

Strengthening Public Sector Skills in Africa

The Role of NEPAD

In the first section, the article attempts to give a brief explanation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative as a framework, a concept, a philosophy and a programme of action. The second part outlines in some detail the capacity development strategies of NEPAD in general and the need for strengthening the overall skills of the African public sector in particular. The article identifies some major conditions that would bring about effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the NEPAD pan-African capacity development strategy. Some recommendations are made in the form of possible implementation techniques and new approaches that could enhance the process. Conclusions were drawn on the need for strengthening Africa's public sector skills as a pre-condition for a successful implementation of key components of the NEPAD initiative.

Edwin Okey Ijeoma

Edwin Okey Ijeoma is a senior lecturer at the School of Public Management and Administration (SPMA), Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Introduction

NEPAD was adopted as the continent's development framework at the July 2001 summit meeting of African heads of states in Lusaka, Zambia. According to NEPAD, attainment of Africa's long-term development goals is anchored in the determination of African peoples "to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world."¹ It calls for a new relationship between Africa and the international community, in which the non-African partners seek to complement Africa's own efforts. The United Nations (UN), Group of Eight (G8) industrialised nations and various donor countries have pledged to do so. For Africa to develop, argues NEPAD, three conditions must prevail: Firstly, peace, security, and democracy; secondly, good political governance, improved economic and corporate governance; and thirdly, regional cooperation and integration must dominate.

NEPAD further identifies several priority sectors requiring special attention and action:

- Physical infrastructure, especially roads, railways and power systems linking neighbouring countries
- Information and communication technology

- Human development, focusing on health and skills development
- Agriculture
- Promoting the diversification of production and exports.

NEPAD further explained that the principles which underpin the achievement of these objectives include: African ownership and responsibility, promotion of self-reliance, democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance, promotion of gender equality, respect for sanctity of human life, promotion of social justice and fostering a new relationship with the developed countries that would be based on mutual respect and responsibility and accountability.

NEPAD is a vision, a philosophy, a framework of development and a programme that is based on the human being as both the subject and the object of development. NEPAD is presented as a collective vision of African leaders to eradicate poverty and uplift the living standard of the African people. It arose from the collective realisation of the unacceptable situation in which the continent has found itself – poverty, decline in almost all sectors, and marginalised in a rapidly globalising world – and from the desire to arrest and reverse the situation. The primary objectives of the NEPAD initiative include the restoration of peace and security in Africa, and the eradication of widespread poverty and severe underdevelopment, along with acute income discrepancies between the rich and the poor. Other objectives are the promotion of accelerated growth and sustainable development and halting the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process.²

The NEPAD programmes emphasise conditions for development which include: peace and security, democracy and political governance initiatives and economic and corporate

governance initiatives. Similarly, the NEPAD initiative was developed along thematic and sectoral areas for easy identification and implementation. These areas include; agriculture; human capacity development initiative; including reversing the effects of the brain drain; bridging the digital divide; investing in information and communication technologies; energy; transport; water and sanitation; environment and tourism, education and youth, market access, trade and private sector investments.³

Other areas of interest to NEPAD include poverty reduction, bridging the education gap, and attention to health matters, including killer diseases such as HIV and AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.⁴ However, the article will concentrate on the public sector reforms with the aim of identifying strategies that could assist NEPAD to achieve the stated goals and objectives including capacity development of the public sector in Africa with the aim of upgrading human resource skills, as a part of its human resource development initiative.

NEPAD: Africa's New Development Trajectory

NEPAD has come to symbolise a new dawn for Africa. It is perceived by the African leadership as a new concept and also as a framework for the transformation of Africa. As a concept, NEPAD is beginning to define new development paradigms. There has been radical shift from past development approaches which have seen economic stagnation for the majority of the African countries over the past half century. The guiding philosophy of the new development paradigm being pursued by NEPAD is African ownership, which entails Africans taking responsibility; not only in terms of defining the development agenda for their countries, but also in terms of

ensuring that they are committed to mobilising domestic resources for their own development. Where funding is derived from outside, the NEPAD principle sees this as supplementary, and the terms of such external support are also premised on the ethos of African ownership.

