

Whole of Government Approach to Achieving National Development Goals: The Reform Managerial Roles and Processes in Ghana

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Received Date: November 16, 2013; Accepted Date: June 11, 2014; Published Date: July 7, 2014

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Abstract

The Commonwealth Secretariat proposes a new reform concept: 'Whole of Government Approach [WoG] to achieving national development goals' for Commonwealth African Governments. A critical analysis of the conception fails to differentiate it from existing 'joined up government' or 'governance'. Despite being a matter of semantics, WoG builds its framework on three questions to differentiate it from the others and making it look unique. Situating Ghana's Public Sector reform experience into administration reforms and development cooperation literature blended with a string of African cultural history the answers are constructed in Africanised context. This nascent WoG Approach granted its uniqueness, development partners' overarching influence could hinder its progress as they have demonstrated with earlier reforms. Also, if it is to be Africanised to work, the leadership ought to identify, understand and communicate national relevant values and needs consistently with the governed.

Keywords: Whole of government approach; Political will; Governance; Communication; Implementation communication; Leadership

Introduction

The Commonwealth Secretariat proposes for African Governments 'Whole of Government (WoG) Approach for national development' [1]. This is yet another imposition and diversionary act. Although perceived as such, the nascent WoG is not to be discarded until analysed for any possible value. As a result, this paper is a critique of the WoG vis-à-vis some observations of Ghana Public sector reforms. Much has been observed of the Ghana Government public sector reforms to sit with the proposal. Identified gaps and challenges cut across the reforms, public administration and development cooperation literature of the continent. For example, Notes of East and South African bureaucracies reform problems as paternalistic and poor leadership, donor dominance coupled with little knowledge of the African setting; while describing the gap between the administration's top and bottom as the 'black spot' of the reforms [2]. This purpose here is to analyse and upgrade the Whole of Government Approach to achieving national development goals by critically examining the Managerial Roles and Processes in Ghana. It is; therefore, appropriate to identify needs, values and their alignment befitting an Africanised WoG/JUG/Governance process.

Method

The inquirer who follows words benefits from first-hand experience of the setting, people and actions; as well as having the opportunity to notice things that may routinely escape awareness among the people in the setting [3]. Implying that observational data describes the setting that was observed, the activities that took place in that setting, the people who participated in those activities, and the meanings of what was observed from the perspectives from those observed for the purposes of the facts and accuracy. It was also supplemented by

interviewing a spectrum of bureaucrats, politician, and academics. Randomly, students and the governed or general public were, sampled (N= 450) for the name of the sitting Minister of State for Public Sector Reforms. That an overwhelmingly majority (410) of 91% will not know readily.

This simple recall fact failure spells out poor communication of Ghana's reforms. Communicating reforms is an observed challenge therefore. 'Implementation Communication' is suggested as a core ingredient for the WoG Approach reform. To situate WoG for better fit, Ghana and Africa reform context is previewed as hinted already. The paper then will continue to compare the new concept of WoG with the existing governance or joined up government model. Having set the background with this discussion, the three questions of WoG are then answered in the subsequent sections. A conclusion is then drawn.

The African Governments Reform Context: Gaps and challenges

Sociology, history and other fields of studies have both acknowledged the cultural centrality, the ethnicity and extended familial systems of Africa. Then theoretically, proposing 'Whole of Government Approach to Achieving National Development Goals' today should be a welcome concept for government and governance in Africa. This conceptualisation, therefore, appears more 'natural and appropriate' to the African than the colonial Weberian model of Public Administration inherited from the past which ironically rode on the back of the African own cultural centralised systems but has failed to adapt. It had been upon the efficiency of our centralised hierarchical and values system that permitted the imposed British indirect rule and the French Assimilation systems. But Africa did not have that opportunity to evolve and develop her own governments and governance systems despite having the cultural structures that have been destroyed gradually over the years. However, the first crop of Africa's nationalist political managers have taken notice of this and

even warned of foreign interferences of Africa's developmental processes.

Two historical scenarios suffice Africa's developmental problems and challenges. In one instance, this developmental definition is vividly posed in Ghana's first President Words that [4]:

"We live by experience and by intelligent adaptation to our environment. From our knowledge of the history of man, from our knowledge of colonial liberation movements, Freedom or Self-government has never been handed over to any colonial country on a silver platter".

In another, a Finnish renowned professor of development with forty years Africa experiences will see this phenomenon poignantly and quotes from another African political manager [5]:

A country, village or community, cannot be developed, it can only develop itself. For real development means growth of people.... If real development is to take place the people have to be involved. ... Knowledge does not only come out of books. ... We would be fools if we allow the development or our economies to destroy the human and social values, which African societies have built up over centuries (Nyerere 1968).

