Development planning in sub-Saharan Africa: A brief overview

2.1. Introduction

Sub-Saharan Africa is characteristically represented as a symbol of tragedy, despair and failure. Images of war and political disorder, environmental disasters and famine, economic crisis and mass impoverishment tend to pervade the media as well as the development literature. Its highly disproportionate share of the global HIV/AIDS epidemic seems to further entrench this notion of a lost continent. Whereas these images convey some of the harsh realities on the subcontinent, they are also distorted and one-sided. Positive trends, successes and advancements seldom receive the same amount of attention. Also, responsibility for the subcontinent's woes is often put squarely at the feet of its political leaders and its people, without recognising the complex interplay between internal and external factors, the global and the local, the past and the present.

This chapter seeks to present a more balanced view of the nature of development challenges facing sub-Saharan Africa, of progress achieved and problems encountered, and of how exogenous barriers as much as policy and institutional flaws are contributing to disappointing development, at least in some respects. The intention of this chapter is to give a brief historical perspective on development planning on the subcontinent.

Although the notion of development predates the post-colonial era in sub-Saharan Africa, it gained particular resonance for African people and African leaders in the post-independence period. This applied equally to the first generation of independent African states – the former British, French and Belgian colonies that gained independence after the Second World War – as to the late decolonisations of former Portuguese colonies and to countries that gained political liberation in the 1980s and 1990s. This chapter will reflect on the history of development planning in sub-Saharan Africa, the legacy of colonialism that newly independent states sought to address, the successes achieved, and the factors that eventually influenced the poor track record of development planning on the sub-continent. Although the emphasis here is mainly on the first generation of independent African states, thereby referring to a particular moment in history, these observations seem equally pertinent to states that have become independent or gained political liberation more recently. Clearly, applying such a broad brush to the subcontinent ultimately serves to obscure the variety, depth and complexity, not only of the specific development challenges facing particular countries, but also of their responses to these challenges. It lies beyond the scope of this report to explore such specificities.

2.2. Four fundamental challenges

At the time of independence, African states were faced with four fundamental challenges. How newly independent states responded to these challenges varied, depending on, amongst others, ideological orientation, the relationship with the former colonial power and with the two superpowers of the time, and an assessment of local realities – all of which informed what was perceived as 'the art of the desirable and the possible'.

Firstly, newly independent states needed to instil a national identity and a sense of national unity among the people living in their territories. These territories, following colonial boundaries, tended to host various ethnic groups. In many cases, the imposed boundaries separated people of similar kinship and ethnic background. The challenge for the new African leadership was to promote national unity so that diverse – possibly divided – populations would identify themselves as Ghanaians, Malians, Burkinabé, Malawians, Zambians, or whatever the nationality may have been, and accept the new political leadership as legitimate.[iv]

Secondly, the new political leadership was faced with the challenge of addressing the colonial legacy of ‘under-development’ and embedded inequalities in education, health, employment and other aspects of social development. Although in the 1940s and 1950s former colonial powers had become increasingly development-minded, the colonial systems for service provision were inherently unequal, often of inferior quality and premised on western notions of development. Education systems, for example, were based on racial segregation and informed by European content. In the late 1950s, less than half of all African children of school going age went to primary school (43%), compared to a secondary school enrolment rate of only three percent. At the time of independence, university enrolment of African students was practically nil (Court and Kinyanjui, 1986). This had significant implications for the number of qualified nationals who could manage the affairs of African states and propel these countries onto a sustainable path of development. For example, in 1964, one year after independence, Kenya counted 36 doctors, 20 electrical engineers, 17 university professors and seven economists among its citizens (Cheru, 2002a:72). Other African states were faced with a similar lack of qualified nationals.

The third challenge for newly independent states was to take control of the economy and improve national economic performance. Under colonial rule, African economies became chiefly customised to the industrial and consumption needs of the ‘metropolitan centre’, rather than the needs of the local population. Thus, the institutional structure of the economy that post-colonial states inherited was characterised by low-income agriculture, external dependence and a marginal position in world markets (Lewis, 1998). In contrast, former colonial powers and other ‘developed’ countries were seen as representing the state of development to which African states should aspire.

Finally, newly independent states were faced with the challenge of ‘state building’ and the need to establish legitimate, viable and effective organisations of governance and development. African states inherited colonial structures of administration, which had been designed to suit the interests of colonial powers. As such, these political and administrative apparatuses were ill-equipped for the tasks of nation-building and national development in newly independent states. Thus, the transformation of political and administrative systems so that these could fulfil the tasks of modernisation became a key focus for the first generation of African leaders.[v]

