CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Africa enters the 21st century with daunting challenges of poverty and underdevelopment, which stand in stark contrast with the unprecedented prosperity that other parts of the world enjoy in the new millennium. Since the first country to be granted independence in Africa, over forty years ago, Africa has lost opportunities for social development, industrial expansion and trade so that today it is the poorest continent in the world despite its immense natural and mineral resources. The reasons for this situation are numerous and include colonialism, political instability, poor and inappropriate policies, limited human capacity, and the workings of the international economic system (i.e. globalisation). However, bad governance, especially poor political governance has been identified as the most important factor that holds back Africa's development. African leaders themselves have recently acknowledged that indeed bad governance in many countries has hampered development efforts. Consequently, in 2001, African leaders launched a development programme, called the "New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)", whose overriding goal is to end Africa's poverty and underdevelopment. At the centre of this plan is the recognition that economic growth and sustainable development cannot happen in the absence of good governance. Following the formation of NEPAD, there was the creation, in 2003, of a mechanism called the "African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)" to monitor and evaluate the progress of African countries in complying with the principles and values of good political and economic governance and in achieving the objectives set out in the NEPAD. To evaluate governance performance, especially in the political domain, is a new and unique exercise in Africa. The process and dynamics of implementation of the APRM justifies the undertaking of this study. This study uses a "case study" approach and investigates the capacity of the APRM to address governance challenges that constitute the principal hindrance to the socio-economic transformation of

Africa.

The APRM evaluates four areas of governance, namely democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance, and socio-economic development. For the purpose of close analysis and interest in issues of public administration, the study focuses on a review of democracy and political governance. Furthermore, the study puts a strong emphasis on the issues which the literature review identifies as problematic in Africa's political governance. These include constitutional democracy, separation of powers, effective and accountable public service, and corruption. The purpose of the study is to probe the capacity of the APRM to address the above problems of governance through establishing its merits and potentials, but also through identifying its institutional limitations and shortcomings, and recommending remedies for its optimal use and contribution.

This introductory chapter provides a general historical background of the NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism, the latter being the unit of analysis for this study. The historical background of Africa's development is a description of the major development policies and efforts brought forward since the first country in Africa acquired its independence from colonial rule (circa 1960s). The discussion revolves around two main development frameworks, the Lagos Plan of Action and the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes. These plans are selected because the first set the stage for development efforts and the second sought alternative ways to the dominant and devastating neo-liberal structural adjustment policies imposed on most African countries by international financial institutions in the 1980s. This review highlights the major factors that have obstructed development in Africa. Furthermore, this chapter introduces NEPAD, which is the latest in a series of Africa's development initiatives. It draws attention to the intellectual and philosophical roots of the NEPAD, its driving principles and the objectives it seeks to attain. In this context, a brief prologue of the African Peer Review Mechanism is also provided. Lastly, the chapter states the research problem and research questions, the rationale for

undertaking this particular study, the objectives to be achieved, the limitations to the study by taking into consideration reliability and ethical issues of the research process. It also outlines the structure of the thesis.

AN OVERVIEW OF AFRICA' S DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Since the early years of independence, that is since the 1960s, when the first African countries obtained their political freedom from European colonial masters, issues of poverty and development have become top priorities on the agendas of African leaders. At the time of independence, African leaders established institutions for continental cooperation and unity, and crafted various indigenous development plans. In 1963, the Organisation of the African Unity (OAU) was created. The main objectives of the organisation were, among others, to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa, to defend national sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, to promote unity and enhance cooperation among African states in order to ensure a better life for the peoples of Africa (Charter of the OAU, 1963).

On the economic front, several development strategies have been also developed. These include the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) adopted by the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government (AHG) in 1980. The LPA is considered the first effort of development policy by Africans. Since the LPA, there have been several other development programmes to review and adjust the plan to the changing needs and imperatives. They include the Africa's Priority Programmes for Economic Recovery (APPER), which was later transformed into the United Nations Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD) (1986); the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment for Socio-Economic Transformation (AAF-SAP) (1989); the African Charter for Popular Participation for Development (1990); and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) (1990).

THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION

The Lagos Plan of Action was initiated in 1980 in Lagos, Nigeria. The

development plan came after shocking findings of African economic performance from the reviews carried out by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA or ECA) from 1975 to 1979 (Adedeji, 2002:5). The evaluation of Africa's macro-economic performance over the period from 1960 to 1975 found that the macroeconomic aggregate performance was below the targets set by the UN Second Development Decade. The GDP annual growth rate was 4.5 per cent instead of the target of 6.0 per cent; the export was 2.8 per cent instead of 7.00 per cent; the agricultural growth rate was 1.6 per cent instead of the target rate of 4.00 per cent, while manufacturing grew at 6.0 per cent instead of the target of 8.00 per cent. The only macroeconomic aggregate the performance of which exceeded target was import, with an actual growth rate per annum being 10.0 per cent exceeding the target of 7.0 per cent (Adedeji, 2002:5).

The findings of the ECA' reviews raised questions about the effectiveness of development paradigms and strategies that independent African countries had pursued. Since independence, African countries had implemented state-led development models, which placed the state in the position of leading agency of national development. This model of development was characterized by central planning and the creation of local industries and their protection through "import substitution trade policies" (Ranis, 2004). The ECA's assessment revealed that the development strategies adopted failed to transform African economies or to improve the wellbeing of African peoples. The situation was so critical that of all the five United Nations regions, Africa's performance was the worst (Adedeji, 2002:5).

The adoption of the LPA in 1980 came as a resolve by African leaders to change the course of development in Africa as the following extract of the Lagos plan indicates:

> We recognised the need to take urgent action to provide the political support necessary for the success of the measures to achieve the goals of rapid self-reliance and self-sustaining development and economic growth. (OAU/LPA, 1980)

The LPA was mainly informed by the dominant development paradigm of the time, namely the dependency school (Adesina, 2003). Therefore, the plan for the recovery of the African economy was an attempt to address the crisis of dependent capitalism, within the framework of a nationalist development model. Increasingly, leaders and intellectuals of the developing world realised that post-colonial development strategies advised by rich countries were exploitative and could not be to the advantage of poor nations economically. The LPA was aimed at changing this abnormal situation. African leaders were convinced that the poor development record was the result of exogenous development strategies that opened the continent to dependence and exploitation. This view was explicitly expressed in the LPA preamble in these terms:

> The effect of unfulfilled promises of global development strategies has been more sharply felt in Africa than in the other continents of the world. Indeed, rather than result in an improvement in the economic situation of the continent, successive strategies have made it stagnate and become more susceptible than other regions to the economic and social crises suffered by the industrialised countries. (LPA, 1980:1)

Consequently, African leaders committed individually and collectively to promote the economic and social development of Africa within the framework of "self-reliance" and "self-sustaining development" (OAU/LPA, 1980 para 3 (i)). The LPA was a comprehensive development programme covering issues that range from food and agriculture to industry, the utilisation of natural resources, the development of human resources, science and technology, transport and communications, trade and finance, technical cooperation for strengthening economic development, the environment and energy. The plan also addressed the issue of women and development, planning coordination, and mechanisms for implementation.

