

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT: WHAT ARE THE PERSPECTIVES FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT?

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Abstract

Governance is always perceived as trustworthy benchmark for good practices in prediction for better results through transparency and accountability. This is the reason why Western liberal democrats considered good governance as a prerequisite for Africa's socio-economic development. This school of thought inferred that, democracy is the panacea for Africa's woes and precarious socio-economic predicament. On the other hand, the second school of thought spearheaded by those who challenge the myth of market liberalism, postulate that socio-economic development is an essential conditionality for establishing viable democracy. Their thinking in this line is strongly promoted by countries such as South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey, and South Africa, where socio-economic development has occurred either under non-democratic or outright dictatorial governments. After the institutionalization of their economic development, these countries then embarked on a dynamic democratization process. Compromise analysts posit that despite the apparent dichotomy between the two views, there is merit in both approaches, because there is a positive correlation between democracy, good governance and socio-economic development. This group therefore proposes the concurrent institutionalization of both democracy and economic growth through a process of adaptation. They recommend that such a process should be gradual and inclusive, comprehensive and systematic, taking into cognizance the dynamic peculiarities and socio-cultural realities of African countries. This paper critically examines these views arising thereof.

Keywords: Good Governance, Liberal democrats, Socio-economic development, Institutionalisation, democratization, dictatorial government.

Introduction

There is a resuscitated and ongoing debate – very robust in nature - on the indispensability of Western liberal representative democracy to development, particularly among the underdeveloped and developing economies of Africa. Opinions, and the literature supporting them, are divided on the issue. For some analysts, the institutionalization of liberal representative democracy is a precondition for the creation of an enabling environment for the introduction of policies likely to lead to the socio-economic development of Africa's mostly underdeveloped economies. For this group therefore, democracy is the panacea for Africa's woes and precarious socio-economic predicament (Skhar, 1979; Carrey, 1993; Elagab, 1993; Dorraj, 1994; Hope, 1997). Others, among them some who challenge the myth of market liberalism, maintain that socio-economic development is an essential conditionality for the establishment of democracy (Amsden, 1989; Wade, 1990; Adedeji, 1990, 1995; Beckman, 1991; Schatz, 1994). Quite a number of them argue that this later position is sustained by the observed experience of countries like South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey, and South Africa (to mention but a few), where socio-economic development has occurred either under non-democratic or outright dictatorial governments. After the institutionalization of their economic development, these countries then embarked on a dynamic democratization process which has reinforced the overall emancipation of the greatest majority of their citizenry. Compromise analysts posit that despite the apparent dichotomy between the two views, there is merit in both approaches, because there is a positive correlation between democracy and socio-economic development. This group therefore proposes their concurrent institutionalization, through a process of adaptation. They recommend that such a process should be gradual and inclusive, comprehensive and systematic, taking into cognizance the dynamic peculiarities and socio-cultural realities of African countries (Olukoshi et. al., 1994; Strydom and Fiser, 1995; M'baya, 1995; Ake, 1996; Ezeanyika, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2006; Jega, 2003).

The concept linking the development of liberal democracy as an instrument of socioeconomic development evolved in North America and Europe (particularly among European Union [EU] members) in the mid- and late 1980s. The conceptualization of this new approach was aided by events in the international system such as the end of the Cold War, and the emergence of democratic movements from the civil societies of many underdeveloped and developing countries. The EU took a fundamental step in its development policy toward developing, but particularly underdeveloped economies, when, in November 28, 1991, it adopted the Resolution on Human

Rights, Democracy and Development. With the traditional approaches to development co-operation, the argument that political factors may play a decisive role in the creation of development opportunities, thus enhancing overall economic performance is currently being strongly encouraged and pursued. North American countries and EU members have buried the 'aid without conditionality' era, particularly in Africa. The United States of America (USA) set the tune. In the summer of 1992, when he was still a presidential candidate, Bill Clinton outlined his views on projected USA policies toward Africa. According to him, "we must reform our aid programmes to ensure that the assistance we provide truly benefits Africans and encourages the development of democratic institutions and free market economies" (Topic, 1992).

