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Sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from Experience in Supporting Sound Governance

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Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

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OEDPK: Evaluation Capacity Development

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I. Introduction

The World Bank is supporting monitoring and evaluation capacity development (M&ECD) in Sub-Saharan Africa. It has linked its M&ECD efforts to other governance activities in Sub-Saharan Africa, and is endeavoring to strengthen its work by building on the experience of previous work in support of governance in the Region.

With this in mind, the Partnerships and Knowledge Programs Group of the Operations Evaluation Department (OED) asked the Institute on Governance (IOG) to prepare a short report addressing the convergence between work to support sound governance and that on behalf of M&ECD in Sub-Saharan Africa. The report was to be based on a narrow literature review,¹ as well as the IOG's own direct experience. This report seeks to provide an overview of issues and experiences from *other areas* of governance-related support in Sub-Saharan Africa, and to draw out operational linkages with M&ECD. The report summarizes:

- Experiences and lessons from governance support in the Region, and their implications for M&ECD work there
- Common issues and modalities between governance support and M&ECD in the Region

- Opportunities to maximize synergies between M&ECD and broader governance capacity building efforts in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Overview

The paper seeks to provide a basis for identifying common issues and operational synergies between M&ECD and governance in Sub-Saharan Africa. But it is necessary to first understand key issues and experiences in these fields.

Implications of Experience with Governance Support for M&ECD Efforts

Chapter VI draws out issues and experiences that are common to both governance and M&ECD, and suggests implications for M&ECD, as well as opportunities for synergies across the two types of work.

II. Understanding Monitoring and Evaluation and Governance

For the purposes of this paper, the term *monitoring and evaluation* (M&E) will be understood as described in a recent OED publication (Mackay 1999: 3). It covers a range of tools used in the public sector to address performance measurement, including:

- Ongoing performance monitoring
- Ongoing, real-time evaluation, at the project, program/sector, or country level, supporting continuous learning
- *Ex post* evaluation
- Performance audits
- Financial audits.

Use of the term *governance* is derived from the IOG's own working definition:

Governance is the art of steering societies and organizations. Governance occurs through interactions among structures, processes, and traditions that determine how power is exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say. Governance is about power, relationships, and accountability: who has influence, who decides, and how decisionmakers are held accountable (Plumptre 1999: 3).

This definition goes beyond “government” to include the role of actors from civil society and the private sector. This paper focuses on the effort to strengthen public sector management—which has been the locus of Bank support for sound governance—and makes some observations about the important role to be played by civil society in creating demand for better governance.

M&E can support sound governance in several ways. First, the information produced by M&E can be an important input for government decisionmaking and prioritization, particularly in the budget process. Second, M&E assists managers by revealing the performance of ongoing activities—producing valuable information for planning new activities—at the project or sector level. Thus, M&E is a management tool that promotes future learning and improvement (that is, results-based management). Similarly, M&E information can be used to assess the performance of organizations and institutional reform processes. Third, M&E contributes to accountability mechanisms, which hold managers and governments accountable for their performance (Mackay 1998: 8).

III. Issues and Experiences

M&ECD

Substantial M&E achievements on the ground are rare in Sub-Saharan Africa (Bratton and others 1998; Mackay 1998). The binding constraint would appear to be insufficient demand for M&ECD (ADB 1999; Mackay 1998, 1999; World Bank 1999). Few leading bureaucrats and politicians in Sub-Saharan Africa accept the value of an evaluation culture that supports fact-based administrative and political accountability. Demand for M&ECD does not flourish in a dysfunctional governance environment, in which the public administration is seen as a vehicle to achieve personal gain and nurture patrimonial patron-client networks.

Other key issues and experiences related to M&ECD in Sub-Saharan Africa are a result or a manifestation of the demand problem. They include:

- *Insufficient Supply.* There are simply too few people in most Sub-Saharan African countries capable of designing and implementing M&E activities. Many of the best people have left—part of the “brain drain” afflicting much of Sub-Saharan Africa (Ul Haque and Aziz 1998). Training programs to raise the skills of those who remain have produced disappointing results.
- *Donor Agencies in the “Driver’s Seat.”* Lack of demand for M&E in the Region means that much of the M&E activity has occurred through donor-driven initiatives. M&E often addresses donors’ concerns for the accountability of project inputs and outputs, rather than local concerns related to broader development issues. The disproportionate element of donor initiative reduces local commitment to, and ownership of, M&E efforts.
- *Absence of a “Learning Culture.”* The notion of continuous learning, in which the results of performance monitoring and program evaluation are fed back into the design of new programs, or the redesign of existing ones, is poorly understood and rarely implemented. To the extent that performance information is available, it is not systematically incorporated into the policymaking process.