At the heart of the LPA was also the idea of collective economic development through regional integration. The ultimate goal of the LPA was to form a united African economic bloc with common tariffs, parliament, and eventually common currency. The rationale for regional integration in Africa was that

integrating national economies would provide larger markets and economies of scale for investment and production, with combined or complementary resources, and would provide effective frameworks within which to correct disarticulated and ineffective economic structures.

However, it should be noted that the LPA emerged during the time when the structural adjustment policies (SAP) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were imposed on poor countries, including Africa. The SAPs focused on production efficiency and market signals by paying attention to such elements as macro economic stability, balanced fiscal accounts, tax reforms and trade liberalization and deregulation (Williamson, 2000:252). Under structural adjustment, the core principles of increasing economic and technical efficiency were the guiding principles and objectives of the development process. They became the early priorities for economic reforms in Africa. Clearly, the development approach of the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWI) under the structural adjustment policy was in conflict with the people-centred approach advocated by the Lagos Plan. Development scholars note the struggle for the development agenda between the BWIs and Africa policy makers. As Ake reasserts, development donors expressed their rejection of the plan by ignoring it and refusing to fund it. The African development agenda lost the battle to the western structural programmes, as only policies and reforms in line with SAPs were funded (Ake, 1996:25). Thus, given their weakness and dependent position, African leaders abandoned the LPA and started implementing structural adjustment reforms crafted by the BWIs.

After a decade of implementation, it was widely accepted that the results of the structural adjustment reforms were deleterious, impacting badly on social sector (Cheru, 2002:19). In March 1988, senior African officials convened in Khartoum, Sudan, to oppose adjustment policies. The "Khartoum Declaration Towards a Human-Focused Approach to Socio-Economic Recovery and Development in Africa" vehemently voiced Africa's concerns over SAPs, for aggravating the human condition in Africa. The Declaration denounces the structural adjustment policies in the following notes:

The programmes are incomplete because they are often implemented as if fiscal, trade, and price balances are ends in themselves and are virtually complete sets of means to production increases. Human condition imbalances as related to employment, incomes, nutrition, health and education do not receive equal priority in attention to macroeconomic imbalances. (Ake, 1996:33)

Thus, the frustration and hardship resulting from the implementation of SAPs led African countries to design yet another development plan, which sought to provide an alternative framework to structural adjustment programmes.

THE AFRICAN-ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK TO THE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME

The African-Alternative Framework to the Structural Adjustment Programme (AAF-SAP) emerged in 1989 as a reaction to the hardship resulting from SAPs and the persistent frustration of Africa's efforts to bring about fundamental socio-economic structural changes since the Lagos Plan of Action (Ake, 1996:31-41). The AAF-SAP was not only a critique of the IMF and World Bank structural adjustment but was also an alternative development agenda. It was the comprehensive plan covering issues from the root causes of poverty and development crisis in Africa to policy recommendations to solve the crisis. To overcome the development tragedy, AAF-SAP, like the LPA emphasized the principles of human-centred development, a self-sustaining process of economic growth and development, and integration of African economies through national and regional collective self-reliance. The strategy argued for the transformation of structural weaknesses of African economies which were evident in a human capital deficit, disarticulated production base with ill-adapted technology, fragmentation of the African economy, weak physical infrastructures, inadequate institutional capacities, and the excessive dependency of the African economies (AAF-SAP, 1989: 2-8). In addition, AAF-SAP elaborated on the imperatives of democratic governance, human rights and political freedom, the provisioning of basic human needs such as potable water, shelter, primary health-care and sanitation, education and public transport as public "goods" that should be met urgently (AAF-SAP, 1989, para 34-38).

Thus, the AAF-SAP reaffirmed the rationality and urgency of "welfarism" that the structural adjustment policies disapproved of.

Like the LPA and other previous development strategies, the AAF-SAP failed to produce the anticipated results. Adebayo Adedeji, who headed the UNECA for almost three decades, explains the challenges that African development strategies met:

> African development plans were opposed, undermined and jettisoned by the Bretton Woods institutions; and, Africans were thus impeded from exercising the basic and fundamental right to make decisions about their future….lacking the resources and the will to soldier on self-reliantly, they abandoned their own strategies. (Adedeji, 2002:4)

However, even though African countries followed the development paradigm advocated by the BWIs, successive programmes that have been implemented in Africa since independence have failed to boost economic growth and socio-economic development. The recent statistics from the United Nations Millennium Indicators Database (2004) indicate that in 2001, 46.4 per cent, or nearly half the population of Africa were living below the international poverty line of US $1 per day. The mortality rate of children under five years of age is 174 per 1000 (the highest in the world), and life expectancy at birth is only 54 years. This is threatened by the scourge of HIV/Aids for which out of an estimated 40 million infected in the world, 28.2 million live in Sub-Saharan Africa. Over the past forty years of independence, the continent has lost the opportunity for industrial expansion and trade. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 2003, Sub-Saharan Africa's share in world trade was estimated at 1.5 per cent falling from about 6 per cent in 1980. In comparison with other developing regions, Asia's share of world trade is estimated at 24.3 per cent; and Latin America about 5.5 per cent (UNCTAD, 2003:3). Similarly, the foreign capital inflows to Africa have been very insignificant despite the continuing increase of foreign direct investments (FDI) to developing countries. In 2004, inflows to Africa were estimated at US $20 billion. This compares to $166 billion into Asia and the Pacific, and $69 billion to Latin America and the Caribbean (UNCTAD, 2005:4). Clearly, Africa's economic performance stands in stark contrast with

the unprecedented prosperity that the rest of the world is enjoying today. A question that strikes is the following: why has Africa failed to deliver in terms of socio-economic development? A number of challenging factors have been put forward. Below, some major impediments to Africa's development are discussed.

CHALLENGES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: SOME MAJOR OVERVIEWS

Several factors have contributed to the development quagmire in which Africa finds itself today. They include historical factors such as slavery and colonialism, the Cold War, poor and inappropriate development policies, and bad governance characterised by corruption, and a lack of accountability and transparency in the management of public affairs.

HISTORICAL FACTORS: SLAVERY AND COLONIALISM

Historians estimate that between 1650 and 1900, some 28 million Africans were forcibly removed from Central and West Africa as slaves. This human catastrophe has been referred to as the "black holocaust" (Venter and Neuland, 2005:65). Africans and the natural resources of their continent, including ivory and gold, were exploited and exported to develop the rest of the world, in particular, Europe and North America. African slaves were exported to work in the colonies of North America, Latin America and the West Indies. African slave trade labour transformed the world in many ways. In Africa, slave trade destroyed African communities leaving them impoverished as well as dispersed, because the strong men and women were taken for slavery, and coastal tribes fled from the slave raids made on their communities thus, migrating to many parts of Africa. In the Islamic world, in particular, in the Middle East, African slave labour expanded commerce and trade. This was particularly so in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. In the Americas, it was African slave labour that supported the booming capitalist economy of the 17th and 18th centuries (Venter and Neuland, 2005:65-66). Thus, the African slave trade contributed to the economic growth of other

parts of the world while impoverishing Africa.