The EU's approach has been to lay down very stringent political and/or economic conditionalities in accordance with the stipulations of the Maastricht Treaty (Diop, 1994:15). The argument that these conditionalities are informed by Europe's economic recession in the past few years, and the public opinion within EU member countries on the repeated failures of development aid policies does not imply that the attachment of demands to aid-giving would ensure the establishment of Western-types liberal democracies that would in turn ensure socio-economic development in Africa. It is a truism that such democratic clauses introduced in a number of important development co-operation 'contracts' between the EU and Latin America prior to the 1990s have not succeeded in institutionalising democracy in the region.

After the brief discussion on liberal democracy and socio-economic development, section 2 of this article critically examines the daunting challenges faced by African countries compelled to adopt Western models of liberal democracy with their weak economies still undergoing structural transformation. Section 3 presents an incisive discussion on the popularisation of multi-partism and its symbiotic linkages with socio-economic development and neo-liberalism. It also discusses the fallacious assumptions inherent in their wholesome adoption. Section 4 contributes to the ongoing debate on the role and impact of the civil society in the contemporary process of democratisation in the 21st century. Section 5 presents our concluding remarks.

The Challenge of Liberal Democracy in Economies in Structural Transformation

We want it to be clearly understood that liberal democracy is not synonymous to socio-economic development. In other words, the introduction of liberal democratic principles by African emerging international elite and their cohorts through constitutions and/or other legal documents does not inevitably bring about the socio-economic transformation of a polity. Among many African countries, Nigeria under President Shehu Shagari (1979-1993) and President Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007) are case studies. It is however a truism that it cannot develop in an environment where the majority is condemned in a debilitating prison of absolute, acute and disproportionate poverty in the midst of the ostentatious few (Ezeanyika, 2006, 2008), or where stringent International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed structural adjustment programmes (SAP) are imposed on economies undergoing structural transformation. Most of Africa's underdeveloped countries are responding poorly to the twin responsibilities of managing socio-economic and political reforms.

Based on Africa's dependence on foreign aid from the developed economies of the West for its development, and the necessity for its countries to establish Western liberal democracies to secure and ensure the continuance of development assistance, African countries must face up to the challenge of simultaneously managing economic dynamism and the needs of their civil societies. The implication is that they have to sustain the economic logic of their SAP in tune with the political logic of the democratisation process.

The adoption of multi-partism does not guarantee the institutionalisation of a statist and representative-type of liberal democracy and democratic principles including legitimacy, accountability, transparency and civil liberties. It has to be recognised that the introduction of multi-party constitutions may not in themselves, be enough to sustain 'new' democracies in the 21st century (Moore, 1993). While national debates and pluralist elections are fundamental steps leading toward the creation of an enabling and sustainable democratic environment in Africa, these structures need to be reinforced and supported by sound socio-economic reforms and development policies, and a myriad of non-state actions and activities involving the civil society (Shaw and MacLean, 1996:250).

The initiation, evolution and development of an indigenous political culture, which is people-inspired and people-oriented, and rooted in their socio-cultural experiences and realities needs to be valorised. Though their trade-historic experiences vary, their colonial and post-colonial realities constitute their binding cord. Taking Nigeria for instance, the colonial experience is measurably similar and the post-colonial misrule is evenly felt across the vast and densely populated country. Therefore, no matter the ethnic group that enjoy hegemonic power at a given time, it is the same national elite that continue to benefit from the largesse of government while the majority of the populace suffers across the divide.

