



## The International Monetary Fund's Shaped Public Administration in the Ivory Coast and the Emerging Contextual Realities

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### **Abstract**

This article aims to examine the relations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Ivory Coast in the achievement of public administration reforms. While the former had to devise adequate structural adjustment programmes, the latter must set workable legal and policy frameworks for effective implementation of the programmes. The approach taken is a textual analysis based upon evaluating various IMF programmes contained in four successive Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and the legal and policy frameworks set in compliance with IMF programmes. Based on its membership with the IMF, Ivory Coast benefits from the United Nations' agency's assistance should the need arise. As a result, from 1980 to date, regular cooperation has existed between the two entities. Whatever the outcome of their cooperation, lessons are always learned to improve future dealings. The value of this article lies in the characterisation of the nature of the cooperation between Ivory Coast and the IMF and the shift in approach to the practice of public administration and public management in Ivory Coast for sustained economic growth.

**Keywords:** *Public Administration; IMF; Ivory Coast; Structural Adjustment Programme; Law; And Policy Implementation*

### **1. Introduction**

At the dawn of its independence from the French colonial rule, Ivory Coast adopted a system of public administration, which to a great deal is identical to the colonial administrative structure and mechanisms. Equally, the socio-economic and political configuration of the newly independent Country was inherited from the former colonising government. However, like most newly independent African nations, Ivory Coast responded to comply with the established international order. Thus Ivory Coast became a member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on November 21 1960, the World

Bank, and the International Monetary Funds (IMF). To meet the expectations attendant upon its new status not only as a sovereign nation but also as an actor in the international community, the Ivory government endeavoured to enact laws and policies that would be implemented with the view to attaining socio-economic stability underpinned by a strategy of well-equipping civil servants and economic actors. While the Country's development goals were under the IMF's scrutiny, the government did not resort to the technical assistance of the Funds until the early 1980s. Indeed, the first two decades of the post-independence Ivory Coast were successful in terms of economic growth and social stability. This specific era, known as the Ivorian economic miracle, did not require the authorities to seek external interventions.

The apparent economic success and social stability of the Ivory Coast in the West African sub-region has attracted foreign workers and other migrants (Chauveau and Richards, 2008). The massive exodus of migrants and movements of the working-age population from rural areas to urban areas put a strain on the few resources and developing infrastructures. Moreover, the lack of a proper development plan and the acute state of mismanagement of public funds led the Country into a lingering economic crisis known as *conjuncture* in the 1980s (U.S. Library of Congress, 2008). The nature of the problem in the public administration and public management gave rise to a new approach to the relation of Ivory Coast with the IMF. The need to bring in reforms to reignite Ivory Coast's economic growth and social stability became a matter of urgency for both the IMF and government authorities. A comprehensive approach to thwarting such a crisis was possible in an agreed framework defining a series of programmes to be implemented by Ivory Coast. However, the IMF programmes on public administration and public management appear to be stringent for a country; the aims and objectives for taking such measures remain optimistic on the Country's economic outlook. This article attempts to define the nature, scope, and impact of IMF programmes in the Ivory Coast.

Moreover, this article seeks to critically evaluate the impact of IMF programmes on public administration and public management reforms in the Ivory Coast. As the IMF's programmes are in essence intended to trigger a paradigm shift in the country approach to the practice of public administration as well as the improvement Ivory Coast's economic performance, this article also seeks to analyse the aims of the specific programmes set for the Country and the extent to which they were met in practice. Given the stringent nature of most IMF programmes, chiefly in the context of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), this article attempts to identify lessons for both the IMF and Ivory Coast from the experience of cooperation.

## **2. The Practice of Public Administration in Ivory Coast: Concept and Context**

### **2.1 Conceptualising Public Administration**

The concept of public administration is defined as implementing government policies (White, 1955). It is also considered the academic discipline that studies this implementation and prepares civil servants to work in the public service (Scott & Marshall, 2009). This conceptual approach makes grasping how government policies are implemented crucial in delivering good public service. From a practical perspective, public administration is to be exercised in a framework that allows the executive branch of the government to devise the best approach to political and socio-economic issues.

