The African state

An administrative dilemma

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ABSTRACT

Most articles and books attend to the practising of the public administration and management in countries with stable well established governments and career public officials. It is assumed that a government is operating in accordance with policies sanctioned by the legislature. The legislature is operating in terms of the country's constitution and public officials are appointed in accordance with specific legislation determining qualifications and service conditions. It is furthermore accepted that service conditions are formalised; that every employee is appointed in a clearly demarcated position; and that salaries are paid regularly.

No real research had been done regarding the operation of public administration in countries with unstable governments and with employees subjected to political interference. In the case of e.g. Somalia, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Sudan/Southern Sudan and Mali governments are unstable and for all intents and purposes unable to perform their governing functions effectively. The question to be addressed is whether public administration could be practised in accordance with the generally accepted principles or guidelines and functions performed by officials in leadership positions. Attention will be devoted to the challenge officials face in delivering services in the absence of clear and consistent policies or even inconsistent or conflicting policies. Another dilemma facing the public sector in such countries is uncertainty in budgeting as revenue sources are unstable and may not be available when expenditure is incurred. The availability of personnel is uncertain as employees are deployed according to political whim or are simply dismissed without recourse as the central personnel agency is not operational. In some instances no clear organisational structures exist due to political infighting as in the case of Zimbabwe where co-ministers were appointed. This uncertainty results in officials being in a quandary as far as instructions and even accountability are concerned.

The article will address the challenges faced in countries struggling to repair the damages caused by civil strife and to render the basic services without proper organisational structures, uncertain budget allocations and in the absence of a proper corps of officials trained in the operations of a civil government.

INTRODUCTION

Most literature on public administration refers to the governmental and administrative arrangements in states with well-established systems. The discussion then focuses on the operation of the administration of the public sector according to the usual approaches and practices followed in any democratic system of government. In countries without the advantage of this stability public administration is subjected to various stress factors inhibiting the functions and processes required for efficient and effective action. This article addresses the situation in countries without governments serving a democratically acceptable term of office and with a public sector operating without the benefit of security of employment, regular remuneration or consistent policy guidelines.

GOVERNMENTAL STABILITY

The usual approach to the study of administrative systems and managerial practices is to assume that a democratically elected government will provide clear policy guidelines which will enable the appointed officials to implement those policies within a reasonable period. It is furthermore accepted that a budget will be adopted annually by the legislature providing funding to implement the policies as initiated by the governing structure (cabinet). There would also be clarity on the posts and the assignment of duties to every public employee enabling each public servant to determine exactly what his/her duties are. In a similar manner clearly demarcated organisational structures will exist, assigning responsibility for the different functions to be performed by the state's machinery. Procedures will be laid down in regulations or departmental guidelines to prevent unlawful or unethical behaviour. Lastly control mechanisms as well as monitoring and evaluation systems will be in place to enable the legislature and society to call political office bearers and officials to account for their actions or inactions.

In states lacking the well-established political systems a different scenario is present. The most salient of these phenomena will be referred to in an attempt to identify whether public administration could indeed be practised to ensure service rendering to society in an ethically acceptable manner and to the satisfaction of society.

It is important to commence a discussion on government by identifying what the characteristics of politics are. Claude Ake defines it as "any act by any member of a society that affects the distribution of the power to make decisions for that society. Political behaviour is ubiquitous. Members of society behave politically insofar as in obeying or disobeying the laws of the society they support or undermine the power stratification system" (Ake1975:271). This statement applies to the political office bearers and members of the legislative assemblies as well. Every violation of the law is *ipso facto* a defiance of constituted authority. It threatens the maintenance of the existing pattern of distribution of power to make decisions for society (Ake 1975:271). Political stability, for the purposes of this discussion, implies the regularity in the flow of political exchanges i.e. between society and the political authority and among the political office bearers, as well as between the legislature and appointed officials responsible for giving effect to laws passed by the legitimate authorities.