In the context of national governments, African ownership entails a process that is not driven by African bureaucrats, but more critically by engaging ordinary people in the design, management and implementation of development programmes.⁵ In such a context, the NEPAD thrust places quality on governments being accountable to the people they serve. It is in this regard that the public sector, which is traditionally the custodian of public resources, is expected to become accountable to the ordinary people. The public sector, which has been perceived as an ivory tower separated from the people, and sometimes even as a manipulative body, will be expected to discard its past methods and embrace a new ethos of engagement with the ordinary people. NEPAD is therefore, about a re-orientation towards change for the benefit of Africa, and more particularly the benefit of the ordinary people.⁶

In preparation towards the implementation of NEPAD's new ethos of managing partnerships in Africa, the new approach will entail a redefinition of the relationship between governments and civil society, market forces and other partnerships in pursuit of the national development. Governments and more particularly public servants will now be expected to play dual roles. Firstly, governments and public servants in particular must facilitate the introduction of legal economic governance and institutional policies and systems that create incentives for stimulating national development. Secondly, governments, through the public service, must facilitate partnerships with civil society organisations (CSOs), private enterprises and

other developmental agents in providing public goods, environmental supervision and targeted assistance to disadvantaged communities.

The public sector therefore, has to steer away from the state-entrepreneurship role of the 1960s and 1970s and begin to play an enabling role as suggested by the Washington Consensus Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the 1980s and 1990s.⁷ It is becoming increasingly imperative, that public institutions in Africa have to reform to meet the new challenges offered under the NEPAD framework. The envisaged reformation may include elimination of the rent-seeking behaviours and begin to forge new partnerships with CSOs, including community based organisations (CBOs). This will entail the devolution of planning and implementation to bring on board groups of people who have traditionally been at the periphery of development. The public service has to innovatively explore how churches, mosques, farmers associations, women and youth groups could be included in the design, management and implementation of grassroots development programmes.

CSOs should be seen as partners in national development rather than as competitors. To facilitate these partnerships, the public sector will be required to provide support to CSOs, including training in design, management, implementation and evaluation of development programmes. Efforts should be made not only to bridge gaps created by lack of access to assets, markets and other resources, but more fundamentally, to provide for the safety needs of the most disadvantaged groups. Therefore, the role of public sector should be to enable "asset-less" people to gain access to resources and thereby enhance their livelihoods and productivity. It should also single out the most vulnerable members of society and provide them with adequate safety to enable them to participate in

mainstream development. However, the devolution of these initiatives to CSOs would contribute to their success in achieving these goals as they would not have to rely exclusively on political leaders. There is clearly an emerging consensus that past approaches to development have not worked and that Africa has to proceed differently if it wants to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.⁸

NEPAD is advocating a fundamental shift of mindset and total approach to development, at the individual level, where there must be an acceptance that NEPAD does not have the monopoly on solutions to achieving the national development agenda. Africa must accept that over the past two decades there has been a shift in the centres of power; and that there are new centres of social power. For example, the growth of producer organisations, the organised private sector and other associations in most African countries has meant that these bodies have taken responsibility for articulating their interests in business, marketing, education, technology and governance. The voices of all-inclusive stakeholders sway the definition of the national development agenda in many African countries. Their voices are critical in shaping the future development discourse as well as policy and programming if the interests of the nation are to be furthered. Acceptance of this shift in social power relationships from the public service focus towards the civil society domain is a *sine qua non* of the new development paradigm that is necessary if the public sector is to facilitate the achievement of the millennium development goals by 2015.⁹

Similarly, partnerships must be built between the public and private sectors through continuous interaction and consultations aimed at gathering inputs into budgets, policies and development plans. In the implementation of programmes and projects, public private

partnerships (PPPs) must be encouraged. All these mean attitude change on the part of public servants. A fresh look at the interpretation and application of the Official Secrets Act in African countries will go a long way towards the accelerated implementation of the NEPAD development initiatives. As drivers of national development initiatives, public servants need to be trained to acquire the necessary skills that would enable them to face the implementation challenges posed by the NEPAD initiatives.