Moreover, civil servants indeed need to be up to the standards required for the efficient practice of public administration regarding the academic aspect. In that respect, Cooper et al. rightly observe that 'government employees need to have managerial discretion and flexibility to make quick and informed decisions on various issues affecting the public. At the same time, our system requires political accountability; citizens must monitor their government and feel assured that elected and unelected officials perform their jobs adequately. Ideally, citizens keep an eye on the government, make a judgment

about government performance, and adjust their preferred level of bureaucratic discretion accordingly' (Cooper et al., 2008). This observation entails the practical aspect of public administration as a whole. It emphasises the necessity of having capable civil servants in the running of public services and the need to establish a culture of good governance. It appears, therefore, that good governance, including accountability redistribution of wealth, remains the backbone of public administration.

The globalisation narrative seems to create an effect of mimetics whereby every Country meets specific international standards. In that vein, Chang (2005) observes that: 'with the recent advance in globalisation; it has become popular to argue that countries need to adopt a certain set of institutions that meet the "global standards" to survive in the new, borderless world'.

While this eagerness might not be intense among industrialised nations because they have met or neared to meet these standards, the developing countries vigorously compete to meet those standards. Moreover, they tend to be active at every stage of globalisation. Chigara (2007) argues that: 'latecomers' involvement in the ILO objective of authoritatively updating the International Labour Code gave them co-editorial control over the whole of the labour code so that the result could be said to be an International Labour Code that has been both co-authored and approved by all the four regions of the world through their representation in the Working Party.' However, many countries that aspire to a specific international standard often fall short of observing fundamental societal values. Values such as transparency, the protection of human rights in general (UDHR, 1948), and the protection of women and children's rights, in particular, are scarce in most traditional communities. Yet, they are part of the global community (Ine, 2013). Crawford (2015) notes that: 'Transparency is a key feature of a human rights-based approach to development. Transparency reflects both intrinsic and instrumental human rights values. Citizens' insight and oversight regarding issues of public concern are important intrinsic values, enabling people to make informed and autonomous choices and live meaningful lives.' This leads to the ideal approach to a country's public administration and public management.

The experience of the cooperation of the IMF and its member countries demonstrates that an institution plays the surveillance role to guarantee the delivery of good public administration to the population at the international level. Suppose a country is in a crisis or needs financial and technical assistance from the IMF and as a condition for responding to the particular request. In that case, the government has to reform its public administration; such a country must strictly comply. Suppose the IMF's structural adjustment programmes are often regarded as damaging for the population. The substrate of definitions of an interested public is the continued presence of common, public goods. Whether the services are rescue services, electricity, sewage, or other necessary aspects of maintaining life, the administrator's job is to "keep the lights on" in the early stages of a crisis. The first task of public administrators during times of crisis is the maintenance of public goods and the provision of services. The reflection on the recent history of natural disasters is needed to acknowledge the importance of basic goods provision to the maintenance of public (Jordan, 2008).'

## 2.2 Public Administration in the Ivory Coast Context

The Ivory Coast has inherited its public administration and the relevant practices from the French colonial administration (Woods, 1988). The policies emanated from the government agencies in the one-party political system (Zolberg, 1969). Obviously, at the independence of the Country, political pluralism was allowed (Zolberg, 1969). However, an 'arrangement' was made to function in a one-party system. In other words, the Ivorian Constitution has never denied political pluralism, but in practice, *monopartism* operated until 1990 (Djezou, 2014). This aspect of administering public affairs is significant because it gives leeway to the only party in power to run the Country unopposed. Therefore, in terms of law and policy-making, there is impliedly no cross-party examination and possibly no vetting of specific policies that could appear inadequate in a given context.

Ivory Coast endeavoured to set legal and institutional frameworks for economic and social stability from the outset. The Republic of Cote d'Ivoire (The Ivory Coast), created by the 1960 Constitution, was led by a solid and centralised government, independent judiciary, and national legislature. The legal system is based on civil and customary law. Since November 08 2016, the Country has had a new constitution ratified using a popular referendum. The administration is stratified so that the Executive branch headed by the republic's president holds enough power to exercise his duty as head of state and as commander in chief of the armed forces. The second major branch of the administration is the judiciary, represented by the Supreme Court that oversees all aspects of Ivory Coast's judicial system, including the court of appeal and local tribunals. The Constitutional Council in charge of determining presidential candidates' eligibility and the legality and conformity of laws enacted by the National Assembly or the treaties domesticated by Ivory Coast is also part of the Supreme Court.

