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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND THE CHALLENGE OF REFORM IMPLEMENTATION IN PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCIES IN GHANA

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### ABSTRACT

Beyond to highlighting on the public institutions organizational structure and the challenges of reform implementation in Ghana public sector agencies in this paper, the researchers emphasized their analysis in the previous empirical investigation and scholar literature(s). Samiatu S. (2010), George a. (2006), The study revealed that Ghana public institutions while having an organizational structure, there are still some threats as potential challenges to reforms implementation such as: lack of professional competence and skill, weak management information system, incompatible human and institutional capability, and limited finance and budget. Public institutions organizational structure whether well designed or change internal rules are not enough to foster ownership and promote sustainable reform. To secure an effective reform implementation, the reformer shall setup mechanisms which promote public agency capacity building to improve public sector performance.

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## INTRODUCTION

The state does not make sense, and its political construction is only sustainable if its "social utility" is established. In this respect, the development of public services that meet the needs and aspirations of the population is both an imperative and a priesthood for the public authorities. The delivery of public services must be seen as a sovereign mission of the State, which alone is able to guarantee equity and justice in the access of populations to social welfare. It is therefore in the light of its ability to build the capacity of the incomprehension needs of citizens, through the public service, that the credibility and viability of a state are measured. Capacity building to improve public sector performance is thus an important focus of the government development initiatives. Several implicit assumptions underlie most such efforts: that organizations or training activities are the logical sites for capacity-building interventions; that administrative structures and public policies implementation must lead to the country administration performance. The Public organizations work well when structures and good policy mechanisms are in place.

Merilee S. and Mary E. (1995)<sup>1</sup> in their study on government integrity carried out in six developing countries found that effective public sector performance is more often driven by strong organizational cultures, good management practices, and effective communication networks than it is by rules and regulations or procedures and pay scales. Public administration in Ghana as other developing countries seems to be evolving a tradition of its own, making the career bureaucrat the "master" of policy implementation. In Ghana, the bureaucracy has a near monopoly on technical expertise, and benefits from the prestige that goes to the professional expert in a society aiming toward the capacity-building of industrialization and economic growth This in effect, waste time a lot. As (Aphu E. S. 2015) propounded, in the event that you infuse time as a remedy in your everyday dealings, you will dependably have solid minutes cum productive outcomes. Thusly, time should be clung to in as much as one is locked in to execute an obligation for an authoritative execution, accomplishments and subsequently exemplifying productivity (Aphu E.S 2018). As in many countries, Ghana public administration system's reform is a dynamic process and, as any structural reform

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<sup>1</sup>Merilee S. and Mary E. (1995). Building sustainable capacity in the public sector: What can be done? Public Administration and Development.

process, it entails several essential conditions such as: determining the existent problems: Identifying optimal solutions; identifying the available resources. The organizational structure of the country's public institution evolves gradually. This paper is aiming to highlight the organizational structure of Ghana Public organization and the challenges of reforms implementation in public institutions. The paper sets out to answer a greater part of the requirements imposed by the functioning of public institutions in a complex national environment.

**Organizational Structures in Public Administration<sup>2</sup>:** In government and public sector agencies, the organizational structure establishes the responsibilities, power and control assigned to each member of an organization. It also dictates relationships between employees who provide direct services, management and directors, which sets the tone for how work is conducted and goals are achieved. A generally strict assignment of roles is important for the local and central government to accomplish short and long term projects and aid their society in overcoming complex obstacles, enabling each to better serve the public. For government to build a strong organizational structure in public sector, implementation of organizational change is required.

**Organizational Change** is a complex process of reorganization or the structure and management in public institutions. Several literatures are relevant to the case of organizational change. Change is a concept that encompasses many different meanings. To change *means in the sametime to become, to adjust, to adapt, and to transform* (Beaudoin, 1990). For Belanger (1994) change is the transition from a current state to a desired state, a current original case considered inappropriate into another deemed as adequate and which meets better the demands or the new aspirations of the concerned people. According to Grouard and Meston (1998), organizational change is "the process of radical or marginal transformation of the structures and competences set up in the process of the development of the organizations; for Collette, organizational change is "a relatively sustainable change occurring in a subsystem of the organization, provided that this change can be observed by its members or by those who are connected with that system" (Collette, Delis and Perro, 1997). Change can also occur under the environmental pressure. Usually, institutions transform themselves in a rather incremental way and not discontinuously (North, 1990).