2.3. Responses to development challenges and progress achieved, 1950s-1999

Given the vastness and the complexity of these challenges, it is hardly surprising that African states opted for the centralisation of decision-making and resources and favoured state intervention in the economy and in the development process in general. This happened regardless of the ideological orientation of respective states, whether these were socialist-oriented or Keynesian-oriented.[vi] Also, conventional wisdom at the time endorsed significant state intervention in the development process, partly because of the commonly accepted notion of ‘market failure’ in economic theory, particularly in relation to ‘latecomer’ economies (Ghosh, 2001). In light of the dominant perspective of development as economic growth, development planning was associated with a deliberate government attempt to pursue economic progress and respond to the basic needs of citizens. In accordance with modernisation theory, which identified various stages of development, development planning became a tool to enable ‘underdeveloped’ countries to follow the appropriate stages of modernisation. For some African states, which associated capitalism with foreign control, this meant pursuing a socialist path of development characterised by state control and state ownership of industries. These included Tanzania, Guinea and, for a while, Mali. Other African states, like Kenya, Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria, adopted a capitalist path of development. In some instances, African states altered their approach as their allegiance to the two superpowers shifted (e.g. Ethiopia). Yet, as highlighted earlier, both socialist-oriented and Keynesian-oriented regimes supported a strong, interventionist role of the state in pursuing economic progress.

The 1950s and 1960s: the development era

Evidence suggests that in the first two decades of independence, African states made significant strides in relation to the four fundamental challenges outlined above. By pursuing an economic strategy largely based on capital formation through the expansion of exports and import substitution (anticipated to result in rapid industrialisation), African states realised an average weighted growth rate in sub-Saharan Africa of 3.9% in the 1960s - an average that was only to be attained again in the latter part of the 1990s (Ghai, 2000:17). Clearly, these average ratios hide great variations in economic performance among African countries

Table 2.1. Enrolment ratios in sub-Saharan Africa, 1960-1997									
	Primary enrolment			**Secondary enrolment**			**Tertiary enrolment**		
	Men	**Women**	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**
1960	54.4	32.0	43.2	4.2	2.0	3.1	0.4	0.1	0.2
1970	62.3	42.8	52.5	9.6	4.6	7.1	1.3	0.3	0.8
1980	88.7	70.2	79.5	22.2	12.8	17.5	2.7	0.7	1.7
1990	81.9	67.6	74.8	25.5	19.2	22.4	4.1	1.9	3.0
1997	84.1	69.4	76.8	29.1	23.3	26.2	5.1	2.8	3.9
Source: World Bank (2002b: 106)									

and for specific countries over time. The fact that 10 African states realised a sustained growth rate of 6% over more than a decade in the period between 1967 and 1980 is an indication of how successful these states were in achieving economic progress (Mkandawire, 2001:303).

African states also made major improvements in relation to social and physical infrastructure by doubling, at times even tripling, public expenditures on education, health and water (Seidman, 1974). Strong public investment in newly established national health care systems contributed to a significant decrease in infant mortality and maternal mortality, resulting in higher population growth rates and an increase in life expectancy of about four years per decade, rising from 40 years in 1960 to 48 years in 1980 and reaching nearly 52 years in 1990 (Cooper, 2002:107; World Bank, 2002a). Transforming the colonial racial education system to ensure access to education for all nationals became a key priority for newly independent states. This involved tackling racial segregation in schools, 'Africanisation' of the curriculum to ensure that the content of education was appropriate and gave an accurate reflection of local history and culture, and promoting African nationals into positions at all levels of the education system (Court and Kinyanjui, 1986). Education and investment in human capital were seen as central to economic development, which led to an emphasis on primary education and adult education. In addition, many African states adopted a policy of guaranteed employment for university graduates (Cheru, 2002a). As a result, primary enrolment rates increased from 43% to 53%, secondary enrolment more than doubled from 3% to 7%, and university enrolment increased from almost nil to close to 1% between 1960 and 1970 (see Table 2.1). Girls and women clearly benefited from these measures.

In relation to nation building and 'state building' (the first and last challenge identified above), the successes seem less straightforward. Much of the literature on the African state bemoans the autocratic, repressive, 'clientelistic' or corrupt nature of most African states, particularly since the late 1960s. While these negative views of the state in Africa may not always have been justified and may have eventually become self-fulfilling[vii], there is ample evidence that many first generation African leaders closed the political space for debate and dissent on the basis that this would undermine national unity and the legitimacy of the state (see, amongst others, Chafer, 2002; Cooper, 2002). But whilst in the 1960s autocratic government was combined with the notion of developmentalism, by the 1970s African states (quite a few of which were military regimes by that time) were less able to fulfil promises of development and were increasingly tied into patronage politics. An important contributing factor, which is often overlooked, is that African states inherited overdeveloped civil and military bureaucracies and underdeveloped political and legislative systems from former colonial powers (Martinussen, 1999).