Regarding public administration, Ivory Coast devolved the legislative power to the parliament (*l'Assemblée Nationale*) to make laws that will subsequently underpin policies and decisions from government agencies. Thus policies and decisions about the implementation of relevant laws, the power rested with government agencies and elected authorities. As public administration is also an academic discipline that studies the implementation of policies and prepares civil servants for public service, Ivory Coast founded the School of National Administration ( *Ecole Nationale d' Administration - ENA*) in 1960. The school was in charge of preparing elite civil servants who will be well equipped to lead the Country on the path to economic and social progress.

A development strategy was made essentially after Ivory Coast gained independence from France. The policies for transforming the public and private sectors were to be implemented by the authorities' plan to achieve unprecedented economic prosperity and social stability in a subdued environment. The authorities would not have allowed subversive activities from political activists or the population in such a context. It also includes the excellent management of the natural resources, such as the large forested zones in the east, west, and south of the Country and the waters. However, it seems paradoxical; the rationale behind the ban of pluralism perhaps was the authorities' determination to achieve their plan to control the political environment. As to the control of the forested zone, the *Société de Développement des Forêts (SODEFOR)* was created to ensure that forestry is well managed and exploited accordingly ( Djezou, 2014).

The achievement of such a goal was facilitated by existing patterns of development policies regarded as a 'blueprint' for guaranteed success in the newly independent Country. Applying the theory of mimetics was an approach adopted by Ivory Coast ( Mazrshall, 2004). As a result, Ivory Coast attained a satisfactory level of economic development. The state of the buoyant economy in the history of post-independence Ivory Coast is known as '*miracle économique.*' As Cohen observes, it became evident that 'the Ivory Coast development strategy is based on the productivity of cash-crop agriculture to support a modern urban industrial sector. This strategy requires cheap agricultural labour to maximise agricultural earnings and a trained workforce to operate and manage the methodology of industrial growth.

The practise of public administration in post-independence Ivory Coast has placed little emphasis on endogenous socio-cultural realities. This is what essentially transpires in the assertion of Amoah (2012) that 'in its evolutionary trajectory, the dominant narrative of public administration tends to assume totalising, universalistic nomothetic posture as they both undermine and ignore other worldviews. In Africa, the upshot has been a public policy that scarcely responds robustly to the continent's 'wicked problems'. Although colonial interventions came from outside the different countries, changes of the autochthonous societies had to be adapted to this model originating from another social system that had had an increasing influence since the beginning of the 20th century. Today, no groups remain which are not influenced by structures of western models. However, 'the transformation of a social system never

concerns all elements simultaneously: several elements change in the initial phase and force other elements to change until the emergence of another structural model can be observed (Amoah, 2012).

From a practical point of view, given that policies must comply with existing laws, government agencies such as the Ministry of education, the Ministry of agriculture, and the Ministry of social affairs have to strictly follow the letter and the spirit of the legislation from which their policies derived. In a context where the parliament was *unicameral* but also composed of members of one party, **PDCI-RDA**, laws from such parliament were usually made in the personal interests and for the political agenda of the ruling authorities. The Ivory Coast's apparent steady conduct of public affairs and administration lasted almost twenty years, from 1960 to 1980.

### **3. The Ivory Coast's Public Administration and the IMF Interventionism**

#### *3.1 Public Administration and Governance Issues*

It was admitted by the United Nations that 'international organisations have urged Ivory Coast government to undertake civil service reforms, but the Country's political divides then were so deep that the civil service sector deteriorated severely. Violence plagued the Country, leading to devastating humanitarian consequences. As a result, many former employees of the civil service administration fled the Country. Moreover, the state of the social and legal dilemma in the west and the north led the health and primary education to total collapse (Daddieh, 1988). The United Nations' observation about the state of Ivory Coast's public service is essentially based on the civil war that plagued the country from 2002 to 2010 (BBC NEWS, 2011).

The Ivory Coast practice of public administration has yielded prosperity and wealth during the buoyant economic era indicated elsewhere in this article. However, financial crisis and external factors have severely affected the Country's structures. Without blaming the Country's practice of public administration, it appears that the initial choice for development strategy encapsulated in the various public policies has played a crucial role in the predicaments of the West African Country. Certain foundations were identified in the implementation process of government policies to build a strong economy.