Apparently, that nascent 'Whole of Government' (WoG) approach of the Commonwealth Secretariat to the association of African governments is seemingly consistent with African hierarchical value system of extension to include all stakeholders and citizenry [1]. But in recent time, theories and practices in development and administration, the African governments' intelligence, values, needs and human developments appear abandoned contrary to Presidents Nkrumah and Nyerere's Africanisation thoughts and observations. By observation, the substitutes are found through several means including importation, imposition and arm-twisting. It is also true book knowledge dominates the Africa development as Nyerere noted – largely with Western literature.

In development cooperation perspective, for example, the defunct reform Ministry (MPSR Journal 2006: 6) was partly "coordinating with external partners in the area of public sector reform and capacity building and the generation and exchange of knowledge of ideas relating to concepts, techniques and lessons of experience pertaining to public sector reform"; that ironically lands the Minister interacting with the counterpart in Italy (Ministry of Public Sector Reform Journal 2007); a country with poor records in reforms. Consider this instance and how the reforms had unfolded below [6-8].

The former British Prime Minister in his memoir, for example, acknowledged we are people made of values that cannot easily be effaced by policy; and fragmenting government in the name of reforms is a mistake [9]. In the later part of his Prime Ministership, Blair had called for JUG (joined up government) reforms; to replace the 1980s NPM (new public management) fragmentary structures and processes which had criticised and attempted to depose the traditional Weberian bureaucratic model [10,11]. The excesses of the Weberian model include red-tape, inflexibility and non-responsiveness [12,13].

For these same reasons, different organisational forms or models had been imposed upon African governments through public sector reforms. Therefore, a conclusion that Ghana and the other African governments are practicing incompatible 'multi-governing models' that fail to produce desirable results for better service delivery and welfare is appropriate. Thus glancing from the baseline of chief/kingdom institutions are the superimposed traditional Weberian

colonial bureaucracy, the NPM, strategic management, governance/JUG and nascent WoG models.

Reforming imposed traditional Weberian colonial bureaucracy in Ghana had taken place from the late 1980s [14]. The report espouses and chronicles that decentralisation, privatisation, and right sizing of the public service, CSPIP (Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme), NIRP (National Institutional Programme), PUFMAP (Public Financial Management Programme) were some of the existing reforms running concurrently from 1988 to early 2000s. There is nothing Ghanaian or African about these reforms. And what could be termed as Ghana's first ever national reforms is General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong's Government's OFY (Operation Feed Yourself and Industries) policy of the 1972-1976 following World Bank and Western sanctions [15,16]. The authors acknowledged the desirable results of the OFY reforms as Ghana's ever attempt at self-sufficiency at food production. Kofi Quantson (2013: 10) have reminded Ghanaians about this success in the "Daily Graphic" newspapers of July 19th. Describing as "gargantuan and unprecedented" This critical local reform was a well-chosen need and better communicated nationally to yield desired result [17]. But fails to be tagged 'reform'; and, set for any replication despite Ghana food importation.

Back to the administrative reforms and in one such administrative reform from the early 2000s, it is noticeable at various levels the introduction of Strategic Management in Ghana's public administration and government. For example, Ghana Government strategic vision had first been "Ghana Vision 2020"; then came along "Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy I & II"; and now, the on-going "Better Ghana Agenda" (National Development Planning Commission website). Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) also adopt alongside their strategic management models. Such models usually have national goal alignment challenges as noted.

As a result, missions and visions of the institutions remain fashionable and visible right from the office entrances. It is consistent with New Directions for Organisation Theory that most of the workers are bereft of simple knowledge of the organisational missions and goal, let alone adoption for practice [18]. A good example is the OHCS (Office of Head of the Civil Service) Strategic Plan, with its mission as [14]:

"The Office of the Head of Civil Service exists to provide dynamic leadership, manage human resources and promote organisational development in the Civil Service for the benefit of the Government and public in a manner consistent with best management practices and good governance" [14].

Strategic management models are found on paper. Communicating these visions, mission, strategies and reforms generally had been poor and problematic from formulation, design to implementation.

In the early 2000s the Governance project was introduced and supported for nearly a decade by Canadian International Development Agency. Short courses were taught to civil servants as University of Ghana Business School on policy analysis. But it had not also transformed or replaced the traditional system.

Reforms had been fragmentary in Ghana Public Sector. By donor demand and lobby the reforms were led by a Ministry from 2005 to 2009 to demonstrate Government's commitment. The defunct Ministry of PSR (Public Sector Reforms – 2007) having been established as the institutional home of all the reform programmes acknowledged the little achievements of the reforms embarked upon.

