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Development Management and Monitoring and Evaluation System - The Case of West Africa

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Abstract:
This article introduces and analyzes the most relevant existing literature that explores Development Performance Management and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system for improved Results-Based Management (RBM), Knowledge and Information (KI) sharing and Evidenced-Based Decision Making (EBDM) to advance development objectives in West Africa. As we argue here, Development theory as a purely market drive strategy for improved welfare of people is not limited to Economics approaches, instead, it includes Development Management with structured actions and coordination among organizations and institutions responsible for development policies and programs design and implementation.
Development, as defined by Sen (1999), is an expansion of real freedoms that people enjoy for greater livelihood opportunities and improved welfare. As such, there is need to build effective frameworks that guide and coordinate development actions and programs. This article explores development policy and programs in West Africa at levels that show the effective need of coordination: local, national and regional. The article used a systematic review approach to show how development theories and programs outspread from the early cold-war to the recent period and shaped the linkages between development performance, the knowledge, learning, and evidence- based decision-making process in managing development activity.
In its last section, the article presents the concept of monitoring and evaluation system and its role in development management and performance measurement. It analyzes the basic elements of M&E in the development approach and how it is viewed by academics and practitioners. This helps to understand the context in which M&E is linked to institutions, organizations responsible for development actions and performance management. Finally, the article grounded the discussion on how to build effective M&E systems for improved evidence-based decision making and measured risks-taking in development management.

1. Development Management, and the Learning and Decision-Making Process

While the laisser-faire approach to economic development assumes that change will take place without structured action and coordination, Development Management takes a different approach to counter the potential inefficiencies of a purely market-driven strategy. As such, Development Management "*is, instead, the deliberate, conscious and informed attempt to move institutions and organizations towards higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness in a way that is faster than an autonomous rate of progressive change."*(Faguet, 2011:22). And at its heart, Development Management is predicated on understanding and managing the rules of the game within and across organizations that are responsible for development policies and actions as well as their dynamic relationships.
Development is not just about economic growth and economics models, instead, it is a process guided by institutions, organizations, and individuals. As such, if any development policy is to succeed, it must be gauged by an assessment and improvement of linkages and operations across social, economic, and political agencies. Development Management goes beyond an understanding and analysis of development indicators to address the basis of active management of organizations and institutions in a process that promote increased rates of growth, development, and individual freedom (Faguet, 2011). As such, we need a framework that understands the capacity of institutions, organizations, and individuals to adopt measures that promote efficiency and effectiveness in the learning and the decision-making processes. In short, institutions, organizations and individual matter, and only by taking them into closer consideration will development proceed along lines that result in successful outcomes.
What is development? Nobel Economics Laureate Amartya Sen defines development as an expansion of real freedoms that people enjoy. He argues that "*Development requires the removal of major sources of un-freedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over-activity of repressive States.*" (Sen, 1999:3). Even though this definition is based on the "*Evaluative reason*" and the "*Effectiveness reason*" of assessing progress and achievement of development (Sen, 1999:4), there is a challenge in finding and defining meaningful measurements of Sen's "*expanding human freedoms*" (L.S.Davis, 2011:2) and to assess their attainment. In considering the relationship of development

to economic growth, Davis lists three dimensions for an effective measurement of development from a macroeconomic view largely criticized by scholars: economic, human and social.

- Increases in real per capita income are a standard measure of development. Yet only through a decomposition of structural changes can we gain a fuller appreciation of how development takes place. Development of a country's economic system needs to be measured through: "*a number of structural changes, including urbanization, the rise in the size of firms, the relative decline of the agricultural sector in terms of employment and output with expansion of manufacturing and services, the geographic expansion of markets, and increases in the diversity of goods produced and traded.*" (L. S. Davis, 2011).
- The Distribution of the gains from economic growth is the second dimension of economic development. This can be measured by tracing the growth of the income of the poorest 20 to 40 percent of the population. This is also known as *poverty weighted index (PWI)*as the proposed measure. Development economists often have argued that growth is inherently biased against the poor: "*the share of the variance of growth in social welfare due to growth in average incomes is smaller the greater is the weight that the social welfare function places on the poorest.*" (Dollar, Kleineberg, & Kraay, 2014).
- The third element of economic development is sustainability, defined by the UN (1987) as a "*development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*". Its measurement "*requires adjusting income levels to account for the depletion of natural resources and degradation of environmental quality.*" (L. S. Davis, 2011).