Governance Support

The Patrimonial State in Sub-Saharan Africa

Issues and experiences concerning governance support in Sub-Saharan Africa are shaped by the Region’s difficult governance environment. Characteristics of a public service taken for granted in the OECD countries—it is apolitical, rule-based, well-trained, adequately paid, professional, merit-based, and dedicated to the provision of public goods and services to citizens—simply do not apply in many Sub-Saharan Africa countries. Development professionals within and outside the Bank have written at length on the challenges to public administrative reform in Sub-Saharan African countries posed by the “patrimonial state.” Its features include (Dia 1996; Hope 1997; Partnership for Capacity Building in Africa 1996; Polidano and Hulme 1997; Sandbrook and Oelbaum 1997; World Bank 1989, 1997):

- Predominance of personalized informal institutions (including family, ethnic groups, political groups) over formal institutions (for example, constitutionally mandated entities such as elections, legislatures, judiciaries, civil services) in prescribing and enforcing norms related to gaining and exercising power
- Private appropriation of the state’s “public” authority
- Distribution of state-generated benefits by ruling elites to personal and political followers
- Selection of public officials based on personal ties
- Relatively low levels of control and accountability applied to rulers’ use of the state’s coercive powers and management of its wealth
- Unwillingness by ruling elites to distinguish between the personal and the public domains.

Patrimonial norms and practices are anathema to the ideals of public administration that Sub-Saharan African states formally endorse and donor agencies seek to support. The public administration in a patrimonial state is built on a dysfunctional incentive system that rewards personal affinities and opportunism rather than professionalism, hard work, and unbiased service to the public. The average

public servant is poorly trained, poorly paid, and poorly managed. Public servants see little evidence of a link between performance, on the one hand, and reward, on the other, nor are they made to feel accountable for their use of public resources or their interaction with the public. Talented people tend to leave the public administration for the private sector or international agencies where the work is more remunerative and the environment more professional. Capacity thus flees the public sector; the remaining capacity is underused and not oriented toward economic and social development.

The result is that many Sub-Saharan African countries have public administrations with only minimal capability to design and implement public programs. The sustainability of Bank-funded projects in the Region,² as evaluated by OED, is poor. Only 37 percent of Bank operations in Africa that exited the portfolio in FY98 (weighted by disbursements) were judged likely to be sustainable, well below the Bankwide average of 58 percent. The record in previous years, going back to 1990, is equally troubling (Buckley 1999).

Bank-Supported Governance Work in Sub-Saharan Africa

For the Bank, governance support in Sub-Saharan Africa has meant public administrative reform. Efforts began in the early 1980s as an adjunct to structural adjustment lending, which led to a strong bias toward reducing the size and cost of African public administrations—a focus on efficiency rather than effectiveness. Continuing into the early 1990s, Bank-supported public administrative reform programs in Sub-Saharan Africa reflected the agenda of fiscal austerity. “Downsizing” was the period’s major theme. It was often accompanied by project components of a highly technical nature, closely tied to structural adjustment conditionalities, such as:

- Formal restructuring of government agencies
- Reviews of staffing and remuneration practices

- Training of civil servants
- Support for budget management
- Development of multiyear investment budgets
- Support for debt management and tax administration
- Support for economic policy formulation
- Legal and regulatory reform (particularly to support private sector development).

This approach to public administrative reform in the Region was, on balance, a failure (see Nunberg 1996; Olowu 1999; Partnership for Capacity Building in Africa 1996; Schacter 1995; Schiavo-Campo and others 1997). It is difficult to point to one public administration in Sub-Saharan Africa that is significantly more capable of designing and implementing public programs today than it was at the beginning of the 1980s. Indeed, many observers believe that despite decades of donor assistance, the capacity and effectiveness of public administrations in the Region have actually declined since independence (Partnership for Capacity Building in Africa 1996; Schiavo-Campo 1997).

Moreover, Bank-supported efforts achieved only minimal success, even when judged against their own limited objective of containing the cost (as opposed to improving the effectiveness) of the public service. A Bank evaluation observed that “civil service pay and employment reforms have seen only limited achievements . . . especially in Africa” (Nunberg 1996: 5).

Only recently have Bank-supported activities paid systematic attention to deeper institutional issues at the root of the dysfunctional patrimonial state—issues related to leadership, incentives, and human capacity deficits. Yet the hallmarks of patrimonialism—corruption, cronyism, and critically ineffective service delivery—remain embedded in the fabric of governance.

IV. Governance Support in Sub-Saharan Africa

Lessons

The major lesson from two decades of governance support in Sub-Saharan Africa is the failure of the blueprint approach to reform. The Bank treated “good governance” as something to be “installed” in an African country, much as a Bank infrastructure project might install a bridge or a power dam. The engineering formulas that underpin the blueprints of a dam or a bridge are independent of local circumstances. Similarly, Bank staff and external experts arrived with ready-made blueprints for solving governance problems, assuming that governance had a level of technical specificity similar to that of a civil engineering project.³ The blueprint approach to governance reform failed for a number of reasons.

It did not take a sufficiently broad view of the problem. Cost containment, managerial efficiency, and organizational restructuring in the public sector are necessary and important, but cannot be successfully addressed in isolation from underlying features of the governance environment. The approach ignored the reality that governance is about politics and power, institutions and incentives, habits and attitudes—factors that are only partly susceptible to technical fixes and quantitative specification.

It was supply-driven, neither generating nor building on domestic political will for reform. Many national leaders had a vested interest in maintaining an unreformed public administration because—as is the case in a patrimonial state—they were the main beneficiaries of the dysfunctional characteristics that Bank-supported programs sought to correct. Even in cases where leaders favored fundamental reform, Bank-supported blueprints were seen as externally imposed and alien. Reform-minded leaders were left little or no role in designing Bank-supported reform programs. They consequently felt no sense of ownership, and embraced the programs with little enthusiasm, often agreeing only to satisfy a precondition for receiving substantial Bank financial support.

