

**Public Administration For A Democratic  
Developmental State In Africa:  
Prospects And Possibilities**

Kealeboga J. Maphunye

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**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FOR A DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATE IN  
AFRICA:  
PROSPECTS AND POSSIBILITIES**

Kealeboga J. Maphunye  
Contract Researcher

**Centre for Policy Studies**  
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Centre for Policy Studies  
1st Floor Maths Centre  
28 Juta Street, Braamfontein  
Johannesburg, South Africa

P O Box 1933  
Parklands 2121  
Johannesburg, South Africa

Tel (011) 403 4001  
Fax (011) 403 4026  
e-mail: portia@cps.org.za

[www.cps.org.za](http://www.cps.org.za)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND KEY QUESTIONS

The goal of this paper is to examine the concept of a developmental public service and administration within the context of a democratic developmental state (DDS) in Africa. 'Developmental public service and administration' means an efficient and effective state administration or apparatus; one that is committed to clearly outlined and systematically implemented development plans and programmes that consciously seek to address poverty and underdevelopment in Africa. Such public administration, which is critical to advancing the ideal of a DDS<sup>1</sup>, must also: allow space for civil society inputs promote public participation in the policy and decision-making processes adopt and implement innovative strategies to address social inequalities be geared to dealing with corruption or maladministration in terms of human resource management, procurement and financial management processes.

It is acknowledged that "[t]he concept of democracy is a heavily contested one" (Sachikonye 1995: 1). Democracy in this regard refers to the concept in a formal and substantive sense that includes accountability of public representatives to the electorate, public participation in a country's governance and decision-making processes - including the holding of regular, free and fair elections - and change of government through popularly sanctioned, constitutional means.<sup>2</sup> This paper also contains several definitions of a DS or DDS, as it is assumed that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' definition or approach towards conceptualising the DS. Each of these approaches takes a policy directional or public administration approach, an ideological approach; other approaches are derived from political science, economics, development studies, human resource management, and sociology. This position was deliberately adopted because the subject matter straddles several fields of study. Further, the paper outlines these definitions or approaches to the DS (or DDS) to give the reader an indication of the diverse views and debates on the subject matter. However, for the sake of a conceptual framework and clarity of definition, the conclusion attempts to synthesise these definitions or approaches by summarising their key aspects.

Much has been written about the state and development, or the lack of it, especially in Africa. Recently, writers' interest has shifted to the idea of a DS (Weiss 2000; Mkandawire 2001; Wade 2003; Sindzingre 2004; Naidoo 2006; Southall 2006; Maserumule 2007). Yet the literature on the DS hardly conceptualises the role of the public/civil service or bureaucracy

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<sup>1</sup> This paper refers to the developmental state (DS) but also to a democratic developmental state (DDS), as the case may be, owing to the fact that some scholars frequently refer only to one and not the other of these two concepts. For the sake of clarity, this author believes that a DDS is the ideal to which African countries must strive, since some (e.g. Botswana) are already DSs.

<sup>2</sup> Arend Lijphart, in his 1984 book *Democracies*, outlines eight defining characteristics about democracies. These include freedom to form and join organisations; freedom of expression; the right to vote; eligibility for public office; the right of political leaders to compete for support and votes; alternative sources of information; free and fair elections; and institutions for making policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference.

in such a state, especially in those African countries not cited as relevant examples. The critical importance of the public bureaucracy<sup>3</sup> and relevant public institutions cannot be overlooked in the debate on the DS, but such a state must be democratic. Some observers stress that a “strong state capacity is critically important as [a] distinguishing feature of a developmental state.” (Maserumule 2007: 212) but in Africa weak institutional capacity throughout the continent serves as a stark reminder that much needs to be done about such capacity if the state is to play a sustainable and developmental role.

As Mbabazi (2005: 54) aptly asks, “But what exactly is a developmental state and what does it imply in the context of Africa?” A DS is a state which is by definition interventionist and pro-poor, and which seeks to address challenges such as poverty, low economic growth, lack of infrastructure, and unequal development, by deliberately using state resources to address these challenges. Observers emphasise that a DS is “...one whose ideological underpinnings are developmental and one that seriously attempts to deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development (Mbabazi 2005: 54, citing Mbabazi and Taylor 2005). In such a state, the role of the market is not to wield its ‘invisible hand’ to resist pro-poor policies, but rather to play a developmental and supportive role to a democratically elected government administration to implement such policies; the assumption is that the market alone will not play such a positive role in the absence of such a state. According to Moon and Prasad (1994: 380, the DS “has emerged as a powerful alternative to neo-classical and dependency accounts of the political economy of growth.” However, some writers have cautioned against “...the employment of the term as a ‘feel-good’ label if the concept of the developmental state is to retain any heuristic value” (Southall, 2006: xli).

The value of the term ‘developmental state’, which is a term “... used by international political economy scholars to refer to the phenomenon of state-led macroeconomic planning in East Asia in the late twentieth century” (Wikipedia 2007, online), is that it links economic, political and institutional structures (Sindzingre 2004). This might enable Africans to understand the complexity of issues that Africa needs to tackle in order to build DDSs, the ideal towards which the continent must strive for if it is to address its developmental problems. Given this complexity, the current debate on development and the DS in Africa reminds us to take note of historians’ advice:

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<sup>3</sup> Numerous public administration scholars have used the term ‘bureaucracy’ but its precise meaning has varied, according to the different authors’ approaches and emphases. The work of the German social scientist, Max Weber, was instrumental in introducing the concept of bureaucracy into the study of organizations (Wallis, 1989:2); also, see Heady (1979:60-61).

The problems which Africans and their governments have had to face since independence have, very largely, been the product of their history. This is not to suggest that the misdirection, corruption or incompetence of some African leaders or even ecological factors have not been partly to blame for Africa's continuing underdevelopment. But the roots of many of Africa's recurrent problems in the final decades of the twentieth century are to be found in the period of colonial rule of the previous eighty years or more. (Shillington 1995: 406).

This brief historical background is extremely important when examining the nature and role of the African state. In Shillington's view (1995: 409), Africa inherited an economic legacy of underdevelopment and dependency:

European colonial governments left Africa with a mounting economic crisis that had been the end-product of eighty years of colonial misrule. The African economies, such as they were, had been directed towards exporting cheap agricultural raw materials and unprocessed minerals to Europe and in return importing relatively expensive manufactured goods...There had been little or no attempt to develop African economic self-sufficiency, for that would have defeated the purpose of Europe's possessing the colonies.

At independence, many African leaders saw rapid industrialisation as the answer to their development challenges. However, "...the new rulers of independent Africa made the initial mistake of modelling their development programmes upon the industrialised economies of Western Europe and North America. In this, they were often advised by European economic 'experts' (Shillington 2005: 411). As Maphunye (2008a) writes, "...the idea that developing countries must 'catch up' with the countries of the North implied that the 'progress' or 'advancement' of a country could only be measured using the perspective of the North." Obviously, many Africans developed a sense of helplessness and "...a deep and sincere feeling that very little can be accomplished without outside assistance" (Asante 1991: 5) from, for example, multinational corporations or foreign governments.

The dominant view then was that "[I]f African countries industrialised, then they could manufacture their own consumer goods which up until then had been imported from Europe. This, in due course would shift the 'adverse terms of trade' in Africa's favour...But it did not work out like that" (Shillington 2005: 411). The reasons for this are many and widely documented; they include the fact that Africans were for decades forced to export raw materials to the highly industrialised countries, only to re-import them at inflated prices as

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finished products (a common story in the case of minerals such as diamonds, gold, copper and several other products that Africa lacked the machinery and infrastructure to process (Rodney 1972; Asante 1991; Ake 1996).

Friedman and de Villiers (1996) note that “(i)n South Africa – and no doubt many other developing countries – there is ...a long-standing debate on whether we should look to the industrialised societies of the north or to those elsewhere on our continent for comparisons which might help us address our challenges” (citing Friedman and De Villiers 1996: 5). Such debates raise questions about the criteria that Africa should use to measure development which, as Adebayo Adedeji argues, “...refers fundamentally to human beings, ‘to every man and woman, to the whole man and the whole woman’” (Adedeji, cited by Asante 1991: 6).

The recent focus on the idea of a DS by scholars, development planners, civil society organisations, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders adds another dimension to the study of development in Africa. The debate about the role of the state in development in Africa is, however, not new. It “reached its peak in the 1970s. Following independence in the 1960s, state involvement in the economy was welcomed, partly due to the lack of indigenous private entrepreneurs and partly due to economic distortions created by colonialism” (Osei-Hwedie 2001)<sup>4</sup>. At that time, many countries considered state intervention in the economy as a legitimate strategy to ensure the delivery of vital services to communities. In the context of the Cold War, debates on the state’s role often related to the then polarities between capitalist and communist countries, and were heavily ideological. Leftwich (1994: 381) points to “the centrality of politics and the state in development” and believes that politics and the state have a key role in development, suggesting that an analysis of the symbiotic relationship between these two concepts might have given impetus to interest in the idea of a DS. He writes that “...development is fundamentally a political matter and that it is illusory to conceive of good governance as independent of the forms of policies and type of state which alone can generate, sustain and protect it” (p 364).

This paper explores the nature and characteristics of an ideal or appropriate public administration that would be suitable for a (democratic) DS in Africa. It assumes that the policy goal for many African states would be to transform themselves into developmental states if their development policies were to be sustainable. In other words, given Africa’s

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<sup>4</sup> No page reference. URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v5/v5i1a2.htm>.



decades-old socio-economic, political (democratic) and developmental challenges, many African scholars and intellectuals seemingly suggest that a DS is the answer. This paper attempts to understand what these scholars are saying, and how they conceptualise this ideal entity called a DS - particularly in the African context where emphasis is increasingly being placed on democracy, good governance, efficient and effective public administration, transparency and accountability, quality service delivery and public participation. The paper explores the kind of (developmental) public administration such a state would need, what African countries should do to create its relevant institutions, and its defining characteristics. Briefly, such public administration must be professional and experienced; its officials must be selfless in service delivery, be highly motivated and goal-directed, and have the capacity to support the state's developmental and strategic vision of social transformation. This matter will be closely examined in Section 4.

The following key questions helped in the analysis of this topic:

- Is the DS a sustainable framework for development, and what kind of public service and administration is appropriate for such a state
- Are there typologies of DSs or is there an ideal type DS that can be used as a template to evaluate existing states exhibiting related characteristics?

These questions served as background support to the analysis presented in this paper to stimulate debate; the paper in no way claims to have covered all the relevant issues about DSs through these questions. On the contrary, the paper problematises, rather than seeks to provide definitive answers to, these questions. Against this background of evolving and contending views, the paper examines the different meanings and applications of the concept of the DS. It also discusses what is increasingly being referred to as a 'democratic developmental state' in some literature (particularly within the ruling African National Congress in South Africa), that is, a state that enjoys relative popular support, with the citizens playing a substantive role in electing public representatives, as well as a significant and meaningful role in policy and decision making, not only through such representatives but also civil society organisations.

This paper presents views on the subject of the DS from several writers, including their varied and often contradictory positions and definitions of this concept. This approach was deliberately chosen, as it was believed that this would best reflect the diversity of views in

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the literature. A summary of these views suggests that African states need first to strive to become DSs; however this paper views a DDS as an ideal to avoid the pitfalls of the East Asian DSs, e.g. authoritarian or undemocratic practices. By virtue of the term 'democracy' being a contested concept, reference to it here and in the rest of this paper is to the 'formalist, minimalist definition' of a system characterised by "... multi-partyism, periodic elections, [and] governmental succession by constitutional electoral procedures [that are] guaranteed under the rule of law" (Sachikonye 1995: iii) that many African states have adopted. However, it will be argued here that for a DS model to succeed in Africa it has to adopt the participatory model of democracy, i.e. the "expansive and more substantive definition" which is characterised by "redistributive socio-economic reforms, broad popular participation and human rights" (ibid) including other values that will enable such countries to develop into DDSs.

## 2. APPROACH AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This approach is based on a qualitative analysis of the concept of the DS from the perspective of public administration and development management. The paper is informed by a review of the literature, including periodicals, books, and a range of relevant sources, which were combined with data from a previous official study on the human resource capacity needs of African countries.

The theories of development were revisited, including the centre-periphery argument, which attempts to explain contradictions between development processes at the 'centre' and in the 'periphery' or outlying parts of an economy. The relevance of established modernisation theories was also reviewed. These theories developed after the Second World War out of various streams of thought in Western social sciences (Davids et al, 2005: 9-12), which see development as being essentially about modernisation and industrialisation. The review of the literature also included revisiting the dependency theory and underdevelopment paradigms as espoused by Andre Gunder Frank, Fernando Cardoso and Paul Baran in Latin America, and Issa Shivji in Africa. These paradigms point to the centre-periphery dichotomy and related tensions and contradictions between overseas 'powers' and their 'Third World' peripheries. Some of the arguments pursued by the proponents of a DDS are similar to those of the leftist dependency theorists; however, unlike the latter, it would appear that the advocates of a DDS seek to improve (rather than destroy) the capitalist system.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Throughout the literature that was reviewed by this author on the DS, there has been no explicit reference to the nationalisation of the means of production or other characteristics that are usually associated with socialist states or socialism, e.g. class struggle, or the need for a 'vanguard' to effect a DS. The debate essentially envisages the role of the market in a DS, but it could be argued that a (democratic) DS is much closer in the ideological continuum to one that espouses socialism.