The African inclusive democracy project is, to a very large extent, an internally engineered, gradual, and inherently long-term and endogenous process that has to emanate from within local and national institutions that will be able to fairly and equitably share power, in a holistic manner, for the national management of opportunities and resources. This leads us to pose the following questions: How do we allocate power? Who should eventually wield the ultimate power? The answers to these important questions are going to inform us about who should be the ultimate target of state's policies? Is it the majority of the people in a given African country? In this case, if development, that is, economic, political and socio-cultural, targets the majority, it becomes democratic. On the contrary, it is a pretext. The supposed popular empowerment that has generally eluded African international elite should be a major focal point in the centre of any meaningful discourse on democracy and development.

Multi-partism, Socio-economic Development and Neo-liberalism

In the majority of the world's peripheral countries (which includes almost all of those from Africa), the wholesome adoption of Western-style models of multi-party democracy and their neo-liberal economic policies now dominate the debate on sustainable socio-economic development (Peet and Watts, 1993; Slater, 1993; Ake, 1996; Jega, 2000). These models are not new to the African continent. European colonial powers, at the last stage of colonisation, fashioned constitutions similar to theirs, for the territories they occupied (Young, 1970; Olamola and Ola, 1979; and Chuku, 1997). These constitutions, patterned mainly after those of Britain and France, possessed the fundamental principles of multi-party democracy (Ake, 1991, 1994; Anyang, 'Nyongo, 1992; Ezeanyika, 2007). The economic policies embraced by the majority of these 'nominally' political independent African countries had development agenda of export-oriented growth and free market capitalism (Myers, 1996). However, Africans' perceptions of Western democratic ideals and their free market economies were diverse and so were their impacts in different states.

These diverse perceptions and different national impacts in Africa call for insights from previous experiences. This approach is fundamental to the understanding of the dynamism of African countries' current structural transformation (Osaghae, 1995: 184). It could therefore be said that the current debate on democratisation, sustainable socio-economic development, and neo-liberalism in Africa is an old debate and the continent has been engaged in it for nearly five decades. While the pre-independence experiences of most African territories were patterned to the colonial policies of their 'conquerors', they were however all principally geared toward comprehensive and systematic exploitation, plunder and destruction. Therefore, post-independence multi-party liberal democracy has affected and has been affected by the socio-cultural realities in each country. The national political configurations have shaped Africans' reactions to multi-partism, leading to the gradual and progressive emergence of international African elite.

The imposition of Western-style multi-partism and neo-liberalism on African countries is based on some fallacious and inconsistent assumptions. It takes for granted the dynamic pluralism of most African countries, thus making the wholesome application of these foreign models of political and economic development disruptive. There is also the tendency among Western governments and scholars to assume that their style of multi-party, statist and representative liberal democracy is a superior one and the best political arrangement for all nations, in fact, that it is, 'the end of history' (Fukuyama, 1992).

There are discernible contradictions in Western governments' disbursement of development assistance. On the one hand, some countries which abide to their model of multi-party elections are rewarded with 'generous' development aid and held up as exemplary models for other countries to follow (Sarnoff, 1987; Hayward, 1987; Bowman, 1991), while on the other hand, these same Western governments and their donor agencies also provide generous development aid to well-known non-democratic and/or outright dictatorial African governments.

Meanwhile, most of those African countries undergoing Western-imposed and sponsored SAPs have to bear the brunt of their conditionalities (Mengisteab and Logan, 1993). One of the principal conditionalities imposed on the majority of the underdeveloped and developing countries is the reduction of the state's role in the economy, a role which is covertly active in most developed economies (Shafaeddin, 1994; Ezeanyika, 1995; 2002). There is sufficient evidence tacitly embedded in the national economic policies of the developed nations which encourages intervention in the 'free flow' of their economies. It is overtly explained as government incentives to sustain and spur growth. Empirical examinations of African countries' political economy show that in most of them (if not all), the state's participation is critical to the overall development (Osaghae, 1995:190; Ezeanyika, 2006). Strong state's intervention in Africa's underdeveloped and developing economies is, at this nascent stage of its socio-economic development, inevitable.

