



Workshop 4 Report

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Adapted and inclusive public affairs governance in Africa

Context and problems

Public affairs management in Africa is analyzed in different ways; sometimes it is described as duplicated from colonial model, more often weighted down by community allegiances or entirely being characterized by such opacity.

Public affairs in most African countries are managed by an administrative and political elite who is very often tempted to use it as situation of rent and then excluding the citizen who is however the legitimate beneficiary of public service.

a tailored and inclusive public affairs management in Africa requires taking account of following stakes and challenges :

- state reappropriation by citizens. In many African cases, populations continue to perceive the state not as public services distribution apparel, but as a foreign body whose “utility” is not understood.
- Current political system available in most countries foster corruption development especially social and political corruption rooted in public goods and positions monopolizing strategies. Substantial reforms should be undertaken in order to question populations representation mechanisms and system at public institutions level. This will be done through local, legislative, senate ballots modes review and representation institutions types to be selected ;
- publics public goods patrimonialization and monopolizing ban;
- public policies effective evaluation ;
- administration neutrality and non-vassalisation of parliamentary institutions and judiciary administration ;
- Citizen education and effective codes of conduct adoption;

- Promoting transparency and fighting corruption and concussion...Efficient laws are needed and also citizens should develop perfect behavior and state of law being effective. At the same time it is necessary to work on changing citizens behaviors related to bad practices. Values related to ethics, integrity, honor, responsibility, and the sense of respect for common goods, dignity...ICTs utilization to implement transparent administrative and financial transactions allowing citizens to access information and therefore enabling them to play their control and watchdog role. Following this perspective, African values promotion could be a mean to fight against corruption.
- Accessing information still a problem experienced by civil society. In fact African states are using very often the « classified documents » alibi to deny civil society access to information.

Challenges to adapted and inclusive public affairs management in Africa

While promoting tailored and inclusive public affairs management, many African countries should take on numerous challenges such pushing public institutions to take into account traditional legitimacies that influence governance.

The other challenge is to successfully bring African populations to state institutions appropriation. In fact in many cases, the state and the political system still considered as exogenous by populations.

Autonomous funding of CSO (Civil Society Organizations) to ensure their sustainability and independence is another challenge. This challenge is linked with citizen economic needs taking care through endogenous financing of citizen participation process.

Evolution patterns observed do show colonial paradigm characterized by hegemonic state, public servant in charge of commanding and the passive and obeying citizen is fading due to globalization effects and new local dynamics that have the tendency to reduce its power.

The other pattern observed shows a structuring dynamism in African civil society components and functioning. After distinguishing four types of civil society (governmental civil society, opposition civil society, civil society for intelligence, civil society of conviction), it is important to assess grassroots organizations of citizens and citizen movements increasing number, which illustrates a new citizenry emergence. These grassroots organizations should be the true driving forces to make civil society credible and legitimate.

Even though grassroots organizations role is important, one should not deny political parties important position for power exercise and conquest. But their action and functioning should be better organized especially inside a political system to be reformed.

Numerous advantages contributing to reinvent another way of conceiving public affairs management in the city have been identified in ongoing sociopolitical dynamics in the African space. Some of these advantages are related to multi actors principle implementation as the right public affairs process enabling to generate a participative and transparent public affairs governance.

Good governance principles adoption such as elections candidates, presidents and others elected officials statement on their assets do contribute to reduce public funding embezzlement, illicit financial transactions while contributing to institutionalize transparency practices into public affairs management as new norms ;

Another advantage identified is related to the uniformisation and adoption of public markets regulation systems by UEMOA. This initiative realized through joint, tripartite, multi actors regulation authorities creation, is an example of best practice to be popularized and strengthened.

Also dynamic citizen movements and credible social movements in some African countries can play a driving role and as a beachhead for citizenry strengthening in Africa.

1 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURING ACTIONS

In order to include all society actors in public affairs management and then ensure equitable public management by working with an active civil society, it is imperative **to amend constitutions and provide a well defined role and status to civil society.** Among identified objectives there is one that resuming in conciliating democracy and technocracy by giving favor to public administration independence through state continuity and CSO strengthening for public policies monitoring, execution and evaluation. .

Another strategic objective is focusing on participative democracy strengthening through permanent political dialogue mechanisms implementation at the grassroots level between decisions makers, elected officials and citizens.

It also strategic to develop a strategy enabling citizen control over public policies and at the same time to reinforce citizen capabilities in order to set, durable and ethical behaviors needed for an efficient management. This however can be achieved through educative systems and curriculum reforming for a new, active, patriotic and panafricanist citizenry.