The 1970s: crisis in development planning

The early 1970s saw a continuation of the gains made in the preceding ten to twenty years (see also Table 2.1), but with more attention to the distributional dimensions of development. In accordance with shifts in international thinking on development, there was increasing concern with the fact that productivity did not spread throughout the national economy as anticipated, nor did it automatically translate into the fair distribution of growth and improved standards of living for the majority of people (Seidman, 1974). This led some to conclude that African economies experienced "growth without development" (Clower et al, quoted in Seidman, 1974:4). Of particular concern was the new phenomenon of graduate unemployment, which was indicative of the lack of correlation between expanding education opportunities and productive activities in the economy (Court and

Kinyanjui, 1986; Seidman, 1974). African states responded by pursuing internationally recommended development strategies that were more sensitive to social equity (e.g. through the provision of subsidised food, education, health and employment) (Ali, 2001), including those focusing on the spatial dimension of development, more specifically regional planning and integrated rural development (Ayeni, 1999; Belshaw, 2002).[viii]

Yet, after having achieved remarkable progress in the first few decades of independence, the situation began to change dramatically during the course of the 1970s, eventually leading to a 'crisis in development planning' in sub-Saharan Africa. To some extent, this may be considered as the logical outcome of the scope of the fundamental challenges facing African states. The high level of demand for services and the transformation of political and administrative systems forced governments to push their budgets to the limit. As early as the end of the 1960s, it became increasingly clear that some of the planning objectives pursued by African states exceeded state capacity and resources and were unsustainable. Contrary to expectations, external funds were not forthcoming, at least not in the volume required.[ix]

At the same time, there was growing evidence that direct state control in the allocation of imports, credits and raw materials and administrative decisions on prices and the protection of industry had resulted in inefficient resource use, shortages, parallel markets and even corruption (Ghai, 2000). Patronage politics, political instability, civil war and excessive military spending further contributed to this situation, halting the initial progress made.

These issues became particularly pertinent with the economic shocks of the 1970s and the subsequent global downturn in demand for tropical products, the rise of world interest rates and the continued lack of foreign investment in African economies. These global trends exposed the vulnerability of African economies to erratic world markets due to their dependency on primary commodities.[x] Both socialist and capitalist (Keynesian) models of economic development adopted by African states proved incapable of weathering the economic storm, which resulted in economic stagnation, a worsening balance of payments, deteriorating terms of trade, significant levels of poverty and a decline in agricultural production (Falola, 1996). In addition, orthodox measures used to respond to the economic crisis, such as cuts in public expenditure, laying off government employees and devaluation, only aggravated the situation by reducing real incomes of wage earners and cash crop peasants and by increasing unemployment (Seidman, 1974). As a result, public services came under severe pressure and, in many cases, eventually collapsed.

Average economic growth slowed down significantly in the second half of the 1970s, reaching an average of 2.9% per annum between 1975 and 1979 (World Bank, 2002c). Yet, this average figure hides the fact that some countries experienced erratic growth rates or even economic decline. Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, economic stagnation became increasingly widespread on the subcontinent and started to affect those countries that had consistently performed well (Ghai, 2000). Because the total population continued to grow, even moderate economic growth translated into a drop in average per capita income. While in the 1960s two-thirds of sub-Saharan countries showed a positive per capita income, this declined to 62% in the 1970s, only to fall even further to 48% in the 1980s and to less than a third (31%) in the 1990s (Elbadawi and Ndulu, 2001).

By the late 1970s, the international economic crisis propelled a new approach to development and fuelled an aversion to state-led development in mainstream development thinking. In contrast to preceding years, when there was general appreciation for the state as a critical actor in the development process, the pendulum now shifted to the opposite direction and the state became increasingly criticised for being the main obstacle to development. The neoclassical view that the state should withdraw from the development process to enable the market to take its 'rightful' place became ever more influential in international development thinking and practice (Ohiorhenuan, 2002). Development planning became associated with the 'gatekeeper' state[xi], where state interventionism was linked to authoritarian rule and disregard for human rights. Failed experiments in nationalisation and grand-scale social engineering, as in the case of Tanzania and Ethiopia (Cooper, 2002; Scott, 1998), gave proponents of the neoclassical model of development fuel to argue against such central involvement of the state in development. This was reinforced by the dichotomous thinking of the Cold War period, which fed into a strong anti-state sentiment in the West and among its allies in sub-Saharan Africa. This "neoclassical counter-revolution" (Ohiorhenuan, 2002:5) was at the root of the neoliberal paradigm to development, so

Box 2.1. Key characteristics of economic planning in sub-Saharan Africa	
1960s-1970s:	**1980s-1990s:**
• Medium-term planning, based on the two-gap model focusing on growth rate, capital-output ratios by sector and the derived financing gap	• Short-term macroeconomic planning, focusing on recurrent budget deficit and inflation
• State employs instruments of control to realise planning objectives (e.g. credit guidelines & tariff regimes)	• State has a facilitative role, rather than exerting control
• Tax regimes focusing on agriculture and/or mineral export taxes and possibly income taxes on the small 'modern' sector, i.e. public and corporate sectors	• Broadening the revenue base and increasing supply responses through institutional support to investors and exporters
Source: Taken from Ohiorhenuan (2002)	

prominently advocated in the "Washington Consensus" in the 1980s and 1990s.