It ignored the critical shortage of local institutional capacity. Bank-supported reforms were rarely sustainable because project designs failed to accurately gauge the capacity of

local institutions to implement them. Hence, implementation depended upon continued inputs of external technical resources.

It nurtured the tendency of most Sub-Saharan African governments to overly centralize. Political and administrative structures in the Region are often highly concentrated in the capital city, while field administrations and local government suffer acute shortages in quantity and quality of personnel and equipment. The blueprint approach, normally delivered through relatively short missions by external experts, lends itself to dealings with the capital city, rather than excursions to dispersed, subnational centers. This serves to widen the capacity gap between the center and the periphery.

The Way Ahead for Support

The failure of past approaches to governance support in Sub-Saharan Africa is instructive. It demonstrates that future interventions, if they are to have a reasonable chance of success, must pay careful attention to:

- The quality of local leadership for reform
- Local capacity to design and implement reform programs
- Features of the local incentive and accountability environment, particularly as they relate to the level of corruption in the public sector and the quality of public service delivery
- Capacity-building needs of decentralized as well as centralized forms of governance
- Forces external to the public service that support governance reform.

Local Leadership, Ownership, and Commitment

Because governance reform goes to the heart of how power is exercised, how decisions are made, and how government interacts with citizens, meaningful reforms must have the support of the highest leaders in the land. The reform message, once endorsed by the supreme leadership, needs to be carried into the ranks by committed champions through-

out the public administration. Absence of strong local leadership of, and commitment to, governance reform has been perhaps the single most important constraint to efforts to build sound governance in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Local leaders must not only demonstrate a strong personal commitment to governance reform, but also believe that they are the owners of the programs implemented to produce it. When the local perception is that reform programs have been designed and imposed by external agencies, there will be no ownership. Conversely, when local actors take the lead in both recognizing the need for governance reform and in designing the interventions to achieve it, the sense of ownership will be high.

The Bank cannot create the levels of leadership, ownership, and commitment necessary to make reform work. But through judicious provision of financing, technical advice, and general encouragement, it can play an important role in supporting the efforts of leaders who are already committed to governance reform. It can also nurture local ownership by refraining from playing a leading role in defining the reform agenda and designing reform programs.

Local Capacity

Low salaries and adverse working conditions make it difficult for public administrations in Sub-Saharan Africa to attract and retain well-qualified personnel. Moreover, talent appears to have flowed out of the Region at a significant pace since independence in the 1960s. According to one estimate, middle- and high-level managers have emigrated at a rate of more than 10,000 each year (UNCTAD estimate, cited in Ul Haque and Aziz 1998). A severe shortage of the local human capacity needed to design, manage, and implement public programs is widely recognized as a key constraint to improved governance in Sub-Saharan Africa (Ul Haque and Aziz 1998; World Bank 1996).

A highly specialized—but particularly important—area of governance weakness in the Region is the capacity of the central government (at the cabinet level) for policy analysis and policymaking. Donors have paid increased attention to

this question over the past five years, given its pivotal role in affecting development outcomes, and a variety of interventions have been launched in Sub-Saharan Africa since the mid-1990s to strengthen policy capacity at this level (Bratton 1998; Schacter 1999).

An emerging lesson is that the dearth of local capacity is not only a cause but also a *consequence* of poor governance and failed approaches to governance support. A feature of the patrimonial state is that qualities such as responsiveness to citizens and attention to public service delivery are not systematically valued or encouraged. There is little motive, therefore, either to invest in building capacity to design and deliver public services and programs or to retain and reward individuals who already have such capacity.

Furthermore, donors' approaches to development support (including governance support) have, perversely, impeded capacity building in public administrations in the Region. The donor response to capacity shortages in Africa has, too often, been to substitute their own expertise, or hired expertise in the form of expatriate consultants. While this has served donors' immediate internal requirements for timely design and implementation of development projects, it has done little or nothing for the long-term goal of building local capacity. Indeed, this approach is seen as having stifled local capacity building by hindering the development of a market for locally based technical expertise (World Bank 1996). Public administrations have been left in the ironic situation of experiencing a domestic "brain drain," while simultaneously receiving substantial flows of foreign technical assistance.⁴

Incentives and Accountability

Economics has taught us to look to the incentive environment to explain or predict human behavior. This is as relevant to the public sector in Sub-Saharan Africa as it is to any other setting. One need not dig too deeply to discover that the structure of both financial and nonfinancial incentives in most public administrations in the Region is at odds with an ethos of professionalism and service to the public.

Financial Incentives. Public service salaries, with the possible exception of some Franc-zone countries, are widely accepted as being too low, particularly at higher grade levels, to attract and motivate a high level of dedication and professionalism (Nunberg 1996; Schiavo-Campo 1997; Ul Haque and Aziz 1998). It is normal in many Sub-Saharan African countries for public servants—faced with salaries that do not permit an acceptable standard of living—to indulge in petty corruption (demanding side-payments for the performance of routine duties such as processing files) and to devote much of their official working day to private business.