For the orderly conduct of public affairs there should be consistency in the decisions affecting the operational requirements of the state. This statement does not imply that no change should take place. Societal needs and expectations change continuously and the role of a state changes in the international setting as well, e.g. the situation in Mali, Central African Republic, Morocco/Western Sahara, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya and Sudan/South Sudan changed significantly during the past months. However, without a properly elected and legitimate legislature and governing body haphazard actions could ensue.

It is not argued that stability should be the only factor determining success. A system may become anachronistic e.g. the apartheid system in the former Republic of South Africa up to the democratic elections of 27/28 April 1994. Since then political stability was introduced it required the re-engineering of the total structure of the state in the national, provincial and local spheres. This required the South African Parliament to pass more than 700 acts in the first 10 years of the democratically elected legislature. These transformational policies did not result in political instability, but required society as well as all the political role players to co-operate to achieve a just society based on the newly adopted democratic ideals.

Political stability could be viewed from different angles e.g. the absence of domestic or civil conflict and violent behaviour; political and societal change taking place in an institutionalised manner without aggression and conflict; absence of disorderly structural change; governmental endurance/longevity; and the existence of a legitimate constitutional order (Hurwitz 1973:449–455). Considering some African states it could be argued that some of these characteristics referred to above are absent, implying that those governmental systems do not provide a political environment suitable for administrative efficiency and service delivery effectiveness.

It is not the intention to typify states as acceptable or unacceptable. However some states which have suffered from internal turmoil over an extended period are subject to a number of challenges regarding their efforts to govern, to oversee executive actions and to ensure that quality services are provided. Reference will be made to some African states as examples of the effects of governments lacking the authority and the legitimacy in society to guide the public administrative practices. The countries used as examples serve to clarify the statements concerning the serious implications of governments without the required status or authority to take enforceable decisions and without the capacity to enforce its decisions and policies.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) with a population of ±70,9 million became independent of Belgium in 1960. It consists of more than 200 ethnic groups and four of the major religions (Roman Catholic 50%, Protestant 20% and Muslim 10% with 10% Kimbanguist and 10% other indigenous beliefs). The country has been in political turmoil since its independence. Various peace agreements had been signed, but stability has not returned although a limited form of democratic government has been introduced in 2006 (Dagne 2011:2). More than 19 million voters cast their votes for 9 707 candidates for the 500 seat Parliament. The presence of various armed groups is a serious challenge and a major source of instability. The Lord's Resistance Army militia as well as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) create significant tensions between Uganda and the DRC. From Rwanda major offences have been lodged, increasing the tensions between the two countries (Dagne 2011:5).

The Mai Mai militia and the National Congress for the Defense of the People, promoting one ethnic group, are also contributing to the political instability in the DRC. Human rights

abuses have often been reported in the DRC (Dagne 2011:11). These abuses contribute to tension in the country and add to instability although most citizens are demanding democracy intransigently (Ngoma-Binda, Yahisule and Mombo 2010:1). This is due to the fact that the democratic system had been misapplied or abused during a long period after independence. The assassination of Patrick Lumumba in 1961 triggered a spate of violations and representative democracy was put under pressure. Successive wars contributed to the demise of the democratic ideals. Later efforts were made to re-introduce democracy, but the warring factions prevented the transformation and the efforts were often questioned, contributing to instability. Parliament has also not succeeded in fulfilling its role as a counterweight in controlling the executive (Ngoma-Binda *et al.* 2010:15). In fact Parliament has become subjected to the parliamentary majority of the President and undue influence by government. In the absence of sanctions, recommendations emanating from Parliament are largely ignored by government. Thus, Parliament has virtually no real influence on any decisions of government (Ngoma-Binda 201:15). The situation has become worse as a result of MPs being accused of corruption and other crimes, but with no action taken. It is considered imperative for Parliament to strengthen its own transparency and deal effectively with the executive in cases of non-compliance with parliamentary prescripts.