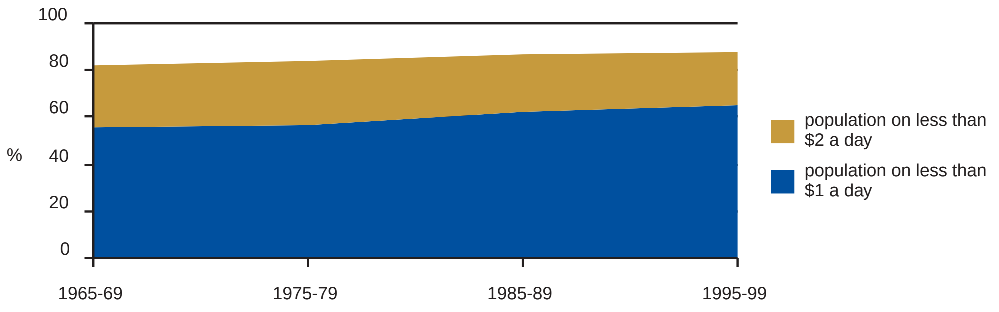
The 1980s: structural adjustment

In the 1980s, a narrow perspective of development as economic growth, best facilitated and distributed through the market mechanism, held sway. Macroeconomic reform and structural adjustment became the buzzwords, associated with measures such as non-inflationary budgetary policies and monetary restraint, the liberalisation of trade and financial flows, exchange rate correction, privatisation and deregulation of domestic financial markets. These measures were considered appropriate means to overcome the structural weaknesses of African economies and their management (including domestic policies and institutional mechanisms), which were seen to lie at the root of the economic crisis gripping the subcontinent. It could be argued that, ultimately, these means became ends in themselves. In sub-Saharan Africa, the economic policy and development debate became completely dominated by structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) (Nissanke, 2001). An underlying tenet of structural adjustment was that countries could "export their way out of the crisis" (UN Economic and Social Council, 2001:12). In the process, the capacities of African states to function as a 'state' were drastically eroded (Mkandawire, 2001). Box 2.1 illustrates some elements of this fundamental shift.

Structural economic reform was made conditional on African states that found themselves unable to service loans made by Northern commercial banks and the Bretton Woods Institutions. In the 1960s and early 1970s, following the 1973 increase in global oil prices, money was made easily available to African states, often regardless of what the resources were used for. In fact, lending countries stand accused of 'loan-pushing', by making large sums of money available for white-elephant projects, the acquisition of arms, or the import of luxury goods, often to undemocratic regimes. In 1979, the interest payments of these loans increased dramatically, resulting in a significant foreign debt problem for many African states. To repay these loans to Northern commercial banks, African states could access structural adjustment loans from the IMF. Yet, these IMF loans came with a host of conditionalities related to policy reforms, including domestic trade liberalisation, relaxation of foreign exchange controls, the privatisation of basic services and an end to social subsidies (Cheru, 2002a). In the 1980s and early 1990s, a large number of African countries had to pay more in debt service charges than they received in the form of development assistance and foreign investment. According to Potter (2000:6), by the end of the last century the total external debt burden of sub-Saharan Africa amounted to 83% of total GNP for the region. As a result, the subcontinent spent four times more on debt interest payments than on health care (Potter, 2000:7).

The economic slowdown that had started in the 1970s became more entrenched and noticeable during the 1980s. The average national GDP growth rate on the subcontinent dropped to 1.7%, only to drop even further in the early 1990s to 0.9% (Belshaw and Livingstone, 2002:5; Ghai, 2000:17). This economic decline has manifested itself in almost all economic and social indicators and in negative per capita growth rates (Elbadawi and Contributors, 2001). Even those who argue that macroeconomic and adjustment policies have resulted in modest per capita income growth in sub-Saharan Africa concur that the growth rates are not comparable to long-term growth rates in other regions, nor that it has been sufficient to address widespread (and growing) poverty (Rwegasira, 2001). Ali (2001) has demonstrated that sub-Saharan Africa has seen a significant increase in poverty, particularly in rural areas, in the second half of the 1980s. He argues that this increase has been

Graph 2.1. Poverty trends in African LDCs, 1965-1999



Source: UNCTAD (2002b)

Table 2.2. Poverty trends in African LDCs, 1965-1999

	1965-1969	1975-1979	1985-1989	1995-1999
Population living on less than $1 a day (%)	55.8	56.4	61.9	64.9
Population living on less than $2 a day (%)	82.0	83.7	87.0	87.5
Number of people living on less than $1 a day	89.6	117.4	170.5	233.5
Number of people living on less than $2 a day	131.7	174.4	239.5	315.1
Average daily consumption of people living on less than $1 a day (PPP at 1985 rates)	0.64	0.66	0.64	0.59
Average daily consumption of people living on less than $2 a day (PPP at 1985 rates)	0.95	0.96	0.90	0.86