In the literature, especially in regard to development, these debates are crucial as they seek to explain the continent's social, political, economic and developmental history and trajectory. They also form an important basis for exploring current debates in Africa relating to the DS and the type of public administration (or developmental public administration) that would be appropriate for such a state.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has the following limitations:

- Interviews were not conducted; nor was primary data collected. Only secondary data was used.
- The guiding hypothesis for this study was: "There are no DSs in Africa, only a few countries striving towards the ideal of a DDS".<sup>7</sup> This was however not empirically tested using primary data, but merely served as a working hypothesis.
- A major challenge facing scholars analysing African public service and administration dynamics, its development patterns, or the features of its states, is that "Africa is both huge and complex. Any attempt to write a review of what is happening on the continent faces challenges and difficulties" (Hyden 2006: 9). For this paper, the major challenge has been the fact that not much has been written on the concept of the DS, in particular where public administration is concerned.
- To avoid generalisation and speculation, the paper does not assert that Africa has other DSs, save for Botswana, Mauritius, South Africa, and Uganda, for which the literature provides a strong argument. (Despite their respective shortcomings, these countries can be regarded as DSs as they come close to satisfying the

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<sup>6</sup> These debates are being highlighted here to underscore the fact that one needs to go beyond this and explore, discuss and analyse the nature and characteristics of an ideal or appropriate public administration that would be suitable for a DS in Africa.

<sup>7</sup> A careful analysis of several views in the literature suggests that an ideal democratic developmental state (DDS) is one that is not only democratic i.e. founded on the will of the people in terms of regular free and fair and credible elections, but also enjoys greater legitimacy and therefore can be seen as carrying a popular mandate to implement development policies. Such as state should also include fundamental human rights and freedoms, and be transparent and accountable to ensure the application of this mandate in different forums in a country's governance structures. A DDS should also be participatory in the sense that various stakeholders such as civil society organisations, community bodies and various other role-players will be involved (or have meaningful say) in shaping public policies.

conceptual model or definition of a DS outlined in this paper.) This issue will be discussed in the section on examples of DSs in Africa.

#### **4. CONCEPTUALISING DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATES AND DEVELOPMENTAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN AFRICA**

At its broadest, the term 'developmental state' (DS) links economic, political and institutional structures and dimensions of development. The rise of DSs is often seen as explaining the remarkable and rapid economic growth rates, development and performances of the east and north-east Asian countries known as the 'Asian Tigers' (Kwon, 2005: 478; Moon and Prasad, 1994; Sindzingre, 2004; Fritz and Menocal, 2006; Maserumule, 2007; Nzewi and Kuye 2007). On Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan, Fritz and Menocal (2006) write that these states "...underwent rapid economic growth and a radical socio-economic transformation, moving from being poor agrarian societies or city states in the 1960s to producers of high technical, high value-added goods by the 1990s" [online]. Of interest to Africa, where there are very few examples of participatory democracy and good governance, it is noteworthy that these East Asian countries have also been viewed as 'strong authoritarian' states which curtailed democratic and labour rights (Kwon, 2005: 478).

Even more complex issues should be taken into consideration when the term DS is being analysed in the context of Africa, i.e. what is of key importance in terms of this debate is to determine whether a state can be both developmental and democratic (see Edigheji 2005: 2). This paper adopts the position that a DDS may be seen as an ideal towards which Africans should strive given the governance challenges and other problems that many countries have encountered since they attained independence. Further, a DDS is a desirable goal that will not only enable the majority of African citizens to have a meaningful say in the running of their countries (and thus influence development), but will also allow them to participate fully in their countries' development programmes. Presently, there is no blueprint for an African DDS, but this paper argues that many of its features will be similar to those of the East Asian DS model, but excludes a number of key features of the East Asian model, including authoritarian tendencies and suppression of universally accepted democratic practices. Such a blueprint can only emerge once extensive continent-wide consultations and debates have been held to produce a consensus model. While the characteristics of a DDS will include meaningful public participation and civil society inputs into public policy making, these are not the only features and need further inputs from scholars, intellectuals and relevant stakeholders in the entire continent. Similarly, the debates and concise definition of a DDS have to be shaped by such role-players.

According to Maserumule (2007: 212), the idea of planning for development, can be linked to a DS. Citing Chalmers' (1982), Maserumule argues that a DS is "...that type of state radically planned in a manner that makes it possible and necessary for government to influence the duration and pace of economic and social development rather than leaving it to the dictates of the markets." Planning is a critical tool for effecting development, with some authors pointing to its great value when applied in consultation with the members of communities for whom such development is intended, and Aaron Wildavsky's (1974) seminal work stressed the importance of planning in development. Lane (1993: 2-3) has suggested that a developmental public service and administration might straddle the divide between Weber's 'ideal type' bureaucracy and New Public Management (NPM), which introduces private sector practices into public institutions.<sup>8</sup> The relationship between the type of public administration and the ideal DDS is that such an administration is fundamental, as it is capable of defining the character of the state itself. It is in this sense that the argument pursued in this paper emphasises the role of public administration. In terms of the ideal of a DDS, it is quite obvious that Africa cannot rely on the whims or generosity of public servants schooled in the mode of the traditional Weberian bureaucracy; on the contrary, the task at hand demands fundamental reform of the public bureaucracy to enable it to give vital support to the DDS.

To understand the concept of the DS, it is necessary to attempt a definition of development. One observer argues that "[t]here is no agreement on what exactly 'development' means (Moss 2007: 2), adding that "[t]he narrowest economic definition is to make poor people less poor by raising their incomes." Others look beyond income, and link development to human 'progress'. As Esman (1991:5) for instance states: "Although the concept of development has been and remains imprecise, it connotes steady progress toward improvement in the human condition; reduction and eventual elimination of poverty, ignorance and disease; and expansion of well-being and opportunity for all." Conceptualising development in the context of Africa is critical to the debate on the DDS, but it must be recognised that there are various interpretations of this process, including a range of phenomena that we often link to development. Of potential interest to Africa, Esman adds that "Development involves societal transformation...but not necessarily Westernization" (p 5). As a concept, the term 'Westernization' has positive and negative features and is as

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<sup>8</sup> Weber's ideal type bureaucracy falls short of creating a structure capable of supporting the ideal DDS as it emphasises administration based on written documents, formal training for officials, hierarchically organised tasks, and a career bureaucracy. While these qualities may be acceptable as some of the requirements that would help develop a professional civil/public service in Africa, the ideal of a DDS requires much more from state functionaries including public officials who understand, but seek to change, the objective conditions under which the citizens live. Pollit and Bouckaert (2000: 20, cited in Maphunye, 2003: 7) view NPM as 'managerialism' which was applied especially in the UK whereby "...almost every [public sector] reform in the 1980s and 1990s included participation by one or more management consultancies..." in attempts to improve efficiency in the public sector. Similarly, NPM has also been described as "business oriented public administration" which, among others, involves the "...conversion of various departments and statutory boards into autonomous agencies with a certain degree of operational flexibility (Haque, 2004: 232).

much a socio-cultural phenomenon as it is socio-economic and technical. However, in terms of Africa's development in particular, the negative features of this process have often included the uncritical acceptance of development plans, paradigms, ideas, and strategies of creating infrastructure and spatial layout, which originate from the West. Development refers to the use of home-grown ideas or strategies to improve the lives of ordinary citizens; but this must involve significant public participation and consultation with the relevant stakeholders.<sup>9</sup>

The decades from the 1960s through to the late 1990s saw the emergence of competing paradigms on development. While some countries, particularly those in the US sphere of influence during the Cold War, preferred a mixed economy that posited a balanced role of the state and private sector in the economy, others - mostly under socialist systems - preferred to nationalise the means of production, with the state playing a dominant role in the economy. Among those favouring a mixed economy, many felt that "...the state could and should be the prime mover in economic development, a conviction that was shared by the leaders of the newly independent states, by international and bilateral development assistance agencies, and by the great majority of scholars and publicists who provided the intellectual underpinning for this grand development enterprise" (Esman (1991:7)).<sup>10</sup>

From the 1970s, many countries in the Western world began experiencing fundamental changes (Esman, 1991: 7-8). "The rapid and unexpected ascendancy of neoconservative ideology in the wake of the oil shock and the economic slowdown of the 1970s, followed by the political victories in Britain [Margaret Thatcher] and the United States [Ronald Reagan] in 1979 and 1980, prompted a fresh look at the state." These changes in political and economic outlook also began to affect developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America in a sense that international development agencies began to link aid and economic assistance to public sector reform and to liberalisation of the economy. "In the neoconservative world view," Esman (1991:8) argues, "the overblown state, to paraphrase Ronald Reagan, had become the problem, not the solution." This change of development paradigm marked the beginning of an era characterised by threats and enticements to developing countries to conform to the dominant new economic order of reducing state intervention in the economy, which was done through the economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs).

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<sup>9</sup> This is not to overlook the fact that development also refers to a complex phenomenon which involves the material basis of development and economic growth as a primary, though not the ultimate, goal of development.

<sup>10</sup> This underscores the fact that in a mixed economy the state plays a leading role in directing the ends and structure of the economy, while allowing the market to create the conditions under which the market can flourish and provide the entrepreneurial incentives for fostering economic growth.

From the perspective of public administration and development management, the concept of a 'developmental public service and administration' is not easy to explain in the context of Africa's development because of the following characteristics of the continent:

Africa is a huge continent with a geo-political landscape that can be broadly sub-divided into four categories:

- Anglophone
- Francophone
- Lusophone
- Afro-Arabic.

It is highly diverse, with wide socio-economic, political and cultural dynamics and differences, and thus little homogeneity, at least in terms of these features. However, the similarities or commonalities that exist cannot be ignored.

Service delivery and the features of the public service differ markedly according to whether a country's political system bears the imprint of Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone, Afro-Arabic or a hybrid structure.<sup>11</sup>

The existence of a DS in a country might be conditioned or predetermined by the specific and pre-existing socio-political and historical background or experience of the country concerned. If this were the case, it would suggest that we would have to determine which socio-political and other characteristics would dispose a country more towards or away from adopting a form of DS. But this conclusion could not be sustained in the absence of empirical data to support it.

A developmental public service and administration may be defined as a politico-administrative structure with the capacity to deliver services to the public in a manner that

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<sup>11</sup> It is not clear whether the fact that a country can adopt a DS format makes any difference as to the kind of public administration it will have. However, many countries in the continent face similar developmental, socio-economic and political challenges, irrespective of their historical/colonial heritage. Hence, the point made by many scholars that virtually all African countries have been disadvantaged by their collective colonial and post-colonial experiences, and that this makes it particularly imperative that they adopt an effective form of state, i.e. a DS, to enhance or speed up their development.

goes beyond the Weberian criteria of a trained and professional bureaucracy that merely interprets legislation and policies and follows orders to the letter. Such a public service must be able to go beyond the call of duty and be selfless in rendering services to the public; it must be highly skilled, professional, experienced, and have highly motivated, goal-directed personnel with the capacity not only to fulfil the mandate of the government of the day but also to sacrifice and contribute to the development of a strategic vision for transforming society.<sup>12</sup> Such a public service would be geared towards the efficient and effective implementation of progressive policies aimed at eradicating poverty and promoting a democratic, egalitarian governance system through, among other processes, effective monitoring and evaluation, strategic contribution to the organisation's overall mandate, and systematic implementation. A wider definition of the term might include the need for high ethical standards among public servants and the political office bearers under whom they work, as well as a public and private sector environment that is not conducive to maladministration and corruption. In Africa, with its past and current woes, it might be argued that such a public service and administration is more of an ideal than reality but such an ideal would be very close to the idea of a DDS which will enable Africa to play a proactive role in the 21st century. The following are some of the characteristics of a traditional Asian-type developmental state (Evans 1995; Leftwich 2000; Beeson 2004; Polidano 2004; Makgetla 2005 :

- Highly competitive, extensive, relatively efficient and effective bureaucracy
- State-led development/ developmentalism
- Interventionist political elites
- Meticulous planned process of economic development
- Substantial, sustained and real increase in per capita income
- Tradition of national identity (to mobilise society around national development project)
- Existence of 'pilot agency' to lead development and channel it to indigenous economic actors
- Effective relationship with domestic business class.

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<sup>12</sup> Anecdotal evidence suggests that Japan's Toyota may be an example of such unusual 'deferred gratification'. While it is a private company, its employees are known to request that payment of their salaries be deferred whenever it faces an economic downturn until the company's finances improve.