Tshiyoyo (2011:109) argues in his article on the state of the civil service in the DRC that three impediments inhibit the development of public services *viz.* the policy of indigenisation; the systematic politicisation of the civil service's higher echelons; and the drift to dictatorship and military rule. The civil service is subjected to the following dilemmas:

- governance by predation (e.g. through mining operations), illegal taxation, rent-seeking, administrative meddling, coercion and deprivation;
- interference by the political elite in exploiting the administration through "mafia type networks for political survival and personal enrichment";
- administrative procedures conditioned by the "mood, availability and personal expectations and needs of civil servants who thrive on the ambiguity of their work environment" resulting in either working strictly to the rule or opting for an informal approach by inventing or interpreting rules to suit their fancies;
- flawed administrative reforms due to the crises in the state resulting in the public service undermining reform rather than facilitating it; and
- loss of expertise due to experienced and skilled public officials leaving the service due to unacceptable working conditions and joining other counties where they can attract better remuneration and service conditions.

From the above-mentioned summary of the situation in the DRC it should be obvious that the public service is not contributing to the development of the state. It is again highlighted that African states are not winning the battle to provide efficient and effective services to its inhabitants due to ingrained shortcomings. These can only be solved by a political authority that is free of corrupt tendencies and focussed on the wellbeing of society as prime objective of the state.

In a study commissioned by the European Union (Baumüller *et al.* quoted by McKay 2012:6) it is argued that in some countries the political will does not exist to enforce existing laws and regulations and act against foreign investors damaging the environment through mining or oil drilling operations.

Sudan has a total population of ±34 million people (including South Sudan). About 70% of the population are Sudanese Arab with the rest comprising Fur, Beja, Nuba and Fallata. The main religions are Sunni Muslim with a small Christian minority. Two official languages are recognised (Arabic and English), but various other languages are spoken.

The Sudanese politics often transcend the internal power struggle, the religious and the ethnic subjugation, the imbalanced resource distribution, fractured geo-spaces and many conflicts have serious effects on the development of the country (Mayai 2012:1). After a 55 year union between the Sudan and South Sudan the agreement ended with the voting on 9 January 2011 when the South seceded. However, disputes persisted regarding the border issues especially in Abyei; the proposed debt portioning; and the sharing of the oil revenue with the north. The situation regarding corruption and poor governance is counterproductive to the nation building process and to the creation of a stable governmental system.

If politics is left aside the following quote explains the essence of nation building: "Human progress depends on society's understanding of its population needs as well as the measures it employs to meet these particular needs" (Mayai 2012:2). It should be noted that the South Sudan gained ± four million people since the end of 2009, bringing its total population to 11 million. It is projected that by 2019 the new nation would increase by 3,8 million (Mayai 2012:2). This clearly indicates that the new government will be faced with more demands for services. However, considering the current political uncertainty efficient administration seems to be difficult if not impossible to attain.

Zimbabwe has a population of ±12,6 million. The population consists of 98% African (Shona 82%, Ndebele 14% and other 2%) with mixed Asian 1% and Whites less than 1%. As far as religion is concerned the following are found: syncretic 50% (part Christian part indigenous beliefs); Christian 25%, indigenous beliefs 24% and other 1%. The official language spoken is English with Shona, Sindebele and numerous tribal dialects also being used. Zimbabwe is characterised by poverty and high a high rate of unemployment. The government of National Unity came to an end with the most recent general elections held on 31 July 2013. There is no indication that any significant changes are envisaged. Many Zimbabweans leave the country and it is reported that ± three million already are in South Africa. Public services are not delivered efficiently and the public sector is not able to stabilise the economy.

The examples quoted are mainly used to illustrate the challenges faced by the public service in establishing and performing the administrative functions to meet the needs of society in the face of turmoil and uncertainty regarding policy directions. Even in countries with so-called stable governments (In Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe has been in office for the past 33 years) policies are not necessarily consistent. Thus, it could be inferred that political longevity may be demonstrated, but the internal conflict in the country, detracts from the notion of public administration serving the needs of society based on clear and unambiguous policies.