Source: UNCTAD (2002a:59)

much more dramatic than is commonly reported, reaching between six to ten percent per annum. In 'intensively adjusting' countries (Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia), rural poverty increased from almost 57% in 1965 to 62% in 1988. This correlates with a twofold increase in absolute numbers, from just over 18 million in 1965 to just over 36 million people in 1988. In 'other adjusting' countries (Gabon, Gambia and Mali), an increase from 45% (or 2.3 million people) to 61% (5.1 million people) was recorded over the same period. Instead, in 'non-adjusting' countries (Ethiopia and Lesotho), rural poverty declined from 66% to 44%, remaining constant in absolute numbers at 17 million people (Ali, 2001:119). Likewise, Table 2.2 and Graph 2.1 show that poverty trends in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Africa have increased steadily since the mid-1960s.[xii]

As intimated earlier, the economic crisis, and more specifically the way in which structural adjustment was designed and implemented[xiii], also halted the rate of improvements in social development achieved in preceding decades, resulting in only moderate improvements at best, if not a reversal. As Table 2.1 shows, primary enrolment ratios declined quite significantly between 1980 and 1990, whilst secondary and tertiary intakes continued to increase, but at more modest rates than before. Another indicator is the dependency ratio. According to UNCTAD's recent report on Least Developed Countries, the dependency ratio in Africa is the highest in the world. Moreover, Africa is the only region that has seen an increase in the dependency ratio between 1970 (0.91) and 1999 (0.95) (UNCTAD, 2002a:89). Even where there is evidence of (modest) quantitative growth, such as in secondary school enrolment and access to health care, this does not necessarily imply qualitative improvements. In fact, anecdotal evidence often suggests a decline in the quality of these services (Edwards with Kinyua, 2000). Clearly, the negative view of the state in neoliberal orthodoxy and the concomitant erosion of state capacity have contributed to a decline in the scope and quality of social services and infrastructure.

In accordance with neoliberal ideology, emphasis was put on the role of the market in the provision of social services, like education and health, coupled with a diversification of service providers and the introduction of user fees as a cost-recovery mechanism. Although the justification for reforms in social sectors was couched in terms of sustainability, efficiency and equity, the nature of the reforms showed that efficiency was the overriding concern. In effect, as many observers have commented in the context of health planning, the emphasis on user charges generally served to perpetuate, if not aggravate, inequities in access to health care (Blas and Hearst, 2002; Blas and Limbambala, 2001; Nyonator and Kutzin, 1999; Van Der Geest, et al., 2000).[xiv] There was also a dramatic increase in the level of involvement of donor agencies in sectors of social development, particularly in health and education, leading to a considerable proliferation of donor projects, procedures and policies, resulting in a significant amount of duplication, competition and a high administrative burden on recipient countries.[xv]

It is worth noting that it was in this context of structural adjustment and its regressive impact on human development that HIV/AIDS started to emerge, first as a public health concern and subsequently as an epidemic with major implications for all dimensions of development. Although the link between SAPs and HIV/AIDS is not simplistic, it can be observed that SAPs came at a time when households, communities and governments were already quite vulnerable to external shocks and that SAPs tended to exacerbate certain factors associated with enhanced risk to HIV infection (Collins and Rau, 2000; Poku and Cheru, 2001; Schoepf, 2004a). HIV/AIDS will be further discussed in the next period, the 1990s.

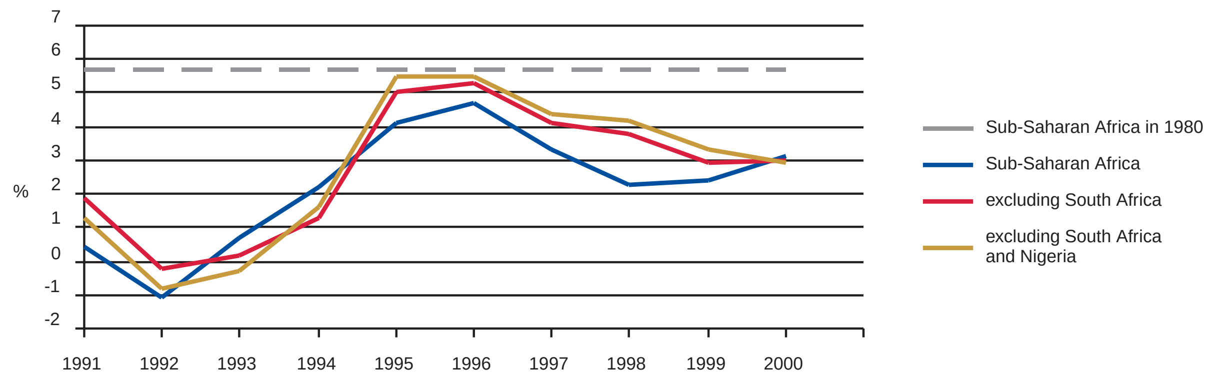
As far as the twofold project of nation-building and state-building is concerned, it could be argued that both came under severe stress in the 1980s. Cooper (2002) argues that the project of building a common national identity came undone in the 1980s, when other forms of identity expression, such as religious identities, became more influential. To some extent, this may have been propelled by the patronage politics pursued by many African leaders at the time. The fact that the political institutions inherited from colonial powers were relatively weak allowed for the emergence of 'strong man politics', where political leaders had strong vertical ties with their supporters – although there were undeniably great variants in political institutions and procedures across sub-Saharan Africa and significant variations in the degree of political space (Cooper, 2002; Goldsmith, 2002). Cold war dichotomies further entrenched this situation, with Western governments and international organisations propping up support for undemocratic leaders and military regimes for geopolitical reasons. At the same time, integral to structural adjustment was the objective to address poor performance and inefficiency in the public sector and state-owned enterprises. The assumption was that African states were overextended, bloated and highly bureaucratic. Yet, as Goldsmith (2000) has aptly demonstrated, the African state was no anomaly in terms of public sector expenditure, public sector employment or public enterprises' share of the economy. In fact, in comparison to other regions these aspects of the African state were actually lower than average, particularly in terms of public sector employment. As a result, structural adjustment measures "have so maladjusted African states that they provide proof of the impossibility of developmental states in Africa" (Mkandawire, 2001:306).