State of Skills Challenges in Africa

In this era of globalisation, growth in the knowledge-driven economy is dependent on a labour force that is healthy and well-endowed with knowledge and skills. In NEPAD, it is believed that despite the progress made in education and health in Africa over the past two decades; both the quantity and the quality of human capital are grossly insufficient to meet the challenges of development envisaged under NEPAD. It is argued that poor health perpetuates poverty and is a barrier to those scientific and technological capacities that are the keys to modern development. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Economic report 2000¹⁰ states that, "Africa is yet to produce the critical mass of kills and highly trained workers capable of initiating and sustaining a dynamic development path. Africa's capacity to generate knowledge and participate in the knowledge society has continued to decline".

Similarly, the United Nations Economic Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) studies show the continent's research and development expenditure in 1994 to be only US\$4.2 billion or 0.9% of the world total. Its share of scientific publications in 1995 was less than 1,5% while Sub-Saharan Africa's share

was 0,2% of European patents.¹¹ These prevailing trends have not improved over the years. In achieving skills development in Africa, human resources are a priority sector identified for the NEPAD plan of action. Three components fall under this initiative: poverty reduction, bridging the education gap and health. NEPAD has adopted the applicable MDGs. The first goal is poverty reduction in all programmes and the undertaking to support existing poverty reduction initiatives at the multilateral level (in the form of PRSPs). The second goal is to achieve universal primary education by 2015. The third goal, which concerns health, is to reduce infant and child mortality ratios by two-thirds, reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters and provide access to reproductive health services for everyone who requires them by 2015.¹² NEPAD recognised the work done by many African scholars, UNESCO and the World Bank in the area of education, and the work done by WHO, and by the Commission on Macro-economics and Health.¹³ Skills development initiatives in Africa have been lent credibility by the Heads of States Implementation Committee of NEPAD. In July 2002, this initiative was endorsed by the Summit of African Heads of States and Government of the African Union.¹⁴

Major Skills Needs

One of the major challenges facing the NEPAD initiative is to identify capacity need of the local and national public service. The continental agenda for development preceded the NEPAD efforts in identifying the skills needs of the continent with the aim of achieving its stated objectives. These are capacity building on peace and security; economic and corporate governance; banking and financial sector; regional infrastructure projects; and agricultural

development and market access for continental products.¹⁵ Although, the general capacity need in Africa may not be exhausted in this article, the following immediate capacity needs form the skills identified in the NEPAD Action plan aimed at facilitating the NEPAD implementation process.¹⁶

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

The current global state of ICT leaves Africa with no option but to invest massively in both computerising the entire public sector and creating the enabling environment for public servants to acquire computer and ICT skills. Africa is currently lagging behind in internet connectivity and massive investment by governments, the private sector and international partner organisations is required to create the environment and impart the required skills. NEPAD can assist by opening avenues through partnerships, for example, with the European Union (EU) Commission and the UN agencies operating in Africa. There has to be investment in continuous training and the upgrading of skills. Operating in a knowledge economy requires new skills, just as the advent of ICT has imposed new ways of doing things. For example, in Afghanistan and Iraq events in the theatres of war were watched live on television around the world. Let us bring this home to the public service and persuade them to invest in what has come to be known as the “virtual office”. This will allow the public servants to access information and function as if they were in their offices irrespective of their location.

Ergonomics/Job Design

The concept of ergonomics allows for job redesign that fits persons and situations. In the present world, the public service needs to take a hard look at itself and redesign jobs in a way that ensures that skills match the jobs.