The "*human development*" dimension of development is linked to the capacity of the individual to satisfy their needs and fulfilled lives. "*Freedoms*", as defined by the United Nations Development Programme can be measured through the use of a Human Development Index (HDI) that apportions weights to three dimensions of development that include measuring income, health, educational attainment, and gender equality.

Even with the kinds of adjustments, we note here, much of the development literature overlooks roles of development institutions, organizations, individuals, and management, even though they are highly elaborated in macro and microeconomic theories and strategies. As we argue here, institutions are key components for development effectiveness. Some countries are rich while many others are poor not from a lack of resources or absence of economic growth, but from poorly governed institutions and counterproductive incentives. As U.S. President Barack Obama,has noted, "*Development depends on good governance… In the 21st century, capable, reliable, and transparent institutions are key to success*" (Obama, 2009: 3).

Institutions, "*Therules of the game*" according to North, are the underlying forces that govern economic, social and political matters (North, 1991). Leftwich *et* Sen, citing Hall and Carey, qualified two types of institution, formal (written) and informal (usually unwritten) and clarified that: "*From Confucius and Aristotle (1964) through the German School of institutional economics in the 19th century (Hodgson, 2001), to Durkheim's analysis (1895/1938) of 'social facts' and in the work of many other social scientists since then, a strong analytical tradition has emphasized the importance of institutions in shaping social, economic and political life.*" (Leftwich & Sen, 2010).

While Institutions are the drivers of rules, Douglas C. North defines an operational and regulatory framework that includes individuals, households, local governments, government departments, regional bodies, that operates as a game. He notes that rules, both written and unwritten, derive from organizations that set the standards of performance of any given game, be that for a sporting contest or for the allocation of scarce resources. Like teams of people, organizations operate within an institutional environment they can also modify to achieve a certain number of goals and a certain level of performance (Faguet, 2011 and Leftwich & Sen, 2010). "*And any given organization, whether a firm, a government department or a household, functions under a set of incentives created by multiple institutions, all of which affect their behaviors.*" (Faguet, 2011:4).

As we argue here, Development Management requires an examination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of institutional change and organizational behavior that can affect the achievement and sustainability of development objectives. As such, institutions are key to development change. According to North, "*Institutions provide the incentive structure of an economy; as that structure evolves, it shapes the direction of economic change towards growth, stagnation, or decline.*" (North, 1991).

Development policy design necessarily starts with an understanding of institutions underlying policies and politics in each context. It then proceeds to define a certain number of goals and targets to improve the development status of countries or other entities and organizations in place. Development Management is focused on an analysis of institutional changes and organizational behaviors that may affect the attainment and sustainability of development objectives and includes the capacity of organizations to advance development objectives.

Development and economic change can be explained by several parameters ranging from the quality of the policies and programs designed and implemented, the level of investment and priority areas that may add value, the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions and organizations in place, and how these instruments lead to changes in the livelihood of people. As Mantzavinos,North and Shariqclarify that"*The greatest challenge for the social sciences is to explain change—or more specifically, social, political, economic, and organizational change.*" (Mantzavinos, North, & Shariq, 2004).

Development and economic change are not gained only through dreamlike economic theories or models. Instead, they occur under institutional and organizational choices. According to North: "*Economic change is a ubiquitous, ongoing, incremental process that is a consequence of the choices individual actors and entrepreneurs of organizations are making every day.*" (North, 1994). Decision-making and risk-taking within institutions and by organizations and individuals are key to any given development change.

Learning and knowledge-sharing by individuals within institutions and organizations affect how decisions are made in the presence of risk. Improved management of risk can accelerate development. North in "*Economic performance through time*", established a linkage between the expansion of knowledge and the development process: "*The speed of economic change is a function of the rate of learning, but the direction of that change is a function of the expected payoffs to acquiring different kinds of knowledge. The mental models that the players develop shape perceptions about the payoffs.*" (North, 1994).

In the field of development management, learning and knowledge sharing are key elements to success. As learning and knowledge within institutions can improve the quality of decision-making, how knowledge expands and is distributed is central to development management. Where organizations are more focused on development results in the policy-making, and implementing processes, evidence-based decision-making and measured risk-taking are necessary to advance development objectives through a transparent learning and knowledge sharing system or Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System. This practice goes beyond the mere components of what is called in public performance: *better governance*. As stated by Faguet: "*Institutional change can occur through the gradual accretion of small changes over time, or via sudden exogenous shocks. Both kinds of change can be either positive or negative, leading to higher or lower levels of efficiency and effectiveness.*" (Faguet, 2011).