Another factor that has contributed to the ruination of Africa's economy was colonialism. At the Congress of Berlin in 1885, European Powers partitioned Africa into territorial colonial units. Kingdoms, States and communities in Africa were arbitrarily divided; unrelated areas and peoples were just as arbitrarily joined together with no regard to former tribal allegiances. There is no better description of the phenomenon than that described in Venter and Neuland (2005:67):

> Thirty new colonies and protectorates, 10 million square miles of new territory and 110 million dazed subjects, were acquired by one method or another. Africa was sliced up like a cake, the pieces swallowed by five rival nations – Germany, Italy, Portugal, France and Britain (with Spain taking some scraps)…. At the centre, exploiting the rivalry stood one enigmatic individual and self-styled philanthropist controlling the heart of the continent, Leopold II, King of the Belgians.

In Africa, colonial rule has not only meant the drainage of natural resources and the loss of opportunities for development, but has also contributed to the increase of social conflicts. The arbitrary colonial partition of Africa created states that comprised a multitude of competing tribes and ethnic groups. At independence, African states inherited a population characterised by sharp ethnic and tribal divisions. They also inherited a repressive state with autocratic laws and institutions. As the report of the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan correctly points out, the challenge of achieving national unity for the newly independent African states was compounded by the fact that the framework of colonial laws and institutions had been designed to exploit local divisions, not overcome them (Annan, 1998:8). The new African leaders made use of existing repressive colonial system and institutions to maintain their unpopular rule. In the post-independence era, the multiple political parties that flourished because of the common struggle for independence were suppressed, and, in most of the countries abolished to give rise to and the supremacy of one ruling party.

In many African states, politics remained a zero-sum game: power was sought by all means and maintained by all means. This environment favoured

nepotism, corruption, and a general disrespect for laws and institutions, which have often resulted in coups d'états and social conflicts. In addition to slavery and colonialism that exploited Africa, other factors have contributed to poor governance and have weakened the economies of African states. These are the cold war and the economic policies adopted after independence.

THE COLD WAR AND DONOR POLICIES

The 'Cold War' (1947-1989) divided the world into two contending ideological politico-economic systems, namely capitalism (championed by the United States of America) and socialism (championed by the former Soviet Union). The Cold War gradually changed the political map of international relations with the European neo-colonial relationships being replaced with a new set of ties dominated by the Soviet Union and the United States. Developing countries, including Africa, became the battlefields for influence by these super-Powers (Annan, 1998:6). This has had devastating effects on Africa's governance and development. Americans strongly supported dictators, such as Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo/ DRC), or other authoritarian regimes, such as Somalia and Sudan, and non-democratic insurgency movements like Jonas Savimbi's Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), so long as they were avowedly anticommunist (Bratton and Van de Walle, 1997:135; Gordon, 2001:73).

At the end of the Cold War in 1989, only a few countries (regarded as important to the West global strategies) continued to receive substantial assistance (Annan, 1998:6). As a result, most regimes in Africa got poorer and weaker, and political crises and social conflicts spread. This period coincided with a paradigm shift in the donor community foreign policies towards supporting movements for human rights and democracy in Africa (Schraeder, 2001:164). The combination of these factors fuelled civil conflicts and wars. Development received limited attention as African leaders spent considerable effort and resources protecting their power.

Similarly, donor policies have, in general, failed development in Africa. As highlighted above, Africa's development agenda has been heavily controlled

by the BWIs and the donor community (in particular the former colonial masters). Tied to the metropolitan economies during the colonial era, it became difficult for the newly independent states to cut off the colonial umbilical cords and to pursue economic development independently. They thus fell into what has commonly been referred to as the "dependence syndrome". The lack of local manpower with adequate expertise and skills, especially in economics, has aggravated the crisis as most African countries had to rely on expatriates for their development plans (Ake, 1996:19). This has put African states at the mercy of the whims and caprices of donors and their development institutions. Often, aid to Africa has been tied to conditionalities, such as the purchase of the donor's goods and services and adopting economic policy reforms (van de Walle, 1996:4-5). Nevertheless, these foreign development policies have failed to bring about economic growth and development, because development must be generated from within. As Ake (1996:140) notes, the primary principle of development is that the people, who are the end of development, must be the agents and means of that development. These prerequisites for development have been systematically neglected.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Until recently, African leaders blamed exogenous factors for the poor performance of their countries in socio-economic development. Today, however, there is a growing recognition that Africa's economic and political ills are in many respects self-inflicted. The culture of clientelism, lack of accountability, and absence of peaceful means for leadership change in most African states have been the major impediments to Africa's development efforts (Ake, 1996; van de Walle, 2001). The 1998 report of the UN Secretary General on conflicts and sustainable development in Africa also points to the nature of politics to explain political instability and underdevelopment on the continent. The report notes that the nature of political power, which often assumes a "winner-takes-all" form with respect to wealth and resources patronage and prerogatives of office, is the principal source of political instability (Annan, 1998:12). This situation has led to many civil conflicts and

internecine wars which, since 1970, are estimated to number thirty. In 1996 alone, 14 of the 53 countries of Africa were afflicted by armed conflicts, accounting for more than half of all war-related deaths worldwide and resulting in more than 8 million refugees, returnees and displaced persons (Annan, 1998:7). These conflicts have seriously undermined Africa's efforts to ensure long-term stability, peace and development for its peoples.

African leaders too have acknowledged that poor leadership, corruption, and bad governance have worsened the already weak states and dysfunctional economies they inherited from colonial regimes (NEPAD, 2001:5). Indeed, clientelist politics that has dominated African governance has created a breeding environment for corruption, poor performance and other maladministration practices inimical to economic growth and development. It is also accepted that African leadership made bad choices in terms of economic policies. While it is true that Africa's position in the world system did not allow her economic independence, it is argued that African leadership has failed to follow the rigours of "self-reliance", an approach that was central to the indigenous development plans (Ake, 1996:140; Adedeji, 2002:4). Thus, self-reliance has remained an ideal written in documents and cherished in political pronouncements. In reality, foreign powers, through their financial allowances, have continued to dictate the path of Africa's development.

IMPERATIVES FOR THE AFRICAN RENAISSANCE: FORMATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION, NEPAD AND APRM

At the dawn of the 21st century, the challenges of globalisation, increasing poverty and marginalisation of Africa in the world politics and economics have made African leaders realize the need for sturdier frameworks, within which their most pressing problems and needs can be effectively handled. African leaders have initiated a number of new projects, including the creation of the African Union, NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism, which are considered to be fundamental institutions or instruments for the political and socio-economic transformation of Africa. Although this particular study focuses on the APRM, one of its objectives is to shed light on the issues of governance and leadership for social and economic renewal. The following

section provides a brief description of the AU, the NEPAD and the APRM, their objectives and strategies.