National patrimonies like land are fundamental for the actualisation of even development since they inhibit the causes of neo-liberal socio-economic development (Reyna and Downs, 1988; Berry, 1988). States are therefore responsible for the equitable distribution of land so as to create an enabling environment for effective and efficient utilisation. To achieve the desired goal of socio-economic development, African countries formulate interventionist policies designed to regulate and register land acquisition and transfer, even if these are to give way to a privatised land market (Ciekawy, 1988; Sevilla, 1995; Mabogunjo, 1995). With the ongoing international campaign for the adoption of environmentally friendly socio-economic development policies, Africa's fragile and vulnerable economies are expected to introduce similar ones which should include strategies for environmental control (Cocklin and Furuseth, 1994). The contradictions on the one hand, expecting African governments to drastically reduce their role in the economy and, on the other hand, asking them to ensure equitable land distribution and environmental control - have been the bane of aid donors-recipients relations.

The development of sustainable institutions is fundamental to the emergence and growth of sustainable democracy, including the liberal democratic ideals and neo-liberalism. The institutions preferred by the West are those involving the civil society (Colclough and Mayor, 1991; Bratton and Rothchild, 1992; Hyden and Bratton, 1992). Similar institutions have existed in the majority of African communities for centuries and they have ensured, to a large extent, rural self-help, development and social cohesion (Stride and Ifeka, 1971; Ejiogor, 1982; Ezeanyika, 2007).

The civil society, which includes non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector, cannot alone sustain democratic ideals and spur neo-liberal socio-economic development in Africa. Government institutions "which produce, transmit and stabilise development 'truths' have to be involved because they produce the knowledge and practices of democracy and development both within the government and in the civil society" (Escabor, 1988; Watts, 1993).

It has been observed that the geography of a state's institutions plays a key role to its operation. Therefore, the concept of decentralisation of authority must take into consideration the fact that it requires that, of necessity be conceived in spatial terms (Gore, 1984). Such a development will enable it meet the people's needs in their rural communities. This is why Anyang 'Nyongo's (1992:92) argument that democracy is not about what government do; it is about what the people do to make their governments accomplish things for the common good, is not 'idealism run wild' as interpreted by Bratton (1992:4). This is a very fundamental principle that has been behind the institutionalisation of Western liberal democracies. It is also not naive, as stated by Myers (1996:224) to assume that governments at the local level, if given autonomy, are more likely, over time, to accomplish things for the common good. Though the performance of local administrators has been, in most nascent democracy projects, generally poor, there is still sufficient and encouraging evidence from surveys carried out both in Francophone and Anglophone Africa (Cameroon, Togo, and Benin with their actualisation of communal government through *préfectures*, *arrondissements* and *départements* that are equivalent to the local government and county systems of the Anglophone countries like Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana). Using Nigeria as an example of an Anglophone country, its experience, since 1976, with the creation of semi-autonomous local government areas (LGAs) both in non-democratic and in civil rule shows that, in the communities where it has had a positive impact, this administrative innovation has, to a very large extent, brought government actions and activities to the doorsteps of the rural populace, and city dwellers. In the remote rural areas, far away from the state capitals, the devolution of authority to the LGA chairpersons and councillors has substantially contributed in the accomplishment of activities for the common good.

Within the LGA context, where those involved in the local governance are members of the local constituencies, their actions and activities have been more in tune and geared toward solving some of the myriad of socio-economic and other development problems in the concerned rural areas. It is particularly in this context that the genuine people-inspired and people-oriented 'local' civil society has played a two-fold role: keeping the emancipation and the socio-economic development of the people in the top agenda of the LGA authorities, and keeping those in government (elected or appointed) on their toes.