The International Work Environment

The impact of integration and globalisation on job redesign and skills acquisition cannot be over emphasised. What emerges clearly is the growth in the demand for people with skills that are in demand internationally, – computer/ICT skills, multi-lingualism, negotiating skills, knowledge of programme/project design and management/implementation. NEPAD and the implementation of its programmes and projects, also make the acquisition of these and other skills imperative. NEPAD is opening up the continent of Africa, thus making it possible for more people to work together on common programmes/projects. NEPAD promotes holistic planning and encourages the cluster approach to governance. This allows for better coordination and better utilisation of resources. The African public service must invest in the acquisition of these skills.

Decision-Making

NEPAD promotes the ability to make decisions in a transparent manner. Very little can be achieved in a situation where the authority line is either not clearly defined or is not respected. Responsibilities must be given their corresponding authority and a budget line. The time has come for the system to return to assigning and allowing the exercise of authority that corresponds to responsibilities. Training and skills are required to exercise appropriate authority at different levels. The codes and standards will reinforce this practice, as would a clear reward and punishment system.

Transparency, Efficiency & Effectiveness

NEPAD places a premium on a transparent, efficient and effective public service, hence the Declaration on Democracy, Political and Economic and Corporate Governance adopted and endorsed at the first AU Summit in Durban, South Africa in July 2002, speaks of “just, honest, transparent,

accountable and participatory government and probity in public life”¹⁷ in support of good governance. It also recognised the need to make an effort to facilitate transparent Public Service in Africa. The effort to establish anti-corruption units today, the issues of good governance, transparency and human rights are seen as issues of “public goods” and therefore they are everyone’s concern. Accordingly, the public service ignores them at its own peril. With the appropriate legislation and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) in every African country, and extra-ministerial departments, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency will become part of a code of procedure in delivering public goods and services to Africa’s people.

Investment in Equipment and Training on Its Use

Increased investment in necessary hardware/software is required and it is necessary to the staff on the use of equipment. The nature and type of equipment will vary with sectors. Training on the equipment, maintenance and spares supplies is a central issue. The African Public Service would need to improve on this score if it is to deliver on sustainable NEPAD goals.

The NEPAD Capacity Development Strategy

NEPAD has a strong focus on capacity development as reflected in a roundtable discussion on 8 March 2002. The discussion resulted in broad agreement on the guiding principles for capacity development as well as the priority focus areas for capacity development: Peace and Security; Political and Economic Governance; Regional Integration and Public Sector Reform.¹⁸ Despite moves towards economic liberalisation and more democratic forms of state organisations,

many African countries continue to be dogged by dependency, conflict and poverty. The roots of these problems are complex and are related to a history of colonialism, economic dependency and political upheaval.¹⁹

The common response to Africa's crisis has been to emphasise good governance practice and effective development management as outlined in the NEPAD strategy. However, very little attention is paid to the institutional and human resource capacity required for implementing development interventions. The experience of African countries in dealing with the effects of modernisation, dependency and continuous conflicts over unevenly distributed and scarce resources provides an appropriate forum for building context-specific capacity development initiatives. These need to be structured in a way, which supports continental, sub regional and national interests. The challenge of identifying needs and programmes for a range of countries with unique requirements for development and growth is daunting. Frameworks for facilitating the ongoing support and sustainability of such initiatives must be premised on common experience but must also provide sufficient space for different realities.

Capacity development is understood in different ways ranging from economic capability to institutional performance to individual competence. NEPAD recognises that capacity is required at all these levels and that capacity development is a long-term investment in the sustainability of the initiative and the continent. Capacity development plans ranging from training programmes to institutional development and knowledge sharing are essential to ensuring the implementation of NEPAD.