THE AFRICAN UNION (AU) AND ITS OBJECTIVES

In July 2002, African leaders gathered in Durban, South Africa, to replace the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) by the African Union (AU). The following are the objectives of the African Union, to:

- achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;

- defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;

- accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;

- promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;

- encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

- promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;

- promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;

- promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;

- establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations;

- promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;

- promote cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples;

- coordinate and harmonise policies between existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;

- advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in research and technology; and

- work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent. (Constitutive Act of the AU, Act of 2000)

From the Constitutive Act, one sees a clear articulation of the imperatives of good governance, in particular good political governance (promotion of peace, continental stability and democracy), and good economic management and regional economic integration as prerequisites for development. The good news also is that under the African Union, African leaders have decided to move away from the "non-interference" principle, which for a long time has protected dictators and bad leaders in Africa. Article 4 (h) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, Act of 2000, provides the right to intervene in a member state in cases of grave circumstances, such as war crimes, genocide, and crime against humanity. This clause is a major shift in the politics of the continent, which if implemented may contribute to the building of a peaceful and prosperous Africa. However, it does remain to be seen whether and how effective this strategy may be if implemented.

On the economic front, the African Union launched a new development plan called NEPAD at its first Summit in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002. The primary objective of NEPAD is to champion the challenge to eradicate poverty in Africa, to establish stable peace and security conditions, and to promote sustainable economic growth and development, and thus enhance Africa's

|effective participation in global political and economic affairs (AU Commission, 2004:6). NEPAD is claimed to be unique, an African-owned document for the rebirth of the continent. Of course, the crucial question to be answered given the history of African development plans is to know if this time around African leaders are determined to pursue a hard but necessary African development model, which breaks away from the dependence mentality. Does the NEPAD present a paradigm shift in development policy and strategy? These and many related questions are easier posed than answered. The following section describes the NEPAD, its origins, objectives and the strategies it employs to bring about socio-economic development.

NEPAD: ITS INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a vision and a strategic framework for Africa's development. The NEPAD was born from a variety of ideas and imperatives of addressing the development crisis on the continent. The new development agenda comes directly from the idea of an "African Renaissance" which holds that Africans must become the masters of the destiny of their continent. The concept of renaissance is said to have been applied to an intellectual and cultural movement that began in Italy in the 14th century and spread to other western European countries, and which was used to mean the "revival" or "rebirth" of art and literature in contrast to the styles of the Dark Ages. In history, the period of the Renaissance coincides with an age of civilisation in which artistic, social, scientific, economic and political thought turned to new directions in various European countries (Venter and Neuland, 2005:26). The concept has been expanded by the academic community to refer to a new era, a revival of the economy and of art and politics, especially after a country has experienced stagnation or decline.

In Africa, the concept of an African renaissance was first used during the time of the struggle against colonial domination. The first generation of freedom fighters, including Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Patrice Lumumba of Zaire, Sekou Toure of Guinea Conakry, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and others, used the term in the context of the struggle against colonial rule, intending to

capture the dreams and aspirations of the people of Africa in their quest for self-determination (Cheru, 2002:xii). With the end of apartheid, the South African leadership resurrected the term. In his address to the World Economic Forum in 1999, in Geneva, former President Nelson Mandela talked about the "African Renaissance" when he said: "Africa is beyond bemoaning the past for its problems. The task of undoing that past is ours with the support of those willing to join us in a continental renewal" (Mandela, 1999). His successor, Thabo Mbeki is known for championing the "African Renaissance". According to Mbeki, an African renaissance means the following:

> The call for Africa's renewal, for an African Renaissance is a call to rebellion. We must rebel against the tyrants and the dictators, those who seek to corrupt our societies and steal the wealth that belongs to the people. We must rebel against the ordinary criminals who murder, rape and rob, and conduct war against poverty, ignorance and the backwardness of the children of Africa. (Mbeki, 1998)

Thus, unlike the 1960s which saw Africans fighting for political freedom, the new African renaissance seeks to achieve economic emancipation. It is about ensuring that Africans can move from their crippled conditions of poverty and enjoy prosperity, and that Africa's resources are utilised for the benefit of the peoples of Africa. NEPAD is therefore intended to be a strategy to uplift African citizens from the misery of poverty, ignorance, and diseases. It is an empowerment scheme for Africans to participate effectively in the economy.

In addition to the aspirations of the African renaissance, NEPAD grew out of the necessity for Africa to deal effectively with the challenges of globalisation. Globalisation, which generally denotes the widening and intensification of international trade links and the free flows of trade, finance and investment, is said to have further marginalised Africa. This view is illustrated in the following extract from the NEPAD document:

> In the absence of fair and just global rules, globalisation has increased the ability of the strong to advance their interests to the detriment of the weak, especially in the areas of trade, finance and technology. It has limited the space for developing countries to control their own development, as the system makes no provision for compensating the weak. The conditions of those marginalised in this process have worsened in real terms. A fissure between inclusion and exclusion has emerged within and among nations. (NEPAD, 2001:7)

NEPAD therefore identifies globalisation as one of the causes of Africa's marginalisation and underdevelopment. Despite this diagnosis, NEPAD does not seek to cut the continent off from the world economy. Instead, NEPAD holds that, globalisation, if effectively managed, presents the best economic prospects for future economic growth and poverty reduction.

NEPAD was also inspired by a worldwide trend in regionalisation, and the success of such groupings as the European Union (EU), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), which have become the most powerful economic and trading blocs in the world. This regional trend is closely linked with globalisation, which calls for integration into the globalised economy through greater liberalization of markets and capital mobility. Thus, regional integration provides weak economies a framework within which to correct disarticulated and ineffective economic structures, improve competitiveness, and increase negotiating capacities by developing regional responses to the economic consequences of globalisation. It is hoped that through NEPAD, African countries can collectively improve their economies, and reposition themselves in the world economy and politics.

DEVELOPMENT OF NEPAD

NEPAD is the merger of two development plans for Africa; the Millennium Partnership for Africa Recovery Plan (MAP) spearheaded by President Mbeki of South Africa, President Obasanjo of Nigeria, and President Bouteflika of Algeria; and the Omega Plan developed by President Wade of Senegal. In 1999 at the 35th OAU Summit, the OAU tasked Presidents Obasanjo, Mbeki and Bouteflika to come up with a plan for Africa's development and the resolution of its external debt crisis (AHG/Decl.2 (XXXV). At the time, Algerian President Bouteflika was chair of the OAU, Mbeki was chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, and Obasanjo was chairman of the Group of 77. This allowed them to hold multilateral debates and negotiations in pursuit of an agenda for the renewal of Africa. They thus came up with a plan then known as the "Millennium Partnership for Africa's Recovery Programme

(MAP)".