These characteristics outline a traditional (Asian-type) model of an authoritarian DS. However, they may be regarded as the initial ingredients of an ideal (democratic) DS; some African scholars seem to believe that this is appropriate for African countries within the context of the modern era of greater emphasis on democracy, good governance, human rights, and a whole range of features that are often associated loosely with democratic rule. All but the last of the characteristics mentioned provide a general template, but countries will differ markedly in adopting or implementing them. The last characteristic refers to an “effective relationship with domestic business class”, but an ideal African DDS would be inclusive and thus all classes and role-players would have to be mobilised and urged to support the process of building the state.

A striking feature of the characteristics is the existence of a special structure or ‘pilot agency’, such as Japan’s celebrated MITI (Ministry of Internal Trade and Industry) which, according to Beeson (2004, citing Evans 1998) consisted of an “...extensive, relatively efficient bureaucracy, staffed by the nation’s brightest and best”. In the case of Africa, such a combination of skill and brains might prove to be a challenge - owing to the ‘brain drain’ phenomenon - but few can dispute the fact that a well-oiled public administration machine will be an indispensable cog in the wheel of the DDS.<sup>13</sup> One scholar emphasises the need for a powerful, competent and insulated bureaucracy, as well as a weak and subordinated civil society - two features of an Asian traditional DS (Leftwich, 1995: 405, 420). However, these would clearly be unsuitable for an African DDS, as a vibrant civil society, coupled with a civil service that is approachable and able to interact meaningfully with the citizenry, will be required. In fact, in the African context an “insulated bureaucracy” would undermine the relationship between citizen participation in policy-making (especially development planning) and policy formulation: such an insulated bureaucracy would ultimately be autonomous from popular preference and even political intervention.

#### 4.1 Why Africa Needs Democratic Developmental States

A number of reasons can be advanced to explain why DDSs are needed in Africa. Firstly, the traditional model of a DS as observed in the East Asian examples seems unsuitable for Africa, as observers argue that the Asian DSs were authoritarian (Kwon, 2005: 478) in the sense that very minimal public or civil society participation took place in those countries. The differences between the notion of a traditional (Asian-type) authoritarian DS and what some scholars increasingly refer to as a democratic developmental state (eg South Africa) should be noted and are of critical importance to Africa. While many Africans would be eager to avoid the pitfalls of the Asian DSs as indicated in the literature, they would probably be keen

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<sup>13</sup> The famous African scholar Ali Mazrui refers to the importance of “reverse brain drain”, which, he says, Asia’s economic tigers undertook “to attract back their highly skilled nationals.” (City Press, 1 May 2008).

to adopt their impressive economic growth records to address Africa's development drawbacks. However, given the challenges of the Asian DSs, especially in terms of democratic participation, it would be desirable for African countries to consider adopting and implementing DSs that are also democratic, particularly in terms of allowing space for civil society and public participation. One of the challenges that Africa faces in terms of the DS is that currently there seems to be minimal discussions in the literature and among African scholars or intellectuals on the relevance of these two models for African states. However, the consensus within current debates about the DS in Africa seems to be that it would be inappropriate for African states to adopt the authoritarian model of a DS that was adopted in East Asia, especially in the Asian Tigers. There also seems to be consensus that, in the current global era of democratisation and greater emphasis on human rights, democratic accountability and citizen participation, an authoritarian DS model would be inappropriate, and that a DDS would be the most ideal model.

Secondly, countries which are presently considered to be 'developed' in terms of the dominant paradigm themselves benefited from state-led injection of vital resources in their initial stages of development. Beeson (2004: 3, citing Chang, 2002) argues that "...both the UK and the US - seeming paragons of [the] market and latter-day champions of the free market or neoliberal model - enjoyed significant state assistance in their initial industrialising phase". In this regard, the DS model seems to be the most appropriate for Africa, not merely in terms of its appeal to several African scholars, but also in the sense that it may be seen as the most effective vehicle for undertaking positive and fundamental changes, and not merely relying on the proverbial 'invisible hand of the market' that (liberal) economists often allude to as the invisible force responsible for the functioning of the economy. In fact, since much of the continent consists of largely poor, agrarian and underdeveloped countries that require significant state intervention and support, this suggests that a much more effective development model, i.e. a DDS, is required to address the continent's developmental problems. Some authorities see a DS as "...having a mission to achieve high rates of accumulation industrialisation and deriv[ing] its legitimacy from its ability to do so" (Mkandawire, cited by Southall, 2006: xxii). Adrian Leftwich (2000: 169) argues that "it seems unlikely that it is possible in the modern world for any society to make a speedy and successful transition from poverty without a state that in some respects corresponds to this model of a developmental state."

Thirdly, many scholars criticise the effects of foreign influence on the development trajectory of developing countries, especially in Africa. Elsewhere in the world, in East Asia for example, this occurred through "...an externally imposed reform agenda - designed primarily by the International Monetary Fund with encouragement from the United States - which was intended to completely reconfigure much that was distinctive about East Asian

developmental states” (Beeson 2004). This alludes to the need for a strong state with the capacity to build both internal consensus around the imperatives and mechanisms of development, while maintaining adequate levels of autonomy in the light of the extreme pressures caused by globalisation to adopt a specific model of development. This poses a particular challenge for the DS to effect internal consensus while counter-balancing foreign interference, which can be done through effective partnerships between the DS and like-minded states.<sup>14</sup> Claude Ake has criticised ‘dependent development’ in which many African countries have found themselves. He has argued that “...the main obstacle to development in Africa is political, that the point is not so much that the development project has failed as that it never got started in the first place” (Ake 1996:18). Ironically, the reason for the project’s failure to start can apparently be found in what Ake calls the “confusion of [development] agendas”, which discouraged many African leaders from following either an endogenous or exogenous development path (p 18). The former refers to home-grown development choices and plans, whereas the latter refers to those from foreign countries and development experts.

Fourthly, this alleged onslaught from the developed countries - including the International Finance Institutes (IFIs) - seems to suggest that for African and other developing countries to experience sustainable development, they need to follow a developmental path of “state-led developmentalism” (Beeson 2004: 2). As much as the concept may appeal to Africans and to people in the global South who feel excluded by the dominant paradigm and patterns of development, Beeson (2004: 4) warns that certain issues should be kept in mind before blindly applying the concept to any country. These are: is the DS “any longer useful or sustainable in an increasingly integrated global economy dominated by the US?”; and there is a need to “carefully assess the theoretical and pragmatic arguments that were made in support of an effective DDS”, and to “...remember that different countries will inevitably confront very different historical circumstances and developmental challenges, something that makes generalisation more difficult.” The current reality of a US-dominated global economy suggests that Africa’s situation must be assessed specifically with the aim of exploring the prospects or options for a DS. This is where local and regional African think-tanks may assist, to help Africa to decide what route to take, given the impact or implications of globalisation on the continent.

Finally, scholars such as Claude Ake have criticised what he terms the “apparent failure of the development enterprise in Africa”. He added that factors responsible for this failure

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<sup>14</sup> A pertinent example of such partnerships is the IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa) trilateral forum.

include “the colonial legacy, social pluralism and its centrifugal tendencies, the corruption of leaders, poor labour discipline, the lack of entrepreneurial skills, poor planning and incompetent management, inappropriate policies, the stifling of the market mechanism, low levels of technical assistance, the limited inflow of foreign capital, falling commodity prices, and unfavourable terms of trade, and low levels of saving and investment” (Ake 1996:1). These factors are critical and must inform any discussion of the concept of the DS in Africa.

In addition to the reasons given for why Africa needs a DS, it is important to understand the reasons for such justification. The usefulness of studying DSs is that it enables researchers, policy makers and planners, development experts, think- tanks and other role players to draw on relevant information when choices have to be made on developmental issues. Increasingly, development advisors, governments and organs of civil society in African countries view the DS as the best means for Africa to resolve its developmental challenges. In addition, with increasing globalisation Africa no longer has the latitude to experiment with alternative development strategies or approaches as pressure is persistently applied by powerful international actors on the continent to adopt one approach or another. Admittedly, these pressures have always existed and may not be a function of globalisation, as they reflect Africa’s historical and current subordination in the global political and economic arena, but they are a constant reminder that Africa needs sustainable solutions to its development challenges.

Furthermore, with the era of the grand ideologies such as socialism and nationalism slowly passing away, new pro-poor development strategies are increasingly sought to lift the continent out of its economic woes, many of which resulted from the adoption and implementation of external economic prescriptions as well as their interplay with dysfunctional politico-economic systems and processes which exacerbated the situation.

The apparent inclination towards the idea of a DS has to be studied to understand whether this is rhetoric or a genuine desire to resolve Africa’s development problems. If it turns out that the idea of a DS is more than mere rhetoric, then this issue will require that each African country invests time and other resources to realise this ideal and thus improve Africa’s development. From a public administration and management perspective in particular, devoting time and energy towards the design and implementation of a developmental public service could help Africa to address the ‘brain drain’ that remains a challenge for African governments. In other words, home-grown solutions to the challenges of the public service as well as development could be addressed in the quest for solutions in this regard. It is also important for Africans to understand to what extent proponents of the DS subscribe to the idea of ‘people-centred development’ which is closely linked to the

dictum ‘development is about people’ (Davids and Maphunye 2008: 23). The concept of the DS needs to be carefully interrogated in Africa to ensure that the pitfalls that accompany the uncritical embracing of fashionable terms or concepts are avoided; it is in this regard that persistent calls are made for Africans to build democratic developmental states (DDSs).

## 4.2 About Developmental States in Africa

A debate is currently under way in Africa about whether the continent has any DSs; where they are located, if they exist; what their features are; and why some African states can or cannot become DSs (see Mkandawire, 2001; Osei-Hwedie 2001; Sindzingre 2004; Edigheji 2005; Mbabazi and Taylor 2005; Matlosa, in Matlosa et al. 2008). However, as some scholars correctly note, “any discussion about the developmental state is a discussion of how the state can enhance its planning capacity to enable it to intervene in the economy to achieve its social and economic objectives” (Edigheji, Shisana, and Masilela 2008: 36). The concept of a DS offers a sustained critique of the contemporary capitalist economic order and explores alternatives for developing countries. However, the complexity of the idea of a DS cannot be ignored. As Southall (2006: xxx) notes:

...while offering a critique of both free market models of development as well as of the distorted patterns of (under)development pursued by numerous Third World countries, the developmental state idea offers experiential support for the view that states in the South must intervene extensively (but appropriately) in business decisions if they are to achieve rapid growth.

Osei-Hwedie’s (2001) paper ‘The State and development in Southern Africa’ compares Botswana and Mauritius, which she regards as DSs, with Angola, Malawi and Zambia on the basis of the kind of state intervention that is conducive to the promotion of development in these countries. Citing the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and other indices of successful development as some of the measures for assessing such state intervention, Osei-Hwedie concludes that “for Angola, Malawi and Zambia to be DSs, they have to adopt fully-fledged democratic state structures, which are legitimate and popularly accepted by society as in Botswana and Mauritius”. Her views about whether Botswana qualifies as a DS include other factors hitherto excluded from definitions of a DS, as discussed in paragraph 6.2 below.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, South Africa is not listed as a DS by Osei-Hwedie.

Another dilemma facing Africa in terms of articulating its views on the DS is that, as Mkandawire puts it, “...there is no template for a DS” (Mkandawire, SAFM, 05/06/08). In many respects, it is unclear whether a common view exists on what exactly such a state entails, which would assist in assessing its implications for the role of public administration in such a state. A further challenge in relation to the relevance of the DS to Africa is how far - if at all - the current efforts of the African Union (AU) to promote development and the ‘African Century’, especially through the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development) are related to the DS. As its name suggests, the APRM is the AU’s instrument for reviewing the performance and development of its member states, which has a potential to promote the ideals of a DS if this can be deliberately included in the APRM. Such ideals include those articulated below. Clearly, the question of the DS needs to be discussed widely in Africa, especially through continental bodies such as the recently established Pan-African Parliament (PAP). Referring to NEPAD in particular, Mutahaba argues that “African public services can only contribute meaningfully to the realisation of [its] goals if they are conceived, designed and implemented by Africans (Mutahaba 2004: 16). This means that for the idea of a DS or DDS to be fully embraced in Africa it has to be interrogated by Africans, and they must take ownership of its implementation.<sup>16</sup>

Mkandawire adds that the characteristics of a DS include a co-ordinating authority, a state to persuade different stakeholders about the ‘desirable economic path to be taken’, and the building of human capacity. All these issues should serve as a basis for discussing the idea of the DS through the PAP, whose vision statement states that it “...has a long-term perspective of a pan-African parliamentary institution that will provide a common platform for African people to participate fully in the decision-making processes for the political and socio-economic development and integration of the continent” (PAP 2004: 54). As Mbabazi and Taylor (2005: 1) observe, the DS might be “one of the most urgent tasks facing the continent.”<sup>17</sup>

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16 This author contends that the debate on the DS or DDS cannot exclude the role of regional and continental bodies as their (possible) involvement in such a state raises an interesting but not irrelevant idea that might complicate the idea of a DS in terms of the difficulty of creating regional or continental consensus on the DS, which is arguably a strong underlying impetus for the existence of NEPAD and the APRM. At issue here could be the specific roles of such bodies in constraining or channelling efforts towards the creation of DDSs in Africa.