The 1990s: 'structural adjustment with a human face'

As early as the late 1980s, concerns about poverty, equity and the narrow conceptualisation of development in neoliberal thinking resurfaced.[xvi] In the 1990s, these concerns became more pronounced and eventually found their way into development orthodoxy. In 1990, UNDP presented the notion of human development, defined as "the process of enlarging people's choices" (UNDP, 1990:10).[xvii] The resurgence of poverty and equity concerns coincided with a 'rediscovery' of the state as a key actor in the development process, encapsulated in the notion of the 'developmental state'. Because of this renewed attention to the role of the state, the past decade has seen an increasing interest in the institutional environment and 'institution-building' of the state, particularly the local state. In the African context, this emphasis on 'institution-building' may, in part, be fed by the persistently negative conceptions of the African state, which is commonly referred to as the 'rentier state', the 'over-extended state', the 'parasitical state', the 'predatory state', the 'lame Leviathan', the 'patrimonial state', the 'prebendal state', the 'crony state', the 'kleptocratic state', the 'inverted state', etc." (Mkandawire, 2001:293). The focus on institution-building has been accompanied by an emphasis on democratisation and 'good governance', in large part brought on by the end of the Cold War and the subsequent collapse of the bipolar world system. Since 1989, a significant number of African states have moved towards multi-party democracy, albeit at times very closely 'managed' by incumbents to prevent the renewed political space from opening too far.[xviii]

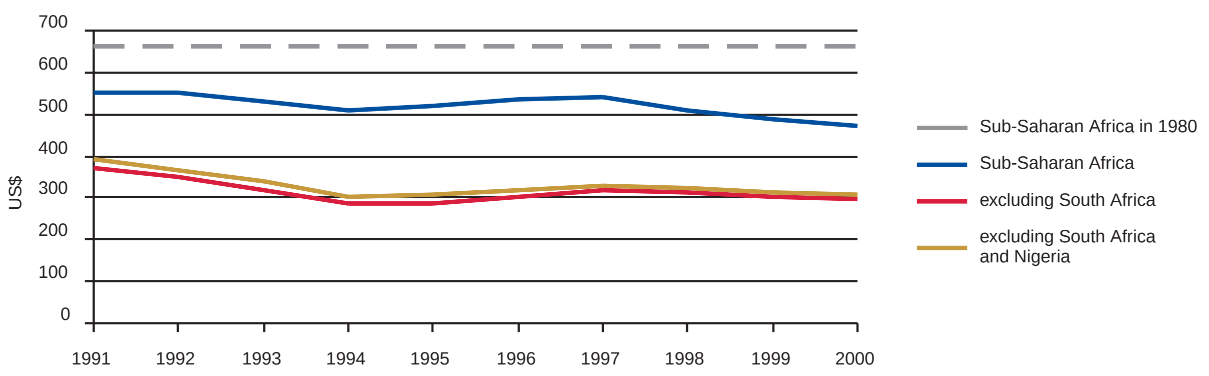
In the second half of the 1990s, economic growth in

Graph 2.2. Trends in GDP growth (%), 1990s



Source: World Bank (2002c)

Graph 2.3. Trends in GNI per capita (US$) in the 1990s



Source: World Bank (2002c)

sub-Saharan Africa showed a marked improvement, resulting in an average annual growth rate of four percent between 1994 and 1997 (Ghai, 2000:17). Graph 2.2 shows how economic growth on the subcontinent has started to improve since 1992. Yet, it has not been able to surpass the 1980 economic growth rate of 5.7%. It is also significant to see what happens when South Africa and Nigeria, considered the 'economic powerhouses' on the subcontinent, are excluded. As Graph 2.2 reveals, their economic fortunes and misfortunes clearly distort the average GDP growth trends in sub-Saharan Africa.