The MAP was a comprehensive plan embracing virtually every aspect of development. It identified peace, security and governance as preconditions for Africa's development. It also highlighted the pressing need for improving Africa's production and exports and human capital development; and it stressed partnership with developed countries through aid, investment and debt relief to finance the plan. Around the same time, President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal drafted what he called the "Omega plan" which he presented to the Franco-African Summit in Cameroon, in January 2001. The Omega plan identified four sectors, which it considered the most important areas of focus in order to bridge the gaps between Africa and the developed countries. These are infrastructures, education, health, and agriculture. According to the Omega plan, investment needs in the priority sectors would be evaluated and brought to the purview of a single international or continental authority. The identification of needs and implementation was to be entrusted to the five African economic regions, thus adding the regional integration to the project.

At the 37th OAU Summit held in July 2001 in Lusaka, Zambia, the two plans, MAP and Omega were merged and gave birth to the New Africa Initiative (NAI). The NAI was renamed the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD) in October 2001 in Abuja, Nigeria, when the first meeting of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) met. Looking at the three documents: MAP, Omega and NEPAD, it becomes clear that NEPAD has kept the structure and content of MAP while adding the regional component of OMEGA for the implementation of the programme. At the inaugural Summit of the African Union in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, NEPAD was formally adopted as a development plan of the African Union.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES OF NEPAD

NEPAD is managed by a three-tier governing structure: the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC), the Steering

Committee, and the NEPAD Secretariat (NEPAD Annual Report 2002:81). The primary responsibilities and objectives of these structures are to:

- ensure effective political leadership of programme development and implementation;

- develop a deep commitment by African leaders to NEPAD;

- ensure capacity for technical analysis and programme development;

- accelerate economic integration at the sub-regional and continental level; and

- effectively engage development partners, the international community and multilateral organisations (NEPAD Annual Report 2002).

The HSGIC was established in terms of a Declaration of the OAU taken at the 2001 OAU Summit in Lusaka, Zambia, and amended by the Summit of the AU in 2002 in Durban, South Africa. Today, the HSGIC comprises 19 member states, representing all the five regions of AU. These countries are also affiliated to African Regional Economic Communities (RECs):

North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya

West Africa: Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, and Ghana

Central Africa: Rwanda, Cameroon, Gabon, and Republic of Congo

East Africa: Ethiopia, Mauritius, and Kenya

Southern Africa: South Africa, Botswana, Angola, and Mozambique. (NEPAD Annual Report, 2002:81)

 The HSGIC provides leadership to the NEPAD process. It sets policies and prioritises projects for implementation. It meets at least three times a year to review implementation progress and take decisions on strategic issues. It reports annually to the African Union Summit (NEPAD Annual Report, 2002:81).

The second structure is the "Steering Committee". This is made up of Personal Representatives of the Heads of State and Government serving on the HSGIC. The Steering Committee is primarily responsible for developing the terms of reference for identified programmes and projects and for overseeing the work of the NEPAD Secretariat (NEPAD Annual Report, 2002:82).

The third organ is the Secretariat. The NEPAD Secretariat is located in South Africa. It is responsible for coordinating the preparation of NEPAD projects and programmes, mobilising technical and financial support, facilitating and supporting implementation, mobilising private sector participation, promoting NEPAD awareness in Africa and internationally, liaising with development partners, especially the multilateral development institutions and bilateral donors, and monitoring and reporting on progress (NEPAD Annual Report, 2002:82). Schematically, the organisational structure that governs NEPAD can be represented as follows.
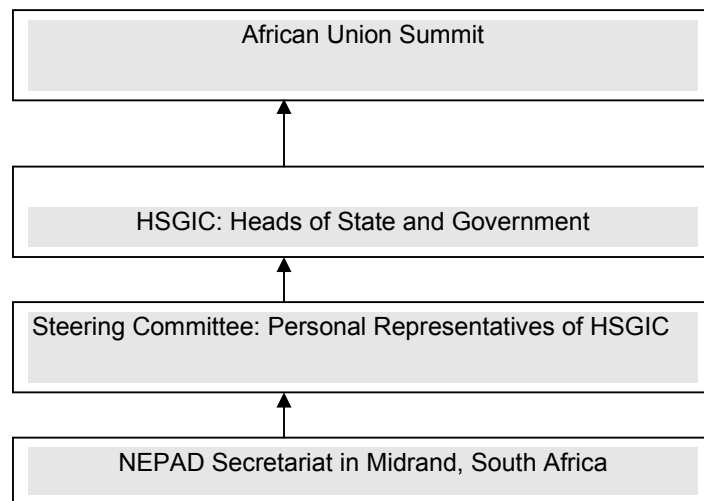

Figure 1.1: NEPAD governing structures

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES OF NEPAD

The first paragraph in the NEPAD document describes the principal goal of the NEPAD as follows:

> This New Partnership for Africa's Development is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and firm and shared conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politic. The Programme is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world. (NEPAD, 2001:1)

Thus, the overriding goal of NEPAD is to end Africa's poverty and underdevelopment, and to place the continent on a path of durable growth and development. NEPAD also embraces the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted in September 2000 by all governments of the world as a blueprint for building a better world in the 21st century. These include the following:

- reduction by half of the proportion of Africans living in poverty by the year 2015;

- enrolment of all children of school age in primary schools by 2015;

- promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women by eliminating gender disparities in the enrolment in primary and secondary education by 2005;

- reduction of infant and child mortality ratios by two-thirds by 2015;

- reduction of maternity mortality ratios by three-quarters by 2015;

- access for all who need reproductive health services by 2015; and

- implementation of national strategies for sustainable development by 2005 in order to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015. (NEPAD, 2001:14)

More specifically, it appears that NEPAD seeks to achieve the following:

- ensuring African ownership, responsibility and leadership of her development;

- making Africa attractive to both domestic and foreign investors;

- unleashing the vast economic potential of the continent;

- achieving and sustaining an average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of over 7% per annum for the next 15 years;

- ensuring that the continent achieves the agreed international MDGs;

- increasing development of human capital and promote science and technology;

- promoting the role of women in all activities;

- promoting sub-regional and continental economic integration;

- developing a new partnership with industrialised countries and multilateral organisations on the basis of mutual commitments, obligations, interest, contributions and benefits;

- modernising agriculture and promoting intra and inter regional trade; and

- strengthening Africa's capacity to mobilise additional external resources for its development. (NEPAD, 2001)

To achieve these goals and objectives, NEPAD has drawn up a strategic programme of action, which in fact comprises several initiatives to be implemented. These initiatives can be grouped into three categories: the first group embodies the preconditions for sustainable development; the second group identifies priority sectors for fast tracking development; and the third group put together initiatives for mobilization of resources. Below, these strategies are discussed in detail.