It is also imperative to legislate and enshrine in constitutions mandatory control and evaluation over public policies. As well public action control by citizens and funding procedures of CSO actions have identified as strategic objectives to be achieved for setting an adequate and inclusive public affairs management in Africa.

It was recommended to operate a redefinition of African civil society conception and function. This will promote CSO of conviction which action is based on citizen commitment at the expense of state, opposition or intelligence Civil Societies

Organizations types. This type of civil society organization due to its closed relationship with populations and its equidistant position within political parties and others actors with private interests can play, at times, regulation role between protagonists-actors around power stakes.

Strategic objectives mentioned above need for the achievement in the African space to be endorsed structuring actions as following:

2 - SELECTED STRUCTURING ACTIONS

One of the first structuring actions identified is **information diffusion in an accessible language** in order to strengthen education about budget functioning. In this case, community radios do play an important and strategic role to be enhanced further.

Citizen participation in all stages can be realized through participation mechanisms (social communication, accessible language, using local committees).

It is also important to give priority to a transformation process that will resume working at the global political system level in one side and at actors, citizens and representatives level in the other side. For example the Forum Civil in Senegal is implementing a strategy focused on institutions strengthening and citizen commitment to obtain a durable impact public affairs management system.

Procurement contracts regulation adopted by UEMOA and translated **into multi actors, tripartite, joint regulation authorities is a best practice to be enhanced and strengthened.**

It is also important to encourage sectoral surveys on governance; this can be done through **multi actors forum organization** at the local level (local state representative, parliamentarians, mayors, populations, etc.)

One major structuring action is **participative governance and accountability mechanisms implementation**. There are existing best practices initiatives to be strengthened (participative governance centre, legal assistance, local collectivities certification by citizens, cooperation framework, participative budget institutionalization in Cap Vert; legislation for churches and CSO local collectivities representation in Angola.

In order to prevent and fight opacity that characterizes funding for political parties searching for vote, one proposition was made to think about a **public financing system for elections**.

In order to **fight corruption**, it might be important to adopt a funding system for political parties and electoral campaigns, but also to make administrative documents obtaining, automated. **E-government promotion** can be materialized, for example, by cell phones messages utilization to provide citizens with information regarding budgets.

Youth education to active citizenry (Forum Civil-Senegal) and against corruption (RENLAC-Burkina Faso) is also considered as a decisive structuring action in an adequate and inclusive public affairs management upcoming in Africa.

Structuring actions can also resume in the **use and application of petitioner law** in **constitutions** to enable direct participation of citizens to legislation. Actions can be the promotion of independent administrative authorities (such as CENI for example) and public affairs regulation or generalization of asset declaration for high administrative positions holders.

Government procurement contracts with private sector should be monitored by parliament and citizen control to avoid corruption and bribe.

Finally it appears decisive to help the administration become an ethical administration of development for citizens; this requiring **training modules revision** to tailor them to citizens needs. In fact there is a need to reinforce curricula by integrating modules rooted on principles such as ethics, patriotism, responsible citizenry, good governance and management of quality.

Public administration agents training in ICT do contribute to ensure more efficiency in public service delivery.

3 - ACTORS RESPONSABILITIES AND ROLES

Institutions such as state (executive, legislative, judiciary, army), political parties, CSO, local private sector, religious and cultural institutions are normally emanation of the people who generate them. However when realizing their missions, these institutions do not fulfill correctly their roles and missions. At this level, the task will be to reform these institutions in a way to take into account collective interest and help these institutions get closer to the citizen through animation rules and procedures implementation.

It is also question to strengthen citizens capacities to enable them to be respectful of principles and rules of public affairs management whatever their positions are in the governance global system.

→ The state :

State role is to monitor transparency of laws and procedures, equity principles, accountability in public service of quality delivery.

State should also give priority to capacities strengthening, competencies and means for its administrative bodies in charge of public spending control and monitoring.

A third important state role is to develop a culture of public policies evaluation.

→ **Political Parties:**

Political parties should ensure their members training; they also should respect and enforce laws and rules related to electoral processes creation, functioning and participation.

→ **civil society organizations:**

These organizations should work on an information, sensitizing, education and citizen mobilization task but also ensure strictly and with neutrality efficient citizen monitoring. They should participate and contribute as strategic actors in the whole public policies process: from elaboration to public policies evaluation.

The SCO should play an important role for developing their credibility and legitimacy to be the voice of citizens. This is possible through the search of their own perennisation and independence vis-à-vis the others actors.

Lastly, CSO should develop technical capabilities through research and their members training.

→ **traditional and religious institutions:**

These authorities have a monitoring role to play regarding principles and social values respect; this can be done through youth socialization and social regulation.

They also should contribute to effective application of these principles and values in public affairs policies and mechanisms formulation.