2. Development Strategies, Policies, and Programs

In the early days of the Cold War in the 1950's, the U.S. Government launched a foreign aid development initiative designed to thwart the expansion of Communist power in poorer areas of the world. The main objective was to avoid "*another China*" risk, by promoting investment in agriculture, health, education and water access in developing countries to generate increases in welfare via per growth in per capita incomes. As Alacevich states, "*The politics of productivity, promoted by the US administration in Europe and rigidly embraced by the World Bank's top management for the Bank's loan policies worldwide, was broadly interpreted by the US administration to include poverty-biased policies. This would help tackle the rising threat of communism in several underdeveloped regions of the world.*" (Alacevich, 2011).

While foreign aid focused initially on the rebuilding of war-torn Europe, the expansion to developing countries took a broader view of the kinds of institutional transformations that would be needed to produce credible increases in per capita income. As the geographic focus expanded, much debating took place within development institutions such as the World Bank as to whether infrastructure alone could produce expected increases in welfare. As this debate unfolded, it became increasingly clear that a broader-based approach to development strategy would be needed. To quote Alacevich once again: "*What is notable is that the analysis of a country's economy was integrated into a study of the broader institutional setting and general conditions, rather than keeping a strict focus on the economic conditions of the country. Most of the reports address the organization and efficiency of public administration, the fiscal system, and the banking system.*" (Alacevich, 2011).

One evolving approach was put forth by John Williamson. What John Williamson (1990) called Washington Consensus (WC), was built around three major pillars of economic reforms in developing countries: 1) Fiscal discipline, 2) Re-ordering public expenditure priorities, and 3) Tax reform. Williamson summarized the WC as a "*response for a leading role of the state in initiating industrialization and import substitution.*" The flagship strategy of this Washington Consensus was undoubtedly the 1981 World Bank Berg report: "*Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action*". The Berg report gave a prescriptive list of structural reforms that in view of the team could put African countries on a sustained and accelerated path for economic growth and development.

The Berg report was published in part as a response to the 1980 African Chiefs of State strategy, *The Lagos Plan of Action*, which called for greater independence from international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. As the World Bank and IMF constituted a major source of development finance at the time, structural adjustment programs of the World Bank and conditionality loans by the IMF became the norm.

The thrust of the Berg and his team was a critical look at an over-expanded public sector that diluted some essential functions of government. According to Berg and his team, "*underdeveloped human resources, political fragility, insecurely rooted and ill- suited institutions, a climate and geography hostile to development, and rapid population growth. And while the governments have scored considerable achievements, the legacy of history and the facts of geography continue to hamper African economic progress.*" (Berg, Amoaka, Rolf, Meerman, & Tidrick, 1981).

There was no consensus on the Berg report as there was no consensus on the WC. The WC and the Berg report fell short in bringing African countries to buy-in. Rather it was implemented as a necessary medicine to take by force though access to the needed funds, promoted by the WB and International Monetary Fund (IMF). As former World Bank-Chief Economist, Joseph Stiglitz put it, "*If there is a consensus today about what strategies are most likely to promote the development of the poorest countries in the world, it is this: there is no consensus except that the Washington Consensus did not provide the answer. Its recipes were neither necessary nor sufficient for successful growth, though each of its policies made sense for particular countries at particular times.*" (Stiglitz, 2008).

Despite ongoing dissent within the ranks of development institutions and within developing countries themselves, some effort was made to paint a picture of success through structural reform. The early 60s, the called "*development decade*", the UN Secretary General U. Thant described development as "*growth plus structural change.*" From that period to the Millennium Development Summit in 2000 organized by its Secretary General Kofi Annan, significant changes emerged in the field of development on how to define it and how to address it. J. F.E. Ohiorhenuan summarized this evolution in the development conception by: "*The MDGs are the culmination of 50 years of thinking and policy about development. They also represent a shift from an original empirical grounding to a normative framing of the development question.*" (Ohiorhenuan, 2011).

The MDGs were expected to improve coordination among partners and developing countries for a better appropriation of development actions to reach targets. Have MDGs contributed to foster countries accountability and public performance? To that question, Davis (2011) provided the following answer: "*A common claim is that the MDGs fail to encompass all the elements of 'development', with* *implication for the effective use of resources. A second significant complaint is that the goal-targets-indicators approach has only marginally overcome the difficulty in establishing clear accountability relationships in the international development environment.*" (T. W. D. Davis, 2011). In short, MDGs failed in improving country-led accountability and performance measurement systems.