Preconditions for development: political and economic governance

The conditions for sustainable development include initiatives aiming at promoting peace and security, democracy, and good political, economic and corporate governance and regional cooperation and integration. According to NEPAD (2001:17), development is impossible in the absence of true democracy, respect for human rights, peace and good governance. Under NEPAD, African leaders commit to respect the global standards of democracy, the main components of which include political pluralism in which people have the freedom to form political parties and unions, to express their opinions and to vote for their leaders. President Thabo Mbeki, one of the pioneers of NEPAD, in his address to the South African Parliament on October 31, 2001, explains this commitment of African leadership to good governance in the following words:

> We are agreed that we must strengthen democracy on the continent, we must entrench a human rights culture, we must end existing conflicts and prevent new conflicts. We have to deal with corruption and be accountable to one another for all our actions. Clearly these measures of ensuring democracy, good governance and the absence of wars and conflicts, are important both for the wellbeing of the people of Africa and for the creation of positive conditions for investment, economic growth and development. (Mbeki, 2001)

Accordingly, the promotion of democracy and good governance in Africa is not only important for attracting investments, but it also creates a favourable environment that supports entrepreneurship, trade and economic growth. To ensure the establishment and consolidation of good political environment, a series of initiatives to be implemented have been designed, including peace-keeping and conflict prevention and resolution, institutional reforms in the areas of public administration, the judiciary, strengthening parliamentary oversights and putting in place effective mechanisms to fight corruption. In addition to good political and economic governance, regional development and economic integration of the continent are considered as vital in order to ensure African competitiveness in global markets and to strengthen its voice in international politics.

Sectoral priorities

The second set of strategies identifies various sectors that need to be prioritised, each of which having a variety of component goals. There are six sectors identified that need massive investments. These are:

Infrastructure sector: it concerns all infrastructure sectors, roads, railroads, airports, seaports, and energy, water and sanitation, and telecommunications facilities. Infrastructure is one of the basics for economic growth. With poor and, in some instances, lack of infrastructures, NEPAD aims to collectively engage on projects that develop infrastructures in Africa.

Human resource development: this initiative includes all activities dealing with poverty reduction, improving the quality of education, and increasing access of Africans, especially women to education. It also contains strategies to retain African brains and utilisation of African Diaspora for Africa's development, strengthening programmes, which control communicable diseases, with a particular focus on HIV/AIDS.

Agriculture: in this sector priorities are put on modernising African agriculture to increase food production and nutritional standards, addressing agricultural systems, and improve the institutional support in the form of effective agricultural policies, research institutes and other support services to boost agricultural productivity.

Environment: with the recognition that sustainable development incorporates effective management of the environment, the environment initiative has prioritised the following: combating desertification, wetland conservation, control of invasive alien species, coastal management, monitoring the impact of climate change, promoting cross-border conservation areas to boost conservation and tourism, and, providing environmental governance (institutions, training, and funding).

Culture: under this sector, the objective is to effectively utilise indigenous knowledge for developmental purposes, and to protect this knowledge through

appropriate legislations.

Science and technology platforms: the initiative aims to establish and promote cross-border cooperation and sharing of science and technology information to enhance development on the continent.

Mobilisation of resources and market access

The third set of strategies looks at ways of mobilizing resources to finance NEPAD projects. According to NEPAD, to reduce poverty and meet the millennium development goals, Africa needs to achieve and sustain an average gross domestic product (GDP) of 7 per cent per annum. This requires enormous capital inflow, approximately US $ 64 billion per annum, the bulk of which have to be obtained from outside the continent. NEPAD builds its resource mobilisation strategy around two initiatives, namely, capital flow and market access.

The capital flow strategy seeks to increase resources through four initiatives, namely, the increase of domestic resources, official development assistance (ODA) reforms, increased private capital flows, and debt relief (NEPAD, 2001:37-39). Domestically, resources will be mobilised through the rationalisation of government expenditures, improvements in the public revenue collection systems and increased domestic savings through the introduction of effective tax collection systems, and creation of an environment conducive for the retention of domestic investments given the high levels of African capital flight.

In terms of debt relief, NEPAD's leadership intends to negotiate with creditor governments and institutions for debt relief arrangements. Furthermore, a forum will be established in which African countries can share experiences and strategies for better management of debt. With regard to ODA flows, NEPAD's strategy is to negotiate with donors the increase of these flows in the medium term and the delivery system that needs to be reformed to ensure that donors abide by the commitments they make and allow recipients to effectively use these resources. NEPAD considers private capital flow as the

long-term resource base for its programmes. Initiatives to attract foreign capitals will focus on a number of areas including regulatory frameworks especially with regard to security of property rights in order to address the investors' perception of Africa as a high-risk continent. In addition, public-private partnership (PPP) programmes will be promoted and implemented along with the promotion of financial markets within and between countries.

The second major strategy to mobilize resources is market access. It comprises several initiatives that first seek to address the structural weaknesses of African production through initiatives that promote diversification of production and effective use of Africa's resource base. Improvements in agriculture, mining, manufacturing, tourism and services are considered strategically urgent. At the same time, the initiative focuses on activities, mechanisms and negotiations to increase the access of African exports in western markets (NEPAD, 2001:40-50).

NEPAD'S MONITORING MECHANISM: THE APRM

After the adoption of the NEPAD document, African leaders agreed to establish a mechanism of peer assessment, called the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The principal purpose of the mechanism is to determine to what extent African countries are complying with agreed codes and standards of good governance and sustainable development as endorsed in the NEPAD (NEPAD, 2001:57). The APRM was established in 2003 as a tool to be voluntarily acceded to by member states of the African Union, to monitor their progress towards meeting the NEPAD objectives (APRM, 2003:1).

Peer assessment is a strategic alliance among African states that attempts to build the confidence of a continent the image of which is tarnished by civil wars and poor governance. This move is expected to attract investments and boost donors' funds. This passage from President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, whose country is among the signatories of the APRM, confirms this assertion.

> The States, which support the APRM understand that for African countries to approach the 21st century with renewed momentum and confidence, we have to change Africa's image and accelerate performance through the rule of law and good governance practices. Besides, we believe that the APRM

process will hasten the process of harmonisation of standards and practices, which will in turn accelerate continental economic integration that we see as the key to our own emancipation and development. (NEPAD Rwanda Magazine, 2004:3)

Specific objectives, standards, criteria and indicators in accordance with the "Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (AHG/235 (XXXVIII) Annex 1) and the APRM base document (AHG/235 (XXXVIII) Annex 2) have been developed to assess and monitor progress in four key areas. These are: democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance, and socio-economic development.

According to the document outlining objectives, standards, criteria and indicators for the APRM (NEPAD/HSGIC-03-2003/APRM/Guideline/OSCI), the overall objective for democracy and political governance is to consolidate a constitutional political order in which democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, the separation of powers and effective, responsive public service are realised to ensure sustainable development and a peaceful and stable society. In the area of economic governance and management, the key objective is to promote macro-economic policies that support sustainable development. This means the implementation of transparent, predictable, and credible economic policies, but also the acceleration of regional integration. Good corporate governance aims at increasing investor confidence in Africa, making it easier for corporations to raise equity capital and finance investment. And lastly, the socio-economic development area deals with issues such as self-reliance in development and policies for poverty eradication. The following table highlights the distinctiveness of NEPAD in comparison with previous development strategies.