While policies were implemented in other areas, the development of the agricultural sector was regarded as the priority, and emphasis is placed on this fact by Sawadogo (1977), a former Ivorian Agriculture Minister. Such an approach was adopted upon the idea that a strong economy would sustain the development of other sectors of the Ivorian society as a whole. Hence, policies were abundant in areas regarded as the foundations of the economy. However, paradoxically, the ratio of active farmers to achieve such a goal was lower than that of civil servants. This indicates that the burden of bureaucracy in Ivorian public administration would eventually impede the attainment of the government's development plans. A brief analysis of the policy implementation in the areas regarded as the economy's foundation is intended to shed light on how gaps and ineffectiveness distort the process so that the practice of public administration before the intervention of the IMF was flawed in Ivory Coast.

With the crisis of the 1980s, Ivory Coast went through significant phases of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP). 1981 to 1983 was focused on recovering the financial situation and creating the conditions for economic recovery. The second phase was from 1984 to 1985; SAP was devoted to reducing the fiscal deficit and increasing government revenue. The third phase from 1986 to 1988 was the SAP dedicated to absorbing rising unemployment. The fourth phase from 1990 to 1992, the SAP called; 'financial Stabilization', was the most noticeable in the IMF's attempts to put Ivory Coast back on the economic development track (Jarret & Mahieu, 1991).

The World Bank (1987) indicates that faced with the rapid deterioration of the economic and financial situation, the Ivory Coast government launched at the end of 1981 a structural adjustment programme aimed at stabilising the economy, improving macroeconomic management, and laying the foundation for a resumption of growth in the medium to long term. The IMF supported this program through a multi-year arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) from 1981 to 1983, two one-year stand-by accounts in 1984 and 1985, and two structural adjustment loans with the Fund in 1981 and 1983. This first major structural adjustment program comprised two significant elements. The first element was a series of immediate policy actions to restore internal and external macroeconomic stability and correct the most blatant distortions in economic incentives. The second element is concerned with an initial reassessment of the development strategy at the macroeconomic and sectoral levels to implement policy reforms to restore the condition of self-sustained growth over the long term.

Although this was a new approach to the authorities' management of public affairs, they recognised that the structural adjustment program would be a long-term effort. It represented a fundamental change in institutions and policies. Implementing a broad range of fiscal measures was initiated to reduce expenditure and increase revenues. The government's new efforts include the freeze on public salaries, reduction in fringe benefits such as subsidised housing to a civil servant, strict enforcement of retirement legislation, a sharp decrease in the number of daily paid workers, more selective allocation of scholarship, limitation to the number of admission to civil service school. The efforts made by the government to reduce public expenditure were accompanied by a series of measures to increase revenues (The World Bank, 1987). There has also been a transitional phase of the structural adjustment process from 1986 to 1990. To achieve the essential objectives set for the transitional phase under the constraints about macroeconomic adjustment policies, the government had to formulate a coherent policy package taking into account the interrelationship between monetary, fiscal, and incentives policies as well as the responses of private economic agents to changes in these policies over time (Azam, 1993). However, previous SAPs have made Ivorian civil servants. The majority of the population endure financial hardship commonly known among the population as a *conjuncture*; it is worth noting that the most stringent SAP on the Ivorian society was the fourth SAP called 'Financial Stabilization' (The World Bank, 1987).

The fourth SAP, commonly known as '*Plan Alassane Ouattara*' among the Ivorian population, is a phase of the IMF's intervention in Ivory Coast that severely impacted the Ivorian public administration and social structure. This period coincided with the 'reinstatement' of pluralism in the Ivorian political sphere (Widner, 1991).

Ivory Coast entered in the spiral of social and political contestations for the first time since independence due to financial stabilisation being essentially related to administrative reforms in the Country and the implementation of austerity measures.

However, the administrative reforms instigated by the IMF include the implementation of strict policies regarding the number of civil servants, work hours, retirement age, pensions, and various benefits allocated to senior civil servants and students. The newly appointed Prime Minister, Mr Alassane Ouattara, conducted substantial administrative reform. His government had the mandate to initiate reforms to redress the crumbling Ivorian economy and the uncontrollable public service. Due to bad organisational practices and bureaucracy, the public service broke down (Owusu & Odhiambo, 2012). Worthwhile, it could be said that these adverse practices emerged and persisted because of the Country's poor method of public administration. If Ivory Coast was led to undergo a fourth SAP, it is not entirely due to the inefficiency of the previous three SAPs. The measure was also due to the enduring maladministration in Ivory Coast. Perhaps the supervision or the follow from the IMF was not as strict as it ought to be in the context where mismanagement of public resources is frequent—initiating the fourth

SAP per self-evidence the fact that the previous SAPs did not address the predicament of public service in Ivory Coast.