It therefore sought to improve the efficiency and service delivery of Government Machinery: that the strategic position of the Government on the reform exercise “remains the surest way of achieving efficiency and effectiveness in the management of Public Service administration.” And, “The objective is consistent with the goal of the country’s GPRS II (Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy) – a blue print for the creation of wealth and employment in the country” [7].

Two years later, 2009, a new government is voted into office to continue with the process of building political will or commitment for reforms. The new Lead Agency for government reforms is the PSRS (Public Sector Reforms Secretariat 2012) of the Presidency [19,20]. It has the roles of oversight, coordination, facilitation and reporting. The PSRS reports that based on the consistent minimal performances of reforms in the country, from 2009 onwards, its new approach to reforms shift emphasis to the sector ministries to identify the reform needs of their sectors for better productivity. This attempt at fragmentation closes the chapter on “across the board reforms’ which usually becomes ‘waste pipes’” [19,20].

Ghana’s public sector reforms have been associated, so far, with policy needs and alignment, and poor achievements. Thus ‘silo’ versus WoG/JUG/Governance. Hitherto, both sector specific and centralised reforms had existed concurrently in Ghana with NIRP as the overall coordinator and sectoral such as respectively, for example, the PUFMA (Public Financial Management) and CSPIP (Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme) sponsored by the British Government DFID. The silo and systemwide reform mix may be the way forward.

In practice, governance remains a scarce commodity, not only on the African continent [11]. Nonetheless, the popularity and use of the reform jargon ‘governance’ is noticeable across the public, private and third sectors. However, none of the challenging organisation forms or models mentioned has surpassed the traditional Weberian colonial bureaucracy that keeps extending and getting fragmented by reformers as discussed already. This is to reemphasise Meier and Hill’s (2007: 67) powerful conclusion having diagnosed challenges to bureaucracy both intellectually and practically from recent reform variety in different countries as follows:

“Bureaucracy will continue to flourish in the twenty-first century for many of the same reasons that it had flourished in the last century, it facilitates the many of the governance process in ways that other organisational forms do not. Challenges to bureaucracy will always be challenges at the margin, moving tasks from a public sector bureaucracy to a private sector one, for example. Underneath these cosmetic responses to reforms, however, one will still see Weberian bureaucracies continue to perform a myriad of tasks.”

Even more relevant the researchers also found that there is skills gap between developed and developing nations; and, that generates a bureaucratic capacity gap that severely limits what governments without effective bureaucratic capacity can do.

Meier and Hill’s flourishing bureaucracy, skill and capacity gaps, and developing countries limitation draw attention to the Commonwealth’s Secretariat’s failure to produce remedies to Africanise the existing bureaucracy for its excellence reform problems and challenges but introduced WoG. However, WoG Approach may be a welcome concept if it was to unify all these silo attempts and bad governance reforms as the chronicling reveals. Beforehand, the Commonwealth Secretariat’s new Whole of Government Approach to Achieving National Development Goals in Commonwealth Africa is

perceived as another ‘burden’; and, a distraction to African bureaucratic and political managers as aid literature indicates [21]. Also, it exacerbates the already murky incompatible multi-models of poor performance in governance. In these cases, conferencing on repairing and upgrading the colonial Weberian model are relevant and preferable.

Governance versus the new WoG Process

“Governance” means: the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented) [22]. Donors perceive Africa is engulfed in bad governance [23]. Good governance, Sheng argues, comprises of eight (8) major characteristics as follows: It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law – democracy. Furthermore, it ensures corruption minimization, consideration of the views of minorities and the vulnerable in society in the decision-making process; being responsive to the present and future needs of society is also supposed to be taken care of in the governance processes. A governance infrastructure is, therefore, the collection of technologies and systems, people, policies, practices, and relationships that interact to support governing tasks and activities [24]. Johnston advocates further that envisioning a healthy governance infrastructure into the future is to frame the challenges of governance appropriately.

There may be difference in name: (Good) governance and WoG; but the principles may not be after all that different. Consequently, taking it from the latter’s ‘new’ conception of efficient operations that it is based on political and leadership commitment to work beyond partisan lines, individual electoral terms, ministerial and sectorial borders. The conception endorsement of the following perspectives absolves the conceptual differences:

Policy planning/design and implementation

Policy and programme monitoring and evaluation; and

Alignment of resources (financial and human) to agreed strategic priorities.

Additionally, they all have the anchor and lead actor as government. Governance and WoG are about people and needs, values and their alignments for results. With these commonalities, WoG process successes and achievements would be dependent upon the development partners’ timely resource provision and conditionality on the one hand, and to the other, the governed, local officials and government participation and value fulfilment. All partners strong commitment and determination for success.