LEADERSHIP

Since the independence of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1960 government was inhibited in its efforts to make progress due to the "lack of a real vision for the DRC's future,

the competence and ability to execute the vision, and the character needed to ensure the realisation of the vision with sound judgment, integrity and equity". (N'Gambwa 2011:3). It could be argued that the formulation of a clear and practical vision was not articulated and implemented. Government actually lacked the leadership qualities required to take the country into the new dispensation. Lack of leadership also contributes to government's inability to utilise the country's resources optimally. They also failed in meeting the deep seated political, economic and social challenges facing society.

Even the era of Mobutu could not attain the promises of stability and prosperity in the DRC, rather it produced a stage of corruption, repression, and failed social and economic programmes. His successor Laurent Kabila was also described as incompetent. The latter's son has been in office for a decade and still has to prove his mettle. During February 2013 an attempted *coup d'etat* was foiled with an arrest in South Africa of a group opposing Kabila.

The political turmoil in Zimbabwe is already well-known. It is equally important to state that the current leaders fail to act decisively in cases of corruption and lawlessness. This situation results in members of society becoming disillusioned with government and governmental institutions. Therefore the notion of nationhood is failing and commitment to promoting the country's wellbeing is eroded.

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

The development of every country is inextricably linked to its economic wellbeing. Zimbabwe is suffering from a sharp economic decline since it gained independence in 1980. This has resulted in 80% of its industries experiencing a decline in output volumes. More than 15% of them are operating at less than 30% of their capacity; a further one third is operating at between 30% and 49% of their capacity. More than 90% of the companies are unable to produce enough to cover their costs (Makumbe s.a. 3). These statistics clearly identify the serious nature of the fiscal and financial situation in Zimbabwe as a declining industrial sector implies loss of revenue for the state and an inability to provide services to society. To this should be added that an estimated unemployment level of ±80% contributes to the financial woes of the country. This observation was borne out by the Minister of Finance in his *Mid-Term Fiscal Policy Review* in July 2006. If the embarrassing inflation rate (at one stage 11 million %) is considered, the effect on the country's revenue for performing even the most basic services can be deduced.

The DRC is dependent on bilateral and multilateral donors to support the transitional process. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund require the DRC to implement reform policies to promote macro-economic stability. The DRC needs a tight fiscal policy if economic conditions are to be improved. Without economic development the DRC will continue to experience economic instability, adding to political and social tensions.

In the case of Sudan the prospects of economic development is seriously hampered by the lack of human and technological know-how. The private sector as a primary requirement for economic development is extremely weak. To this should be added that about 350 to 410 persons out of 1 000 are unemployed in the Upper Nile states (Mayai 2012:6).

POLICY CHALLENGES

A parliament would normally be constituted immediately after a general election and a government formed to give guidance regarding policies to attain the goals identified during the election campaign. It should be noted that this broad political policy is only a framework to vie voters. Unfortunately voters often expect that election promises will come to fruition like: houses for all; work for all; and economic prosperity for all. Unfortunately these promises cannot be realised quickly or not at all. Once government must consider implementation of the political promises they are faced with resource constraints e.g. lack of funding; lack of human capacity and even a lack of a system within which policies can be translated into action. In the case of the DRC new initiatives are required to introduce policy approaches to obtain economic progress and bring about stability in society and in the executive institutions.

The coalition government of ZANU-PF and the MDC-T may have been considered as an acceptable solution to the political stalemate. However, an unequal power structure has resulted in an unwieldy government (Masununguru & Mutasa 2010:135 as quoted by Nhede 2012:4). The principal players failed to reach agreement on the sharing of ministries, resulting in organisational chaos. Co-ministers have been assigned to departments, resulting in confusion and an inability of ministers to give proper policy guidelines to permanent secretaries (Nhede 2012:11).

Zimbabwe's ZANU-PF has adopted a so-called democratic political dispensation by developing a coalition government with the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T). Policy implementation remains imperfect and the *Global Political Agreement (GPA)* could result in a "tombstone" for ZANU-PF and is therefore not implemented as it would imply relinquishing its key levers of power over the state. (Onslow 2011:10). This situation changed with the general elections held on 31 July 2013. ZANU-PF was returned to power thus thwarting the possibility of significant policy changes.