Regarding the reforms undertaken to stabilise the economy and restructure public service, the statutory retirement age of 55 years was annulled. Instead, a civil servant who has had thirty years of career in the public service was listed for immediate retirement irrelevant of their age. In the same vein, thousands of temporary civil servants, workers associated with the public administration, and factious employees were made redundant or removed from the employee's list of the public service. The reforms were initiated through laws and government policies. The whole process spanned from 1990 to 1993 and was evidenced by Law 92-570 of September 11 1992, related to the Ivorian public service reform.

The fourth SAP reforms have also resulted in a drastic reduction of government officials' privileges and the cancellation of specific benefits to government officials and the diplomatic staff. As to the public university students, free transport and various subsidies were removed from their usual allowances. While this new approach to public administration initiated by the IMF was seen as a testing trial for the population, it has proven efficient in revealing the hidden face of the Ivory Coast's bad practices of public administration and putting back the Country on the path for growth (International Labour Rights Forum, 2004).

#### ***4.The IMF's Role in the Paradigm Shift in Ivory Coast's Current Approach to the Practice of Public Administration***

##### *4.1 The Need to Intervene*

Based on its membership with the IMF, a country in severe financial difficulties and, as a result, is unable to service its international debts will surely get the assistance of the IMF. The rationale for the IMF's intervention in stabilising the global financial system. The reassuring element of the IMF's relations with its member states is that any member country irrelevant of its economic status can request the institution's financial assistance if it has a balance of payment need (Siddique, et al., 2021).

Loans from the IMF are meant to help member countries to address their balance of payments issues. In the IMF's mechanisms In addition to concessional loans, some low-income countries are also eligible for debts to be written off under two key initiatives (IMF, 1999). The increasing need for the IMF to intervene was noted in the 1980s and early 1990s when most low-income developing countries, chiefly in Africa, were brought to the point of collapse by years of economic mismanagement and adverse external shocks that have affected public services in general (IMF, 1999). In that perspective, the IMF has to intervene in a country such as Ivory Coast due to its bad economic shape and crippled public administration. It is noted that the IMF assists its member countries to design economic policies and managing their financial affairs more effectively by strengthening their human and institutional capacity through technical assistance and training. The IMF aims to exploit synergies between technical assistance and training.

The IMF's assistance aims to build countries' members' capacity development and maximise their effectiveness (IMF, 2021). In its dealings with member countries, the IMF exercises the necessary surveillance through a regular reporting system to ensure that data about country members are accurate and ensure that country members implement reform policies. This is necessary to address areas of weakness and possible dangers to the country members' economic stability (IMF, 2021).

#### 4.2 An Overview of the Results from the Second Major Co-operation

From a holistic approach, when it comes to hail the positive impacts of the IMF intervention in a member country, it should be admitted that adverse situations may occur. For instance, while the first significant intervention of the IMF in Ivory Coast is said to have raised the GDP, the magnitude of child labourers in the Country became substantial. This transpires in the observation of Kingston (2011) as follow:

Cote d'Ivoire is the world's largest cocoa producer providing for 43% of the world's output. The cocoa industry was privatised in compliance with the World Bank and IMF conditionality (SAP). Following the privatisation, between 1988 and 1995, the incidence and intensity of poverty doubled from 17.8% to 37% of the population. Even though Cote d'Ivoire's exports increased from \$3 billion to \$5 billion from 1980 to 1995, the GDP remained stagnant at \$10 billion for that period. The strain on the economy meant that farmers were under increased pressure to produce more cocoa. The need to increase cocoa output led to the illegal exploitation of children. Child labour became more recurrent. The government lowered the legal age for agricultural work to twelve. Yet, children under twelve worked in the plantations, and violators were unpunished.

Regarding the second central cooperation, the overall results appear to be satisfactory. Effective implementation of the structural reforms aimed at fixing the distortion in the economy and developing a framework of incentives to encourage a dynamic private sector (Kingston, 2011). This new approach instigated by the IMF highly contrasts with the previous policy frameworks that emphasise the culture of public service. The new system to the private sector has led the Country to adopt a flexible labour code (**Code du Travail, 1995**) and a new investment code (**Code des Investissements, 1995**). More significantly, the government accelerated its policy of withdrawing from productive activities by privatising many public enterprises and establishing performance targets embodied in performance contracts between the parapublic sector and the state (IMF, 2021).