In putting the object of their review of public management reforms in Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa (2003), for example, down played the African need [appropriate organisation model and filling in skills gap] for ‘donor wish’ – good governance as the object. This is also found in Sheng’s (2011) observation that mostly resource providers and international financial institutions are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms ensure good governance procedures. The Chinese play batter.

Going by Nkrumah’s view above, while the local officials are not applying their intelligence and experience to adapt; the resource providers too may not be aware of their own obstructive roles in the process by imposing their wishes; as a result of their resource

dependency monopoly [25]. This challenges governance, African and development values.

Now, to borrow two facts from the Commonwealth's conceptual framework of WoG to illustrate the above issues: Notwithstanding Blair's later repentant view above, and as a once upon a time a proponent of good governance and leading NEPAD – (new partnership for Africa Development) in the early 2000s, we still witness strong externally driven policies and their implementation [2,21]. Even more worthy of note is finding and wonder that the former Prime Minister advises Rwandan Government [26]. And much more would it have been if Gregg Mills had told of or if it is possible to find out Blair's new role and view with this shift downward the aid ladder and somehow closer to the real action ground. These interferences are found to be very worrisome because of their prevalence and frustrating performance efforts. And yet, Africa is found indicted by development cooperation literature for failures at development as modern nations of recent time [27].

To culminate the wholism approach, take it from Presidents Nyerere and Nkrumah's statements above for the African developmental thoughts, views and the elderly practices of consultations before action depended upon communication. Collaboratively, Sheng's (2011) participatory view of governance, Africans, especially the governed, must be part and even the dominant group of the decision-making and implementation process; and, still be lent the needed resources and support for reforms. Ghana and Africa reform and development require unique skills, capacity and effective communication to repair its colonial inherited bureaucracy.

Best practices, according to Fukuyama (2005), do not easily transfer across borders as practiced. From the discussion WoG is not something different from governance/JUG. But granted it is or be it a best practice of elsewhere, its three rational questions are answered against the background discussions done in preparedness.

How can we overcome the barriers that make it difficult to integrate work across public sector boundaries?

Studies show the failure that the NPM (new public management) reforms tried to torpedo the Weberian model bureaucracy in the 1980 and 1990s [12,26,28,29]. It introduced customisation, performance pay, contractualism, and pragmatic managerialism, marketization, privatisation and public private partnership, downsizing, among others [10]. The internationalisation of NPM and its imposition on Africa and other parts of the world by the World Bank and Consultants fail to consider the African context [10,11,30,31]. As pociated earlier, Meier and Hill had warned against equalisation of advance and developing systems due to differences in skills and capacity [27]. Take, for example, Peters comment that emulating the advanced strong and performing systems to pay compensation to clients in the developing weak and nonperforming systems by imposing the establishment of client services units fail common sense test [11]. Instead, he argues, such monies should have been used to fix the systems to standard and improve performance.

At post NPM its elements including performance pay and customerisation have become problems or barriers in Ghana to reforms. There is fixation as the reformers and their government, and donors continue to fumble with these same ideas for the last two decades. Collaborating with Peters, and having followed the NPM customerisation processes in Ghana public sector reforms, it is conclusive that since its introduction by CISPIP in the 1990s it has

failed to be established and delivering as expected. Whilst it remains still on the Presidential reform secretariat's priority list; performance pay has found a home at newly created Fair Wages and Salaries Commission established by law. Its Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS) has been fraught with communication and implementation problems for the last five years. Far from the weak and unknown Clients Service Units the Presidency directly handles the numerous workers associations' strikes for better salaries and wages. This failure could be as a result of lack of understanding and relevance, skill and capacity, and other resources gaps including procurement.

Another export of the NPM reform is that it promotes silo development; which in turn leaves the by-product of horizontality, a disease suffered by all governments [31,32]. The result being individualism, lack of common culture and key information remain in the field with poor communication among others [33]. This could explain 'black spot' of reforms separating the top from the bottom of the public administration in East and Southern Africa [2]. In Ghana, one Chief Director of the Health Ministry comments: "I don't see any connection between the directors and the Assistant Directors in the Ministries". It is also observable that as the top levels are kept busy by the donors in particular the bottoms are left to fend for themselves [12,21]. These suggest that every reform must be looked at critically for its side effect as it unfolds. Feedbacks loops with active communication do not exist. Donors and local politicians lack the waiting time but require "quick wins" to demonstrate success. Impatience, structuration and poor communication are the barriers affecting the reforms.