17 Perhaps this is where the PAP and similar structures could serve as ‘co-ordinating authority’ to ensure that this matter is tackled systematically. Using Mkandawire’s notion of ‘co-ordinating authority’ as played by an agency such as the Japanese MITI, even though such co-ordination can only be possible within a single state, is feasible if the PAP (a multilateral continental parliamentary body not coterminous with a single state) might kick off the initial discussions on the need for a DS and thus play a ‘co-ordinating role’ (like Japan’s MITI) within the different African countries. This is particularly so if one assumes that a DS can only be created at the level of a nation state rather than as a continental or supranational entity.

Despite these challenges, and based on the different conceptual models used by many scholars in the literature on this topic, the paper identifies a very broad template emanating from the different conceptions that suggest some level of consensus among scholars on some of the key aspects or characteristics of a DS in Africa. These characteristics would be ideal for African states to overcome their intractable developmental challenges, which a traditional neoliberal/post-colonial state has been unable to overcome. Drawing from these various conceptual models, notwithstanding scholars' disagreements on a common template, a working model of a DS (and, by extension, DDS) has the following characteristics:

It is a democratic state (in a formal and substantive sense and as defined by Lijphart, 1984) and pro-actively seeks to address the many challenges originating from Africa's colonial legacy; is pro-poor and interventionist, ie relies on state-led macro-economic planning and state resources to address poverty; has ideological underpinnings that are developmental as it seeks to deploy its administrative and political resources to economic development; presents a powerful alternative to liberal democracy and neo-classical accounts of the political economy of growth; is stable, enjoys relative popular support, with a substantive role played by citizens and civil society in electing public representatives and making meaningful inputs into policy and decision making.

## 5. EXAMPLES OF DEVELOPMENTAL STATES IN AFRICA

It is assumed that Africa has a desire to build DSs in order to address its developmental challenges. The definition and template of a DS, which might be regarded as containing the fundamental features of a DS, includes the characteristics described in the preceding section.

A comparative overview of the three countries frequently cited as DSs in Africa may help to highlight their similarities and differences, thereby indicating common features among DSs in Africa.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> In their comparative study on Botswana and Uganda, Mbabazi and Taylor (2005: 8) found that the latter "... has made tremendous strides over the recent past and by the dawn of the new millennium it could well be considered an emerging economy. With a remarkable average annual growth rate for the last few years, it would seem that Uganda has adopted astonishing post-conflict recovery and turnaround strategies that might ensure that it remains on a sustainable developmental trajectory.

Figure 1: Comparative overview of Botswana, Mauritius and South Africa<sup>19</sup>

Botswana	Mauritius	South Africa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the world's best economic growth rates; surpassed that of Mauritius and the Asian tigers</li> <li>• Fastest economic growth rates in the 1980s (10%)</li> <li>• Small population but large resource base with per capita income of \$5,367.18</li> <li>• Diamond revenues managed carefully - mining revenues account for 50% of GDP</li> <li>• Liberalised economy boosted by stable, democratic system</li> <li>• Political and bureaucratic elite committed to development and realistic foreign exchange, fiscal and monetary policies</li> <li>• Beef exports have given government additional revenue for developmental programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has one of the most successful economies in Africa</li> <li>• Modelled development along East Asian export-led terms</li> <li>• High GDP per capita (5.3 yearly average) compared to 0.09% of SSA</li> <li>• 3 important success factors: pro-growth economic policies; self-induced SAP from 1980-1986; pre-conditions for sustained export-led growth</li> <li>• Liberalised economy including devaluation of its currency (Mauritian rupee)</li> <li>• High demand for Mauritian exports in developed countries</li> <li>• Availability of cheap labour intensive, which benefited government's labour intensive, export-oriented strategic development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State intervention in society and the economy to ensure the "common good"</li> <li>• Upgrading public service skills</li> <li>• Development is about improving quality of life... about equity and justice</li> <li>• Development entails a growing economy in which redistribution is a critical element</li> <li>• The state role is also to ensure democracy and popular participation</li> <li>• Importance of democracy, justice and human rights</li> <li>• 'Strong state' with "intellectual resources to plan, monitor, and stimulate high growth"</li> <li>• Mobilises and deploys capital into sectors unattractive to private industry</li> <li>• Challenges of poverty, high unemployment, and HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>

Source: Botswana, Mauritius: Osei-Hwedie (2004). South Africa: Fraser-Moleketi (2004); Cosatu (2005); Southall (2006).

<sup>19</sup> These are merely comparative features or characteristics of the three countries concerned, but they can be regarded as features of a DS in the African context.



## 5.1 The Case of Botswana

From a country that was “incredibly underdeveloped” at independence (Taylor 2002: 7), Botswana is frequently cited as an example of an African DS owing to its impressive economic growth, relatively low levels of corruption and crime, political stability and efficient public bureaucracy.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the UNDP states that Botswana “...has a very low debt of \$0.7 billion, with debt servicing accounting for four percent of exports and enormous foreign reserves. Botswana has a relatively small population but large resource base with a per capita income of \$ 5,367” (Osei-Hwedie 2001, citing UNDP 1997). In terms of the characteristics cited, it is not clear how far small population size or low debt ratio can change a country into a DS, but it may be surmised that these criteria might serve as indirect support for such a state to flourish. For if low debt and small population alone were the only criteria used to determine a country’s suitability to being a DS, this would probably mean that many indebted countries on the continent with populations larger than that of Botswana would not qualify to become developmental states.

Another key characteristic is the extent to which a country succeeds in reducing extreme social inequalities and abject poverty among its citizens, eg through the channelling of resources towards the improvement of citizens’ quality of life, capabilities, and freedoms. If this is the other core element against which a country should be measured when gauging the extent to which it is a DS, then Botswana might be a pertinent example as observers argue that “... it is not only the country’s economic growth that is impressive” (Taylor 2002: 3). In fact, economic growth in itself, including measures such as GDP per capita, might not be a useful tool for assessing a country’s development levels or serve as an indicator for a DS. If anything, it might mask the levels of inequality in a country and therefore it has to be acknowledged that a country’s social and human indicators, rather than its economic performance, should also be examined to determine the extent to which it might fit the above model of a DS.<sup>21</sup>

An analysis of Botswana’s public administration suggests that it followed the traditional post-colonial route of other Anglophone countries, though with specific local patterns. Its civil service developed from the colonial model of the British who ruled the country until it

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<sup>20</sup> Frequently cited examples of African developmental states are Botswana and South Africa, Mauritius (Osei-Hwedie 2001) and Uganda (Lange 2008).

<sup>21</sup> Taylor cites the following (UNDP 2000) statistics to support this claim, adding that: “[a]t the developmental level, Botswana has achieved a great deal: income poverty rates fell from 59% in 1986 to 47% in 1994; real per capita income increased about ten-fold between 1966 and 1999; the primary school enrolment rate went from 50% in 1966 to 97% in 1999; adult literacy rates improved from 41% in 1970 to over 79% in 1999; the mortality rate of children under the age of five dropped from 151 per 1 000 live births in 1971 to 56 in 1991; the infant mortality rate fell from 108 deaths per thousand live births in 1966 to 38 in 1999; malnutrition among children under the age of five declined from 25% in 1978 to less than 13% in 1966.”

attained its independence in 1966. Initially, its civil service was dominated by expatriate (mostly British) officials in its top positions and locals in the lowest positions. However, with independence the civil service changed, “ ... not only from a law-and-order pattern to a nationally oriented service, but also from a service controlled by whites to an indigenous-based one ... it had to be transformed to face the daunting tasks of maintaining law and order, and of realising the development objectives of the incoming nationalist government in Botswana. (Mfundisi, in Edge and Lekorwe 1998:163-4).

The structural features and performance effectiveness of this country’s public service apparently assumed a developmental character gradually as the country began to confront the many challenges it encountered in a bid to improve its citizens’ lives. The country also had the added advantage of “an abundance of natural resources such as diamonds or cattle” (Taylor 2002: 4) which, while not entirely explaining Botswana’s developmental record, nevertheless formed the bedrock of the country’s admirable development trajectory. Botswana’s gradual development into a DS “... may be accounted for by the powerful sway of rural exporters, strategically situated at the highest levels of the state and bureaucracy, who have influenced economic policy” (Taylor 2002: 4). Before South Africa’s first democratic post-apartheid elections in 1994, many analysts viewed Botswana as a shining light of democracy in Africa.<sup>22</sup> According to Osei-Hwedie (2001), Botswana’s remarkable development has many hallmarks of a DS, such as having “... one of the world’s best rates of economic growth, surpassing that of Mauritius, Korea and other Asian tigers - the newly industrializing countries (NICs).” During the 1980s it had “the fastest economic growth rate in the world, with an average of 10 percent, despite six years of drought that affected the cattle industry”, (Osei-Hwedie 2001, citing Laishley 1992).

Botswana’s impressive economic record makes the country attractive to foreign investment. As Osei-Hwedie (2001) explains, “The current economic prosperity of Botswana contrasts sharply with the situation at independence, when the state was viewed by most analysts as a very poor country dependent on foreign grants to finance its budget (citing Laishley 1992). The transformation of Botswana from a poor agricultural country to a buoyant thriving economy makes it a developmental state, but this was achieved when “... leading elements of the bureaucracy ... [created] a dynamic interaction between the various (cross-cutting) groups that stimulated policies favourable to the elites themselves but had the important knock-on effect of stimulating structural development as part of a “national”

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<sup>22</sup> Arguably, the pendulum continually swings to and fro between Botswana and South Africa, with some observers claiming that the former retains this status, whereas others argue that the latter has overtaken Botswana in this regard.

project” (Taylor 2002: 10). However, this does not imply that Botswana has solved its problem of poverty entirely. Despite these positive characteristics, Botswana has also been seen as a country with deep and increasing levels of poverty and income disparities between rich and poor, which suggests that the country’s diamond and cattle wealth has not ‘trickled down’ to the rest of the population (see Good 1992, 1993). Moreover, while the country is commonly cited as an example of successful multi-partyism in Africa, in essence Botswana has had a one-party dominant system with the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) at the helm since independence in 1966.<sup>23</sup> Looked at from this angle, it might be argued that Botswana struggles to qualify as a DS, but the country has a potential to address these challenges.

## 5.2 The Case of Mauritius

Of the three examples described in Box 1 earlier, the small island nation of Mauritius is the only country that is not part of the mainland, although this alone does not give it any additional advantages over other countries that are on the mainland. This distance from the mainland may in fact be one of its advantages and may have promoted its remarkable economic and development success. As one observer notes, Mauritius is “a very successful small state which is one of the African states that have managed important reform programmes over 20 years” (Herbst 2005: 10). Like Botswana, as Sindzingre puts it, it has “...displayed certain developmental features, e.g., the combination of effective institutions with original compromises between interest groups” (Sindzingre 2004: 5). From an economy that was “mainly agricultural with few manufacturing outlets”, to one that was boldly liberalised to enable the country to educate its labour force, benefit from favourable international conditions, and build an autonomous efficient bureaucracy, in short “the key ingredients of a successful developmental state” (ISS 2009, online), the country has gradually built its economy and evolved into what many regard as a DS.

As an African country with one of the “...most impressive track records vis-à-vis growth and economic progress” (Mbabazi 2005: 54), Mauritius certainly provides a few lessons from which the continent might learn. One of these is being able to attract significant foreign investment as well as diversifying into a wide variety of products to promote development (Herbst 2005: 11). It is also a stable country with a relatively functional civil service that has arguably contributed to its admirable developmental record. Over the years, Mauritius has

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<sup>23</sup> Taylor states that this resulted in “... the recruitment of senior civil servants directly not just into the ruling party politics but into senior state positions” (citing Charton 1991: 283).

developed a highly complex but effective and efficient public administration, with civil servants "... endowed in sufficient numbers with firm commitment to implement the governmental programme" (Joypaul 2001: 5). The country's current public administration benefited from a mixture of French, Dutch and British civil service traditions, which influenced its institutions during the colonial era and which have since strengthened its structures. Its cadre of civil servants is widely regarded to have highly skilled individuals, whom the country gradually developed from as early as the 1960s. "They hailed from various socio-cultural backgrounds but had imbibed the classical civil service ethos, which would enable them to work with an 'esprit de corps' to tackle the problems which the country faced" (Joypaul 2001: 5). Perhaps the character and quality of the country's public administration contributed immensely to its contemporary impressive economic growth, development track record and image as a DS.