**Purposes of Organizational Structures in Public Administration:** Organizational structures in government and public sector agencies help everyone know who does what. To have an efficient and properly functioning in public services, you need to know that there are people to handle each kind of task. At the same time, you want to make sure that people aren't running up against each other. Creating a structure with clearly defined roles, functions, scopes of authority and systems help in making sure that, the administration subordinates are working together to accomplish everything in the society that are aimed towards the capacity-building.

**Function of Organizational Structures in Public Administration:** To create a good organizational structure in public sector, the administration has to take assessment of its

functions. Doing this, government have to identify the tasks to be accomplished and from these, they shall map out functions. Usually translate these functions into the ministry on that duty. Although there are several ways to organize the tasks, the government can always choose something less traditional. But in all cases, organizational structure brings order to the list of tasks. The commonly used organizational structure in public sector are as follow:

**Vertical Structures<sup>3</sup>:** The most predominant organizational structure used by government agencies is the vertical structure. Similar to a hierarchical structure, it is characterized by having several directors at the top who are responsible for making decisions that define policies, public programs and operational procedures; these top level directors report to elected or appointed political leadership. The next level down is made up of middle managers who establish plans for accomplishing goals set out by top level administrators. The subsequent level of positions are the greatest in number and work to carry out assigned tasks. An example of this structure can be found in government agencies such as the military, where the chain of command is clearly defined and individuals within the structure focus on their specific roles and responsibilities allowing them to perform duties efficiently and proficiently in accordance with established rules and standards. The executive branch of the California State Government is another example of vertical structure, as each department reports to a higher level agency with Governor Jerry Brown at the head of command.

**Horizontal Structure<sup>4</sup>:** A horizontal structure embodies few people at the top with the majority of positions being of equal standing. Most of the individuals within this structure are peers working with one another as opposed to answering to someone higher up on the hierarchical ladder and supervising someone lower on the ladder. While this structure is most common in organizations such as law firms and medical practices where professionals have equal standing, there are instances when it applies to government agencies as well. For example, departments in smaller jurisdictions working with limited budgets and staff may utilize this structure, as it makes communication easier and allows efficient work together, building upon each other's strengths and shared responsibilities and tasks. In addition, employees in smaller public organizations enjoy more direct decision making authority and greater autonomy to demonstrate their skills as public service employees. The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence represents an example of horizontal structure, as the board and staff members are made up of specialists working together to intervene and prevent domestic violence while helping victims and their families.

**Matrix Structure<sup>5</sup>:** The matrix organizational structure utilizes at minimum a dual chain of command, in which an employee answers to two or more managers from separate departments. Most commonly in government, an employee from a different functional discipline is assigned to a project while retaining their original position within the civic service

<sup>3</sup>Session 2. Structure of an organization. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/w7503e/w7503e04.htm#designing%20organizational%20structures>

<sup>4</sup>Session 2. Structure of an organization. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/w7503e/w7503e04.htm#designing%20organizational%20structures>

<sup>5</sup>American Society for public administration, Source: <http://patimes.org/matrix-teams-public-sector/>

<sup>2</sup>Types of Organizational Structure in the Public Sector. Source: <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/types-organizational-structure-public-sector-4892>

organization. Matrix teams are created within government agencies and similar organizations to tackle complex problems because they bring together specialized employees who offer expertise and experience from other departments or agencies to address specific issues. The goal is to bring the right people and resources together to collaborate with each other and solve problems more intelligently and efficiently. These structures also establish relationships between agencies and foster better communication, visibility and organizational oversight.

Another benefit of the matrix structure is that it empowers and motivates employees to be proactive and creates new leadership roles, opportunities to expand and develop skills and capabilities outside of their initially hired position description. Challenges associated with this type of organizational structure include increased complexity and reporting to multiple supervisors. This requires clear and consistent communication and cooperation between managers and employees so that responsibilities, work priorities and performance standards are acknowledged. An example of this can be found in the Energy-Related Environmental Research Area within the California Energy Commission. Research conducted in the four main areas of air quality, global climate change, aquatic resources and terrestrial resources work towards the central goal of evaluating the effects of energy production and use on the environment.