Sudan had been suffering from tribal and religious conflicts for centuries. There had been a continuous demand by South Sudan to secede from the north. The tension this demand created before the latter obtained its independence resulted in incoherent policies, and a lack of monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation. This situation led to low accessibility to public services (Kameir 2011:16). Lack of decisive leadership also prevents the development of clear goals and sustasinable policies.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Clearly demarcated areas of operation should be established to ensure that responsibility can be assigned and accountability demanded for every action or inaction. Fifty years after independence the DRC remains plagued by various governmental challenges. State institutions are relatively weak and their efforts have produced mixed results (N'Gambwa 2011:1).

As a result of the coalition government in Zimbabwe the ZANU-PF and the MDC-T came to some workable solution regarding the political oversight of government departments. This had no positive results. The proposed solution was the creation of co-ministers and even a

so-called *parallel government.* Sympathisers of one party preferred to work with only the minister representing their party and did not heed the requests of the co-minister belonging to the other party. This naturally created many challenges for public officials (Nhede 2012:12). After the recent elections this situation no longer exists, but the example is used to illustrate the dilemma a country faces when there is a lack of clear leadership to give direction to the public service.

Kameir (2011:28) argues that institutional capacities in Sudan remain fragile (even before the independence of South Sudan) and inhibits transparent public administration. Even before the independence of South Sudan the three tier system of government was incomprehensible. At one stage the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) consisted of 10 state governments, 78 counties and 19 constitutional commissions making extensive demands on the limited human resources. The demarcation into these subsystems is counterproductive and does not promote efficiency and effectiveness of services.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

No public institution can operate without funds. Equally important is the availability and utilisation of the country's natural and human resources. The DRC is one of the richest African countries as far as natural resources are concerned. However, it suffers from instability and insecurity as a result of the mismanagement and plunder of its natural resources by domestic and foreign armed militia (N'Gambwa 2011:1).

Human resource requirements

In the case of human resources, political turmoil contributes to the lack of skills and experience in the corps of officials. If appointments are made on the basis of political affinity, skills seldom are considered. This is also the case in Sudan where the marginalised people's expectations were not met. "Patronage, low capacity, and accusations of corruption…limit efforts to improve the delivery of basic services such as health, education, and security" (Kameir 2011:17). As is the case in some other African countries the freedom fighters or struggle veterans demand to be compensated for their support during the struggle for independence. Such supporters are then appointed (deployed) without regard for their competence. Money is spent without a commensurate rate of work. The fiscus becomes depleted, without efficient services being delivered. The concept of a merit-based public administration is forfeited and mediocrity is introduced in the public service. In the case of Sudan ethnicity also plays a significant role in the appointment of public officials (Kameir 2011:17).

Only 50% of the positions in the Sudanese ministries have been filled (Kameir 2011:28). The staff situation is exacerbated by the fact that nearly 50% of the public service staff have only early education and only 5% have graduated or have higher qualifications (Kameir 2011:28). They also lack experience and have difficulty in communicating in English which is the official language of government (Kameir 2011:28). The large number of structures that were established for South Sudan naturally also put pressure on the limited human resources available. In particular there was a dearth of skilled personnel with the majority of

the human resources consisting of "unqualified and untrained civil servants" who previously worked for different public institutions such as the Civil Authority of the New Sudan (CANS). These officials were formerly appointed by ministers who employed them on their own terms resulting in posts filled with "relatives, tribesmen and friends, without the required credentials or necessary skills" (Kameir 2011:28). The institutional conditions remain fragile and individual capabilities are heterogeneous resulting in delivery capacities being extremely weak. There is an acute shortage of a professional and accountable public service with a commensurate lack of confidence in government.

It is obvious that in countries with unqualified and insufficiently educated public officials as e.g. in Sudan that no proper public services can be rendered. It could also be deduced that the quality of public servants is a prerequisite for any government to achieve its goals. Should political affiliation be considered as a condition for appointment, appointed personnel may be tempted to further the party political policies of government without regard for the needs of members of society not supporting their views. This subsequently could result in politically motivated action without adhering to the basic principles of accountable public administration e.g. honesty, probity, impartiality and objectivity. The politicisation of the public administration has become a stimulant for conflict rather than a depressant, making the new state susceptible to failure.