The state governments are generally perceived as far away authorities despite their proximity to the LGAs. In most LGAs in Nigeria, the federal government is almost always absent, and its presence is rarely felt, because its actions and activities are too far away from the rural people and very few, if any federal presence is felt in the majority of these remote areas. The LGA authority therefore becomes the intermediary between the rural people, the states, and the federal government. Though the effective utilisation of bounded spaces to regulate social behaviour is highly uneven in practice in most African countries, the experimentation of multi-party democracy in some of them that is focused on the devolution of state power is gradually bringing it to the people, from whom it was hijacked in the first place. The participation of rural people in their own governance makes them direct parties to the planning and execution of their socio-economic development programmes. The above position is not opposed to Lemarchand's (1992:181) argument that spatial tactics of states involve much more than the delineation of territorial units. It

rather reinforces the position that genuinely empowering to the people by making them a party to the selection and election processes in their communities ensures that the majority of those in position of authority at the third tier (and in other theirs) of government have a socio-cultural commitment to their communities. This is most likely to encourage social responsibility, reduce conflict and encourage unity and cohesion.

We are not oblivious of the scandalous levels of power abuse that the LGAs system has experienced since its inception, particularly in Nigeria. We are therefore, conscious of the fact that generalizing the gains of decentralisation is hazardous. This is particularly so because the large majority of African countries are still in the *democracy project* stage of development, where their policy-making machinery is just being articulated by their international elite. They have attained only the transition from military to civil rule. Most African countries are still grappling with the next stage or the second transition, from civil rule to the democratising process. It is at this stage that the greatest majority of Africans will begin to enjoy and reap the dividends of the *democratisation process*, made possible by the peoples' direct appropriation of their power from the international elite and its transfer to themselves.

The Role of the Civil Society in Africa's Democracy Project

Africa's contemporary political economy is quite different from that inherited at the end of colonisation and the beginning of neo-colonisation. These changes are as a result of two major sets of events: the evolution of national and international economies and the civil societies; and the evolution of national policies (Shaw and Maclean, 1996:284). The SAPs have dominated Africa's political economy of the 1980s with their neo-liberal conditionalities. These programmes, according to Shaw and Maclean (1996) "were simply a formalisation and extension of pre-and post-independence dependency, the negative effects of which had been initially camouflaged by post-war growth and post-independence honeymoon." It is on record that SAPs were introduced in Africa during the period through which the Cold War attained its apogee and then collapsed. During this same period, the world economy was in recession, thus exacerbating the socio-economic problems confronting Africa's underdeveloped and developing countries.

Structural adjustment programmes were designed in the 1980s by the Breton Woods institutions - the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. During the second half of the 1980s, these programmes were imposed on most African countries, particularly those very dependent on and highly desirous of Western development aid. The officially stated objective of these policies was to stabilise African economies by reducing the macro-economic mismanagement, particularly over-valued exchange rates and high rates of inflation, highly protective trade regimes,

government intervention in regulating markets and controlling prices, and heavy direct taxation of agriculture, over extended roles for public enterprises, and government control and intervention in the operation of financial institutions (World Bank, 1994:3). The initial focus of SAPs, that is, on economic policies and terms of trade has, since the early 1990s included other conditionalities such as political, ecological and military elements, and others such as democratic institutions and multi-party elections, and increased environmental) and decreased strategic expenditures (Shaw and Maclean, 1996: 248). The whole agenda for the proposed reforms reflect Western concepts of democratic and neo-liberal hegemony.

Even the World Bank acknowledges that SAPs have negative effects on the majority of those groups in absolute, acute and disproportionate poverty, even in those African countries that have sustained major reform policies. Lipumba (1995:45) notes that “policies do not go far enough, even in those countries that are doing the best job of reforming are not achieving the growth rates that can significantly reduce poverty in the medium terms.” The bottom line is therefore that “with today’s poor policies, it will be forty years before the region returns to its per capita income of the mid-1970s” (World Bank, 1994: 36). The adverse effects of SAPs are also affecting the middle and upper classes of the African society. In the words of Shaw and Maclean (1996:249) “they have been affected negatively albeit belatedly as:

1. Their real incomes have declined precipitously, especially in terms of foreign exchange;
2. Costs of goods and services have escalated as inflation and user fees have risen.”