**Divisional Structure<sup>6</sup>:** Functions and responsibilities are separated based on job specialty, service or geography in the divisional structure. Each division is fully autonomous with the resources and capabilities for handling their operations with very little input or assistance needed from other departments or agencies. Divisional structures that are separated according to regions can be seen in the court system and government agencies like police departments. These are divided and assigned to specific jurisdictions according to where they are and function on their own while running parallel to other departments. Divisional structures work in conjunction with other organizational structures. The Department of Homeland Security provides a significant example of divisional structure. Formed eleven days after the U.S terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the office first focused on developing a strategy to protect the nation against terrorism and any future attacks. In November 2002, the Homeland Security Act passed establishing it as a Cabinet-level department which led to a need for multiple divisions to handle different specific areas of threat and security, such as border security, critical infrastructure security, immigration enforcement, human trafficking and other areas. Organizational structures represent more than the way an agency is set up. These structures establish rules and responsibilities for the most efficient routes for attaining organizational objectives. While variations of these structures are used in different areas of the public sector, administrators need to be familiar with the various ways organizations are structured, and how specific organizations have changed over time, so that they can be most effective within their own organization.

**Overview of Some Countries Public Sector Institutions Structural Change:** There are several countries in which public sector institutions structure change has been

institutionalized through the establishment of separate reform bodies. The People's Republic of China has a State Commission Office for Public Sector Reforms (SCOPSR). SCOPSR is to develop and manage a comprehensive strategy of public sector reforms in China. It is the coordinating organization responsible for the overall administration reforms of public institutions across China. They have the remit to propose public sector-wide reform measures directly to the state council. It is also responsible for the implementation of decisions of the Commission Office for Public Sector Reforms at local levels – province, prefecture, municipal and the country at large. It has ministerial status (UNDP, 2007). The Government of India has set up a department in charge of reforms named the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) under the Ministry Of Personnel, Public Grievance and Pension established 31<sup>st</sup> august, 2005. Based on the administrative reforms, the Department is to facilitate the improvement of the functioning of Government by streamlining the Government by organizing methods of managing grievance, and by supporting modernization, citizen's charters, e-governance, and best practices through consultation with the central ministries States' administration, organizations and individuals. DARPG is to carry out studies on eminent national institutions, deliberating with all stakeholders, thorough consultations with the State Government and carrying out field trips in order to evaluate the realities on the ground. Joshi, (2009). As Aphu E.S and Xinhai L, (2018) indicated, the connection between the sophisticated financial institution structure and its real infrastructure accelerates economic growth and improves economic performance to the extent that it facilitates the migration of funds to the best user.

In Britain, a separate or independent unit was established by the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair. This separate unit was to spearhead and coordinate the public service reforms agenda which cuts across all aspects of the public sector. The Office of the Public Service Reform (OPSR) was founded in 2001; it was responsible for promoting the reform of public services. It was also to make sure that the wider public sector capacity is developed through structure development, skills development and the right incentives to be able to produce better services. It was to inform and coordinate the overall strategy for public services reform, cutting across sectors from education to local government<sup>7</sup>. In Bulgaria, a Ministry Of State Administration and Administrative Reform (MSAAR) was established on the 16<sup>th</sup> august, 2005. Its establishment was the decision of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria. The key priority of MSAAR is to modernize and develop organization, train and develop human resources in state institutions, the development of e-government; upgrading and streamlining of administrative regulation and service delivery in order to enhance transparency and integrity in state administration. (MSAAR report, 2006). Some of the small states from the Commonwealth Caribbean have also created an independent body for their reforms in the public sector; an example is Antigua and Barbuda. In stepping up its public sector reform initiative, the government of Antigua and Barbuda have an integrated approach to their public sector reforms, combining economic reform with social development and strategic planning processes. The success story of the reform agenda of this country was due to the creation of an independent body to coordinate the components of the reform process; it was called

<sup>6</sup>Session 2. Structure of an organization. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/w7503e/w7503e04.htm#designing%20organizational%20structures>

<sup>7</sup> Source: <http://archive.cabinet-office.gov.uk>

Ministry of Public Sector Reform and National Strategic Planning. In St. Lucia, the Ministry of Public Service was given the mandate to institutionalize the reform initiative in the public sector. Hence, the Office of the Public Sector Reforms (OPSR) was established and is responsible for the coordination of all reform initiatives, to serve as a research arm on all areas of the public sector reforms and to monitor and evaluate the effort of reforms taking place in each ministry or department etc. In the Middle East, the Government of the Republic of Lebanon in collaboration with the Lebanese Council of Ministers established an Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reforms (OMSAR). The Minister of State for Administrative Reform is entrusted with the task to coordinate the reform efforts. The office was formed in May 1994 with the support of the UNDP, to give a solution to and also reform the lacking post-civil war public administration. The Lebanese Government objective on the whole is to have a lean and well-organized public administration which is able to make available essential services to its citizens. (OMSAR annual report, 2002).