The South Sudanese public service is riddled by corruption, nepotism and ethnicity contributing to the inefficient functioning of the state (Kameir 2011:34). This situation has been inherited when South Sudan became independent. It has even been stated that it may take 10 years after independence to reverse the results of this ingrained unethical practices if the new government applies strong measures to introduce an accountable administration to serve the people of this new state.

Ehtnicisation pervades all levels of the public administration in Sudan. Ministers and senior public servants have received an almost *carte blanche* to appoint personnel in accordance with ethnicity. Appointments are quite often made in accordance with the locality of an applicant. Such officials often tend to favour the particular region and have nearly unlimited access to resources which are used arbitrarily due to lack of a proper financial management system. One minister (Dr Garang) introduced a system of appointing personnel in regions other than the one in which a person's tribe commanded the majority. However, after his demise, the system was cancelled reintroducing tribalism and nepotism (Kameir 2011:34). As could be imagined, the focus is not necessarily on finding the most suitable candidate, but in ensuring the appointment of someone with a particular ethnic origin.

In South Sudan only 23% of the health facilities are functional, but lack infrastructure such as blood banks, medical supply stores, laboratories and pharmaceutical equipment. There is also a lack of medical staff and training schools. This situation has a long term effect. This is partly due to a weak educational system as well. Managers cannot be produced overnight and medical doctors require at least six years of training. Thus, even though government could decide to improve service delivery, existing staff will have to be retrenched and new staff with the required expertise will have to be recruited, which may have serious political consequences. Such a new public service complying with competency requirements will have to be recruited and trained. Only then attempts could be made to establish hospitals and other health facilities with a possibility of providing efficient health services.

Financial requirements

No public policy can be implemented without the provision of funds. In the case of Sudan only 6,5% of the annual budget is devoted to education, down from 10% in 2010. Should government be intent on providing a core of proficient public officials (managers, medical practitioners and nurses) the educational system will have to be improved. The country also lacks an effective Public Finance Management System. Support has been provided by external funders e.g. the African Development Bank (AfDB) in the areas of budgeting, planning and treasury systems. This involvement consists of only support to enable the country to develop a system to meet their requirements and that will be managed by their own officials. This implies that the country will have to attend to issues such as revenue collection, procurement, auditing and financial management.

Although Sudan has experienced a valuable wind-fall through the presence of significant oil reserves, the revenue has to be managed efficiently. Currently the country experiences a lack of financial management legislation; inability to trace expenditure due to non-compliance with the Appropriation Act; no procurement procedures or guidelines exist (although introduced by the GoSS); and lack of prioritisation and inattentiveness to discretionary and non-discretionary expenditure result in an unsustainable budget. This situation is exacerbated by an enlarged wage bill; ineffective budgeting prescriptions requiring supplementary budgets being demanded annually which, in some cases, amount to 60% of the main budget; low accounting capacity and inadequate accounting systems with poor internal and external audit control; and low capacity of the personnel employed in the Ministry of Finance who have mainly studied in Arabic (Kameir 2011:31).

A major problem experienced in countries with large oil reserves is predicting the revenue from that commodity (McKay 2012:6). In some cases the country's fiscus is totally dependent on the mining company's estimates of the revenue the country is entitled to. This again emphasises the dilemma of budgeting for services without certainty regarding expected revenue. It is often also subject to political manipulation.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSEQUENCES

In the introductory paragraphs reference was made to the need for a stable government to ensure effective and efficient public administration (and management). Considering the discussion of the countries used as examples it could be stated that public administration is under tremendous pressure.