The group’s decline in prosperity has profound implications for development as well as for democracy. Without a strong middle class, sustainable democracy is unlikely. Therefore, the assumption that SAPs would ultimately contribute to the emergence of thriving middle classes throughout the continent involves a fallacy of social composition which parallels the economic fallacy that unlimited opportunity for diversification and expansion of exports exists even when most underdeveloped and developing countries are subject to similar SAPs conditionalities.

Two decades after the 1960s, the majority of African countries had regained nominal political independence from their former colonisers, adopting either the liberal democratic ideal or the socialis one, corresponding to the prevailing bipolarity of the international system (Ezeanyika, 1999). In spite of the favourable economic conditions of the 1970s, most states had adopted the one-party system and their leaders had entrenched their interventionist power either through the perpetuation of the one-party state controlled by the pre-colonial nationalists or through coup d’état, characterised by a high degree of power centralisation (Ezeanyika, 2007). These non-democratic governments were neither developmental nor democratic and the majority placed several obstacles to the participation of the civil society as well as private capital. According to

Shaw and Maclean (1996.), “such concentration (of power) was excused as a necessary reaction to previously exclusive colonial or settler orders in a Cold War era in which large parts of the world enjoyed state communist government.”

Notions of inclusive democratic development or human rights were rejected as mere Western attempts to maintain economic influence and strategic balance. The majority of these African dictatorial regimes continued to perpetuate political continuity through their tight control of the state’s political machinery, but they failed to maintain continuity in the national economic prosperity of the 1970s into the next decade. The relative economic prosperity of the early 1960s reinforced the prevailing neo-liberal notions of socio-economic development anchored on free trade, international assistance and exchange. This artificial growth not linked to a sustainable industrialisation policy and industrial production base encouraged excessive borrowing which subsequently led to the ‘shocks’ of the 1970s and the debt ‘crisis’ of the 1980s. This made Africa’s underdeveloped economies overtly vulnerable to Western hegemonic neo-liberal dependence.

The predominance of neo-liberal ideals of socio-economic development changed the nature of the development debate (Moore and Schmitz, 1995), with a transition from acceptance of state participatory role in the economy to that of ‘non-interventionist observer’ (Nyang'oro, 1993). As in the period characterised as the ‘drive toward independence,’ the active participation of the civil society expanded in scope (Ezeanyika, 2007). Thus, by the beginning of the 1990s, the majority of African countries, however reluctant first, were compelled to embrace economic and political liberalisation, whether they were compatible or not with the dynamic realities of their pluralism since these were the imposed conditionalities prescribed by the industrialised economies which were providing them with development aid.

Walzer (1991) defined civil society as the “space of un-coerced human association and also the set of rational networks - formed for the sake of family, faith, interest and ideology - that fill this space.” According to Shaw and Maclean (1996), “civil society is comprised of the various non governmental organisations, human rights groups, co-operatives, unions, media, religious assemblages, professional associations, and so on, through which individuals collectively and voluntarily carries out their social enterprises.” In a nutshell, the civil society is composed of all reciprocity-based organisations not established by the state (national and international) which are concerned with and engaged in the betterment of man’s life in society. It is therefore understandable that, from their very nature, these groups often exist in dynamic tension with the state.

There are several perceptions of the civil society. Three are discussed in this article. Liberal analysts perceive the civil society as being distinct from and opposed to the state. Following this viewpoint, the authority over all within its space mediates among competing and sometimes conflicting interests in the civil society, while the latter, protected by the rule of law (where it exists),

collectively acts as a check to balance the pervasive power of the state. Marxist analysts perceive the civil society as a product of the bourgeoisie developed through the social organisation evolving out of production and intercourse, which in all ages, forms the basis of the state and the rest of the idealistic superstructure. From this analysis, the state is perceived as being subordinate to the civil society that is in control of economic relations. The Gramscian analysts accept the Marxists' perception of the primacy of a materialistic base but they place the civil society in the superstructure along with the state and include ideology with economies as primary forces (Carnoy, 1984:65-68).