Development dimensions as described by Sen, include: "*Economic facilities, political freedoms, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security.*" (Sen, 1999). Development programs aim to address these fundamental dimensions to improve people wellbeing and livelihood. In West Africa, these components of development are yet to be addressed in many countries. This situation is aggravated by the weak institutional and organizational framework in designing and implementing development policies and programs in the region. Understanding the development program approach in Africa necessitates visiting the roots of poverty and development in the continent. It should start from the colonialism and its impact on the present development condition of Africa (Mccord, Sachs, & Woo, 2005).

3. Regional, National and Local Frameworks for Development Policy and Program

Development programs at country and regional levels are key components of national and regional policies to address development objectives. In our view, Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (M&E-Systems) are important feeding elements to development programs results and performance and knowledge base information sharing as they contribute to the country development pillars. Quesnel expressed: "*strategic intent of intervention*" constitutes policy, strategy, institutional strengthening, program, project, activity, task, product or service (Quesnel, 2010). Monitoring and Evaluation Systems are therefore central to how this range of activities can be viewed as a coherent approach to the success of development programs.

Mainly characterized by its "*strategic intent*" or general objective, development program focuses on institutions and organizations in a geographic coverage and with intended impact and outcomes as well as core stakeholders concerned with the proposedactions and changes. In our view, development program must be driven by demand and based on a tangible and sustained institutional ownership, and as Bakare put it: "*the fundamental root cause of African underdevelopment is the failure of various developmental policy paradigms adopted from the western policy options by African leaders and the inability of Africans (as followers) to ask questions and make their leaders responsible for their actions or inactions.*" (Bakare, 2014).

How Monitoring and Evaluation System addresses the various differing interests that encompass the range of public sector intervention, underlines the grounding rationale of these development actions and supports depending on existing development strategies, policies and the level of and roles in the intervention: local, national and regional. In West Africa, the definition of the different levels localities may change from a nomenclatural view for different countries. It is worth noting that three levels of administrative and geographic contexts in defining localities exist in all countries: Communities level (the lowest), District level (the medium), and national level (the highest and unique level).

When development programs are defined and implemented for the country-wide population benefit and for the national coverage, they are generally called "*National Development Program*" (NDP). That means, the products and services of the development program go to different areas and cover the wide country. Whether are they defined and implemented at district or communities level, they are generally called "*Local Development Program*" (LDP). The products and service go only to beneficiaries in those areas.

When regional bodies or other regional stakeholders along with country representatives, define and implement actions in the development field, the activity is generally called "*Regional Development Program*" (RDP). In the introduction of the Africa union Strategic Development Plan, Agenda 2063, the Continental organization stated its vision as follows: "*build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, an Africa driven and managed by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena.*" (The African Union, 2014).

Generally, development projects and programs are defined under regional, national or local development strategy and policy frameworks. Regional bodies, national governments, and local authorities are responsible for the definition of development objectives through various participatory consultations and policy assessments. The most important level in regards to political aspects is the country or national level, where development objectives are strictly driven by the political, social and economic vision of authorities in charge.

3.1. Regional Development Policies and Program

In Africa, regional bodies that oversee the integration of the region's people and institutions are very weak and hampered by bad governance, lack of funding and weak political will to integration of some countries. The Economic Commission for West Africa Countries (ECOWAS)[1], with the diversity of the population, variety of democracies, is challenged by alack of political will of countries not yet able to fulfill their commitment to funding the institution, hence making the regional organization dependent to foreign investments and technical support in implementing regional development programs.

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[1]ECOWAS**,** the Economic Community of West African States**,** was established by the Treaty of Lagos signed on May 28, 1975. Francophone countries in ECOWAS include: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Conakry, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. Mauritania withdrew its membership in 2002 to join the Maghreb Arab Union States (UMA). Lusophone members of ECOWAS include Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. When added to the Anglophone countries of Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, and Nigeria, ECOWAS total country membership stands currently at fifteen (15). Headquartered in Abuja, Nigeria, data on ECOWAS programs and activities can be found at: http://www.ecowas.int/. ECOWAS constitutes one of five regional groups that constitute the African Economic Community (AEC), a subsidiary entity of the Africa Union (AU). The other regional groups are: COMESA (The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa), ECCAS (the Economic Community of Central African States), IGAD (the Intergovernmental Authority on Development), and SADC (The Southern African Development Community). A February 1998 protocol defines relations between the AEC and the five regional groups.

