOE and the government through performance contract or management contracts. While on one hand, performance contracts are used to define new relationships between managers of SOEs and the government with a view to making the achievement of the desired results possible, management contracts, on the other hand, involves a private enterprise

taking up the management of an SOE (Adamolekun, 1999; Laleye, 1999; World Bank, 1992; AFDB, 2005).

(i) Public-Private Sector Partnerships (PPPs) emphasize the synergy between the public and private sectors in the provision of social welfare, public goods and services. Such partnerships or cooperation are meant to present governments with the opportunities to improve citizen access to services. In addition, the competition in such service provision arrangements is expected to encourage quality institutions (Collins, 2000).

7. CHALLENGES OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS IN AFRICA

Public sector management in Africa has faced a number of challenges that have limited the scope, speed and quality of services rendered. Such challenges include institutional capacity; multiple accountability; declining public service ethics; declining social values and civil service morale; and corruption. African governments need to increase their efforts to curtail these challenges to well-meaning public sector reforms (see ECA, 2004).

However, the public sector plays a significant role in national development. To remain viable, efficient and effective in responding to the dynamic needs of the citizen, it has to embrace strategies that can enhance improved productivity and the quality of services delivered. Towards this end, a number of strategies to enhance public sector performance are proffered for adaptation by African governments. These strategies, while not exhaustive, touch on the key requirements for improving public sector performance in general, and public service delivery in particular. Among these are Total Quality Management (TQM), Organizational Strategic Management, and Training and Development. These strategies are based on the concept of a “lean” government, which means a government that is run in partnership with all stakeholders, whose focus is on promoting the advancement of the private sector and citizens through a well-managed policy and regulatory environment (see ECA, 2004).

8. THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

Most observers of African public administration agree that the African public service, especially the civil services, local governments and field administrations were at their best in the years just before and shortly after independence. The hope of the present reforms is to at least revert back to these “golden days”. As this study has shown, it is clear, thus far, that most of the strategies pursued by African states to reform their public services have not able to achieve the desired outcomes because of

political, historical, economic, institutional, cultural and other environmental constraints. The characterisation of the 1980s as the “lost decade” and of the 1990s as a “mixed bag at best” gives the measure of the distance between expectations and outcomes of reform efforts in Africa. The new task in the reform of public sector in Africa will, presumably, gear towards partnership for Africa Development, Domestic Ownership and Leadership, Good Governance, Entrenchment of Democracy, Peace and Security as act of terrorism is now ravaging some western region of the continent.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This analysis of public sector reforms in Africa shows that since the 1980s, governments have been making huge efforts to improve the performance of their public sectors to meet the technological and socio-economic challenges of this era. In response to these challenges, reforms have been launched to consolidate the foundations of good governance with particular emphasis on the key institutions of the State, namely, the legislature, the judiciary, the executive and the civil service. Their ability to operate as separate entities of government working in harmony, while maintaining checks and balances, has been necessary for control. The requirement is a strong attachment to constitutional government and the rule of law.

However, the fact remains that in spite of the efforts made by African countries, the results achieved remain somewhat poor and the socio-economic situation of many African countries that have undertaken reforms has even, in many cases, deteriorated. Budgetary deficits exist and the performance of public services has not improved owing to factors such as the politicization of the civil service, coupled with by corruption and lack of accountability, which undermine not only professionalism but also competence.

Africa’s efforts at modernizing its machinery of government have also been constrained by the formulation and adoption of inappropriate reforms as well as poor and ineffective implementation of the reforms. Even where reform committees/ machineries have been created, many of the recommendations have not been implemented. Further, public sector reforms have taken a piecemeal approach, which has focused on the management of the public service or a specific sector to the negligence of others.

Many recent reform programmes, through NPM, aim at ensuring not only the adequate management of machineries of government, but also effective public service delivery through the building and strengthening institutional capacity, and by introducing results-oriented and total quality management techniques. The new

paradigm for the delivery of services in government calls for a business approach to running the affairs of state, and requires the application of marketing and production techniques to the field of public administration. To this effect, mechanisms such as decentralization, privatization and performance management are being adopted with a view to improving the responsiveness of governments to public concerns, improving the quality of public goods and services, increasing the efficiency of service delivery and promoting accountability and ethical values.

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