Organisations are set based on the individual, communication and responsibility [34,35]. This principle defines structure as the relationship between the manager and the subordinate; managers are however, warned of the uncertainty (such as these imposed reforms or new developments) [36]. He brings to the fore how oversight responsibility remains the direct supervisory work of the manager; making delegation or decentralisation not a let go away affair. Failure to take oversight responsibility results in silo development as found in the last paragraph. Direct communication should be viewed more efficient mode over mere authority in dealing with the subordinate or colleagues [37]. However, a balanced blend of both with supervision is what the good manager needs. It is the responsibility of the manager to pass on work with clear instructions to the subordinate for better understanding [38]. But the top is found too busy and chasing after perquisites [12]. Sogge describes this as resource redistribution. As a result, turfs are well protected to the detriment of work progress as the relevant information this time around stays at the top. Although it is the middle level management that do the work they are kept at bay as observed [12,39]. Mintzberg describes this turf protection as silo-slabs that managers hang in devoid of the necessary information and communication to act effectively.

In practices Hill and Hupe think understanding policy implementation as a legitimate part of the governance process enhances leadership control [29]. Top managers and their subordinate managers, therefore, require both vertical and horizontal linkages providing smooth communication if they are to take control of the governance or WoG process for development.

To the barriers of implementation particularly at the leadership level these marks the base of governance/WoG process with communication. The African tradition had practiced long ago as the oral tradition or the so called informal education mode [40]. Thenceforth, Africa is well vexed in communication for change.

African reformers need therefore to come up with clear instructions (Mountjoy and O'Toole 1979 cited in Younus and Davidson 1990) and implementation communication imbued with understanding, capability, and will to boost and run the reforms. It is in this manner that building commitment for performance, consistency and focus that breaks organisational barriers for successful implementation begins.

Simon argues from 1945 that it takes communication to unbound the rationality of the individual. Implying that besides clarifying instructions and other minutiae, it also builds skills, knowledge capabilities to set the fundamental 'wills' for boundary breaking and crossing. It has been found that when people have not what it takes to perform a job or reform they turn to shun and or even resist it all together [37,41]. Being bound by rationality is enough for apathy and resisting reforms by both bureaucrats and their political masters. It is, of course, a great source for suspicion of reform failure.

Dror nails the matter appropriately with top managers [42]:

"The importance of rulers and their quality is widely recognised, but needs and possibilities for improving them are not only ignored, but taboo".

Reform is noted for its requirements of adequate resources, new skills and knowledge. With the 'Implementation Communication' as this paper prescribes and based on the discussion above, it takes communication to be a key ingredient in reforming processes that can transform and break boundaries of the manager and subordinate as well as the organisation for performance will. For implementation enhancement, Dunsire, for example, found the reforms must be transformed from the political language into the professional language that the implementers' best speak [43]. This is to facilitate understanding, knowledge and capability above all building the will for commitment and performance. Formulating a systematic communication strategy aligned with the requisite values is a necessity. It is not only the reformer to communicate the reform, especially, if it is for our envisaged 'Whole of Government Approach' but all concerned. The inspiration is sourced from the 'only' successful OFY reform campaign as hinted above. It covered the entire country from top to bottom and in various local languages, the media, and schools and so on. It was well communicated and practiced massively for what it stood for.

The political decision maker must, therefore, get on board and be willing to break Dror's leadership ignorance and taboo barrier. The head of civil/public service's roles becomes more critical as in communicating behind the scenes connecting reforms between government and bureaucracy, key groups and individuals. Having hinted on the next question already full attention is now shifted below onto the political arena and leadership itself.

How do we support effective political leadership and 'political will' needed to achieve public sector reforms?

In this section "political and managerial will" is first discussed before dealing with political leadership as to how to go about providing the necessary support and remedy. From earlier discussions Implementation Communication outlined 'Will' as one of its core ingredients for possible mind-set change. Thus, Olivecrona classically argues that if one has no 'will' to perform an action then there is very little left that can be done to compel such an individual or group for any meaningful action [44]. He asserts that 'will' is purely the

individual's internal motivational affair and cannot be touched by any one; and, personal values, interests and rationality set the motivations. But in dealing with public management and reforms for public welfare: Firstly, our concerns should, therefore, go for public values and public interests [but not overlooking the individual values and interest] and how to align people to come aboard for public goods production and welfare. Secondly, Olivecrona's explanation gives meaning as to why the reform exportation and impositions have 1) overshadowed local initiation and 2) failed to work with commitment despite immense resource consumption especially at the top.