The fifteen African ECOWAS countries are Low-income and Dependent Countries (LDCs) and, as Fozzard et Foster (2001)put it: "*Poverty,limitedtechnicalcapacity,economicinstability,anarrowrevenuebaseandweaksystemsofgovernancerepresentsignificantconstraint soneffectiveexpendituremanagementinallLDCs.Aid-dependentcountries,whereaidinflowscommonlyaccountforover10%ofGDP,mustalsocontendwithmultipledonorsandrelianceonaidinflows tofinanceasubstantialpartoftheirbudget.*" (Fozzard & Foster, 2001).

Nigeria, the most important economy of the region hosts the organization. As shown by the UN-Africa Economic Commission Report (2015), while the economic growth rate declined slightly in 2015 (4.4%) compared to 2014 level (5.7%), the West African countries are moving to a structural critical change of improved Trade-Industrialization with weak institutions and huge fluctuations in major primary commodity prices.

ECOWAS countries have growth margins and market opportunities to fund their development strategies. The UN economic outlook is showing a total average 21% of level debt compared to the regional convergence threshold of 70% of the GDP. Only Cape Verde, the Gambia, and Ghana are beyond that threshold with respectively 117%, 95.1% and 72.8%. The regional average level of Public Debt is influenced by the lower level of Nigeria (78% of the entire ECOWAS economy), with only 11.9%. Nevertheless, "*Security conditions, which are still difficult in some countries of the Sahel (especially Mali and Niger) and the north of Nigeria, will continue to be major risks for the economic outlook for 2016.*" (United Nations, 2016).

To overcome development challenges and ensure the livelihood of the West African people, regional institutions such as ECOWAS set forth regional policies and strategies to advance the development of their communities. Built generally within a participatory approach by convening various stakeholders at the regional level, regional policy making is primarily to address institutional, political and economic challenges and aims to foster integration and organizational capacity towards a performant regional market for improved economy and business enterprise to ultimately benefit to people. ECOWAS constitutes the regional umbrella under which policy and development programs are designed and implemented in the West Africa region.

The importance of multi-party decision making in policy design and implementation is wonderfully stressed by Clinton J. A. in his "*Rationality in Decision Making*" (2010) approach that shows the strong role of regional umbrella or institutions in moving policy at abroad level forgreater sustainability. In the same streak, Bakare put it: *"One of the major challenges that have faced African states since the advent of political independence has been that of establishing and sustaining appropriate governance institutions and practices that would engender democratic practices and promote sustainable development on the continent.*" (Bakare, 2014).

Thus far West African people, in general, have very little understanding and knowledge of the development vision defined by their leaders (Bujra, 2004), the regional institution vision is considered as the supreme reference for sustainable development planning and regional integration. In the African continent, there are four regional economic and political grouping institutions: The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) grouping nineteen countries, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with fifteen member states, the Economic Commission of Central African States (ECCAS) counting ten member states, and the ECOWAS with fifteen member states.

These non-exclusive groupings have as along-term objective the creation of an inclusive African Economic Union, yet as per Otto et Patino: "*ECOWAS seems to be gaining both in terms of the volume of trade and GDP… Members of ECOWAS appear to be more homogeneous in term of ethnicity, language and religion than COMESA although they lack significantly behind COMESA in the literacy rate.*" (Ott & Patino, 2009). These regional integrating institutions according to Otto & Patino, have as driven objective to promote the continent's economic growth, political stability, and good governance.

To achieve their objective of economic development and political and economic integration, regional institutions define and implement policy and programs in many areas purely linked to a regional free market and improved business opportunities that lead to people's wellbeing. In its Strategic Plan 2011-2015, ECOWAS states its *Vision* as follows: "*To create a borderless, peaceful, prosperous and cohesive region, built on good governance, and where people have the capacity to access and harness its enormous resources through the creation of opportunities for sustainable development and environmental preservation.*" (ECOWAS-Commission, 2010). In 2014, the African Union (AU) defined a continental strategic plan called "*Agenda 2063 – The Africa We Want*" - which presents the vision of the Continental Institution as to: "*build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, an Africa driven and managed by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena*" (African Union, 2014).

Regional integration increases economic growth and incomes to result ultimately in welfare gains for the people through improved regional free trade and increases in the size of the markets and business opportunities (Kimenyi & Kuhlmann, 2012). The way decision-making is organized at the regional level and the approach for regional institutions in making development policy through improved result-based management, information and knowledge sharing, learning, and evidence-based decision-making, are key to advance the development and welfare of the people in the region.