However, development involves much more than economic growth; other factors clearly have been at play, as explained by Osei-Hwedie (2004). In spite of problems that the country has faced in recent years, including "low economic growth, high unemployment, widening fiscal and external deficits, and excessive public debt" (ISS 2009, online), Mauritius has been praised for its "farsighted government policies [which] are turning Mauritius into a 'cyber island'" (PAP 2004: 79) through information and communication technologies, among others. In this regard, Mauritius qualifies to be regarded as a DS, as most of the criteria for a DS (e.g. democracy, being pro-active in addressing poverty, being pro-poor and interventionist, and pursuing state-led macro-economic planning) are present in this country.

### 5.3 The case of South Africa

Recently, some South African analysts and public officials in various forums have been examining the role of the state in the formal sector as well as whether "South Africa could currently be considered to be a developmental state, what the main challenges in the present system are and how these might be addressed" (Turok 2008: 20).<sup>24</sup> But it would seem that one challenge these individuals face is to reach consensus on the concept of the DS. In his article, "Can South Africa be a developmental state?" Southall (2006: xxvii) argues that "...the difficulty is that first, the term 'developmental state' means different things to different people, and second, as South Africa's labour movement (Cosatu 2005) observes, it

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24 Recent pronouncements by the political leadership in South Africa also suggest that the country is a DS. In 2006, Trevor Manuel, former Finance Minister, insisted that the country is a DS which aims for "...the removal of poverty and tyranny, the expansion of economic opportunities and extension of [public] services to the poor" (Maserumule 2007: 214). These sentiments have since been supported by other public representatives and public servants in different public pronouncements.

is ‘used without much investigation of its intellectual origins or significance in international development theory’”. It has been noted that “[r]esearch on the weakness of the African states, as it has been conducted, for example, by Goran Hyden, Jean-Francois Bayart or Chabal/Daloz, usually excludes the case of South Africa from any general observation because of its size and unique institutional history” (Asendorpf 2000: 273-274). Yet, despite this apparent uniqueness, almost a decade and a half after the demise of apartheid, South Africa cannot be excluded from an analysis of the continent’s development performance because of its ongoing struggles with widespread poverty, inequalities and other factors which it shares with the rest of Africa.

Arguably, the ruling ANC has adopted developmental strategies as the basis upon which service delivery rests in the country’s ‘Two Economies’ approach, which is also a characteristic of the country’s development policy.<sup>25</sup> This approach states that “...economic activity in South Africa can be distinguished by two economies, one well off, the other poor; one predominantly White, the other predominantly Black; one experiencing growth, the other existing in poverty...” (Naidoo 2006: 484, citing then President Mbeki, 2004 State of the Nation Address).<sup>26</sup> This argument largely informs South Africa’s understanding of a DS: building the capacity of the state; maintaining a strategic role for the state in shaping the key sectors of the economy; strengthening the role of state-owned enterprises and development finance institutions (ANC 52<sup>nd</sup> National Conference 2007, online). According to Nzewi and Kuye (2007: 202), as a DS South Africa “... should continue to pursue interventionist approaches in the area of the economy.” While this view might appear to be prescriptive, it refers specifically to government spending extensively on social development and poverty alleviation, but the debate can be extended to cover issues of capacity building and development including training, research and allocation of relevant resources in the economy.

Another challenge to building a DS in South Africa is the country’s wide discrepancies in terms of income and wealth, similar to those in Latin America. Friedman and Le Pere (1996: 5) argue that Brazil, like South Africa, is attempting to “...grow amid severe inequalities which threaten its economic and political prospects. In both countries, race plays an important role in the allocation of income and opportunity. And in both, democratization must contend with the very real prospect that political and economic change will only

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25 In fact, South Africa’s development policy is far complex as it incorporates numerous factors in its multi-pronged approach, which includes rural and urban development, economic empowerment of previously disadvantaged individuals in small, medium and macro enterprises (SMMEs) and seeks to ensure that women, youth, people with disability, minorities and workers across all sectors are also covered by the policy.

26 Circumstantial evidence suggests that Black South Africans generally agreed with him, but this is one of Mbeki’s quotations, for which opposition parties once accused him of pursuing a ‘racial agenda’ in government policy.

benefit a section of the society, leaving millions of citizens largely untouched.” It is in this regard that some commentators stress the need for a democratic DS as a realistic and sustainable measure of addressing these developmental challenges.

In the late 1990s, the South African government released a report in which the policy-making and service delivery challenges of poverty, landlessness and joblessness were acknowledged:

Current standards of service delivery satisfy neither the public nor the officials who aspire to serve them. This is hardly surprising, given the problems faced by the new government when it took office in 1994 (Presidential Review Commission, 1998:22).

Since 1994, South Africa has done much to deal with the challenges of service delivery, e.g. through the government’s then flagship economic programme, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). At that time, the document asserted that “(t)he democratic government must play a leading role in building an economy which offers to all South Africans the opportunity to contribute productively. All job creation programmes should cater particularly for women and youth...[and] include representatives from women’s and youth organisations” (RDP 1994:18). While the government has been accused from several quarters of deviating from this pro-poor economic strategy in favour of the Growth, Employment and Distribution (GEAR) policy, its perspective is that much has been done to deal with the backlogs of more than half a century of apartheid inequalities, although it will probably take even more years to remove them. The sporadic protests that continually erupt in many South African communities can be seen as an indication of anger at the lack of service delivery in these communities. While Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) programmes aim to reduce the inequality gap among the racial groups, popular sentiment is that these are not far-reaching and have benefited only a few, possibly politically connected, black elites.

In the opinion of some analysts, South Africa is ‘experimenting’ with the concept of a developmental state to achieve social and economic goals, although they seem to differ on how far the country can be said to have gone in creating a DS (Maserumule 2007: 213). The country’s leaders regularly make public pronouncements on the question of the DS.<sup>27</sup> Others

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<sup>27</sup> The then Finance Minister, Trevor Manuel, cited in Maserumule (2007: 214); Fraser-Moleketi (2004).

have argued that the debate needs to be broadened to include alternative views beyond mainstream national politics (Maphunye 2008b).

The greatest challenge to Africa's development is seemingly the nature of the state and, by extension, its public bureaucracy, as Moss aptly explains. He argues that "...the state in Africa was all too frequently not acting like a state it is supposed to. This is undoubtedly partly because the idea of the 'state' itself is a European construct and African states are mostly inherited colonial holdovers. Thus, many political scientists refer to them as 'quasi-states', 'suspended states', 'collapsed states', 'imported states', 'shadow states', and even 'disconnected states'" (Moss, 2007: 96). In the case of South Africa, much progress has been registered in integrating the formerly disparate parts of the previously racially classified public service and administration entities. Such public administration entities were not only racially categorised, but also male-dominated; they were also inefficient, untrained and not developmental in a sense that there were no coherent development strategies that sought to benefit all the country's citizens. This is despite the many challenges that the country has encountered in the process.<sup>28</sup>

Since 1994, however, the post-apartheid system gradually developed and transformed the public service into one that would implement non-racial policies and focus on developmental outcomes. In terms of the sheer volume of these policies, as well as their objectives, namely, to address the challenges of the apartheid era, it could be argued that South Africa is a DS and has embarked upon the slow path of creating a developmental public service. Its public service, which used to be an instrument of repression against the majority black population, was also divided along racial and ethnic lines during the apartheid era. The country has undergone fundamental transformation which has essentially unified all the formerly disparate public administration divisions.

While South Africa's major challenge has essentially been (lack of) implementation, the country has slowly and gradually been set on the road towards systematic and strategic development that is not based on racial development patterns. Overall, despite the different scholars' perspectives on whether or not South Africa is a DS, the country can be regarded as a DS that is currently striving towards the ideal of a DDS. It has attempted to deal with the

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<sup>28</sup> These challenges include corruption in some departments (e.g. several media and other reports frequently refer to the illegal sale of national identity documents, drivers' licences or creation of 'ghosts' or fraudulent beneficiaries of state social security grants), shortage of skills, and the fact that in some cases public servants are known to deliberately stall service delivery through red tape or over-reliance on bureaucratic rules and procedures.

myriad of socio-economic and political challenges emanating mostly from the apartheid legacy, with mixed results in some instances, but it has without doubt developed remarkable developmental policies, programmes and legislation to address these challenges over a relatively short period of less than two decades since the demise of apartheid in 1994. Observers view South Africa as being “... the most powerful and influential liberal democracy on the continent and [that] its constitution is in some respects one of the most liberal in the world,” (Diamond and Plattner 1999: xiv). The country is gradually becoming a DS which has the potential to become a DDS in terms of the characteristics outlined earlier. Overall, the fact that the issue of the DS often features very predominantly in South African public discourse<sup>29</sup> might be seen as a strong indicator of preference for such a state in the country and elsewhere in the continent.

#### 5.4 The Case of Uganda

Uganda’s situation appears to be similar enough in several ways to that of the three countries discussed as to warrant inclusion into the category of African DSs. But Uganda’s progress to its current position has taken a different route in a sense that it emerged from a bitter and protracted civil war, after which a military leader (Yoweri Museveni) took over the reins of power and gradually returned the country to civilian rule. By observers’ accounts,<sup>30</sup> the country has certainly progressed remarkably from the time Museveni took over a war-ravaged, politically unstable and economically ruined country. However, it would appear that the need to appease the former warring factions and forces resulted in the creation of a state that had to accommodate patronage, Uganda’s policy of co-opting former rebel opponents, which created a burgeoning, expensive military and bureaucratic establishment. This eventually led to a situation in which several sections of the population are experiencing economic hardships and in which “Middle class workers and farmers were struggling just to provide for their families. Government workers were sometimes unpaid, and many civil servants found it necessary to hold more than one job.”<sup>31</sup> However, as in the case of South Africa and Botswana, these challenges do not mean that Uganda does not qualify as a DS, as the country has also adopted developmental policies and programmes.

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<sup>29</sup> Diphofa (2004)

<sup>30</sup> Library of Congress, online, [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCIDD+ug0050\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCIDD+ug0050)).

<sup>31</sup> Library of Congress, online, [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCIDD+ug0050\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCIDD+ug0050)).



## 6. AN ANALYSIS OF THE CASE STUDIES PRESENTED

The material presented above is intended to indicate differences of opinion between scholars who agree and those who disagree with the fact that South Africa is a DS. The key characteristics of a developmental public service and administration suitable for a DDS are that such administration must be capable of successfully carrying out the mandate of a DS, i.e. to implement developmental policies that significantly reduce poverty and unemployment, as well as social inequalities. Such an administration is, among others, efficient and effective, accessible to civil society and community structures, and able to make critical input into the policy and decision-making processes, without resorting to red tape, rhetoric or official jargon to hide incompetence. The defining characteristics of a developmental public service and administration are professionalism, experience, efficiency and effectiveness, accountability, transparency, as well as the timely delivery of quality public services to the citizenry.

In the three case studies, an attempt was made to indicate how the respective administrations and public service institutions of these countries complement or detract from the overall ideal of a DDS, and how these could lead to its attainment. The four countries presented as examples in this paper (including Uganda) are an interesting mix but in many ways conform to the conceptual model of a DS as discussed in this paper. The developmental policies adopted by these countries, the relatively efficient and effective public administrations, their admirable (at least by African standards) development and economic trajectories or growth records, as well as their fairly stable and peaceful political conditions, are a case in point. In the cases of Botswana, Mauritius and South Africa in particular, a strong case can be made for the categorisation of these countries into DSs. The main reason for this position is the comparatively strong institutional frameworks and democratic traditions that have generally seen the three countries being cited as best case examples of democracy in Africa, despite the challenges they continue to face in the consolidation of democracy and the development of public bureaucracies capable of sustaining the momentum of developmental programmes undertaken by the state.

Botswana and South Africa may not be perfect examples of DSs in Africa, given the challenges of glaring social and economic wealth inequalities they both confront - South Africa, because of its apartheid legacy which resulted in its current inequalities between blacks and whites, and Botswana because of the fact that sections of its population, notably Basarwa (indigenous communities of Khoi-San descent), do not seem to enjoy the country's

internationally acclaimed wealth from diamonds and cattle.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps South Africa faces another challenge of having deviated from the participatory and egalitarian ideals of its flagship post-apartheid Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which was highly regarded as a pertinent blueprint for addressing the country's poverty, unemployment and other socio-economic challenges, in favour of the macro-economic GEAR programme. Unlike the RDP, there has been widespread criticism of GEAR in local discourse, and it is possible that the policy shift from RDP to GEAR might have undermined the country's developmental approach. Unlike Mauritius, which has "seen an alternation of the party in power" (Diamond and Plattner 1999: x), both Botswana's and South Africa's political parties still have to taste defeat at the polls owing to their one-party dominant democratic systems.<sup>33</sup> However, in several ways these two countries can be regarded as DSs as they have embarked upon developmental programmes, have interventionist leaders, and have adopted policies that promote the creation of DSs.

