TOWARDS REGIONAL POLICY CO-ORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The Zimbabwe model outlined above is a demonstration of the benefits that flow from attempts to integrate into national situations some of the latest innovations, in policy analysis, co-ordination and collaboration, from specific global and sub-regional experiences in the field. The idea of smart partnership is one such, drawn as it is, through the Commonwealth context, from Malaysia and designed into the regional one that is the Southern African Investment Dialogue (SAID) out of which the "Zimbabwe model" has developed and promises to be so crucial in the process of national economic and political recovery. Therefore, the importance of such workshops as constitute the subject of this work cannot be exaggerated and these initiatives will have to be pursued carefully through closer working relationships between the Commonwealth Secretariat and other continental and sub-regional institutions as AAPAM and SARIPS/SAPES Trust. In this way, "models" drawn from global and specifically Commonwealth, sub-regional and national contexts can be extolled, elaborated and developed into viable interventions in the study of policy analysis and management affairs. Besides, the inherent values of regional and continental blocs no longer require spirited justification; in the era of globalisation, Africa – and its sub-regional blocs – can only survive and become a factor in global affairs through unity of purpose.

However, even the field of policy analysis and public service management will have to take cognisance of the current constraints and limitations to regional co-operation and integration in Africa. This is necessary also because the field itself will have to develop and establish strategies through which to counteract these historically-based problems and thereby contribute directly to the promotion of the African Economic Community, beginning with the various sub-regional blocs that are currently in the form of the Southern African Development Community (SADC); East African Co-operation (EAC); Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); Community of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) etc.

The constraints to regional co-operation and integration in Africa are broadly three-fold and are inter-related. First, the problem of vertical integration into the northern hemisphere. As explained at the beginning of this chapter, this is the historical and colonial legacy: it continues to undermine co-operative, co-ordinating and collaborating efforts among member states of Africa *vis a vis* the northern hemisphere in general and globalisation in particular. The problems associated with this express themselves in the endless competition among African states for aid, access to markets and even preferential treatment. This creates a "hierarchy of powers" at both the continental and sub-regional levels, undermining co-ordination and collaboration at the various levels of inter-state and inter-institutional processes. Second, the problem of uneven and unequal development within and between the African countries themselves, not to mention that between the sub-regional blocs in the making. Among many other things, this gives rise to the problem of reconciling competing interests among member states, and of joint mobilisation of resources for programme development.

Third, the problem of the development of nation-state-in-the-making. Reference has already been made to this at the beginning of this chapter. The point is that unstable and insecure states are inimical not only to the enterprise of regional co-operation and integration but also to the processes of policy co-ordination and collaboration.