Capacity development in Africa has been focused on externally driven or donor programmes. Over the range of initiatives in many different sectors and areas, capacity development has largely been geared towards training in a manner ill suited to meeting the requirements of sustainable development. It is often supply-driven and framed by external expertise. This means that very little attention is paid to the development of an African approach, which would rely on the exchange, growth and development of African capacity. Attempts driven by the former Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and other institutions such as the Southern

Table 1 Contextualising the Implementation of the NEPAD Capacity Development Strategy

Component	Description
Context	Understanding the context of development is critical to understanding the capacity challenge. Context comprises the political, economic and social frameworks that define capacity development initiatives. It also requires an understanding of the key stakeholders and other factors that determine needs and challenges.
Competence	The right skills, knowledge and ability to achieve what needs to be done in specific contexts and organisational settings.
Ethos and practice	Ethos encourages a sense of motivation and initiative. Ethos is underpinned by values and practices and comprises a set of more or less tangible results.
Institutional structures and systems	These are the appropriate structures and systems to support growth and development. The institutional context comprises those elements which determine the capacity of the institution to perform – to fulfil its mission in its own context. These are strategic direction, human resources, financial resources, infrastructure and linkages.

African Development Community (SADC) and the Central African Centre for Training and Research in Administration (CAFRAD) have shifted the orientation of capacity building towards the areas of economic policy, management and policy analysis. These, together with a range of other institutions and networks, provide an important foundation for African-based capacity building interventions. An integrated understanding of capacity development outlined below implies a focus on three areas that could positively impact of public sector reforms in Africa and they include:²⁰

- Ethos and practice: articulating and implementing the principles of good practice
- Institutional development: designing and supporting effective structures, systems and procedures for improved services and institutions
- People development: providing skills to managers, professionals, members of civil society and others by building their competencies and providing support where necessary.

Purpose

The development of individual and institutional capacity is to ensure that the conditions for effective development in Africa are created and supported.

Outcomes

Officials and stakeholders in each of the focus areas are able to perform more effectively in their work to support growth and development in Africa. Specifically, this means:

- In the area of peace and security: officials and political leaders will be better able to conceptualise, analyse, develop, manage

and implement policies, and build national and intergovernmental organisations, for the achievement of the NEPAD objectives

- In the area of political and economic governance: the training and development programme will ensure enhanced economic and political governance performance through the improvement of relationships between the legislatures, the judiciary and the executives at national and regional level. This is in addition to training on responsible economic management and more effective relationships between government and civil society
- In the area of regional integration: stakeholders and experts will be more effective in negotiating multi-level trade deals and centres of excellence will undertake training, engage in research, disseminate information and maintain databases on aspects of regional integration
- In the area of public sector reform: officials and political leaders will be better able to develop and implement regulatory frameworks, improve revenue collection and conceptualise, analyse, manage and implement service delivery in the context of fiscal austerity
- In the area of institutional reform: structures and systems will support the implementation of capacity development at national (through NEPAD focal points) and regional levels (through existing or new regional programmes and networks or the development of centres of excellence). It will in turn lead to institutional coordination and harmonisation between intergovernmental and governmental levels and between various successful initiatives
- In the area of research and knowledge: systems will develop and support the cultures and understandings that build appropriate

working practices and values. This would include mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation such as the peer review mechanism for governance. In particular, research capacities, knowledge and databases developed at regional, sub-regional and national levels to promote the long-term conditions for growth and development. This will enhance the capacity of African institutions to contribute to institutionalising a commitment to the core values of NEPAD within African leadership. Research co-ordination across the African continent will be enhanced.

Key Performance Areas and Interventions

Despite an obvious need to build capacity at all levels, there has been a tendency in the past to focus on the collection of certificates with little attention being paid to actual ability to transfer newly acquired knowledge to institutions, the simultaneous developments envisaged as key performance areas, such as:²¹

- The structures and systems which support development and enable people to work
- The values and culture which encourage appropriate working practices and values
- The development of skills to perform more effectively.