Nonfinancial Incentives. Key nonfinancial incentives to performance in public administrations in the Region relate to the accountability regime. In many public services, there is virtually no system of accountability for performance. Public servants see little link between good performance and reward or recognition. Promotions and salary increases tend to be based on seniority. Although there are formal regulations and sanctions for various forms of misbehavior, they are rarely enforced. The most obvious symptom of the failed accountability regime is the widespread presence of corruption. Five of the 15 most corrupt countries identified in Transparency International's worldwide "Corruption Perceptions Index" are from the Sub-Saharan Africa Region (Transparency International 1999).⁵

Technical capacity for auditing and accounting—the backbone of an accountability system—is precariously weak (Johnson 1995, 1996). In many governments of the Region, there are critical shortages of accountants and auditors,⁶ as well as an absence of recognized accounting and auditing standards. Audited accounts of government expenditure, an important check on corrupt or inappropriate use of public funds, are rarely submitted on time; when finally submitted, they are often inaccurate. Some Sub-Saharan African countries have gone for more than five years without publishing audited accounts. Accounting systems are often fragmented and uncoordinated, with individual public agencies using different systems that are difficult to reconcile. As a result, financial reports are typically late and unreliable.

Support for Decentralized Forms of Governance

Central governments in Sub-Saharan African states will always be indispensable actors in governance reform. The capacity limitations of the central government, however, combined with obstacles imposed by underdeveloped transportation and communications infrastructure, mean that the effective reach of the central administration may not extend far from the capital city. "The state stops at PK 12"—a saying heard often in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic—describes the situation well (Bierschenk and De Sardan 1997: 441).⁷

The impact of governance reform at the central level will not, therefore, be felt far from the capital city unless it is accompanied by reforms at the subnational level. Acknowledgment of this limitation by donors and governments led to the launching of a wave of decentralization programs across the Region during the 1990s. Despite much fanfare, many of these programs have been limited to "paper exercises"—preparation of laws and regulations to create the formal framework for decentralization. Implementation has been stymied by local administrations' lack of capacity to assume their formal responsibilities. Few newly decentralized governments are able to handle basic functions of personnel management, financial management, service delivery, revenue mobilization, and tax administration.⁸

External Forces Favoring Governance Reform

Donor-supported efforts for public administrative reform in Sub-Saharan Africa tend to focus directly on the public sector. But an important element of the accountability regime in any country is the existence of forces *outside* the public sector that exert pressure on public officials to behave honestly, effectively, and efficiently. Meaningful public administrative reform in Sub-Saharan Africa is unlikely to occur solely as a result of public officials' own initiative and energy. The habits of the patrimonial state die hard; public administrations in Sub-Saharan Africa cannot be relied upon to reform themselves. The normal resistance to change—found in public and private sector organizations throughout the world—is compounded in Sub-Saharan African countries by a deep vested interest in maintaining the dysfunctional status quo.

A vicious circle is at work:

- (a) Public administrations have performed poorly for a very long time, doing little to improve the lives of ordinary citizens.
- (b) Citizens have grown to expect little from their governments.
- (c) Citizens, expecting little or nothing, place few demands on the public administration.
- (d) The public administration, sensing little demand from citizens for improved service, delivers little.

And so it goes . . .

Breaking the vicious circle requires that actors outside the public sector exert concerted pressure on the public administration to do better. The wave of democratization that has swept the Region since the beginning of the 1990s provides an opening.⁹ But the promise of democratization is limited by the weakness and ineffectiveness of groups outside the executive branch of government.

Judiciary. A potentially critical counterweight to corruption in the public administration, the judiciary (and the legal system in general), suffers from many of the same ills as the broader public sector. Judges and other legal personnel are poorly paid and operate under difficult working conditions (lack of proper office space and office supplies, absence of systems for recording and disseminating laws and legal decisions, and the like). The independence of the legal system is also compromised in many Sub-Saharan African governments. The judiciary is tainted by corruption, with judges sometimes influenced either by directives from

government officials or by bribery (Center for Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector 1996).

Parliament. Parliaments and national assemblies, as representatives of all citizens, should be an important source of pressure on government, both to minimize corruption and to improve service delivery. The reality in many countries is that national assemblies lack the capacity to function as effective watchdogs over the public sector. To date, few legislatures in Sub-Saharan Africa have played a meaningful role in monitoring the activity of the executive branch, or in exerting pressure for cleaner and more effective government performance. Elected representatives are often less educated or less experienced than senior public servants. Few have the capacity to critique budget proposals or audited accounts—hence, the ineffectiveness of many parliamentary Public Accounts Committees.

Civil Society. There is great untapped potential in Sub-Saharan Africa for citizens to act in an organized fashion to exert pressure on the public sector for improved performance. At the moment, civil society organizations tend to be weak and fragile. Few have been created explicitly to act as watchdogs over public sector corruption or the quality of public service delivery. Many are heavily dependent on external support. Their dialogue with government is hindered by suspicion on both sides: governments often see civil society organizations as enemies rather than potential partners in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector, and civil society organizations are wary of working closely with the government because they fear being co-opted by the state.

V. Promising Signs

Although the record of governance reform in Sub-Saharan Africa is poor and the challenges daunting, there are promising indications of real progress on the ground. Bank operations have adjusted (perhaps more slowly than they should have) to the lessons of failure. Operations from the mid-1990s onward have shown increasing attention to (i) local leadership and ownership; (ii) involving actors outside the public administration in the process of reform; (iii) placing more emphasis on building local capacity (as opposed to substituting Bank staff or imported expert technical advisers); (iv) directly addressing questions of corruption and service delivery; and (v) supporting decentralization.