This evidence-based approach to regional priorities is key to overcome factors that hinder the achievement of development actions at regional level including, but not limited to, political factors, social and cultural barriers, conflicts, weak infrastructures, limited diversification, ownership of the process by the population, etc. (Kimenyi & Kuhlmann, 2012; Ott & Patino, 2009). The necessity of participation and ownership of a regional monitoring mechanism for development actions is stressed in the Blair's "*Our Common Interest. Report of the Commission for Africa*" as follows: – "*Management requires measurement and monitoring. If citizens around the world are to hold their governments accountable and partners in development are to be mutually accountable, they must have reliable and reasonably objective ways of monitoring actions and outcomes.*" (Blair et al., 2005).

3.2. National and Local Development Policies and Programs

While the regional and global policy and program are important to business and free market development in the context of globalization and mundialization, at national and local levels, according to various authors, policy-making is key "*to manage existing resources, to create jobs and stimulate the economy of a well-defined territory.*" Helmsing and Egziabher (2005:1) cited by C. M. Rogerson(C. M. Rogerson, 2011). These levels cover the local development practice in a general concept called Local Economic Development (LED). According to Rogerson, the International Labor Organization (ILO, a UN Agency) "*distinguishes four core features that characterize LED strategies: (1) participation and social dialogue; (2) a focus on territory; (3) the mobilization of local resources and competitive advantages; and, (4) the imperative for high levels of local ownership and management.*" (C. M. Rogerson, 2011).

In West Africa, in a context of a weak nascent private sector and civil society, Government and Public actors are the exclusive leaders of development policy and strategy making at national level. At State level, as democracy is consolidating in the West Africa region, political parties run to elections in general with a proposed strategic development plan to convince voters. For example, in Senegal, the President Wade, with his strategic plan built around the "SOPI"[2] philosophy expanded a free-market policy, strengthened by good infrastructures development, youth opportunities enhancement and women empowerment and participation. This approach, following Wade election in 2000, was implemented progressively through various national documents called successively "National Poverty Reduction Strategy" (joining the World Bank terminology), that shifted to "National Program for Economic and Social Development" following the renewal of his mandate in 2007.

The fourth Senegalese President, Macky Sall, who defeated President Wade in 2012, invented the "*Yoonu Yokkute*"[3] strategy after having visited more than 1000 communities between 2009 and 2011. This strategy was a continuum of Wade vision of free market with more integration of vulnerable groups through social projects and improved integrity and better governance in public resources management. In 2015, the President Macky Sall upgraded the national development strategy to the notion of Emerging Economy: "*The Emerging Senegal*". This denoting of national strategies is adopted by many francophone countries and seeks to move from poverty reduction policy-making to more market-driven, institutional and economic growth strategy.

The President Goodluck Jonathan shaped the *Nigeria 20:2020 Vision*, portending by 2020, Nigeria seeks to be part of the 20 biggest economies of the world as a vision. That dream of President Jonathan was translated into tangible programs in different strategic sectors of the Federal Republic in the 2010s. In the driving agriculture sector, it was translated into the great "*Agriculture Transformation Agenda*" – ATA-. The ATA introduced many innovations in Agriculture sector development approaches in Nigeria: i) Ending the era of treating agriculture as a development project but rather as a business, ii) No more isolated projects without a strategic focus to drive agriculture growth and food security in a clear and measurable way, iii) Ending of "big government" crowding out the private sector, iv) Value chains focusing where Nigeria has comparative advantage, v) Strategic partnerships to stimulate investments, and vi) Putting sharp focus on youth and women.

National development strategies are key in operationalizing the leaders' political, economic and social vision for improved welfare of their people and enhanced development in reducing the gap North-South and launching African countries into the economic growth paths. These strategies up till now necessitate lots of incentives and participatory approaches as they guide all policies and programs defined at lower levels and sectors. West African Governments put in place in their Constitutions and Legal frameworks the underlying laws and reforms that sustain the institutions and organizations responsible for defining, implementing and assessing the results of development actions operationalized from the national development strategies.

While the Government through the President, is responsible for defining the vision and development priorities in the strategy, many other stakeholders are involved in the operationalization. The National Assemblies – Parliaments- in charge of legislations are responsible for adopting the government proposed reforms or to initiate laws that will set forth the needed foundation to ground the development actions implementation and evaluations. In a yearly basis, through various presentations and discussions between the Parliaments and the government Ministries, work-plans and budgets are adopted in line with the available resources and the fundraising systems in place to gather national and foreign investments to move the action plans to achievements.