If it is accepted that leadership is a primary prerequisite for the promotion of good government, then the lack of leadership in the countries referred to counteracts any efforts to improve the governing function. It seems as though politicians (Presidents, heads of government and chief executive officers) are all intent on retaining their positions and fail to devote attention to the act of leading i.e. to give direction; to inspire followers to promote the wellbeing of society and to attend to the expectations of society. Political office bearers who neglect their roles as leaders provide no guidelines for chief executive officials to develop proper administrative systems. Such politicians also do not provide a long term vision to facilitate the framing of policies.

Policy is considered as the core of all administrative practices. In countries with unstable governments policy making is thwarted by the lack of continuity. In countries struggling with internecine wars, governments are not able to focus on long term policies. Actions are undertaken to counteract threats to the state and to the incumbent government. The long and protracted wars in the DRC have diverted attention away from its internal needs to repel the forces from Uganda, Rwanda and even the forces operating from within the country. In the case of Zimbabwe the Government of National Unity was actually a Government of National Disunity. As alluded to earlier, the differences between ZANU-PF and the MDC have resulted in co-ministers being appointed for a department, making it virtually impossible to formulate any coherent policy. Now that the Government of Unity has been disbanded ZANU-PF has the monopoly to determine policies. Only time will tell whether the "new" government will succeed in turning the tide of fiscal collapse and will indeed be able to provide public services on an efficient basis.

In the case of the two Sudanese states, policy formulation is detrimentally affected by the uncertainty regarding the borders, the division of revenue from oil and tribalism. The statement could thus be made that a lack of long term policies covering all the areas in which the state should become involved is counterproductive to the development of an efficient and effective public administration.

The availability of experienced or at least properly trained senior managers is a prerequisite for effective and efficient public administration. Unfortunately in the countries with governments who are unable to govern effectively the requirement for being appointed seems to be rather based on party loyalty than intellectual capacity. In some cases ethnicity is a prerequisite for appointments in some regions as a result of ethnic bias. In the latter case deployment is linked to political affiliation. Officials appointed on this basis will most probably focus more on retaining their positions by succumbing to political interference than endeavouring to promote ethical administration. In the countries quoted, many of the posts in the public sector are vacant. This is partly due to the unavailability of qualified candidates, but as in the case of Zimbabwe it is due to the inability of the appointed ministers to oversee the departments to agree on suitable candidates. This is undoubtedly due to irreconcilable political differences and the intention of securing a foothold in a department to promote party objectives.

The financing of government activities is of crucial importance in any state. If a government fails to set priorities and finance the policies in a coherent manner, the administrative system is severely handicapped. Unfortunately in some of the countries referred to, an annual budget is not submitted to Parliament and due to political expediency amounts are allocated to secure party support. In some of the countries referred to some regions with strong party support are favoured. Regions supporting opposition parties are neglected and services deteriorate.

The allocation of funds to the different ministries is sometimes biased and based on personal preferences. In the case of the DRC as one example very small amounts are assigned e.g. resulting in health services not being provided properly or education is prejudiced in favour of military excursions.

The result of uncertainty regarding funding prohibits departments from forming long-term views on e.g. education, health and infrastructure. (In South Africa the Medium Term Expenditure Framework has been introduced. This provides for estimates for the current

financial year and a further three years). It could be argued that political instability deprives departments the ability to develop long term strategies, to make provision for the acquisition of equipment (e.g. medicine, hospital equipment and even school books) or to even develop a proper establishment within which officials could be assigned clear functions and responsibilities.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The discussion was aimed at investigating the effects of unstable government on public administration. The countries used as examples illustrate the internal challenges due to weakly defined governmental structures. Reference was then made to the way in which policy making is conducted, public officials are appointed and utilised; and how public activities are financed. It was then highlighted that lack of policy negatively affects all the administrative functions. As far as the public service is concerned, political interference and party loyalty as conditions for appointment and promotion prevent the development of a professional corps of public employees. The absence of political stability also makes the compilation of a proper budget impossible. This results in departments' inability to plan actions for a particular financial cycle. In cases where an annual budget is not even approved departments find it impossible to provide sustainable services. Thus, it could be argued that unstable government results in the inability of the public sector to be administered effectively and efficiently.

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