This chapter reviews a few highlights of promising interventions in governance reform. The selection of cases is deliberately nonrepresentative and subjective; it is based on the author's personal biases and experiences. Other equally appropriate examples could have been chosen. The purpose is simply to provide a few practical examples of the general points discussed above, with emphasis on issues that overlap questions relevant to M&ECD. Although there is a temptation to refer to these cases as *best practices*, it is too early to label them as such. They do, however, represent approaches that are worth watching.

Uganda

Uganda is widely cited, both within and outside the World Bank, as the clearest example of a promising beginning to public administrative reform in Sub-Saharan Africa. The key factor in Uganda's success is local leadership and ownership. President Yoweri Museveni has made reform of the public administration a top personal priority since coming to power in 1986. Moreover, the Ugandans have steadfastly maintained leadership of the reform program, ensuring that it did not become donor-driven. The Bank has built on this leadership, and worked with the government to achieve significant gains, as detailed below.

Incentives and Accountability

Uganda's extremely low public sector salaries—among the lowest in the Region—are acknowledged as a cause of

corruption and poor performance by public servants. The government has been able to increase public sector salaries substantially (although average remuneration for public servants remains below the level determined to be a minimum living wage). Civil service wages increased by approximately 50 percent yearly between 1990 and 1994, a rise made possible by a sustained effort to reduce public sector staff levels—staffing was cut by over 50 percent (from 320,000 to 148,000) during the first half of the 1990s.

The government has sought to address systemic corruption in the public sector by reshaping the accountability and nonfinancial incentive environment in the public administration. Reforms relate both to increasing the effectiveness of surveillance and enforcement measures and altering attitudes toward corruption through interventions to raise awareness both within and outside the government. A significant recent development has been a constitutionally mandated strengthening of the Office of the Inspector General of Government (IGG), a public agency authorized to “take necessary measures for the detection and prevention of corruption in public offices.” While the IGG's mandate had initially been limited to making recommendations to the president regarding cases of corrupt practices in the public sector, Uganda's 1995 Constitution granted the IGG the powers to arrest and prosecute. Its reports, which had been sent in confidence to the president, are now submitted to Parliament and made public. IGG investigations have led to the dismissal of public officials found to be involved in corruption. Some political leaders have also been relieved of office following IGG investigations (Langseth and Staphenurst 1997).

The government, with support from the Bank and the international anticorruption NGO Transparency International, also undertook a variety of initiatives to raise awareness to the issue, to change attitudes about corruption, and to involve a broad cross-section of society in the fight against it. These have included:

- A series of high-level Integrity Workshops for senior policymakers aimed at reaching consensus on action plans for fighting corruption

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- A cabinet retreat on issues related to corruption
 - Workshops for journalists on investigative reporting related to corruption in the public sector
 - Workshops for legislators aimed at sensitizing them to the role of Parliament in fighting corruption
 - A survey of citizens to uncover users' perceptions about levels of corruption in selected public services.

Involving Actors Outside the Public Administration

The government, with support from the Bank, undertook a series of service delivery surveys—systematic surveys to obtain data on ordinary citizens' perceptions of the quality of public service delivery.¹⁰ The intent of the surveys was not only to provide public officials with useful management information, but also to generate pressure to improve the quality of public service delivery. The notion of direct accountability of public servants to the public is novel in Sub-Saharan Africa; a goal of the service delivery surveys is to make this idea more generally understood and accepted. Results of the surveys are disseminated widely, both within and outside the public sector.

Decentralization

Uganda is implementing, with support from the World Bank, a sweeping decentralization program that gives new resources and broadened responsibilities to the country's 39 district governments for the management and provision of basic public services.

Tanzania

Tanzania, like Uganda, is perceived to have one of the world's most corrupt public administrations. State corruption is perhaps its most urgent and debilitating governance problem. As with Uganda, Tanzania is an example of a country where the Bank built on local leadership and commitment in tackling the difficult issue of corruption in the public sector. An opportunity was created by the election of Benjamin Mkapa as President in 1995. Widely perceived as an honest leader amid a culture of corruption, Mkapa almost immediately signaled his intention to address

the issue head-on by dismissing long-standing cabinet ministers regarded as having participated in massive fraud under previous governments. Early the following year, he commissioned a report on corruption that singled out corrupt ministries and departments, corrupt business people, and corrupt officials and politicians. Publication of the report led to at least one ministerial resignation.

The first significant Bank-supported intervention was a consciousness-raising exercise aimed at helping build a broad-based, high-level consensus around an action plan for fighting corruption. The National Integrity Workshop of 1995 brought together leading Tanzanians from government, business, the judiciary, academia, and the media. The workshop was widely covered by the local media. Soon afterward, Mkapa's Presidential Commission on Corruption sought the Bank's support in designing and implementing a service delivery survey to assess citizens' perceptions of corruption in the police, judiciary, lands, and revenue services.

The Bank's approach to capacity building in Sub-Saharan Africa, like its approach to corruption, has undergone significant evolution over the past five years. The two examples cited below focus on a particular aspect of capacity building for improved governance: working with actors both inside and outside the government to build their capacity to make or influence public policy. As will be discussed in the final section of this paper, there is an obvious and potentially powerful synergy between this type of governance support and M&ECD.