The purpose of the plan is to build sustainable capacity by ensuring that knowledge developed from interventions is replicable and adaptable to local circumstances. As a consequence, a strong evaluation and review process may be built into the programme. The three key areas of interventions detailed are as follows:²²

- **Training:** developing the capacity to perform more effectively. These are the more immediate short-term interventions that will kick-

start the capacity building process in each of the focus areas

- **Support:** the structures and systems that support capacity development the support mechanisms will be outlined under the proposed implementation strategy later in the article
- **Research:** developing the cultures and understandings that build working practices and values. This is longer-term work, which will inform the sustainability of the capacity development plan over time. This may include monitoring and evaluation. The design will be effective if properly aligned to the capacity needs of the African Union countries in line with the identified priority areas of NEPAD. Therefore, there is a need to consider developing some techniques that could assist in giving a direction to the implementation of the public sector reforms in Africa.

Proposed Techniques for Implementing the NEPAD Capacity Development Strategy

Following the proposed implementation design and the identified key performance areas and interventions of the NEPAD capacity development initiative, there is a need to develop some implementation techniques for effective delivery on the NEPAD initiative. The application of the proposed design will include the objectives of the NEPAD projects and programmes, the challenges being faced by NEPAD in dealing with the major issues in each programme, activities that are required in the programmes and possible outcomes during and after the implementation process. However, the two techniques identified next, if well implemented, will effectively address implementation of the NEPAD capacity development strategy.

Networking Technique

Objective

To improve the ability of public sectors through regional networking to regulate and manage service delivery in contexts of poverty, inequality and fiscal austerity.

Challenges

- Corruption and mismanagement of resources
- Poor and outdated management systems and processes which do not take new technology and systems into account
- Unresponsiveness to citizens in terms of service standards and delivery
- Lack of political and financial accountability
- Lack of transparency and a failure to provide and manage information appropriately
- Inadequately trained staff especially in the areas of public management, policy implementation, strategic planning, resource mobilisation and facilitation, programme and project management, conflict resolution and information management
- Inadequate legislative and institutional frameworks for labour relations
- Inadequate public finance budgeting capacity and revenue collection systems.

Activities

The following key short term interventions would be appropriate:

- The development of appropriate regulatory frameworks for the public sector through regional colloquia of public sector officials. This should lead to the development of a common understanding of the key guiding principles for public sector reform and management in Africa
- The sharing of strategies and systems for improving revenue collection in African countries through workshops, which demonstrate

good practice, and successes in the African context, taking continental realities into consideration

- The development of management and implementation skills in relation to service delivery through regional programmes that focus on specific areas such as e-government, organisational strategies for social inclusion or dealing with impoverished communities.

Expected Outcomes

Officials and political leaders will be better able to develop and implement regulatory frameworks, improve revenue collection and conceptualise, analyse, manage and implement service delivery in the context of fiscal austerity. In order to provide an institutional base to support and sustain African based capacity development initiatives in the focal areas in the long term, it is necessary to develop the capacity of institutions to implement and sustain capacity development in the long term.

Institutional Technique

Objectives

To provide an institutional base to support and sustain African-based capacity building initiatives in the focus areas and the long term by:

- developing the capacity of nodal points to implement capacity building
- Identifying and supporting the institutional development of regional institutions or “centres of excellence” to sustain capacity development in the long term
- Institutionalising commitment to the core values of NEPAD within African leadership.

Challenges

The following issues should be taken into consideration:

- The number of focal points to be reached are very large
- Administrations are overworked and their organisational foundations are not strong enough to take on additional responsibilities
- Budgetary arrangements need to be clarified
- Co-ordination and co-operation takes time and effort
- Existing institutions need to be strengthened and new structures need to be developed only where necessary
- Institutional coordination between the international, African, sub-regional organisations and national governments and programmes needs to be improved.

Activities

- Programmes directed towards enhancing the ability of nodal points for NEPAD to conceptualise, manage, implement and monitor capacity building and developments
- Identifying and supporting the institutional development of regional institutions or “centres of excellence” to sustain capacity development in the long term. This would involve the development of a mechanism for the improvement or establishment of such centres as well as the identification of appropriate areas in each of the focus areas.