From the Eastern part of Africa, the government of Kenya - in pursuing its reform agenda - established an independent secretariat for the public sector reforms in September 2004, to lead the implementation of an all-inclusive and integrated public sector reform programme. The task of the secretariat is to correspond and transform the public service. Ntimama, (2005). The Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform was established in 2006 in Cameroon and its mandate is to develop, implement and evaluate government's policy with regard to public office and administrative reforms. The Ministry is to coordinate the training for government bureaucrats for professionalism within the public sector. The Ministry also studies and forwards measures aiming at improving the cost-output ratio in the public services and acceleration of the treatment of the administrative files; this is to ensure the supervision of all government institutions. Kauzya and Balogun (2005). The Ugandan government in its quest to restructure their public administration system - set up a Directorate of Administrative Reform under the Ministry of Public Service. The mandate of this Directorate is to administer, harmonize and implement Public Service Reform Programme, to guarantee sustainability of reforms in the public service Harrison, (2002). The Republic of Mauritius has a Ministry of Civil Service and Administration Reforms which is to spearhead reforms to enable the delivery of timely and quality service to the public. The objective of the ministry is to modernize the public service and also promote ethics and core values in the public sector. It is also their undertaking to steer and at the same time be a vehicle and a facilitator for development in public administration. Jhugroo, (2006). On 16th September 2003, an independent office for public service reforms was established in Nigeria. This Bureau of **Public Service Reforms (BPSR)** is to function as the '*engine house and driver*' of reforms. Its main objective is to see to the progress of the public service reforms, to drive and coordinate all reforms in the public sector effectively and also to ensure the internalization of all aspects of reform in the public service. The establishment of the Bureau, which is a first in Nigerian history, is designed to provide an institutional platform to internalize the multi-sectoral reforms of the public sector. It is also to guarantee and facilitate reforms in order to improve the quality and output of the Public Service and surpass the tenure of the Administration that initiated it (Goke, 2006). The government sector should be clearly distinguished from the

rest of the economy, where policy and management roles within government should be well defined. There should be a clear legal and administrative framework for fiscal management. The public should be provided with full information on the past, current, and projected fiscal activity of government expenditure. A public commitment should be made to the timely publication of fiscal information. Besides, the prerequisites of budgeting are a matter of technique and will, rather than the product of environmental conditions. Politics are not as indispensable as economics. Good budgeting is a matter of regulation and significant to development. (Aphu E. S et al, 2015)

**Public Sector Institutions Structural Change in Ghana:** In the Western part of Africa, Ghana and Nigeria are the two countries that created separate institutions to house their public sector institutions structural change. These institutions are respectively, the Ministry of Public Sector Reforms in Ghana and the Bureau of Public Service Reforms in Nigeria as stated above. The establishment of the Ministry of Public Sector Reform (MPSR) in Ghana in May 2005 was an attempt to facilitate the implementation of fundamental public sector reforms. In addition, the MPSR has been established to give a new lease of life to reform efforts and at the same time to facilitate and coordinate upcoming governmental efforts. The MPSR is an institutional home for all Public Sector Reforms and is responsible for monitoring, coordinating and as well as evaluating the progress of reforms across the Public Sector. MPSR brochure, (2006).

**Analysis of the Design and Structure of Ghana Public Institutions:** Ghana Ministry of Public Sector Reform (MPSR), an independent institutions was established to run government programmes like policies and reforms led to an elimination of characteristics which have been negatively attributed to the public institutions for an effective and sustainable management of government programmes. Hence successful implementation of reform programmes to be effective and efficient. The MPSR is to support, monitor and evaluate progress and sustainability of reforms across the Public Sector. The ministry as an agency has developed a fully costed, prioritized and time-bound (5years) programme to manage all the key reforms that are taking place in the Public Sector. Owusu-Bonsu, (2007). The MPSR Vision, Mission and Policy Objectives was set as follow:

**Vision and Mission:** MPSR's vision is to build a public service which is transparent, motivated and committed. Their mission is to promote timely performance which is transparent in the service delivery of the Public Sector. This can be said to be a measure to meet the objectives of government which is development. Also, to help in attaining the Millennium Development Goals, by facilitating poverty reduction, led by the private sector.