Private sector and civil society organizations are also involved in the definition and implementation of national strategies. In West Africa, the local private sector is still nascent, weak and fragmented. Some big private sector organizations are currently moving to a growing status and capacity like the Dangote Company in Nigeria which is expanding its investments in other West African Countries. In infrastructures development, the Sow Family Company in Senegal, the "Sahelienne d' Entreprises (CSE)" is expanding its activities in many countries, especially in roads construction. Without a strong local private sector, development actions impact will not last long and remain sustainable for West African people livelihood and welfare as benefits from investments and actions promoted will be keeping moving to the former colonialist countries and recently to China which is leading the building of infrastructures in Africa with its own national private sector generally reluctant to erect partnerships with local firms.

For both Government and national private sector along with civil society to master development policy-making and implementation for improved economic growth, job creation, and welfare, it is critical that reliable information flows within different interfaces, institutions, and organizations. For improved decision-making in risk-taking, evidence-based knowledge and information should be gathered, analyzed for the conduct of policy-making and business enterprises management to advance development.

As development actions are decentralized at different levels of countries, local territories gain political power and responsibilities in defining and managing their local development policies and by partnering with national and international organizations, private sector

[2]Change in Wolof

[3] Sustainable Development Pathway in Wolof

entities, local governments, bilateral agencies and UN agencies to implement their development programs: what is called, *The Globalization of Local Development*.
In West Africa development process, different decentralization policies and institutions started being put in place early 1970. This policy defined local territories based on geographic, environment, economic and cultural standards. The conception and implementation of local development policy is under the responsibility of local government authorities elected by the population at the local level. Capacity building of local governments in defining and managing their policies and programs is still key activities of national governments and development partners. Weak technical and financial capacity and absence of local private sectors and strong civil society is the continuous trial to local development ownership and success in West Africa. Top-down policy-making is still very strong as national government and entities possess and manage the essential of economic resources to implement development actions.

4. Development Program Design and Approach

A development program is generally illustrated as aset of actions and investments planned in a way to respond to a tangible need or aspiration and to achieve a development objective or goal. Primarily, the goal is stated clearly as well as its contribution to the regional, national or local framework. The policy approach seeks to determine the relevance of the development actions and investments realized in line with the program *goal* or *development objective*. The program goal is defined in a way it is captured through tangible long-term development results. These long-term results are analyzed in a certain manner that shows clearly the *development impact* produced by the program *outcomes*.
The development impact can be measured at macro, meso and micro levels of the program's zone of influence (ZOI) or development area. The program's *direct beneficiaries* will experience the impact directly at their level. For example, a national agricultural development program serving directly different actors at specific micro value chain levels, where the development actions produce a positive impact on businesses and livelihood of the various actors at those levels of the industry.
How the development program impact is aligned and contribute to the general development framework defined by the institutions and organizations responsible for the policy-making, is key to assess its broad relevance. whereas a development program is not a stand-alone action, it is originated from a broader policy framework that underlines the development objective at regional, national or local level. It is also elaborated within the development sector in which it originates.
The development sector is an area of common sub-goals, activities generating different development programs translated to specific projects that constitute the bulk of actions defined to move the sector towards its potential development. A sector can be characterized by a comparative advantage and be subject to prioritization by the institutions, organizations at regional, national and local levels as the broad development driven sector that necessitate major attention (planning, funding, management, etc.) from decision makers. Some of those sectors are considered productive, while others are designated as social sectors as their impact is not directly linked to economic growth, and according Alacevich, "*In the years of the New Deal, productivity was considered a necessary element for economic and social recovery and for the improvement of the living conditions of the population at large, but not a sufficient one.*", (Alacevich, 2011).

5. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Development Performance

Despite US$ billions of investments by Governments and Aid industry for African Development over the last century and recent years (World Bank, 2012), poverty alleviation, food security, improved agriculture productivity, access to affordable and clean energy, quality education and health systems among other key development issues are yet to be addressed in West Africa (UNDP, MDG[4] report, 2014). Measured risk-taking and evidence-based decision-making are among those factors yet ranked at very weaklevel of operationalization in development management to advance development objectives in Africa (Kuada, 2014).
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Systems are supposed to be the bottom-upfeeding elementsto knowledge base information of development programs results for measured risk-taking and improved decision-making(Acquaah, Zoogah, & Kwesiga, 2013).M&E is both a performance management tool that promotes accountability through knowledge generation and learning system (Parker, 2008). M&E is a Development Management tool for strategic information generation and use for improved learning and evidenced-results based management and decision making. "*Monitoring and evaluation have long played a dual role in organizational systems, contributing critically both to knowledge generation and learning, and as tools of performance management and the promotion of accountability.*" (Parker, 2008).
As we argue here, M&E-System is not based on the individual knowledge but is a process within an organization and builds on clear institutional approaches to advance development management. In our view, it is close to the Nonaka and Takeuchi concept, who conceptualize knowledge creation "*as a series of 'epistemological conversions' between tacit and explicit knowledge: socialization, externalization, combination and internalization, which are said to work along a spiral that moves up and down between four 'ontological levels': individual, group, organization and inter-organization.*" (Zhu, 2008).
M&E is a set of continuous activities on data collection, storage, management, analysis and creation of meaningful evidence-based information on development results and performance (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability) for decision makers and other stakeholders interacting with or interested in the given development actions. As explained by Keith Mackay: "*More and more governments in developing countries are coming to understand that sound system for monitoring and evaluation can help them improve their performance. There are a small but growing number of governments which have succeeded in building monitoring*

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and evaluation systems in support of evidence-based policy-making, evidence-based management and evidence-based accountability." (Mackay, 2008).

Effective M&E system is core in improving development performance and the capacity to deliver high-quality development results (Mackay, 2010). Keith Mackay described four major benefits of effective M&E system at country level: 1- to support policy making, 2- to improve policy analysis work, 3- to foster Ministries sector management, 4- to enhance transparency and support accountability. As such, the introduction of M&E-Systems in the developing world has increasingly improved accountability and results-based management practices in the public sector. Though, M&E systems are yet to be effective in development management field mainly in Africa.

The main objective of an M&E system is to provide evidence that can feed decision-making process at all levels including development planning process, programs and policy design and implementation. According to Barens et al. "*The basic idea of evidence-based practice is that good-quality decisions should be based on a combination of critical thinking and the best available evidence. Although all management practitioners use evidence in their decisions, many pay little attention to the quality of that evidence. The result is bad decisions based on unfounded beliefs, fads and ideas popularized by management gurus.*" (Barends, Rousseau, & Briner, 2014).

6. Conclusion: How to build effective M&E system?

Three words compose the M&E-System concept: Monitoring, Evaluation, and System. Monitoring is a set of continuous technical activities related to data collection, management, analysis and presentation, on the development programs results through well-defined indicators, benchmarks and milestones as well as mapping of successful strategies and tactics that ensure achievements are leading to desired program outcomes. Evaluation activities relate to the robust assessments of programs performance and impact at certain times before, during and after the program's life-cycle. A System if referring to as M&E being an Information System (IS) since it gathers, creates, manages and shares information within organizations and institutions for management purposes.

The M&E-System intends to provide relevant and meaningful feedback on development programs and projects to help stakeholders and decision makers learn from achievements, results, constraints, impacts, sustainability and to capitalize on learnings for adjustment of current programs and for future development policy design. The development "*intent*" generally summarized in a formal policy document is the basis for setting up the M&E-System. The development intent could be defined at various levels: regional, national, sub-national and local. The main challenge in building M&E-System is how to articulate the development Programs and M&E frameworks to the national or regional results pathways and government performance management plan.

As we argue here, how development programs M&E-Systems perform, partly determines the quality and strength of the development performance as they are results-based. According to Kusek et al.: "*Results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a powerful public management tool. It can and should be used in the context of MDGs - as well as in all public sector management – to help policy makers track progress and demonstrate the outcome and impact of a given policy, program or project.*" (Kusek, Rist, & White, 2005). Development programs M&E-Systems in general face challenges that hinder the quality of their objective for effective performance measurement systems and evidence-based decision-making process in development policies and program management.

Unachievable objectives, inadequate reporting and lack of timeliness among other factors had been identified as main constraints that hinder monitoring and evaluation systems effectiveness (Maddock, 1993) since its introduction in the development field and Aid-Industry in the 1970s and 1980s. Tom Barton (1997), in a view of an integrated IS analysis, identified six weaknesses that undermined the effectiveness of M&E-Systems in the 1990s: poor development program design, human resources development needs, quantitative bias, low priority for information system, involvement limited to data collection and poor feedback (Barton, 1997).

Maddock's question on M&E systems effectiveness (Maddock, 1993)is yet to be addressed by both development practitioners and researchers in development management for improved decision-making in the era of development programs management and performance measurement systems. "*The aim is to improve relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of policy reforms. Why then is monitoring and evaluation not playing its role to its full potential?*" asked Marco Segone (Segone, 2008, 26).

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