The Gramscian analysts' concept of hegemony, which sees a distinction between the notion of civil society from both liberal and Marxist analysts is quite instructive in understanding post-independence state - societal relations, particularly in Africa. Since the leadership of the dominant class (principally composed of the international elite, composed of politicians, the commercial bourgeoisie, and the traditional rulers) over the subordinate one was by consent rather than coercion, the hegemonic control of the state and its space was based on the unifying slogans of nationalism and developmentalism which turned out to be unsustainable and short-lived. Because of the weak economies of the African countries, their dictatorial one-party regimes could not completely emasculate dissenting voices. The above scenario looks like a Gramscian 'crisis of authority' in which the dominant class is unable to spur the development of cohesion and maintain social consensus because the state economy in their control is weak. The civil society can therefore be only coercively controlled.

The above scenario notwithstanding, the dictatorship of the African countries' dominant class, the international elite, did not obliterate indigenous institutions of their civil societies despite incessant harassment, imprisonment, and the killing of their leaders and prominent members. The spectres created by the presence of absolute, acute and disproportionate poverty, marginalisation, and ethnic particularism, and the international waves of globalisation and democracy (as if they are mutually exclusive) have all combined to power a new drive in the development and proliferation of NGOs with national and some international ramifications.

The inter-phase of NGOs that are national but with international connections were generally classified by Korten (1990). In general, NGOs are distinguished not only by their normative commitments and functional operations, but also by the nature of their relations with others in both national and international environments. By implication of the above argument, NGOs may exist through an "engagement between the state and society which may be congruent as well as conflictual" (Bratton, 1989:418). African countries' reactions to these NGOs have varied from toleration and support, to outright oppression, co-option, control or repression. The type of government in power at a given time has generally influenced the intensity of the reactions. Military juntas and one-party dictatorial regimes have been most repressive and thus have produced more dynamic and militant NGOs.

In reaction to the proliferation of NGOs generally antagonistic to the state classifications), African governments have set up rival structures. Fowler (1992) referred to them as governmental-non governmental organisations (GONGOs). They are also referred to as quasi-NGOs (QUANGOs). A good example is the Family Support Programme (FSP) formed by the dictatorial regime of late Abacha of Nigeria which continued to function within the civil rule of president Obasanjo.

Concluding Remarks

Starting from the colonial period through the early years of nominal political independence, and till date, Western governments have adopted multifarious strategies targeted at subverting the genuine independence and socio-economic development of African countries. Among other tactics, these strategies have been particularly expressed through SAPs and the conditionalities attached to both public and private official development assistance (ODA). As a result, SAPs and the funds provided by Western governments and their NGOs, purportedly to maintain a democratising and developmentalist role in African countries' policies and political agenda for socio-economic development have not achieved that goal. This we believe is because they were not intended to achieve a positive goal. Many reasons could be advanced to support this position. The most central one, in our view, is the deliberate timing of SAPs and new ODA conditionalities to coincide with the collapse of communism, recession in Europe and the emergence of globalisation.

It has now become generally accepted that democracy and socio-economic development are essential for alleviating absolute, acute and disproportionate poverty. They can also create a sustainable environment for the improvement of Africans' living standard. To attain this goal of a genuine partnership between the industrialised economies of the West and the underdeveloped and developing countries of Africa, the expectations, demands and support of the industrialised economies need to accommodate the dynamic realities of Africa's pluralism, its nascent institutions, and the need to allow her determine the degree of adaptation suitable to its development needs. On the other hand, African governments and their civil societies have to seriously address the underlying problems obstructing the development of stable democratic governments and sustainable economies. The adaptation of western liberal democratic ideals could lead to social cohesion, the introduction of functioning institutions and a dynamic African form of government that is inclusive of all strata in the society, based on a consensus-building and decision-making process.

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