Using politics as business or to make quick riches is not new phenomenon on the African continent [23]. Ethical leadership is rarely so will it remain for the foreseeable future [45]. Lack of it affects policy, implementation communication. Also, intensions and outcomes are difficult to determine or to distinguish one from the other. For that matter, Pollitt warns about rationality's affinity to shift strongly towards economic power over others as found in the earlier question [10]. Political managers are widely perceived as entering government with the money-making mind-set [26]. To think WoG/JUG/Governance, public reformist managers in Ghana and Africa must demonstrate publicly better reform commitment alongside transparency and accountability. Pollitt and Bozeman recommend bureaucratic managers should demonstrate support to their political managers' election campaigns of promised values and needs [10,46]. Rather than that it is found personal [economic] gains take over when in power. This practice has undermined the leadership commitment and political will development at reforms.

Consequently, let us perceive governance/WoG process as a point where values and interest of various people and groups converge. This could be taken for the creation of purposeful networks (Pettigrew et al., 1992) for consensus building used in attaining policy and implementation [47]. Bardach prescribes dialogue and negotiations with occasional coercion are the appropriate motivational tools to apply alongside [41]. But the political leadership problem is too complex in that most of them may not understand the reform 'monster' in waiting at the bureaucracy as it is hardly an election campaign need or value. It is 'discovered' only at arrival on winning power. The reform may even contradict the personal, one's political party and or government's interests and values. Then also, come problem of skill and capacity to manage dilemma, dualism while keeping the transition in place [13,47]. Gummerson found that in reform situations managers are normally fired in the face of failures or nonperformance. Thirldsen (2001) reports President Yuwari Museveni fired Principal Secretaries for non-performance at Uganda's public sector reforms [2]. Ghana's abysmal performance and result at her reforms is yet to elicit such presidential or ministerial wrath even though performance management has been introduced by the CSPIP 1990 reforms.

Leadership reform performance so far demonstrates poor commitment and political will of the individual, political party, government. Apathy sets in due to lack of knowledge and skill resulting in poor value alignment and communications as found earlier. Donors have lobbied Ghana Government for an openly declared commitment and political will at reforms. From 2005-9 a Ministry of Public Sector Reforms was established as stated above as a result to partly coordinate development cooperation and partly lead the enhancement government machinery for improved service delivery. The diminished Presidential Reform Secretariat is in its fifth year. It demonstrates its commitment and political will by its silence

and lack of visibility. Comparatively, the former regime's Ministry could be credited with bring public sector reform to the political front and to the general public.

A casual survey of over 450 respondents at the Ministries area (N=50 junior and middle level officers; 21 knew but not 29) and University students (N=400 third and fourth years; 19 knew and 381 did not) did not know the name of the Minister of State in charge of the Reforms Secretariat who, in fact, had been at post since 2009. The whooping 410 will not know. Thus translated into 91 percent; leaving merely about 9 percent in the known. It is also very difficult to point out what is on the reform table today that has not been there already last decade or more. An interaction with a senior donor officer who describes the presidency as "a black box" reveals that their purse was zipped up as they were unsure of the reform mission and strategy.

The reform exporters and impositionists, for example, the Westminster passes most reforms through Parliament. In Ghana, for example, public management reforms are usually not put into laws and do not go through the rigor of Parliament. Dr Glover Quartey, a former head of the Civil Service, once retorted that that was a good thing so that the mess caused can easily be reversed and corrected. However, this also means most politicians may lack knowledge of the existing reforms unless it directly falls within their jurisdiction as Ministers (Ghana's 1992 Constitution requires that fifty percent of the Ministerial appointments come from Parliament). This dual role of minister and parliamentarian exacerbate the situation, and, often a baseless claim of lack of time to learn and adjust is made [48].

Building and enhancing leadership political will for Ghana's reforms continues quietly. As hinted earlier, it was noticed that the development partners lobbied Ghana government to take up full front line responsibility of the public sector reforms in order that they committed their resources. That yielded among others, a multi-donor harmonisation budget [49]. Its remnant being STAR Ghana composed of the British DFID, Denmark's DANIDA, USAID, EU and defunct Ministry of Public Sector Reforms. The donors themselves have failed to be united because of their different interests and values. Woll (2008) found out that they proposed and only agreed to harmonise their budgets on the condition that they kept their already existing programmes. She also observed that in spite of local officials' resistance the new budget was imposed. It has since fizzled out but not without remnants, STAR Ghana. Local interests and values are overruled by the donor. It is naturally going to be difficult to communicate such values on their behalf.

Another failure found of the political leadership is their inability to set the values between them and the bureaucrats on the one hand, and to the other between them and the society at large [13]. They argue further that while this anomaly allows the bureaucrat to seek for themselves the power to implement their own created reforms. Pollitt and Bouchaert found this practice in Nordic region between the Civil Service reform Mandarin and their political bosses [31]. The result, apathy sets in amongst the politicians, the bureaucrat and the governed which affect policy and implementation [50].