Zambia

In *Zambia* the Bank supported a comprehensive program aimed at building the capacity of the Cabinet Office, which manages the business of the cabinet and the cabinet committees. The Cabinet Office in Zambia plays a key role in ensuring that cabinet deliberations produce policies that are founded on sound information, and based on thorough consultation across government departments. Few cabinet

offices function well in Sub-Saharan Africa. They typically exercise little control over the quality or quantity of information flowing to the cabinet, or the management of cabinet's agenda. The Zambian capacity building program appears to have produced significant and sustainable results. It restructured the Cabinet Office, creating the first institutional "home" for some of the best and brightest policy analysts in the country. It also led to the development of a thoroughly revised *Cabinet Handbook* that regularized procedures for the development and submission of documents for cabinet consideration. The impetus behind the work was firm local leadership and commitment—in this case, a strong-willed and influential cabinet secretary. The Zambian case has come to be regarded as a model for cabinet office reform in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Ghana

As noted above, the potential of Parliament to act as a check on the executive branch is rarely realized in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Bank is working in several countries to build the capacity of Parliaments to be more effective players in the governance process. **Ghana** is one recent example. The Bank has supported several workshops for the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, aimed at developing its capacity to influence the budget-making process and to comment on the efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditures.

VI. Links Between Governance Support and M&ECD

The foregoing analysis suggests that strengthened accountability between the state and citizens is a cornerstone of improved governance in Sub-Saharan Africa. Governance failures are often attributable in whole or in part to:

- Governments' unwillingness to make themselves accountable to the citizens they are supposed to serve.
- The inability of citizens and of the organizations and institutions that are assumed to represent their interests (legislatures, the judiciary, the news media, NGOs) to impose accountability on governments.

Accountability provides a critical link between governance and M&ECD in Sub-Saharan Africa. M&E is a vital element of a country's accountability infrastructure, and therefore of its governance regime, because it provides governments and citizens with information on the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of government programs. It provides a basis for making public servants accountable to their administrative superiors, political representatives, and the general public, and provides the information to evaluate the performance of political leaders. It also provides both the possibility and the incentive, for public servants and politicians alike, for continuous learning. M&E is thus an element of the broader governance framework. The link between governance and M&E is a profound one.

In more particular terms, the description and analysis above suggests several major issues common to both governance support and M&ECD, including the following.

(i) Financial and technical resources—the stock-in-trade of most Bank-supported operations—are usually not the binding constraint to solving either governance or M&E problems.

In Tanzania, where failed governance manifests itself as widespread public sector corruption, a prominent parliamentarian once observed that “corruption is not as important as the mentality of our people. They must change from what they were to what they want to be” (Economist 1996).

Fundamental governance reform will not occur without a profound change in the attitude or mindset of politicians, public officials, and citizens about the role of the public sector and the meaning of public service. External inputs of money, hardware, and technical expertise will always play a role in realizing governance reform. But the experience of the past 20 years has shown that they will have little impact as long as political and bureaucratic elites regard the public administration as a vehicle for extracting resources from citizens, rather than serving them, and for pursuing private enrichment, rather than public gain. Such a fundamental change of perspective can never be donor-led or induced primarily by the application of external resources. It must come from within.

There is a clear parallel with M&ECD. The literature, as noted, shows that the key constraint to successful M&ECD in Sub-Saharan Africa is lack of demand. Lack of demand is rooted in the absence of a strong evaluation culture, which stems from the absence of performance-orientation in the public sector (ADB and World Bank 1999: 28, 40). Where prevailing attitudes in the public sector pay little or no attention to the government's performance in providing services to the public, there will naturally be little perceived need for M&E.

The implication for M&ECD programming is to heed the difficult lesson learned by the Bank over two decades of governance work: invest up-front in activities that may lead to changes in the fundamental dysfunctional attitudes that prevail about governance and the public sector. Avoid significant material inputs in the absence of indications that attitudes *are indeed changing*.

Be cautious as well about providing training for M&E staff when the governance environment in the public sector is not conducive to the effective use of skilled personnel. One experienced commentator has cited the example of failed training efforts in a closely related area, the training of policy analysts in Sub-Saharan Africa:

A study of Gambians who returned to their home institution after earning degrees from abroad showed that almost none were placed in positions where they could apply their new skills. Despite their new credentials, they were assigned similar duties to those they had before going on training . . . Similarly, in virtually all African countries, series after series of management-related training courses have been provided to countless public servants at all levels, yet little evidence of tangible change has resulted. What is missing is conscious attention to integrating newly gained knowledge, practices and skills into everyday use in the trainees' organizations (Koenen-Grant 1999: 7).

The earlier examples of Uganda and Tanzania are instructive. In these cases, the Bank worked intensively with the government—through high-level workshops, news media sensitization, and citizen surveys—to launch a process aimed at creating new beliefs and attitudes about public service among a variety of stakeholders.

There are obvious opportunities for synergy between this kind of consciousness-raising governance support and M&ECD. Discussion of the role and value of M&E, and of the need for M&ECD, would be a useful addition to the kinds of governance workshops and seminars the Bank has undertaken in Tanzania and Uganda, or to the types of work the Bank has been doing with parliamentarians in countries such as Ghana. The M&E agenda in these countries could benefit from the momentum already created on the broader governance front.

(ii) Local leadership matters.