Table 1.1: NEPAD in comparison with previous African development plans

	OAU and previous development plans: 1963- 2000	African Union and NEPAD: 2002-
Goals	- Eradicate all forms of colonialism in Africa - Defend sovereignty and territorial integrity - Promote economic cooperation and sustainable development	- Eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development - Facilitate effective participation in the world economy and body politic - Achieve a united and integrated Africa (AU vision 2030)
Principles	- Sovereignty of states - Non-interference in domestic affairs of states	- Sovereignty of states - Interference in internal affairs in cases of grave violations
Development strategies	- Inward looking strategies: national self-reliance and self-sustenance - Structural adjustment programs of IMF and World Bank: market-led growth, retreat of the state	- Integration in the global economy (market access and attract investments - Partnerships: state and non-state actors (Public-Private Partnerships "PPP") - Partnerships with donor community - Developmental state: provide effective policies and institutions
Monitoring and accountability mechanisms	No specific instrument of monitoring and accountability of governance	African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to monitor the political, economic, and corporate governance, and regional integration progress.

Adapted by Mukamunana from various OAU, AU and NEPAD documents

As it emerges from the presentation on the history of Africa's development policies, the APRM occupies a central place in the new pan-African development plan (NEPAD). It is this emphasis on democratic governance and economic growth and development as joint objectives, which makes NEPAD unique and distinct from previous development plans. The APRM,

which emphasises not merely economic governance but also political governance, is the most critical aspect that is likely to make a difference in Africa's development history. It is this instrument that gives the African peoples hope for a true African renaissance. Therefore, how the APRM operates, its functions, benefits and likely limitations, are of high significance for research. The statement of the research problem, objectives and the significance of the study follow.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an African development plan and strategy to eradicate poverty and place the continent on a path of sustainable growth and development in the 21st century. NEPAD is based on the premise that sustainable development is impossible in situations of political instability and social conflicts, corruption and macroeconomic instability, which are prevalent in many African countries. NEPAD, which is endorsed by the African Union (AU), and thus by all African member states of the AU, makes good political, corporate and economic governance a prerequisite to sustainable development. Consequently, African leaders have pledged to work, both individually and collectively, to promote the principles of good governance. These include the promotion of democracy, peace and security, good administrative governance and sound economic management (NEPAD, 2001:19).

The requirements for good governance in Africa are also justified by the challenges of globalisation and partnerships' imperatives. Developed countries (donors) want Africa states to adopt democratic values, the rule of law, and market policies as fundamentals of development. The highly developed countries have made it clear in the "G8 Africa Action Plan" that they will support only the countries that demonstrate a political and financial commitment to good governance and the rule of law, invest in their people, and pursue policies that spur economic growth and alleviate poverty. From a globalisation perspective, Africa is perceived by investors (the main drivers of the globalisation process) as a "high-risk" continent. Thus, one of the main

imperatives of NEPAD is to create a stable environment, free of wars and conflicts, by addressing political governance problems, promoting democratic rule, and introducing policy reforms, which will boost donor and investor confidence, and, consequently, attract foreign financial flows. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) has been established as an instrument to help African countries achieve the abovementioned goals. Its mandate is to monitor the performance of African governments in all the areas of governance (political, corporate, economic and social development) in order to help them identify weaknesses, assess the needs for capacity building, and implement policies, which will assist African states to meet NEPAD objectives. In this context, the success of the APRM is vital for the success of NEPAD.

Despite the central role of the APRM in making NEPAD ideals a reality, there are serious problems and issues, which could dilute the potency of the APRM. The following issues are the most critical. First, access to the APRM is voluntary (APRM, base document, 2003:1). Voluntary access to peer review by African states however does negate the philosophical approach of the NEPAD, which makes good political and economic governance a prerequisite for high economic growth and sustainable development. Because the APRM's purpose is to monitor the performance of governments towards the attainment of the NEPAD goals, then logically all AU state members should be peer reviewed. Voluntary access clearly challenges the legitimacy and credibility of the APRM in the assembly of African nations. So far, only 23 of the 53 AU member states have signed the "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) on the APRM, thus submitting to the peer review process. The fact that fewer than half of the members of the AU have agreed to be peer reviewed demonstrates the institutional and legitimacy challenges the APRM is facing. Indeed, some African states criticise the APRM for being the puppet of the donor community, and hence, a mechanism to serve the donor's agenda. This raises the question of how the instrument will achieve its goals if it lacks the buy-in of all the stakeholders.

The second issue is about the capacity of the APRM to deal with political governance challenges on the continent given the fact that the APRM lacks

enforcement measures. The APRM is a cooperative, non-adversarial process, which will rely heavily for compliance on mutual trust and shared commitment to the values of the APRM among countries involved in the process. The political governance review of the APRM aims to address such issues as the unconstitutional rule, separation of powers, corruption, abuses of human rights, political accountability, and effectiveness of the public service (APRM, 2003:59). The question in this regard is to know how the APRM can address these problems if the necessary political will for change is not forthcoming. Furthermore, what happens if or when a country fails to comply with recommended measures proposed by the peer review?

The third problem relates to the role of civil society (national stakeholders) in the process of peer review. The role and importance of civil society (such as labour unions, media, business associations, women's groups, youth, and various non-governmental organisations) in the allocation of values for society are no longer disputable. The participation of these non-state actors in policy-making, setting standards and evaluation of government performance is important in promoting good governance and enhancing accountability. Although the MOU of the APRM explicitly states that there must be broad-based and inclusive participation of all stakeholders in the process of national peer review and the development of a "Program of Action" (PoA), there are no clear guidelines for their involvement. The extent of participation and significance of the input of civil society will depend on the space for participation each government opens. It also depends on the capacity of civil society actors to challenge policies and provide alternatives. On this aspect, this research project looks at the dynamics of participation and the engagement of civil society in the process of peer review. This study aims to investigate and to engage the guidelines agreed upon for the peer review process, and to highlight the implications for the effectiveness of APRM. Consequently, the principal research question is:

"To what extent can the African Peer Review Mechanism address the critical issues of political governance in Africa?"

The following sub-questions have been formulated to assist in answering the principal research question:

- Is the APRM, as currently framed, capable of addressing critical political governance issues, such as unconstitutional rule, corruption, and lack of accountability in Africa?

- Does the APRM have adequate human and financial capacities to conduct credible reviews?

- To what extent has the process been inclusive of African civil society?

To obtain answers to these questions, a comprehensive research project such as the present one is necessary. However, it is equally important to note that definitive answers to these questions are not possible, given that the NEPAD and, particularly the APRM, are barely three years old. Very little research information is available on these initiatives and only a small number of countries have begun the process of peer review. Nonetheless, a number of tentative assumptions have been made in the light of what has been done since their inception.