However, possibly more instructive than economic trends measured in average GDP growth are per capita growth rates. As Graph 2.3 shows, GNI per capita has been fairly erratic during the 1990s, but shows an overall decline. This decline is even more pronounced if it is compared with the average GNI per capita in 1980, which was $665 for sub-Saharan Africa, $528 for the subcontinent excluding South Africa, and $448 if Nigeria is excluded as well (World Bank, 2002c).

Other social development indicators show that significant improvements continued to be achieved during the 1990s. For example, between 1988 and 1990, 41% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa reportedly had access to safe water, whilst 26% had access to sanitation. Between 1990 and 1998, this improved to 58% and 48% respectively (UNDP, 2000). According to data in various UNDP Human Development Reports, adult literacy increased from 47% in 1990 to 61% in 2000, with particularly noteworthy improvements in the adult literacy rate among women. Also, the decline in primary school enrolment rates in the 1980s seems to have been halted, with primary enrolment increasing slightly from 75% in 1990 to almost 77% in 1997 (see Table 2.1). Yet, since the early 1990s, life expectancy has started to decline from almost 52 years in 1990 to just below 47 years in 2001. This reduction in life expectancy of about five years within the space of 11 years is similar to the average increase in life expectancy of four years per decade between 1960 and 1990. This is indicative of the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on the subcontinent.

It is now widely accepted that HIV/AIDS is a developmental and humanitarian crisis, particularly for those countries on the subcontinent with an advanced epidemic and high adult HIV prevalence rates. The rising adult mortality due to AIDS-related deaths among the most productive section of the population not only results in declining life expectancy, it also leads to a loss of skills, knowledge and expertise so essential for a country's development. It further results in a reduction in labour productivity, an increase in organisational costs related to human resources and slower, if not reduced, economic growth. At the household level, household savings and consumption are depleted, resulting in more and deeper poverty. Due to intra-household transmission of HIV infection, there are growing numbers of orphans (who may or may not be HIV-positive) and child-headed households. Following the breakdown of familial and social networks, women and children will face increasing dependency and vulnerability to infection and (sexual) exploitation. Stigma and fear associated with HIV/AIDS further erode social cohesion, cultivating discrimination and social exclusion. The impact on sectors, like education, health, agriculture and the military, is also considerable. Whilst there is increasing demand for more and qualitative different services to provide the necessary support to those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, these sectors themselves are faced with increasing absenteeism and a loss of skilled personnel due to the epidemic. As a result, public sector capacity to respond to the challenges of HIV/AIDS and to deliver on its basic mandate is eroded.[xix] These and other consequences of HIV/AIDS are threatening to further undermine the already fragile development capacity of the subcontinent.

2.4. Concluding comments

By way of concluding this historical overview, it is worthwhile to highlight a few key points.

Firstly, between 1960 and 2000, African states have been able to make impressive achievements in relation to almost all social development indicators, although the rate at which these improvements have occurred has slowed down significantly since the late 1970s, and especially in the 1980s. In some areas, there is evidence of a reversal of earlier progress made (e.g. primary school enrolment and the dependency ratio). A look at individual countries is likely to reveal that a reversal has taken place in other aspects of social development as well. In the 1990s, a slow upward trend seems to have taken root again. An exception to this positive trend is life expectancy, which has started to decline in the 1990s, reflecting the demographic impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Secondly, after realising impressive economic progress in the 1960s and early 1970s, African economies have experienced economic decline and/or a reduction in economic growth since the mid-1970s. This trend is largely due to the vulnerability of African economies to endogenous shocks and pressures, which newly independent states (regardless of ideological orientation) proved unable to overcome and which structural adjustment served to entrench, rather than remedy. Reduced, if not negative, economic growth has occurred in a context of worsening terms of trade, declining volumes of development assistance, lack of foreign investment and high levels of external debt. Where moderate economic growth has occurred, it has not been comparable to economic growth rates in other regions, nor has it been sufficient to overcome endemic and growing poverty.

Thirdly, poverty has increased steadily since 1965, with almost two-thirds of the population in African LDCs living on less than $1 a day and close to an additional 25% hovering just above this poverty line (see Graph 2.1). In sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, almost half the population (about 300 million people) is estimated to be living on less than $1 a day. Similarly, income per capita has declined steadily since 1980, occasional annual improvements notwithstanding (see Graph 2.3).

Fourthly, African states have sought to respond to development challenges in ways that were considered appropriate to the domestic context, albeit often in accordance with ideas and practices that prevailed in the international arena. The next chapter will focus more explicitly on the various types of development planning in sub-Saharan Africa (see Table 3.1 for a summary of the key elements of development planning between 1960 and 1999). The 'crisis in planning', or the failure to achieve the dual objective of sustained economic growth and equitable development, has often been blamed on a host of domestic factors. Even those who do not agree with an exclusive focus on domestic blockages or weaknesses have identified problems with the methods and instruments used to achieve this dual objective, the assumptions underpinning economic development planning, the inappropriate application of particular growth strategies and institutional blockages (see, amongst others, Degefe, 1994; Edwards with Kinyua, 2000; Ghai, 2000; Seidman, 1974). At the same time, they point to factors in the external environment, including the particular vulnerability of African economies to exogenous shocks (see also Elbadawi and Ndulu, 2001). It is also clear that over time, African states have increasingly found their 'room for manoeuvre' constrained – if not determined – by external perspectives and policy conditions. In addition, the rapid integration of the global economy and the emergence of private capital as an extremely powerful force in the global political economy are acting as significant constraints on the nation state to determine and pursue its development path.