The foregoing outline of current views and debates and literature on the DS in Africa has attempted to provide a conceptual overview on the topic. The next sections will discuss public sector capacity-building institutions, the role of public bureaucracy in the delivery of public services, and the "politics-administration interface" as they relate to the concept of a DS.

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32 In terms of the public service, Southall has argued that South Africa would have to "... confront major deficiencies in its capacity, notably those resulting from the skewed human resource patterns inherited from its racialised past" (Southall 2005: xviii). For a closer analysis of Botswana's socio-economic challenges, see Good, K. (1992) Interpreting the exceptionality of Botswana, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 30 No.1, pp 69-95; and (1993), At the ends of the ladder: radical inequalities in Botswana, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp 203-30.

33 The fact that South Africa and Botswana both have one-party-dominant systems may not undermine their claim to being developmental states. But their current challenges in terms of addressing social inequalities might certainly stand in their way towards being regarded as democratic developmental states.

## 7. PUBLIC SECTOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR A DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

Public sector capacity-building institutions in Africa, especially those that deal with training, capacity development, human resource development and management issues, are critical to effective and efficient service delivery (see Appendix 1). Such institutions play a fundamental role in public sector post-conflict reconstruction in parts of the continent such as the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Horn of Africa and other parts of the Great lakes region. In the case of 'failed states' (Edigheji 2005) or those experiencing civil war and internecine conflict, especially Somalia, these institutions can help Africa to develop strategies to assist countries in their post-conflict recovery periods. This is particularly the case in view of the contention that "...sustainable development is dependent upon government institutions, which are committed to promoting intergovernmental relations and cooperation by focusing on aspects relating to institutional capacity building" (Malan, in Van Rooyen 2004: 570, citing Fox and Van Rooyen 2004: 109).

African public sector capacity-building institutions such as the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD), African Management Development Institutes' Network (AMDIN), Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA, formerly SAMDI) and ESAMI (Eastern and Southern African Management Institute) arguably play a strategic role in building public sector capacity, in a similar manner to CLAD (Latin American Centre for Development Administration), OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) in Europe or the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) dialogue forum. Skills that public officials gain from these institutions may help them to contribute meaningfully to the agenda for a DS in Africa. The ESAMI website states that its vision is "to be a leader in knowledge creation and dissemination and a referral center on issues of management and governance in Africa", and that its mission is to undertake "relevant and highly focused research to be used for evidence-based policy formulation addressing African development challenges" (ESAMI). AMDIN is another association with the potential to play a critical role in the training and development of African public or civil servants, and in incorporating the idea of a DDS into its programmes.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> The AMDIN website ([www.amdin.org](http://www.amdin.org)) states that it "was established in 2002 by a network of Management Development Institutes (MDIs) from across the continent through an initiative of the Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF)" and lists thirteen continental associations as its members (<http://www.esami-africa.org/training.php?id=79>).

The existence and activities of such institutions in Africa brings a number of advantages to the continent. First, they have started the process of skills improvement and local initiatives to reverse the 'brain drain' and skills shortages that undermine the continent's efforts. In essence, this means they will have to fill the glaring gap of institutions that are dedicated to addressing public capacity needs among African states. Secondly, the work of such institutions gives Africans hope that they will not always have to rely on foreign training and capacity development institutions.<sup>35</sup> A major challenge for African public sector capacity-building institutions is to ensure that their various training and other initiatives are strategically linked and create synergies. These institutions are critical to the practical implementation of DDSs across the continent.

African public sector capacity-building institutions themselves need to be capacitated through coherent and strategic links with research institutes, local universities, relevant intellectuals and think-tanks such as the Morocco based CAFRAD, South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF) and Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), and the African Development Bank (ADB). Such institutions can contribute significantly to shaping the current continental debates on the DS and advise the continent on the creation of a developmental public service and administration. For instance, data from a 2005 continental survey on public sector human resource management (HRM) highlighted some of the key challenges African countries face. Among other issues, it examined the profile of the public or civil service; the legal and policy context regulating human resource management; issues pertaining to payments, compensation and benefits, and general working conditions; training and development; performance management; and other challenges facing public sector HRM in the continent.<sup>36</sup>

This section sought to highlight the possible role of public sector capacity-building institutions in the creation of DDSs. However, a comparative analysis of the three case studies presented above did not specifically cover these institutions, but the section intended to highlight the importance of the human resource and capacity opportunities that these institutions might have for addressing some of the challenges faced by African countries in their quest to build developmental states.

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<sup>35</sup> At a conference in Addis Ababa (2005), some senior public servants were hopeful about such institutions.

<sup>36</sup> Participation in the survey was limited - only 10 of the 53 African countries responded. These were Algeria, Mauritius, Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Rwanda, Kenya, Central African Republic, South Africa, Morocco, Zimbabwe (Source: HSRC, 2005, The Policy Brief on Public Sector Restructuring and Human Resource Management in Africa). Nevertheless, the survey showed that much work needs to be done on the capacity of the state if Africa is to create DDSs. The list of countries included in this survey shows a relative mix across almost all regions of the continent, including two island nations. However, many West African countries, especially Nigeria, did not take part, and further study is therefore needed on the missing countries before a conclusive picture can be developed about the state of public sector capacity in Africa.

## 7. CHALLENGES FOR A DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATE IN AFRICA<sup>37</sup>

### 7.1. The Politics-Administration interface in a Democratic Developmental State in Africa

The relationships between elected officials and those appointed as civil or public servants, also known as the “politics-administration interface”, is an issue that frequently warrants critical examination through systematic research or policy analysis, as it often affects a government’s tenure. In many instances, the relationships between politicians and public/civil servants in Africa are often strained or characterised by tension, which has made this issue both an interesting research topic as well as a matter of amusement among scholars and public sector advisors alike, although the relationship is sometimes shrouded in mystery and secrecy. In an attempt to understand power dynamics amongst them, many researchers and political analysts are usually curious about the nature of the relationship between a country’s top public/civil servants (permanent secretaries or directors-general) and the relevant ministers, who are usually the political heads of department to whom the PSs or DGs report. One observer has argued that “...African [permanent secretaries] experience considerable role ambiguity and ambivalence due to conflicting and contradictory expectations of their office, but more so due to the mismatch between the original ideals governing the office and the political context that works against these ideals” (Lungu 1997: 5).<sup>38</sup>

In the Westminster system a politician, as the elected politically appointed official, would be expected to focus mostly on policy-related and overtly political matters in a department or ministry, and delegate administrative and bureaucratic responsibilities to the non-elected public administrator in what might be termed political neutrality. In fact, “[p]olitical neutrality in itself is a controversial (and value laden) concept, especially when applied to the developing countries in Africa. For instance, in countries such as Botswana (and other Commonwealth African countries), it would appear that political ‘neutrality’ does

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<sup>37</sup> It is acknowledged that these challenges will also affect other types of state, not only the DS. However, these challenges are being raised here with the aim of highlighting the fact that even the DDS will have to deal with such challenges, though their effect will differ from state to state.

<sup>38</sup> The paradigm adopted here is that of a critique of both the traditional Weberian, Western, neo-liberal perspective of a civil service as well as to expose contradictions between politicians and bureaucrats. The author believes that a DDS in Africa should not be an entity modelled along the lines of a traditional Western neo-liberal entity, given the latter’s failure to help African states to overcome their developmental problems over the past few decades.

not always prevail within the civil service - particularly when applied to the ruling party” (Maphunye 2001). According to Aberbach, there are no significant political or lifestyle differences between politicians and bureaucrats but “...the two groups are likely to place somewhat different issues on the public agenda, for issues arise for them in somewhat different ways” (Aberbach 1981: 13). The challenge for the DS idea in Africa may relate to what Aberbach calls “civil service conservatism”, which may slow the pace of development and thus reduce the desired advance towards developmental goals. Another factor is the traditional “hierarchical nature of the [modern, Western] administrative structure”, which may undermine the ‘soft issues’ such as the Southern African concept of *Ubuntu*<sup>39</sup> as well as African community norms and values of informal access by ordinary members of society to public officials and political office bearers. Such norms and values can be inimical to colonially-derived bureaucratic cultures that may create a barrier between the public and government officials as they have to make appointments, write letters and make calls before they can gain access to these public figures.<sup>40</sup>

The fact that many African countries have what may be termed ‘a politicised bureaucracy’ might be a worrying factor for the ideal DDS. In a Weberian type public service model, this might be a fair point of criticism. However, a developmental public administration is not, by extension, a Weberian institution, as this model will be transformed once a DDS is created. Yet, the present features of Africa’s public administration have striking resemblances to a Weberian model simply because of the colonial legacy in many African countries, although this does not suggest that the traditional Weberian model should be retained. In contrast, transformation of the state will of necessity require that of the administration. Thus, it is assumed that a DDS will be different from a traditional liberal or neo-liberal state, which requires public administration that conforms to the requirements of such a state. This will mean seeking a new or innovative replacement model which does not exist presently and which requires the collective wisdom of all Africans to design, as it will affect the whole continent.

This innovative model also has to deal with the issue of politicisation, which can take the form of the executive deciding unilaterally on issues such as appointments, transfers and promotions (Maphunye 2001). Such duties must be undertaken by relevant civil servants or

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<sup>39</sup> The African philosophy of treating neighbours and strangers with respect and a peaceful approach to conflict or divergent opinions is common to many countries in the continent.

<sup>40</sup> Reference to a Weberian bureaucracy here and in the rest of the paper does not imply uncritical support for the idea of a Weberian bureaucracy. On the contrary, a new model has to be created to suit the ideal democratic developmental state, but this model will not destroy the foundation built by the former model where this has proved effective and efficient.

public service institutions with expertise and experience to deal with such matters. Where the appointment of officials to public office is concerned, observers have argued that “[i]ndependent staffing is necessary because experience has demonstrated that ministerial involvement [in the hiring and firing] invites ministers to think of the public service as an instrument in the service of partisan government” (Aucoin 1997: 24). This is not to imply that public administration in a DDS will be a neo-liberal or Weberian institution. The point is acknowledged that, while scholars are pushing for African countries to abandon the neoliberal state model inherited from their Western colonial masters, which does not serve their needs effectively, it would be unwise for them to uncritically adopt a typical rigid Western-style Weberian public administration model without modifications.

It is equally acknowledged that a uniquely African replacement model will essentially be determined by the realities of the policy choices of the DS model a country adopts. Thus, in attempts to build a DDS, African countries would be unwise to ignore the “...fundamental ideal of a non-partisan, professional public service as a pre-requisite to government...” (Aucoin, p.23). In some African states, there has not been a clear distinction between a non-partisan, professional public/civil service and one that is ‘politically inclined’ because the ecology of public administration is essentially political. It is perhaps with this in mind that some countries, notably in the West, have increasingly looked to NPM for answers and Lægreid (2000: 880) states that NPM “...envisages a public sector organised more along the lines of the private sector, and a civil service whose leaders have greater flexibility and more opportunity to exercise discretion.” This idea might be acceptable in many countries; but in Africa organising the public sector along private lines may not be a sustainable solution because of the lack of affordability by the majority population, which is usually poor and unemployed.

As Batley (2004: 35) notes, “...there is no such a clear distinction between the bureaucratic and public arena. In weaker political economies, particularly ... [in some African countries], the bureaucratic arena itself is highly politicised and interconnected with social interests; it is where power employment and patronage are concentrated. So the stakes are high.” This is equally a thorny problem that the DDS will have to address, especially patronage, which often undermines public service motivation, and public morale and participation in development programmes. A related challenge in this regard is that of the quality of political leadership, as well as the fact that in some African countries “The civil service ... was mostly about creating jobs and controlling access to state favours” (Moss 2007: 95), which presents a dilemma for African nation states. It has been stated that “...[m]ost

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governments in poor [African] nations are not only captured by corrupt elites with a poor history of non-fulfilment of their promises, lacking legitimacy in the eyes of their citizenry, but they are also locked in conflicts that consume their energies and resources” (Umar and Kuye 2006: 816, citing Grindle 2004: 539). In many African countries, the road to power and privilege is often directly linked to access to economic resources through this network of social interests. This tends to impede the development of an efficient, effective and less corrupt public/civil service and administration. Such observations are not an attempt to discredit African public services, viewing them from a prejudiced neo-liberal or Weberian perspective. In contrast, for many decades Africans have grappled with such challenges and it is hoped that they will be addressed in an emergent DDS.

Another challenge for African states, which has to be considered in the conceptualisation of the DDS is the issue of (especially political) appointments in the public service. This question in many parts of the continent remains a thorny issue for post-colonial governments and, by extension, for those countries that have taken steps towards a DS. Pertinent questions to ask here are: How are such appointments made; are they based on relevant regulatory frameworks and based on transparent, accountable frameworks that justify such appointments? While this paper does not intend to answer these questions, the issue is that the pervasiveness of such appointments in the public services of many countries, without a regulatory framework to justify them, creates space for abuse, corruption and maladministration. By political appointment is meant the practice whereby members of a ruling party or party cadres are appointed to public/civil service positions even when they do not qualify for such positions.<sup>41</sup> This abuse of formal human resource management recruitment and appointment processes takes place to a greater or lesser degree in many African countries. As has been noted (Aucoin 1997: 24), “...citizens have a right to impartiality in the administration of law, the implementation of public policy and the delivery of public service; and...a right to expect that positions in the public service be staffed on the basis of merit, without prejudice to any partisan-political affiliation or lack of the same”.