**Policy Objectives of MPSR:** The first policy objective of the MPSR is to coordinate, monitor, evaluate as well as implement reforms of the Public Sector. There is also a need to increase the capacity of the public service for efficient and effective performance in service delivery. In view of this, the second objective of MPSR is to develop (increase) the capacity of the public service in its totality. Thirdly, in order to improve their performance and increase financial sustainability, the objective of MPSR is to restructure as well as transform Sub vented Agencies.

This will lead to a reduction of their dependency on the central government of Ghana. Lastly, to improve the performance of the public service, MPSR took into consideration to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Public Sector.

#### **Review of Empirical Studies on Reform or Innovation in Public Agency:**

The innovation capacity of any public sector organization is related to the environment within which it is located. Therefore, an important first set of considerations is the formal structures within which each municipality is located. Some governance structures have an impact on social innovation. These include the political and administrative context, the legal culture of the public sector, state and governance traditions, and resource arrangements. These characteristics can either function as a trigger for innovation or as constraining it. Based on an analysis of the literature, Bekkers et al (2013) found that the following aspects of the environment could function as important drivers and barriers of innovation: The social and political complexity of the environment in which public organizations operate which leads to specific demands that function as an external 'trigger' for innovation. The characteristics and degree of the legal culture in a country or policy sector, which shapes the level of formalization and standardization and the degree of rule-driven behavior. The type of governance and state tradition in a country or policy sector, which affects the amount of discretion that public sector organizations have to explore and implement new ideas. The allocation of resources, resource dependency and the quality of relationships between different (public and private) organizations at different levels, which all have an impact on how well innovation practices are supported. More specifically, the formal structures that have been previously identified as being positively and negatively related to innovation capacity (Bekkers et al 2013) are political and administrative triggers such as crises and competition (positive effect), a strong formalized, centralized, rule-bound and silo-bound legal culture (negative effect), and a decentralized state, corporatist governance traditions, and strong civil society (positive effect).

A research carry out by Samiatu S. (2010) on Ghana policy and reform implementation processed concluded that In the Ministry of Public Service Reform, insight from three (3) out of the four (4) interviewees revealed the need for a separate or independent body to steer the reforms in the Public Sector for accountability's sake. The Senior Consultant - Project Implementation Specialist MPSR (interview June 2009).

*"A Public Sector reform is a continuous process and not a one-time intervention. We have not yet reached the stage where our public institutions are strong enough, better or matured to know what and how they have to change to adopt to the ever-changing environment. A chief director, chief executive officer may know the problem and even solution to the problem. However, to be able to initiate it is difficult, so a separate body in charge of reforms is very much needed to see to the ever-growing problems within the Public Sector in order for the public officials to concentrate on their work or day-to-day activities"*

The Head of the Client Service Unit MPSR (interview, June 2009)

*"I always continue to advocate a separate body, or as you said an independent body to take charge of the reform agenda or*

*activities for the sake of accountability before donor fatigue sets in. This supposition is based on past experience where public officials or people in charge of reforms within their sector ministries could not be held responsible for their in actions and inefficiencies because they always found an excuse, like a lack of consultation and coordination, lack of technical knowledge and so on."*

To sum up from the respondents of the interview, Ghana public institutions reforms and policies can be smoothly implemented and coordinated in any form to achieve the target goal if the staff in charge of execution has been well trained accordingly in taking the influence of the environment into account. The need for staff training in innovative reform implementation is very important because there is always difficulty in defining the roles between the implementing and supervising agency for the reason that there is no specific defined responsibility when there is individual reform programme in place. A silent or indirect institutional culture has many roles to play where people in the system (public service) have developed attitudes and perceptions that have been adopted from within and these attitudes have to change. Examples of such attitudes are nepotism and tribalism that have characterized appointments and promotions within the Ghanaian public service at the expense of competence (professional qualification). To have a sustainable and effective implementation of reform, the people within the service must understand the need for the reform and what kind of reform is being carried out or embarked upon and the benefits they are going to gain. In line with the ways of reform effective implementation in public institution, the World Bank has had a mixed record in public sector reform to date. Analysis by OED and QAG, as well as the experience gained during the past decade by the Bank's operational staff, show the extensive breadth and depth of Bank involvement and effort, with both successes and failures as outcomes. They also point to several systemic shortcomings of past Bank work in this area: It has sometimes relied on models of "best practice" that have not been feasible in the particular country setting, given variations in human and institutional capacity. There has traditionally been a shortage of staff skills in certain specialized areas related to governance, institutional reform, and capacity building, in part reflecting the lower demand for these skills in the past given the limited emphasis placed on institution building goals.