Bozeman opines values are everywhere in the environment including government documents but what to do with them constitute the problem [46]. The politico-administrative dichotomy, therefore, requires the necessary values to be set linking society at large; well-practiced and better supervised. Pollitt, for instance, advocates values such as loyalty, support for political leaders for bureaucrat and democratic values eliciting public rather than sectional or individual

good are great instances one can learn from [10]. Talking and setting values are as rare as ethical leadership. A former political master and presently a professor of Local Government and Decentralisation, Kwamina Ahwoi agrees in an interview that in Ghanaian politics for that matter public administration nobody talks about values although society at large abhors corruption and poor leadership practices. The public sector is politicised; and, for example, encumbering upon bureaucratic position by politicians is a common practice. This weakens the system, reduces trust and loyalty for performance.

This finding raises the discussion to yet another level. It is inferable from Crowther and Abdullahi that the British indirect rule was facilitated by the traditional African paying allegiance to their leaders and elders [51]. Historically, the African have respected traditional leaders and elders in orderly manner before but undermined by colonialism and Westernisation [52]. There ought to be the will to continue to do so and even extend that to all others ages too. This includes permitting, especially, the knowledgeable and skillful. It is what we need to learn to tolerate and accept in decision-making and work processes as WoG approach and governance holds in suggestion. This is symptomatic of the Ghanaian proverbial child who eats with adults having learnt how to wash her/his hands clean.

Research tells that the manager's (political, bureaucrat, private) job description is largely taken by communication and that should be done around to reach all [39]. Political managers should therefore communicate reforms amongst themselves; with bureaucrats; third sector; the private sector and with the governed. The political managers cannot continue to stay aloof citing ignorance and unbound rationality. As per sectional conclusion, the head of civil/public service, it is a legitimate need to put in motion simultaneously the dual roles: 1) setting the platform for the reform games alongside the politicians and 2) remember that the public administration machinery is the main implementing tool of government is well sensitised and equipped to support the politician for successful implementation of the reforms. Before turning to tackle the third question, it is conclusive to expect that with the leadership in tandem with the reforms; being in the lead and bringing aboard stakeholders including the governed should set the governance/WoG process off to smooth sailing.

How do we engage all the other stakeholders such as nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisation (CSOs) and development partners who are involved in development work and whose results contribute to national results

From question three above, the actors are once again: NGOs, CSOs, development partners and by inference, government. It is viewed incomplete and a fallacy as these are better defined as the sponsors who may provide funding or other relevant resources – a parochial interest group. It cannot also be wholly correct that their contribution make the difference in national results as put above. Nonetheless, this observed trend is no news. It is a very normal practice that the truly governed – citizens, opinion leaders and the (local) private sector – have normally been counted out in reform dealings. The Economic Commission for Africa's committed this blander just as in this Commonwealth WoG proposal where the governed and business sector are left out [23]. Meanwhile, between 2001 and 2008 it was Ghana Government slogan: "The private sector is the engine of growth". A ministry was created to that effect but results are difficult to find. This could explain why the governed and business sectors apathy is common with reforms. Stakeholder definition must therefore

incorporate the governed if it is indeed true that it is all for their welfare. It is only then that national needs, interest and values are properly defined and taken into consideration. Being involved initiates commitment to the reform as a whole.

President Julius Nyerere had far earlier told that we must be part of our economies development process or we are simply fools. To hold brief, the African may not be. For President Nkrumah informed that African is intelligent and lives by experiential adaptation. Thenceforth, the intellect of heads of service and or public managers must lead them to build broad based coalition or purposeful networks to include the governed. It is appropriate to remember Sheng's governance values that include participation of even the vulnerable. For this nascent WoG approach to policy and programmes, there is the need to start learning how to figure out system wide reforms from the local and traditional point of view; as well as how they are related and linked up from top to bottom and the reverse. The Ghana policy process in the last decade had made strides and deserves commendation. However, much remains to be done, especially with the communication, harmonization and feedback processes. Perhaps this disguised WoG Approach could bring them to the fore if well practiced.

The presence of the nongovernmental organisation and the part-taking of the policy process had been seen as a threat to top government bureaucrats. This is where Halligan notes that the traditional policy making role of the top bureaucratic manager is being shared and challenged [53]. This is observed by the appointment of political assistants. The private sector businesses such as consultants have gained more entry due to the new public management reforms. These are the bureaucracy periphery tinkering around and taking away jobs [13]. "Special Assistants" to Ministers and other senior politician was introduced in 2001 into Ghana's Public Administration. Consulting has also increased in volume. Creating parallel bureaucracies, especially, at the Presidency has been the norm as a result. It is truth that bureaucracy jobs are being taking away or duplicated every day and distorting reforms.