Expected Outcomes

- Institutional structures and systems to support the implementation of capacity development at the national (through NEPAD nodal points) and regional levels (through existing regional programmes or the development of centres of excellence)
- Institutional capacity developed to promote the long-term conditions for growth and development
- Institutional co-ordination and harmonisation between inter-governmental and govern-

mental levels and between various initiatives achieved.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In summary, it is clear that public sector reforms and capacity development in all AU countries is a key initiative under NEPAD. The NEPAD human resources components, especially the public sector reforms and capacity development, have been appropriately classified under the broad NEPAD Political Governance Initiative, because without the political will and commitment, the technical and practical aspects of capacity development which could catalyse public sector reforms, cannot be achieved. The following methods of strengthening the public service for sustainable development under NEPAD are suggested:²³

Classical or Normal Training

This category includes the normal training to equip a person for the service; such training is provided by secondary and tertiary institutions as well as through on-the-job training to enable optimum productivity. The inadequacy of courses and skills development programmes in the public sector is unfortunately recognised. This has proven that there is a gap, almost a lost generation has been created by the state of Africa’s educational situation, and there is a need to consciously provide pre-entry upgrade courses.

Reforms and Reorientation of Public Service in Africa

In a globalised world, where interdependence is a given, the erosion of sovereignty becomes a necessary outcome. African leaders under

NEPAD have committed to integration as a strategy to enable Africa to become a player on its own terms in global affairs. A precondition for integration, which the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Commission (HSGIC) have tackled fearlessly, is harmonisation and standardisation of policies, procedures and even equipment. This also is a necessary facilitator of intra-African trade. An example of one area of reform is in Economic Governance. The eight codes of economic governance are the following:²⁴

- Code of Good Practices on Transparency in Monetary and Financial Policies
- Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency
- Best Practices for Budget Transparency
- Guidelines for Public Debt Management
- Principle of Corporate Governance (business ethics)
- International Accounting Standards
- International Standards on Auditing
- Core Principles for Effective Banking Supervision.

These codes are vital to NEPAD implementation strategy and they are aimed at promoting sound macroeconomic and public financial management and accountability, protecting the integrity of monetary and financial systems, strengthening accounting and auditing systems and developing an effective corporate governance framework. Certain other standards for achieving financial system soundness have been approved and adopted for implementation under NEPAD.

Macroeconomic Policy and Data Transparency

This is required for government policy making and operations, corporate governance standards

– for enterprise and market integrity; and financial regulation and supervision. The adoption and implementation of these codes and standards have meant, among other things, massive reforms and reorientation of the public service. In recognition of this, the NEPAD Steering Committee has requested and indeed mandated the African Development Bank (ADB) to work with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and national governments to ensure the adoption of these codes and standards into their internal processes and procedures. It is imperative that national governments and the ADB will have to set aside funds and work together to develop the capacity in each country for effective implementation of these codes and standards.

Several concluding deductions clearly emerge from this article; the African public service needs to embark on a comprehensive reformatory process to meet the demands of the NEPAD initiative and the general African development agenda in the present globalisation era. This may be achieved through the immediate rollout of capacity development programmes. To move forward, the following actions are further recommended:

Skills and training needs assessment: There is an urgent need to conduct a needs assessment in both the public and private sector for service delivery and the achievement of NEPAD goals. It is important to do a preliminary survey using capacities within the public service and later in conjunction with consultants and international organisations. The ACDF could be empowered with required human and financial resources to take a lead in this direction.