#### **Models of Public Administration and Approaches to Public Sector Reform:**

Several researches had been carried out in public administration and public sector reforms in developing and developed countries as well. Models of public administration in developing countries have generally drawn on experience in advanced countries and public sector reforms have often mirrored reform initiatives originating in OECD countries. Several frameworks have been developed to classify and analyse different approaches to public administration and public sector reforms in developing countries. Most of these focus on the transition from the Old Public Administration to the New Public Management that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. Due to the important role of public sector organization in the socioeconomic development of the nation, the Kuffour Administration (formal president of Ghana), after a review of past reform policies in Ghana, created a new department called the Ministry of Public Sector Reform in 2003 to implement much needed public sector reforms in the country. Aryeetey and Kanbur, (2007).

**Table 1. Public Service Reform Problems and Approaches**

	Problems	Approach	Main action Period
1	How can we put government on orderly efficient footing?	“Weberian” public administration and capability building	Post-Independence
2	How can we get government closer to the grassroots?	Decentralization	1970s to present
3	How can we make government more affordable?	Pay and employment reform	1980s and 1990s
4	How can we make government perform and deliver our key objectives?	New Public Management	1990s to present
5	How can we make government more honest?	Integrity and anti-corruption reforms	1990s to present
6	How can we make government more responsive to citizens?	“Bottom-up” Reform	Late 1990s to present

Source: McCourt, 2013

The mixed results of past reform efforts have compelled African governments and international agencies to re-evaluate policies. The results have led to a sober realization that improving the performance of public organizations is a difficult and multifaceted task that must include strategies to fundamentally change the culture prevalent in public sector organizations. From 2000 there was a discernible trend towards an emerging model variously termed the “new public service”, the “new public governance” or the “post-New Public Management” Dunleavy and Hood, 1994; Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000; Osborne, 2006). Each of these approaches to public administration is associated with a distinct philosophy and conceptual framework. The traditional approach to public administration is predicated on a top-down and elitist approach in which public officials are instilled with values of hierarchy, independence, and integrity, and are insulated from politicians and citizens. The focus in this approach is on structure and organizational efficiency, epitomized by command and control and underpinned by a clear public sector ethos. In contrast, the New Public Management approach is based on public choice theory and the principal-agent approach in which public officials require oversight and supervision to constrain their self-interested behaviour and thereby prevent inefficiency and corruption. The New Public Service perspective, rooted in democratic theory, emphasizes the accountability of officials to citizens, whereby officials serve and respond to citizens rather than steering society. It assumes that public officials will be motivated to serve by virtue of a commitment to the public interest and will respond to citizens’ expectations of a healthy and responsive public service. Osborne, (2006); Denhardt and Denhardt, (2011). Many developing countries have followed a similar trajectory of approaches and reforms to those in more advanced countries through broader governance agendas supported by aid donors. Other approaches to public sector reform have also featured in these countries, notably decentralization, pay and employment reforms, integrity and anti-corruption reforms and “bottom-up” reforms, designed to improve the development effectiveness of government agencies. These are summarized by McCourt (2013) in Table 1 (above).

**Challenges of Reform Implementation in Public Sector Institutions in Ghana:** Decade has seen attempts to adopt similar reforms in an increasing number of low-income countries, often due to external pressure or influence. Batley and Larbi, (2004); Bangura and Larbi, (2006); McCourt and Minogue, (2001). While NPM reform in developed countries is well documented. Pollitt and Boukaert, (2000); Kickert, (1997); Christensen and Lægriid (2002), the empirical evidence of its application in low-income countries has only recently begun to receive attention Batley and Larbi, (2004). Yet countries differ widely in terms of their capacity and institutional conditions to implement the new approaches to public Agencies reform, even in OECD countries. Pollitt, (2002); Matheson and Kwon, (2003); Ridley, (1996).