Another pertinent question in terms of public bureaucracies in the continent: What type of entity will a developmental public administration be in Africa, and will political appointments in such an entity necessarily be a bad thing? To answer this question, we are reminded of the fact that in Africa, where the public/civil service is often regarded as a

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<sup>41</sup> The key issue here is the need for the relevant regulatory, legislative or policy frameworks to guide or govern such appointments. South Africa's Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), Chapter 10 makes provision for the “appointment of persons on policy considerations.” However, it is commonly known that political appointments are frequently made at different levels of government without reference to this constitutional provision clearly explained to those who work with such individuals.



means of rewarding friends, relatives and political colleagues with positions in the bureaucracy, in exchange for loyalty and other favours, the issue of appointing officials on merit will be problematic for the DDS.<sup>42</sup> The more such appointments are made without following due process, it may be argued, the more this will unnecessarily drain the public purse, undermine public service morale and motivation, and eventually promote the flight of essential skills or expertise to other countries outside Africa. However, one is not arguing against the appointment of political appointees per se, as incoming political representatives are entitled to appoint staff whom they can trust, especially their private personnel (such as chief of staff in the minister's office) and with whom they have rapport. But these are usually very few, and the processes relating to their appointment must also be clearly outlined in policy and legislation; likewise, their tenure is usually linked to that of the (political) office bearer to whom they report. The advent of the DSs that have to weather the storms of globalisation may perhaps remind Africans of the advantages of a meritocracy as a means of ensuring an efficient and effective public administration.

More than two decades ago, a study of permanent secretaries in Angola, Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Lesotho, and Swaziland found that “[t]he political role of senior civil servants in Africa cannot be differentiated from their administrative roles,” (Montgomery (1986:211). Similarly, Lungu (1997) concluded, in the case of Commonwealth Africa, that senior civil servants or permanent secretaries experienced what he termed ‘role ambiguity’ as they often had to tread carefully between party political mandates and the need for political ‘neutrality’ by career bureaucrats (Lungu 1997). As Tordoff (2002: 146) argues in the case of Ghana, when it became a republic in 1960, the country crafted ‘A New Charter for the Civil Service’, which “...stressed that civil service should be non-political in character and that individual civil servants should avoid identification with a political ideology or part.” However, he notes that “[i]n practice, such provisions were never very meaningful and disappeared with the creation of the one-party state in 1964”. This suggests that African countries should examine their recruitment, training and appointment policies and procedures for public/civil servants, making sure that these are transparent and based on due processes, regulations and laws. Failure to do this would indeed undermine Africa's quest to create DDSs.

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<sup>42</sup> As a former trainer of public servants in the Western Cape, South Africa, this author is aware of incidents in the province and elsewhere in the country where individuals were appointed to public service positions, ostensibly on the basis of merit during interviews, but in fact on party political criteria. This issue was also strongly alluded to the writer by interviewees during fieldwork for his doctoral thesis (1998-2002), which dealt with issues related to South Africa's post-apartheid public service.

## 7.2 The Public Bureaucracy and Service Delivery in Africa

An interesting and yet perplexing force in the chain of public service delivery in Africa is the public bureaucracy. By public bureaucracy is meant the administrative mandarins who often do much of the work behind the scenes with little or no recognition or credit for the work done, which often creates tensions between the political and administrative functionaries of the state and also among the officials themselves.

In Africa, the delivery of public services poses a continual challenge that can negatively affect the well-being of communities and the achievement of a DDS once the full extent of the dynamics becomes apparent. Also of significance to the delivery of public services in Africa is the interplay between powerful role players such as politicians, development advisers and technical experts, such as those from the IMF and the World Bank, civil society organisations, other stakeholders (e.g. traditional and religious leaders) and the local bureaucracy. The socio-economic, political and geographic environment adds its unique complexities, as suggested in Figure 1.

The features of a Weberian bureaucracy<sup>43</sup> in the African context have been criticised by, for example, proponents of new public management, which seeks to introduce business sector practices into the public sector. These include the 'blind' following of rules and applying them "without hatred but also without affection" (Etzioni-Halevy, 1983). In a populous continent with high unemployment rates, poverty and hunger, issues such as nepotism and party political ties continually arise and have been used as justification for providing services to communities or creating employment or programmes such as 'food for work', the purpose of which is to deal with poverty, unemployment and starvation, among others.

In Africa, owing to the challenges of underdevelopment, marginalisation, unemployment and poverty in many countries (Nzewi and Kuye 2007: 102), political leaders or representatives often have the leeway to use patronage, power and influence to direct or misdirect public services in ways that cause political, ethnic and other tensions, and often

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<sup>43</sup> These include a "Well-defined sphere of competence (clearly defined duties) of each office; hierarchy of offices – each office is supported by a higher one; selection based on objective qualifications – acquired through training, established exams, diplomas or both; rules: are general, consistent, and abstract and regulate activity; impersonality: official duties are conducted without hatred but also without affection" (Etzioni-Halevy, 1983: 28).

culminate in conflict. Many instances of African innovation in service delivery may remain undocumented and unrecognised by the mainstream mass media and the development discourse. However, the point being made here is that a DDS could not emerge in a country whose political leaders were bent on impoverishing the communities that they were elected or appointed to serve.

In addition, the authority structures, e.g. community governance bodies, which complement and in essence constitute the state in some African countries, add to the complexity of the formal state institutions. As one observer puts it:

In Africa, there is no shortage of institutions attempting to exercise public authority. In the first place, there are multiple layers and branches of government institutions (the judiciary, the administration, the customs service and police, the various extension agencies and so on) which are present and active to varying degrees ... vying for public authority, [and] often bolstered by government recognition (Lund 2005: 686).

It is also important to understand the state and public authority "...in contexts where it is not the exclusive realm of government institutions, where institutional competition is intensive, and where a range of apparently apolitical situations become actively politicized" (Lund p. 686). All these dimensions of authority are linked to issues of identity, legitimacy, belonging, citizenship and territory, which are often unresolved contradictions in Africa.

The public bureaucracy can play a constructive role in a DS and ensure that public service delivery and policy implementation happen quickly and reach the intended beneficiaries. However, bureaucracies have been known to play a negative role in development. More than three decades ago, Caiden (1971: 86) wrote that "[t]he inefficiencies of the public bureaucracy could cost a country its independence, stability, progress, and well-being." Nzewi and Kuye (2007: 199) argue that the bureaucracy in the Asian Tigers, especially the 'bureaucratic elite', together with the 'autocratic leadership' and 'weak civil [society] participation' have affected the quality of the DS in these countries. This argument is supported by Beeson (2004) who writes that "...a more fundamental... criticism of the DS is that bureaucratic elites are simply incapable of guiding the developmental process beyond a critical point." What this means is that an efficient and effective public bureaucracy can be a critical role-player in Africa's attempts to create DDSs, but it must collaborate with other role-players in society.

Another key question is whether a public services sector is inevitable (Jones, 2004: 25), as the answer to this question has a bearing on the extent to which the public/civil service and its role in the development process can be assessed. In Africa, the answer to this question has to be in the affirmative as there are few actors other than those in the public sector who can provide services to the public. This is why it is so important that the office bearers whose duties are to ensure the delivery of such services have qualities and skills that enable them to shoulder this heavy responsibility. However, if a public services sector is inevitable, there is a need to understand clearly its regulatory and enabling roles as well as its involvement in the direct provision of goods and services (Jones 2004: 26-27).

Arguably, the quality and standards of public services in some parts of the continent are low compared with other countries of the world. These standards include training and education; accountability and rapid response to queries or complaints; client satisfaction; technical and other skills such as financial management and budgeting; ethical standards; and fundamental human resource development and management skills, without which organisations cannot function.<sup>44</sup> We may thus concur with Jones (2004: 38) that “[a]lthough continuing public services appears inevitable, safeguards and internal controls sufficient to ensure full accountability, fairness and honest behaviour have to be deliberately sought and maintained.” Given the fact that very little is written on what the ideal DDS might look like, this poses a particular challenge for scholars and intellectuals in the continent to discuss the nature and characteristics of developmental public administration institutions that would be ideal or appropriate for such a state in Africa.

A basic framework of a developmental public service and administration might be seen as incorporating a highly competitive, extensive, relatively efficient and effective public bureaucracy. Such bureaucracy must have fairly low levels of corruption and it is assumed that it will be led by progressive or forward-looking and interventionist elites capable of undertaking economic planning for a conducive political environment for the building of a DDS. In the context of Africa, these key features or characteristics might initially prove a challenge but can be developed simultaneously with the process for the building of a DDS.

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<sup>44</sup> In fact, Africa has experienced the worst in terms of poor public service delivery and maladministration in a number of countries in the past. Some pertinent examples of the chronic abuse of state power, resources and bureaucracy capacity which culminated in this state of affairs were by the notoriously undemocratic, military and despotic regimes of Idi Amin (Uganda), Mobutu se se Seko (former Zaire), Hastings Kamuzu Banda (Malawi), and Marcias Nguema (Equatorial Guinea).

## 8. PUBLIC SERVICE PROVISION FOR A DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

The provision of public services, especially in African communities where the absence of such services might be a matter of life and death, plays a fundamental part in a country's public administration. Public service provision can be significantly boosted by the prevalence of certain conditions or strengths that are imperative for such services to be provided in a country. In Africa, some of these strengths are:

- Community action, public participation and the prevalence of communal values in many African countries
- Community action, public participation and the prevalence of communal values in many African countries
- Dedicated public/civil servants who can deliver public services optimally in spite of the myriad challenges they often face in their work
- Increasing examples of regional economic co-operation and African Union development initiatives
- Collaboration between national government and local development organisations to promote development.

These strengths are a few examples of what would characterise DSs in the African context, but do not refer to specific countries. Botswana, Mauritius, South Africa and Uganda have been categorised as examples of DSs in this paper, but they may not display all these strengths based on the challenges that they face as outlined earlier.

Among the key challenges to service delivery in the continent is the issue of state finance, whether at the national, regional or local authority level. The fact that African states have to raise financial and other resources locally and internationally means that they need to make hard choices about which services to deliver and which to postpone until funding is available. The effects of globalisation on Africa further complicate matters. While it might not be easy to quantify the effects of such globalisation on Africa's quest to build DDSs, one can surmise that such influence will be biased in favour of the more developed countries and will therefore be negative for the continent. In this scenario, Africa and other developing countries in the geo-political South are bound to be disadvantaged (see Ake 1996: 1). The threats to the creation of DDSs in the continent may be summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Internal/domestic challenges

External/global challenges

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corruption</li> <li>• Incompetence</li> <li>• Inefficiency &amp; ineffectiveness</li> <li>• Politicisation of the bureaucracy &amp; patronage</li> <li>• Unskilled/untrained personnel</li> <li>• Domestic instability/conflict</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prescriptions of International Finance Institutions (IFIs) &amp; deregulation</li> <li>• Globalisation</li> <li>• Regional instability/tensions/war</li> <li>• Corruption (external, e.g. multinational corporations)</li> <li>• Pervasive regional or international competition</li> </ul>
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Source: own analysis

The internal and external challenges outlined above should not just be seen as a threat to Africa's quest to develop sustainable solutions to its developmental challenges, namely through the establishment of DDSs, but also as a challenge to Africa's long-term viability and ability to compete with other continents in all areas. In terms of external challenges, Davids et al (2008: 90-91) argue that the increasing influence of globalisation on national development through international economic actors - such as transnational corporations or multinational corporations - cannot be overlooked. Thus, a pertinent question is: What is the effect of such actors on the creation of DSs in Africa? These effects could be many and deserve a separate paper looking into the financial, political military, economic, diplomatic and public administration aspects, which are too numerous to mention here. But it is possible that such actors will be hostile to Africa's creation of DSs as this could undermine their self-enrichment schemes which have predisposed the continent to perpetual dependency since time immemorial. Among other challenges that affect service delivery, which indirectly affect the creation of DDS, are the following:

- Countries such as Botswana, Mauritius, South Africa and Uganda, as DSs in Africa, face a globalised world environment unlike the case with most of the Asian Tigers.
- Public services are not cheap and often require expensive imports.
- Mismanagement, corruption, and unethical practices such as nepotism usually undermine public service delivery.
- Misdirected aid packages may undermine development.
- There can be undue influence by multinational corporations.