Therefore, bureaucrats have long been advised to be aware of these job encumbrances. There is the need to restructure the mind set to reflect the new challenges in the bid to stay relevant to one self and to political bosses as well as play the key roles of coordination of purposeful networks to include all stakeholders and the governed to serve society. There is therefore the need to be proactive to take on WoG/governance processes.

It has been found far away in the Finnish Public Administration that reforms are not communicated actively and openly among implementers, the service providers and the governed by the government, or the lead agency [50]. Rather, he saw the MDI (Management Development Institution, HAUS) informing their prospective students. It was recommended since the reform job is too much for the MDIs only other tertiary institutional support was necessary. The Ghana MDI seems to have lost focus as it appears to be profit making more than working at its original mandate fulfilment. It fails to be responsive to government needs as a result. The MDI are found to run modular courses as described by Pollitt and MBAs (master in business administration) which do not make managers [31,39]. The chief source of information runs contrary to President Nyerere's advice on (mostly Western) book knowledge dominance in Africa's development. Tailoring to suit needs assessment of government public management reforms is rare. Also, aligning and communicating reforms strategically have been left out. Some form of communication is found in the modular courses but Developing

Implementation Communication strategy would be more responsive to reform needs. Not only the political manager but the consultant and educator would need to be re-oriented with WoG/JUG/governance and its demands for both theory and practice.

Taylor reports that the developed countries systems are said to have poor communication with the development of ICT (information Communication and Technology) [28]. It is therefore important to understand this and how it has affected communication atomisation as that of the Ghanaian and African ICT systems take shape. Dumping of information into the systems, especially, the intranet has been observed to be taken for granted that the information is shared and, more importantly, understood [50]. As much as possible going by the fact-to-face communication which is known to have no substitute is the preferred choice [54]. Let not, Africa too, becomes victim of this technological technicality.

Implementation by itself in the words of Pressman and Wildavsky is a joint-activity [55]. And, that sits well with governance/WoG process as it brings stakeholders together. But it takes vibrant communication to create these joint-activity processes. Government circulars are never enough to disseminate reforms even in a single unit of government organization [56]. In our experiences of communicating reforms in Ghana, the defunct Ministry of Public Sector Reforms and the Office of the Head of the Civil Service had created documentary units (Price Water House Cooper's in 2003 evaluation criticised CISPIP reforms that reports are not results) and reportage journals as a supplementary to official documents that informed of reform status and progress. It did not inform of the formulation and design nor implementation and feedback largely. It has also been short-lived and did not go far enough. Getting it revived and improved is an option worthy of consideration [57,58].

Pollitt and Bouchaert recommend the media as one of the mode of handling reforms [31]. This mode had not particularly been made much use of as a mouth piece of reform communication to the governed and other stakeholders in Ghana. Some occasional posits have been done. Now that the knowledge and intricacies of the relationship between communication and reforms are better established, it is worthy of serious consideration. It forms an appropriate tool for conceptualising and developing the 'Whole of Government Approach' for active practice and consistency. It suits the African context of the extended traditional familial system and modernity. Typically, communication should not be seen as a problem to the African. Consequently, use must be made of it in the WoG/JUG/governance process.

Conclusion

This paper had begun by identifying policy and reform impositions due to changes from elsewhere; and, resource providers' roles. Also, discussed were the distortions of our traditional cultural systems; as well as the need to get involved actively to pursue our own African governments' reforms. It is important to note that the importance of communication as possessing both intrinsic and extrinsic values in the reform processes needs to be recognised and taken seriously. Implementation Communication strategies and leadership in reforms do matter. Communication is a skilful tool necessary for the public manager. Implementation communication can be used to build commitment, performance and consistency. Reforms should make values the core campaign material to political manager while head of service also keeps the dual roles abreast.

Medium to long term reform models may be better than the current rush at issues and models. Skills, capacity and political will gaps of the leadership to reform and Africanise the inherited colonial Weberian bureaucracy with Western technology will continue to be a problem for a long time to come. As such staying focus to fill such gaps will build a strong bureaucracy and government for development. A reflection on our context to find the relevant public values and interests by way of open debates, dialogue and negotiations (governance process) with relevant stakeholders is catalytic. New concepts that falls short of filling these gaps are more likely to be distractive and should be discarded. National goals are achievable if the Ghanaian and African reformer is able to bring aboard the public sector reforms the African intelligence, experience, adaptation and communication skills with all the stakeholders including the governed.

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