Governance is about politics, power, and influence over public matters. It would be naive to think that such a potent subject could be addressed in the absence of strong local leadership, ownership, and commitment. A similar argument applies to M&ECD. M&E, by delving into the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of government programs, generates information that governments might view as destabilizing or capable of shifting the balance of power between citizens and government.

Genuine demand for M&E, like genuine demand for fundamental governance reform, will only emerge from committed political and administrative leaders who understand and accept the risks (as well as appreciate the benefits) of improved capacity for M&E.

This suggests the need for the Bank to be selective in its M&E interventions. It should focus on countries where there are already committed high-level champions who are willing and able to push M&ECD through layers of administrative and political resistance. The recent case of Cabinet Office capacity building in Zambia, mentioned earlier, is relevant. It succeeded largely because of the commitment and energy of Zambia's top-ranking public servant, the Secretary to the Cabinet, who appreciated the need for and importance of strengthening the Cabinet Office. He also had the stature within the government to be able to carry the message about Cabinet Office reform persuasively to other important actors in the system.

The Bank might consider introducing the notion of M&ECD to influential champions who have already emerged in other areas of governance reform. If they perceive the value to be added to the governance agenda by M&ECD, they may champion its cause as well.

The Bank might also pay attention to making it easier for leadership to emerge in favor of interventions in difficult governance areas. This relates to ways that reforms are described and understood. Reform proposals are likely to be met with apathy or resistance if they are seen as not facilitating the work of people who will be affected by them or, worse, if they are seen as threatening people's jobs or careers.

In contrast, proposed reforms may be met with enthusiasm if they are viewed as both useful and nonthreatening. M&ECD, because it may be used for both accountability and organizational learning, could be perceived by different actors in the system as representing either a threat or an opportunity. Potential local champions for M&ECD might find it easier to play a leadership role if they were able to frame M&ECD, at least at its initial stages, in a way that emphasized its less-threatening

aspects. Again, the experience of Zambian efforts to build the capacity of the Cabinet Office is instructive. Positioned as the gatekeeper to the cabinet, the Cabinet Office could have chosen to flaunt its position and operate in an obstructive way with the ministries that wished to put proposals to the cabinet. Instead, it chose to position itself as offering a service to ministries by helping them submit well-prepared proposals (Koenen-Grant 1999). The lesson that “the more these offices demonstrate value added to the process . . . the more legitimacy they enjoy” (Koenen-Grant 1999: 7) is as applicable to units responsible for M&E as it is to cabinet offices.

(iii) Work with outside actors to achieve changes within the public administration.

A powerful lesson from work to support sound governance in Sub-Saharan Africa is that public administrations will not reform themselves. A push is required from agents outside the public sector. A similar challenge applies to building the evaluation culture needed to support sustained M&E. Left to themselves, public officials may have little reason or desire to take M&E seriously. It is important to raise the awareness of external stakeholders, such as parliamentarians, members of the news media, and representatives of civil society organizations, about the value of M&E, and to expose them to the information it yields. This is a critical first step to creating the demand for an evaluation culture.

To help build momentum outside the public administration in favor of M&E, there are opportunities for synergy with other governance-related initiatives that are similar to those described under point (i) above. Discussion of M&E could easily be added to consciousness-raising work with the news media, civil society, and parliamentarians, as supported by the Bank in countries such as Ghana, Tanzania, and Uganda.

(iv) Donor support must be provided in ways that promote local capacity development.

Bank-supported governance interventions have relied heavily on inputs of expatriate technical expertise, and Bank staff have often taken the lead in defining local governance

problems and designing interventions to solve them. These ingrained operational habits have limited the impact of Bank-supported activities in capacity building at the local level.

The implications for M&E are identical to those for support across the full range of governance activities. The Bank should:

- Let its local partners take the lead in developing and designing M&E interventions. The preparation process is, in itself, an important tool for capacity development; it is an opportunity to expand and develop demand for local capacity to analyze M&E problems and design appropriate interventions to address them.
- Encourage and facilitate the maximum possible use of local experts for M&E interventions.

(v) Coordinate governance capacity-building interventions.

A major lesson from governance support in Sub-Saharan Africa concerns the need to take a holistic view of governance problems. In a similar vein, M&E interventions should exploit, to the greatest possible extent, potential synergies with other capacity building activities in related governance fields. Three types of related activities—two of these were discussed above—present obvious potential for a high degree of synergy with M&E:

- *Policymaking at the center of government.* An important current weakness of the policymaking process at the center of government is that it is rarely informed by sound analysis, based on lessons learned from evaluation of completed programs and the monitoring of ongoing ones (Bratton and others 1998: 25). Countries such as Zambia, Mali, and Ghana, which are in varying stages of designing or implementing programs related to capacity building for policymaking, should therefore be prime targets for M&E initiatives.
- *Results-based management (RBM).* This occurs in a variety of forms. Countries such as Mali, Uganda, and Tanzania have implemented service delivery surveys

aimed at laying the basis for a more client-focused public service. Countries such as Ghana have implemented a form of performance contracting within the public administration that requires the top public servant (Chief Director) in each department to commit to specific departmental results for the coming year. Effective M&E machinery is a necessary complement to RBM. There is a strong case for moving ahead with M&ECD in countries that have shown interest in RBM.