Sustained investment in capacity development: Government must put adequate resources into capacity building, research and the development of centres of excellence on a continuous and sustained basis. Research fosters

new knowledge and the sharing of knowledge. NEPAD recognises promoting regional centres of excellence, which must be linked to national centres of excellence in all its sectoral areas. These centres will be tasked to collating and propagating best practices within the regions of Africa, as well as to capacity development institutions. African countries must identify and invest in such centres and work to host some regionally. Research in a knowledge era cannot be ignored, and Africa seems to be lagging behind regarding investing in research and research-based public policy decisions. A participatory and cluster approach to governance within the capacity development framework may be a strong signal for the envisaged paradigm shift and outcome-based public decision-making process.

Finally, the devastating effects of killer diseases such as HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria require urgent attention in order to safeguard the future of public service in Africa. If the negative impacts of these diseases are not contained as quickly as possible, some countries in Africa

will begin to experience negative population growth within the next decade because of the impact. Key sectors like education and agriculture are already being negatively affected by HIV/AIDS. In Africa, the number of persons infected with HIV/AIDS is now acknowledged to have been 400 million at the end of 2006. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rate of prevalence and the number of new infections per day is growing astronomically. Unless a proactive approach is taken within the public service, it will soon begin to lose well-trained and skilled workers and managers and this will eventually bring it down due to inefficiency and a lack of skilled personnel. In taking actions toward capacity development and mitigating the ugly effects of these deadly diseases, African governments need to use the NEPAD platform in developing the much needed skills that would bridge the present capacity gap with a view to sustaining the level of envisaged future growth of African economies. The NEPAD initiative needs to provide a guide for cooperation.

Notes and References

- 1 NEPAD, 'The New Partnership for Africa's Development,' Abiya Nigeria, 1 October 2001, p 1.
- 2 NEPAD, Summary of Action Plan, 2002, p 54.
- 3 *Ibid.*, pp 22-50.
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 NEPAD Framework, 2001, p 12.
- 6 <http://www.nepad.org>, accessed on 26 April 2007.
- 7 African Development Bank, *African Development Report 2005*, p 229.
- 8 G Mills and J Oppenheimer, 'Making Africa Succeed,' in *Charting a New Course. Globalisation, African Recovery and the New Africa Initiative*, Richard Gibb et al, South African Institute for International Affairs, 2002, p 96.
- 9 W Nagan, 'Post-Conflict Governance: Preventing Future Conflict and Ensuring Development,' in *Charting a New Course: Globalization, African Recovery and the New Africa Initiative*, Richard Gibb et al, South African Institute for International Affairs, 2002, p 67.
- 10 United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), 2000, Economic Report on Africa.
- 11 S Dogonyaro, 'The Challenges of Financing NEPAD's Promises for the African Continent,' Paper presented at the 4th African Finance and Investment Conference, Spier Wine Estate Stellenbosch, Cape Town South Africa. (24-25 October 2002).
- 12 NEPAD Annual Report, 2002, p 6.
- 13 WHO Commission on Macro-Economic and Health: 'Investing in Health For Economic Development, December 2001, p 16.
- 14 NEPAD Annual Report, 2002, p 6.
- 15 <http://www.nepad.org>, Accessed on 26 April 2007.
- 16 UN/NEPAD. Cluster on Human Resources Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS. Summary and conclusions of the Fourth Annual Regional Consultations of the UN Agencies Working in Africa, 24-25 October 2002 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- 17 NEPAD Action Plan, 2002, p 4.
- 18 UN/NEPAD 2002.
- 19 NEPAD 2001, Abuja, pp .4-5.
- 20 African Development Bank, 'Public Sector Management in Africa,' African Development Report, 2005, p 225.
- 21 NEPAD, 'Expert Workshop on Market Access, Industrialisation, Intra-African

Trade and Export Diversification,' 25-27
November 2003, Benoni, South Africa
NEPAD/Ext.SC/01-2003/Doc 3.3.

22 *Ibid.*

23 NEPAD, 'Declaration on Democracy,
Political, Economic and Corporate

Governance,' NEPAD/Ext.SC/01-2003/
Doc 2.2.

24 *Ibid.*