It is observed in the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility Policy Framework Paper (ESAF 1998-2000) that Ivory Coast's economic growth resumed in 1994. This is evidenced by the 2.1 per cent increase in 1994. The trend remained the same in 1996 with 7.1 per cent, and in 1996 with estimated it is estimated to have increased by 6.8. The successful cooperation between Ivory Coast and the IMF, which improved the government's financial position during that period, is mainly due to the pursuit of a prudent demand-management policy and wage restraint in the public and private sectors. More significantly, Ivory Coast maintained the substantial competitiveness gains brought about by the devaluation of its currency, the CFA Franc (Clement, 1995). Interestingly the experience of strict compliance to IMF instructions for good practice of public administration has yielded an admirable economic outlook to the Country. Indeed, it is reported that the volume of private investment almost doubled between 1993 and 1996. As a result, the government raised the level of public investment by 3.7 per cent of the GDP to 4.3 per cent over the same period (IMF, 2021).

It is significant in the country shift in approach to external foreign aids and foreign debts management. It is noticed that the government also made considerable efforts in that period to reduce domestic arrears and eliminate non-reschedulable external payments arrears. Indeed, the mobilisation of exceptional external assistance and external public debt relief granted by the Paris Club creditors contributed to reducing government indebtedness vis-à-vis the banking system in that period. The analysis of this cooperation between Ivory Coast and the IMF led to enquire whether Ivory Coast would have descended into an economic pitfall. Was the state of public administration in such a way that the Country would have become a failed state down the line?

The Ivory Coast government recognised improving its economic situation due to its good cooperation with the IMF. However, it admitted that the financial crisis of the Country remained fragile. The government adhered to continued collaboration with the IMF beyond 94-97. This was necessary to undertake several structural and social reforms on which the IMF drew the Ivory Coast authorities' awareness. That must be carried out to deliver and alleviate the remaining rigidities in the Ivorian economy. The ultimate goal of the cooperation was to set the stage for strong and durable economic growth and continue to reduce poverty. Policy implementation in revenue collection was effective because the previous poor practice of public administration has facilitated the critical loss of public funds. Indeed, among other public sectors financial services, the tax and customs administration was entrapped in bad practices of public administration. As a result, corruption and embezzlement of general revenues in Swiss banks were reported frequently (MacManus, 2014). It is worth noting that the reforms in the area of revenues collection intend to strengthen the tax and customs administrations, reduce tax exemption, toughen the fight against tax fraud and evasion, and broaden the domestic tax base.

The government chose to pursue a more prudent spending policy. This was the way of parting with the culture of bureaucratic waste. Meanwhile, the government endeavoured to follow the development of human resources as part of the academic aspect of public administration. Indeed, while effective policy implementation and proper enforcement of regulations are highly prioritised, the human resource aspect is to be emphasised. It could be argued that the poor quality of Ivory Coast's civil servants contributed to a great deal to the chaotic situation that triggered the full involvement of the IMF in the Country's management of public affairs.

Among other reforms that Ivory Coast found vital was the further withdrawal of the public sector from productive activities. The level of private sector investment has been negligible since independence. Most of the productive activities were carried out by the state, and this has proven counterproductive due to bad management, nepotism, corruption, and poor practices of public administration (Gnomblerou, 2015).

## ***5. The State of Affairs in an Unavoidable Partnership***

### ***5.1 An Overview of the First Stage of the New Partnership***

Putting behind the troubled PAS era of the early 1990s, Ivory Coast entered a new generation of partnership with Breton Woods institutions, chiefly the IMF. The further cooperation with the IMF is imposed by the current global economic context and the need for the Ivory Coast to avoid slipping back into bad practices of public administration. Hence, well before entering the new Millennium, Ivory Coast endeavoured to comply with the IMF's request to prepare an Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility Policy Framework Paper covering the three years 1994 to 1996. The paper was organised in cooperation with the staff of the IMF and the World Bank staff (IMF, 1998). The policy framework was intended to outline Ivory Coast's medium-term economic and social reforms. The significant point in this initiative is the total involvement of the IMF in the process. This indicated that the IMF had adopted a new approach to cooperating with countries that needed its assistance.