- *Rational management of public expenditures.* Countries such as Guinea, Ghana, and Malawi have been working on the design and implementation of Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEF). Their objective is a more rational and sustainable allocation of public resources and a more reliable flow of resources to government departments, contributing to smoother program implementation. As MTEFs become well established, demand for well-run M&E systems should increase, because annual adjustments in MTEFs will need to be based on a continuous flow of information about program quality and impact.

(vi) Tailor the intervention to the real nature of the problem on the ground.

The failure of the blueprint approach to governance reform was the result of donor-imposed solutions being poorly matched to the problems they were supposed to address. There is a risk of M&ECD falling into the same syndrome of “solutions in search of problems.” This is particularly true in the Sub-Saharan African environment in the case of *ex post evaluation*—the backward-looking analysis of the impact and efficiency of completed programs—as opposed to *monitoring*—ongoing surveillance of the performance of current programs. Capacity for both evaluation and monitoring is needed in Sub-Saharan Africa, but in many countries in the Region, the more urgent priority will be to build capacity for monitoring (Bratton and

others 1998: 4). Program evaluation is, typically, an attribute of mature management systems in which policies are reliably carried through to the end. This is not the case in most Sub-Saharan African countries, where problems of program implementation are severe (Bratton and others 1998).¹¹ Focusing on evaluation in an environment where relatively few approved programs are ever implemented would seem an inefficient approach, compared with the alternative of developing capacity to monitor ongoing programs.

(vii) Attend to the capacity building requirements of decentralization.

For a variety of reasons, having to do with factors ranging from the Bank’s *Articles of Agreement* to the Bank’s operational “culture,” its governance interventions have tended to target the central government. As noted above, many governments across Sub-Saharan Africa are in varying stages of designing and implementing decentralization programs aimed at devolving responsibility to subnational authorities for financing, designing, and implementing the delivery of basic public services. The implication for M&E is that M&ECD interventions must, *at the very least*, be designed with an awareness of the rapidly growing capacity needs related to M&E found in public administrations at the district and municipal levels.

The need to address M&E capacity deficiencies is also urgent at the central level. Given the need to prioritize M&E interventions, a strong case can be made for focusing at present on M&ECD at the central government level. However, even if M&ECD interventions remained targeted, for the time being, on the central government, their design should take into account the central government’s role in overseeing the decentralization process and in supporting the building of M&E capacity in decentralized public administrations.

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Endnotes

Mark Schacter is a director of the Institute on Governance, a not-for-profit public policy think-tank based in Ottawa, Canada. He was a staff member of the World Bank from 1990 to 1997, working for much of that time on governance and capacity-building issues in Sub-Saharan Africa.

1. For the purposes of this report, the World Bank provided the author with all background material on M&ECD in Sub-Saharan Africa. The author undertook his own separate, limited review of literature related to broader governance support in Sub-Saharan Africa.
2. Sustainability is a useful proxy for the capacity and development orientation of a public administration, because it reflects the degree to which a government is able and willing to carry on with a development intervention after the donor agency has withdrawn its support.
3. Respected observers such as Allen Schick still find it necessary to remind the Bank of the hazards of the blueprint approach. The Bank's recent work in public administrative reform has been influenced by "new public management" (NPM) reforms designed in many OECD countries. Schick has cautioned that some NPM-style reforms—particularly the "government by contract" model implemented in New Zealand—may not be readily exportable to some developing countries, where the prerequisites for NPM may not be in place (see Schick 1998). A case in point would be Ghana (in 1996–97), where as a result of NPM-style reforms to the civil service, Ghanaian "chief directors" (equivalent to permanent secretaries) were being asked to enter into quasi-contracts for the improvement of departmental performance. Chief directors regarded this to a significant degree as an empty ritual, because the absence of central budgeting systems to ensure a reliable flow of financial resources to the departments severely limited the validity of departmental performance commitments.
4. Externally supplied technical assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to cost \$4 billion a year (Ul Haque and Aziz 1998, citing World Bank sources).
5. The index, based on surveys of business people, rates 85 countries on a scale from 1 to 10; lower scores indicate higher perceived levels of corruption. The five Sub-Saharan African countries at the bottom of the list, and their scores, are: Uganda (2.6), Kenya (2.5), Nigeria (1.9), Tanzania (1.9), and Cameroon (1.4). Cameroon had the lowest score of all countries surveyed. An additional six Sub-Saharan African countries had scores below 5.0.
6. In Ghana, for example, the Controller and Accountant-General's Department has a staff complement of 4,000, of whom only 25 are qualified accountants. Among the 150 auditors and accountants in the government of The Gambia, only two have professional qualifications.
7. "PK 12" is a kilometer post located 12 kilometers from Bangui.
8. The Central African Republic, Ghana, and Mali are examples of this phenomenon.
9. At the end of the 1980s there were only four functioning multiparty democracies in Sub-Saharan Africa: Botswana, The Gambia, Mauritius, and Senegal. During the 1990s, a further 42 countries in the Region held elections.
10. The first survey covered over 5,000 households in 40 communities.
11. A study carried out in Zambia concluded that 75 percent of cabinet decisions were never implemented. Studies in Guinea-Bissau and Ghana found comparably high levels of nonimplementation.

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4. The World Bank, *Evaluating Development Outcomes: Methods for Judging Outcomes and Impacts*, Lessons & Practices no. 10, 1997.*
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