Unquestionably, the APRM is well intentioned in seeking to promote good governance in Africa, particularly when contrasted with the non-interference clause of the OAU that tolerated bad leaders and poor governance. However, a number of factors may undermine the institution of a robust and credible instrument, which is supposed to genuinely monitor, evaluate and foster good governance. They include the following:

- The APRM remains essentially voluntary without enforcement mechanisms for non-membership and non-compliance, which questions the political capacity of the APRM to address governance problems adequately and to drive political governance reforms effectively;

- Limited technical capacity and financial resources both at national

and Secretariat levels to carry out professional and credible reviews may delay the process of peer review and the attainment of its objectives;

- Weakness of civil society (such as media, trade unions, businesses, and human rights groups) is a reality in most African countries, with governments constituting the single powerful force. This may undermine the participatory character of the APRM, and hence its credibility.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to:

- determine the capacity of the APRM to address political governance problems and infuse good governance practices in Africa;

- identify the factors that constrain the effectiveness of the APRM; and

- proffer recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the APRM.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, the study will enrich the existing literature on governance and government' self-assessment and peer review, which is important for Public Administration research. While there is a body of literature on government performance and performance evaluation and monitoring, the peer review, particularly the peer review of Heads of State and Government is a new terrain. A body of literature on governance and implementation of extra-national policies has been generated, especially following the European Integration, which has expanded theories in Public Administration (see for example, Managing Complex Networks Strategies for the Public Sector by Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan, 1997). However, the scholarly debate has generally been limited to the EU. Secondly, this study expands knowledge and scholarship on new dynamics of

policy-making and implementation in the context of African peer review. This pioneering study on the "peer review in Africa" provides an opportunity to scholars and readers to explore this unique, contentious, yet promising instrument for good governance. It is hoped that the findings of this research will stimulate intellectual debates and therefore help to raise interest in future research on this critical instrument.

Thirdly, the research on the African Peer Review Mechanism is paramount considering the fact that for the first time in history African states are attempting to monitor one another performance in political and economic governance spheres. Considering the African poor track record in governance and the APRM's purpose of procuring good governance, this research is of paramount importance in its attempt to determine the strengths of the mechanism, to identify the shortcomings and other impediments to the goals of the APRM of improving governance in Africa, and finally to proffer recommendations.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Every research has a closure point, which is defined in terms of time and space. This study was carried out from the inception of the APRM (2003) to December 2005. All developments related to the APRM which occurred beyond this timeframe are not covered.

In terms of space, this study focuses on the instrument of the APRM itself. No country was used as a specific reference for analysis for a number of reasons. First, the APRM is a new initiative (barely three years old) and does not provide substantial country review information for analysis. Second, the operational protocols of the APRM do not allow access to the information of reviewed countries until the final report is made public by the Committee of Participating Heads of State (the APR Forum). Making the country review report public occurs six months after the report has been considered by the APRM Forum. At the time of writing this thesis, only two country reports -

those of Rwanda and Ghana, which started the peer review process in June 2004 had been considered by the APRM Forum in June 2005. But these are not yet public. This study completed in December 2005, as already noted, did not therefore have the opportunity to analyse these country review reports.

This study was also constrained by the paucity of data on the APRM and the confidentiality principle generally surrounding governments operations, in particular, when they are about new institutions. From its inception, the African Peer Review Mechanism has been a highly political and elite driven initiative. Most of the materials (such as minutes of meetings, and reports) which could provide insight into the process and its implementation are classified.

Furthermore, the study confines its analysis to exploratory rather than evaluative research methods. It does not pretend to provide an evaluative account of the achievements or failures of the APRM because the instrument is still in its infancy and has not yet borne sufficiently significant results for evaluation. This limits the ability of the research to provide a fair picture of the capacity of the APRM to for instance influence the adoption of policies or governance norms in participating countries. This can only be accurately done through evaluative approaches. Furthermore, the case study approach, which is used in this study, does not lend itself to generalisation. This is a unique and distinct case and is analysed as such.

Finally, financial constraints and academic time requirements have also inhibited the researcher from enquiring into all the salient issues needed to fully understand the APRM. The study is limited to one aspect of the APRM, the "Democracy and political governance" review. The reason for focusing on this aspect is that it promises to address the issues of political governance in Africa. The overall objective of the political governance review is to consolidate a constitutional political order in which democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, the separation of powers and effective, responsive public service are realised to ensure sustainable development and a peaceful and stable society (APRM, 2003). The section on "democracy and political governance" contains nine objectives which correspond with the

issues to be addressed. This study however, focuses on only four. These are generally recognised as the most challenging in Africa's governance. They are:

- constitutional democracy, including periodic political competition and opportunity for choice, the rule of law, a Bill of Rights and the supremacy of the Constitution to be firmly established in the constitution;

- separation of powers, including the protection of the independence of the judiciary and of an effective Parliament;

- accountable, efficient and effective public office holders and civil servants; and

- fighting corruption in the political sphere.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 provides a historical background to the study. It is an overview of Africa's history and her efforts to address development challenges. The chapter provides the intellectual roots of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), how it was formed, its governing structures, objectives and strategies. Further, the chapter discusses the institutional mechanism of NEPAD, the African Peer Review Mechanism, which is the case analysis for this study. Then the chapter proceeds to define the research problem, determine the objectives of the study, and the rationale for undertaking this particular study. This chapter also provides the limitations of the study and ends by providing the overall structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 is an outline of the methodology and research design for this study. It describes major research methods in social science research and provides the reasoning behind the selection of a case study approach to analyse the chosen topic. The chapter describes in detail the methods and instruments that were used to collect data and how the information collected was

analysed. Finally, the chapter discusses the issues of ethics, validity and reliability for the research.

Chapter 3 is the theoretical framework of the study. It starts by circumscribing the topic in the field of Public Administration. This is done through a survey of the major theoretical paradigms in Public Administration, and their relationship with the case study analysis. The theoretical review defines all related concepts to the APRM, that is, governance, peer review and regionalism. The chapter provides a comprehensive review on conceptions of governance, mainly from two viewpoints: the academic standpoint and that of the multilateral development institutions. The chapter elaborates on the concept of peer review in some depth, drawing on experiences from the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The APRM, which is an instrument for performance and good governance, operates in the context of supranational jurisdiction and is designed for regional cooperation. In this context, the chapter presents various theoretical approaches to regional cooperation and integration, and the relationship between regionalism and globalisation, and their impact of on governance. Lastly, the author develops a framework of governance outlining the essential components needed for Africa, taking into account domestic realities and global challenges and imperatives.

Chapter 4 is a review of the literature on governance models in Africa. The chapter highlights governance models found in modern political systems. It also provides a chronology of governance systems in Africa from the pre-colonial period to the post independence era. This is important to show the patterns of governance during these different periods. The chapter surveys critical issues of political governance, focusing on the main objectives of the political review of the APRM including constitutional rule, separation of powers, fighting corruption, and effective public service. In addition, the chapter discusses African experience on regional cooperation and integration, and the challenges posed by globalisation. In summary, this chapter is a comprehensive account of core governance and leadership challenges and difficulties experienced in Africa. The outline of the problems of governance in

Africa enables the study to rationally analyse the APRM and to predict its likely successes and difficulties.

Chapter 5 is the case analysis of the African Peer Review Mechanism. It is an in-depth analysis of the APRM. It presents its purpose, objectives and governance structure. The chapter critically analyses the APRM in relation to its design and operation. It presents the findings and answers to the research questions. The study concludes with Chapter 6, which summarises the main findings and proffers recommendations regarding shortcomings and other issues that need remediation. Topics for further research are also suggested.