In addition, the inherent tensions between bureaucracy and democracy (Etzioni 1983: 2) may undermine the creation of developmental public administration machinery in Africa. According to Wallis (1989:1), the word 'bureaucracy' "conjures up negative images in people's minds. It suggests a slow-moving organisation, usually associated with government, which serves the public with a mixture of arrogance, deliberate obstruction and incompetence ... [and] 'bureaucrats' (the members of bureaucracies) are sometimes seen as figures of fun." In a characterisation that might apply to many African countries, including South Africa, Etzioni (1983: 2) has argued, "In the past, bureaucratic power has grown through increased state intervention. This intervention was in part a response to an evolving conception among the public which increasingly saw the state as responsible for its [public's] welfare and in part a response to the rising expectations for ever-higher levels of such welfare."

Another important aspect when considering the DDS is the link between democracy and development or, more specifically, the question of whether authoritarianism is a necessary condition for development in its broader sense (Edigheji 2005). The question of exploring the link between democracy and development is as fascinating to African scholars as it is critical to the debate on Africa's quest to create DSs. The importance of this link, particularly to the debate on the DS is that it reminds Africans to beware of the pitfalls of the authoritarian DSs of East Asia. As Fakir (2007: 77) notes, "The broadest concept of development incorporates basic civil and political freedoms and would relate to economic, educational, social, and cultural opportunities and their availability and access, so that they contribute to the general wellbeing of the population at large." Such values include the notion of public participation in the development and democratic processes. As Maphunye and Mafunisa (2008b: 463) write, "Internationally, a wide body of literature highlights the advantages of involving members of the public in the development process." Such participation is considered to legitimise the state and the decisions taken by its authorities. These are complex issues, and attempts by African political leaders and public servants to balance them in their development plans are widely documented (for example, Wallis 1989).

## 9. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY SUGGESTIONS

### 9.1 Conclusion

This paper has explored prospects for a developmental public service and administration in the context of a democratic developmental state (DDS) in Africa. From the authoritarian developmental states of East Asia, Africa can learn many lessons. These include the importance of rapid economic growth to development, the relevance of infrastructure, financial and other relevant resources, e.g. effective human resources or a functioning public bureaucracy to support a developmental state (DS). However, in a somewhat indirect way, Africa can also learn that a DS has to incorporate democratic values and practices to allow civil society and public participation in the process of building such a developmental state (DS). In Africa's case, democratic participation becomes a crucial ingredient of an ideal DS given the continent's past challenges of despotic rule, one-party states and other forms of authoritarian rule that have denied the continent's citizens the opportunities to play a meaningful role in their countries' governance processes.

In light of the above discussion, we may conclude that certainly there are prospects for the creation of DDSs in Africa, but that these appear to apply to a limited number of countries - presently Botswana, Mauritius and South Africa - including Uganda to an extent. Equally, the prospects of a developmental public service are as much a possibility as the creation of a DDS in Africa, which seems inevitable if more countries in Africa can adopt the model. A developmental public service is seen as the best option available to support Africa's quest for a DS, which itself will have to be democratic and egalitarian. Such a developmental public service model is increasingly seen as containing a highly competitive, extensive, relatively efficient and effective public bureaucracy, with fairly low levels of corruption, and it is assumed that such a bureaucracy will be led by progressive or forward-looking and interventionist elites able to undertake economic planning and create conditions conducive to political stability and the building of a DDS. For public administration and management in Africa, the idea of a DDS has particular relevance and appeal because it touches on the fundamental issues that determine the sustainable provision of public services to Africa's largely impoverished, underdeveloped, and marginalised communities beyond the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A key contention in this debate is that without a DS the market will not play a positive and supportive role to help a democratically elected government administration to implement developmental actions. However, the main challenge is how to balance the role of the state with that of the market, which this paper cannot claim to have resolved and which is a subject for another discussion or paper.



Outside the continent, it is emphasised that “...public administration has been about elimination of corruption, improvement of efficiency, and enhancement of service delivery in pursuit of the public interest” (Cooper et al 1998: 1). While rejecting a homogenised view of Africa, it cannot be said these characteristics generally define the continent’s public administration. This is not to ignore the fact that much has been done by some African states, notably Botswana, Ghana and South Africa, to deal with corruption. Others, however, are still caught in the web of corruption and maladministration, and this undermines development (see Blunt and Poopola, 1985). Such corruption, especially in the public sector, is not only a domestic phenomenon, but is often promoted by external actors from Western and other countries. The situation can become more complex where there is maladministration, mismanagement and incompetence (Maphunye 2003), and unethical practices worsen the scourge. In terms of improving efficiency and enhancing service delivery, much still needs to be done by the continent. The challenges facing the establishment of DDSs are multi-faceted and encompass such issues as low (or no) pay for the public/civil service, especially the security and emergency agencies, as was alluded to in the case of Uganda. Other challenges include the ‘brain drain’; ineffective and inefficient public bureaucracies; politicisation of public bureaucracies; and undemocratic tendencies by political representatives.

We may agree with Southall (2005: xli-xlii) that “there are clear indications that the experience of the developmental states cannot be replicated as a matter of will” and that “...important lessons (negative as well as positive) can be learnt from the developmental states.” His view that the notion of the DS “may compel new thinking in South Africa around the issue of how democracy can be combined with development” is relevant to all African states.

The debate on the DDS and, by extension, a developmental public/civil service and administration in Africa, has not begun in earnest. It is complex, and raises fundamental questions about the kind of future continental development, public service and administration infrastructure and personnel that Africa should envisage. In summary, the various definitions of, or approaches to, the DS as presented by the different writers seemingly suggest that a DS model should be interventionist, pro-active and pro-poor, but also redistributive, democratic and participatory. Briefly, this includes the following characteristics:

- High or at least remarkable economic growth that also addresses a country’s socio-economic challenges, such as poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment
- State-led developmental agenda

- Public or civil society participation in the governance process
- Gradual or increasing democratisation of the political landscape
- A skilled, efficient and effective as well as ethical or less corrupt public/civil service and administration
- Political leaders with a strategic interventionist economic programme able to bring a rapid and significant turnaround of the economic and development scenario.

Only a few countries, especially Botswana, Mauritius, South Africa, and to some extent Uganda,<sup>45</sup> are described as DSs based on characteristics seen as distinguishing them from others that do not fit this description. Botswana and Mauritius are particularly cited as having enjoyed “economic dynamism and political stability”; they have also been “continuously democratic since independence in the 1960s”, and it is further said that their “... indisputable success is not just luck. Effective, cohesive bureaucracies, relatively high levels of public integrity, and careful economic management have played a large role. An expanding economy has in turn doubtless made democratic governance more sustainable,” (Diamond and Plattner 1999: xxvi, 48, 76). Although South Africa is a newcomer in the democratisation stakes compared to Botswana and Mauritius, the country is no lesser a contender for the title of DS owing to the developmental policies it has so far adopted since the demise of apartheid in 1994, its relatively stable economic and political record, and the fairly capable governance structures and bureaucratic structure compared to many African countries.

These characteristics may seem appealing to the likes of the IMF and World Bank, as they appear to be similar to the Bretton Woods institutions’ past insistence on ‘good governance’, but significant differences should be noted among these characteristics. They do not apply to all African countries, because of the different stages of development between and within countries. Thus, “...the continuing utility or feasibility of the DDS [may]

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<sup>45</sup> This author views these four country examples as DSs although they are probably a long way from achieving the remarkable economic growth rates of the East Asian tiger economies. Moreover it would appear that almost all of these countries still have to deal with democratisation and other challenges, which could delay their maturation into uniquely African brands of DDSs that also score highly on participatory democracy and other fundamental values. Of these examples, perhaps Uganda deserves special care, because some observers argue that its political change is ambiguous; it now enjoys relative economic progress “... more decent and stable government than Uganda has known in decades ... recurrent elections at both the national and village levels, middling levels of freedom, and ... the most rapid economic growth in Africa in recent years. All of this, however, comes in the strange form of what [the ruling National Resistance Movement] labels ‘no-party democracy’” (Diamond, in Diamond and Plattner 1999: xxi). This term emanates from the old African argument that multi-party democracy is inappropriate for Africa as “competing political parties foster ethnic divisions” (ibid).

depend as much on external geopolitical factors as it does on any specifically domestic ones” (Beeson 2004). Africa’s widely diverse geographical landscape, geo-politics, and regional dynamics are also relevant. As Beeson (2004) notes, it may well be that “different levels of development and different state capacities mean that the DS may still remain an appropriate - perhaps an inescapable - element of economic development.” In this regard, we need to share Ake’s optimism that “[t]he struggle over the political framework that will enable the development project to finally take off is now in progress, and the prospects for development are promising” (Ake 1996: 159).

Based on the views suggested in the literature, the model of a DS seems to be a sustainable framework for Africa’s development, as it could enable the continent to resolve its past development challenges owing to the fact that it incorporates democratic participation as a critical ingredient in addition to the other values and practices that Africa can learn from the traditional East Asian model of the DS. For this model to advance to that of a DDS and be successfully implemented, it requires a kind of public service and administration that is equally responsive to democratic practices and all the relevant stakeholders in a state. But it has to be emphasised that there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ template for such a public administration. Such a template will be determined by a country’s objective conditions and political or governance structure, and be responsive to, and supportive of, the relevant state model. This public administration model for a DDS will not be able to function optimally if there is a “powerful, competent and insulated bureaucracy”, a “weak and subordinated civil society” and “repression, legitimacy and performance” (Leftwich (1995: 405, 420) as these will undermine the DDS. The type of public administration that we can envisage for a future DDS will be significantly different from the traditional Weberian model in the sense that the relevant public officials will share the overall vision of the national development agenda, which enjoys popular legitimacy and support from all stakeholders.

Presently, there seems to be a few typologies of a DS which differ according to the emphasis of the different writers on what they consider to be a DS. However, it is argued that an ideal type of state, ie DDS, as outlined in this paper, can be held as a template to evaluate existing states exhibiting related characteristics. The only challenge in this regard is that the number of African states that can be referred to as DSs discussed in this paper, namely Botswana, Mauritius, and South Africa, as well as Uganda to some extent, are very few and there is a need for others in the more than 50 states in the continent to follow this development model.

To conclude on a positive note, public bureaucracies in Africa seem set to play an indispensable role in the conceptualisation of the democratic developmental state, and many African public servants would be proud to be associated with the following account of the hard work that usually characterises the work of their counterparts elsewhere in the world:

Contrary to popular opinion, there are many things that public administrators do very well. Most people can expect that the basic services they need every day will be available regardless of economic fluctuations, political turbulence, or even the weather. Police, fire, water, sewage disposal, roads, transportation infrastructure, and emergency communications, operate for most people most of the time they are expected to, and many citizens when asked about their direct experiences with government reply positively (Cooper et al 1998:15).

## 9.2 Recommendations and policy suggestions

The following recommendations and policy suggestions may help development experts, members of think tanks, scholars, public service practitioners, policy makers and civil society organisations to test the prospects for the creation and sustainability of DDS in Africa:

- The lack of continental uniformity or coherence in relation to the need for creating democratic developmental states needs to be problematised and conceptualised by policy makers, researchers and African intellectuals.
- Funding should be set aside and allocated to the creation of DDS in Africa.
- Comprehensive research plans and programmes should be designed by African researchers and policy makers to investigate the feasibility of creating DDSs throughout the continent.
- The need to create developmental public service and administrations is still far from being seen as a continental responsibility. This is despite the efforts by the African ministers of public/civil service, who periodically meet to discuss challenges and solutions to Africa's public administration situation. Such efforts need to be complemented by constant and meaningful interaction by the political leadership with Africa's think tanks, experts, academics and scholars who can give policy advice, as well as conceptualise strategies to inform and enrich the debate on the DS in the continent.

- Political leaders and government representatives, academics and scholars, think tanks and experts on African governance should meet regularly to discuss how the idea of a DDS and a developmental public service and administration should be handled. This important issue should be the main theme of the meetings or conferences, and not be relegated to the margins of the conference or meeting agenda.
- African governments and development experts need to collaborate meaningfully to raise and then set money aside specifically for programmes that will ensure the creation of democratic developmental states in the continent.
- Finally, the present crop of developmental states such as Botswana, Mauritius, South Africa and Uganda (as discussed in this paper), should be supported by the AU and NEPAD, as they could help Africa to achieve its millennium development goals, and generally serve as the basis for creating democratic developmental states in the continent.

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## 11. LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	African Development Bank
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AMDIN	African Management Development Institutes' Network
ANC	African National Congress
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
CAFRAD	African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development
CLAD	Latin American Centre for Development Administration
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration (South Africa)
DDS	Democratic developmental state
DDSs	Democratic developmental states
DS	Developmental state
ESAMI	Eastern and Southern African Management Development Institute

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution programme
HIV	Human Immune-deficiency Virus
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa Dialogue Forum
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MNC	Multi-National Corporation
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPM	New Public Management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PALAMA	Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (SA)
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SAMDI	South African Management Development Institute
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WB	World Bank

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