Fifthly, as is clear from the historical overview, the practice of development and development planning in sub-Saharan Africa has been infused with theoretical and ideological perspectives on development, the role of the state in the development process, the notion of the public interest and the object of planning, which have shifted over time. These are all subjects of fundamental debate, which cannot be explored further here. Table 2.3 presents a summary of these debates in relation to specific theoretical frameworks of development that have tended to dominate development practice in sub-Saharan Africa in particular decades. Clearly, though, this delineation is not as neat as Table 2.3 suggests and various perspectives have tended to coexist.[xx]

At the dawn of this millennium, Africans states are faced with some fundamental development challenges related to weak economic performance and limited/structurally skewed integration into the global economy, deepening poverty and widening inequality, high levels of unemployment, a high proportion of the population without adequate access to basic services in their areas of residence and work, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, amongst others. Development planning will continue to be a key instrument to address these complex and interrelated challenges. The next chapter will identify the main types of development planning and associated development planning frameworks in sub-Saharan Africa. By way of introduction, it will first seek to (re)define and revalidate the concept of development planning.

Table 2.3. Overview of dominant theories of development					
	1950s/1960s	**1960s**	**1970s**	**1980s**	**1990s**
Dominant theoretical framework of development	Modernisation theory	Dependency theory	Alternative development: basic needs and empowerment approaches	Neoliberalism	• Alternative development, i.e. focus on social justice, power & environmental concerns. • Neoliberalism, but with greater emphasis on 'social' aspects of development.
Meaning of development	Universal, unidirectional process of change, which is long-term, progressive and irreversible. Centrality of economic growth that proceeds along stages, with 'trickle down' effect.	Economic growth through national accumulation, with 'development of underdevelopment' in the periphery as its distorted form.	'Human flourishing', i.e. basic needs, participation and equity. Also emphasis on 'development from below'.	Economic growth through structural reform, stabilisation, liberalisation and privatisation.	Human development, i.e. capacitation and enlargement of people's choices. Sustainable development, i.e. explicit focus on the environment.
View of the state	Neutral arbiter to maintain consensual society and conduit of development. Coincided with sense of responsibility of newly independent African states (for unity, development and peace) and confidence in state as agent of economic development.	African states are 'dependent states', seeking access to world markets. Capitalist state as integrating mechanism to preserve the status quo between different class interests (i.e. represents elite interests/national bourgeoisie). Socialist state as initiator and agent of national development in the interest of the working class.	Society as the foundation for development as opposed to state-led development. Only in the 1980s attention to the role of the state, as a counterbalance to the dominant view of the market as the leading actor of development.	Failure of development largely blamed on improper functioning of the state. The market is the organising principle of society and core distributing mechanism à role of state = to protect individual and the market (New Public Management). Also shift towards local state (decentralisation & 'urban management').	'Developmental state', which is responsible for 'enabling environment' to allow the private sector and civil society to play their rightful roles in the development process. More concern with institutional environment and issues of 'institution-building' (particularly in relation to the local state and partnerships).
View of society /public interest	Based on consensus, with a singular public interest, namely pursuit of rational self-interest will serve to maximise social welfare. Also, society as recipient: top-down approach.	Conflictual, with a variety of interests and the possibility of dominance and exploitation.	Pluralist, i.e. variety of interest groups/communities. Generally a positive notion of communities as fairly homogeneous, consensual entities. Increasing recognition of power imbalances, especially between men & women.	Pluralist, yet inherently consensual: individuals acting on the basis of rational choice (self-interest), which maximises the public interest.	Consensual pluralism.
View of planning	Planning as a technical, scientific and comprehensive activity to proceed along the various stages of modernisation.	Planning as a state-controlled and state-managed activity that allows 'underdeveloped' states to catch up with industrialised nations.	Participatory planning as beneficial to national development, where local communities and 'the poor' mobilise and self-organise to ensure that the distributional effects of the development process benefit them.	Planning = state = inefficient: need to refocus towards 'enablement' to increase productivity. Shift towards 'management', whereby even politics is reduced to technocratic and managerial aspects, i.e. what strategic planning is supposed to facilitate participation and partnerships.	Strategic planning (i.e. dynamic framework to enable priority setting and the facilitation of partnerships between public, private and non-profit sectors) and renewed focus on participatory planning. On the basis of strategic planning, conventional area & sectoral planning can be used.
Sources: Martinussen (1999), Nederveen Pieterse (2001)