Economic and fiscal crises, characterized by massive public sector deficits, external trade imbalances, and growing indebtedness, has been by far the most important factors driving the introduction of ambitious reforms in the public sector in most sub-Saharan African countries since the 1980s, which then led to reforms in public administration. World Bank, (1997); Batley and Larbi, (2004); Bangura and Larbi, (2006). In the specific case of Ghana, external debts stood at US\$1.7 billion at the end of 1982, and disposable resources available for exports stood at US\$33 million vis-à-vis outstanding short-term commitments on debts amounting to US\$348 million. With credit lines to international banks blocked, the government was left with no option but to accept the IMF/World Bank’s stabilization and adjustment package in 1983 (Larbi, 1998a: 177; Ghana, 1987; Hutchful, 2002). A study carry out by George A. (2006) on the new public management as a template for reforms in health and water sector in Ghana found that major constraint in this reform implementation was weak management information systems, lack of adequate professional staff, limited finance and budget which was related to the broader financial crisis and the unpredictability of government budgets. Overlapping lines of responsibility and weak coordination mechanisms sometimes lead to policy confusion, conflict of authority, and delays in appointments and approval of some capital expenditure for decentralize agencies. The centralization of control over operational resources are due to lack of adequate financial decentralization, mistrust in the capacity of decentralized agencies and units to manage their budgets, and uncertainty in government finance. The capacity of central agencies to set and monitor targets, and to set the macro policy and regulatory frameworks for decentralized agencies, is crucial in a decentralized environment. Larbi, (1998b). However, this capacity is yet to be developed and consolidated, especially in the health sector. While Ghana is an “oasis of peace and tranquility” in West Africa and is moving increasingly towards consolidating democracy, its progress remains “fragile,” concludes a comprehensive African review of the country. The analysis, released publicly in mid-2006, was the first one completed under the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), a scheme through which African states voluntarily assess each other’s political and economic management, or “governance.”<sup>8</sup> But, Ghana Public sector institutions reform remain facing some challenges due the some external and internal forces.

## Conclusion

Ghana government is fighting to do the right things and focus on essentials reform leading to their capacity building and improve public sector performance.

<sup>8</sup>Ghana takes African governance exam. Source: <http://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/october-2006/ghana-takes-african-governance-exam>

To guarantee a successful coordination of reform, the government under the former president Kuffour Administration created a new department called the Ministry of Public Sector Reform (MPSR) in 2003 to implement much needed public sector reforms in the country. Aryeetey and Kanbur, (2007). Notwithstanding the effort of the government through the MPSR, our investigation in previous empirical studies showed that reform implementation of public institutions are still facing both internal and external threats as potential challenges including:

**Lack of Competence:** Professional qualification is crucial to endorse a sustainable and effective implementation of reform, the staff must understand the need for the reform and what kind of reform is being carried out or embarked upon and the benefits they are going to gain.

**Incompatible Human and institutional capacity:** To handle a reform that relied on models of “best practice” that have not been feasible in Ghana.

**Lack of Staff Skills:** shortage of staff skills in certain specialized areas related to governance, institutional reform, and capacity building, in part reflecting the lower demand for these skills in the past given the limited emphasis placed on institution building goals.

#### **Weak management information systems**

**Limited Finance and Budget:** Allocated to the reform project implementation leading to the non-adequate financial decentralization within the institution agencies. Reform will proceed only when reform bodies are professionally well trained, possessing the skill to handle the specific task, committed and in the driver’s seat. But changing the organizational structure and/or internal rules of management is usually not enough to achieve reform.

Reform implementation to be effective, each agency reform team need to work with their partners to understand and address the broad range of incentives and pressures both inside and outside of the institution that affect public sector performance. But also there is no question that reforms must be supported and driven at the highest levels of government to be effective. But changing organizational structure or internal rules is not enough to foster ownership and promote sustainable reform. To secure the public sector institutional reform effective implementation, the reform body shall setup a mechanisms which promote public sector effectiveness and good governance by looking in to:

**Internal rules and restraints:** Among internal accounting and auditing systems, independence between the different groups according to the task, civil service and Finance and budgeting rules.

**Voice and partnership:** As decentralization to empower communities, service delivery surveys to solicit citizen feedback.

**Competition:** competitive social service delivery with private participant in the area, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and privatization of certain task that the institution don’t hold the expertise in doing it and/or the execution will have an additional charge on the budget.

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