At this stage of the cooperation between Ivory Coast and the IMF, it became once again urgent for the former to abide by the latter's conditions for assistance. The Ivory Coast, being compelled to implement policies and reforms accompanied by a substantial reduction in external public debt to facilitate the achievement of the government's objectives, has no other choice than to seek the assistance of the IMF where experts will be available to render the service required by the Country. This type of cooperation is beneficial for both the financial institution and the government. The expertise of the IMF is necessary in the context of new arrangements under this Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility

(ESAF), assistance from the World Bank in the form of unused structural adjustment credits, and financial aid from other multinational and bilateral donors (IMF, 1998). Equally, Ivory Coast demonstrated its reliance on the IMF in the context of debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. The Ivory Coast's long-standing tradition of the lousy practice of public administration placed the Country in the category of the heavily indebted Country; permanent assistance from the IMF was needed. Hence, the HIPC initiative launched by the IMF and the World Bank in 1996 has to be implemented to relieve the debt burden and reform the public administration (IMF, 2021).

### *5.2 State of the post-crisis cooperation*

Ivory Coast was affected by social and political instabilities for almost a decade. Starting in September 2002, the crisis ended in April 2011 (Akindes, 2004; Coock, 2011). The situation of the problem was also affected by recurring armed conflicts. From a realistic viewpoint, it would not have been possible to assess better the impact of IMF programmes on Ivory Coast's public administration and public management. Hence the emphasis is placed on the most recent cooperation. This situation has strained the relations of the Ivory Coast with several international institutions. Admitting the fact that the development process and public administration practice were negatively affected, the new Ivorian authorities who came to power in 2011 took immediate measures to strengthen the cooperation with the IMF in paragraph 3 of the Memorandum on Economic and Financial Policies, which was attached to the letter of intent letter of intention of June 23, 2011, addressed to send to the IMF. Ivory Coast authorities emphasised that the government of President Ouattara is determined to strengthen peace and revitalise the Ivorian economy. The government revealed its intention to pursue the gradual implementation of the reforms already underway to restore the basis for sustainable growth. Moreover, in paragraph 20, the government recognised the necessity of reviewing the full range of reforms initiated in the Economic and Financial Program context supported by the ECF before September 2011 to take stock of the post-crisis situation and look to the future.

The determination of the new authorities was noticeable in the Memorandum on Economic and Financial Policies attached to the letter of intent. The introductory paragraph of Memorandum states that: 'The post-election crisis that has affected Côte d'Ivoire in recent months has had a profound impact on the Country's economic, financial, social, and security situation. As a result, the medium-term economic and financial program supported by the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) that Côte d'Ivoire has been implementing since 2009 to maintain economic stability and implement certain structural reforms has been overtaken by immediate needs. We, therefore, wish to cancel this program (IMF, 2011).' From a holistic approach, the initiative of the new authorities contains a new approach to public administration and public management.

The letter of intent also shows the new authorities' willingness to create an environment for better cooperation given the Country's challenges after the post-election conflicts of 2011 (Oussou, 2015). Pursuant the creating a viable environment for new collaboration and setting a comprehensive framework for such cooperation, a staff team from the IMF met the new Ivory Coast authorities in August 2011 to discuss a three-year economic and financial programme for the Country and the 2011 Article IV Consultation. After this crucial meeting with Ivorian officers, the IMF staff asserted that they had reached a staff-level agreement on economic framework through 2014.

This agreement is significant because it is intended to facilitate the transition from crisis recovery to sustained growth. Therefore, the IMF mission has endeavoured to support the relevant policies with an estimate of USD 14 Million under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF), subject to approval by IMF management and Executive Board. Meanwhile, having recognised that Ivory Coast, the post-election crisis that began in December 2010, had a strong negative impact on the population and the economy, the IMF approved financial support of about USD 130 Million in July 2011 (IMF, 2011).

The approval of financial support to Ivory Coast was possible because the political crisis ended and because a new head of state was sworn in in April/May 2011 (IMF, 2011). This critical step from the IMF indicates that cooperation was not possible in an environment of political crisis because public administration usually becomes volatile. The purpose of the IMF 's financial and technical assistance was to help countries to set sound development strategies underpinned by good governance; it was unlikely for Ivory Coast to meet the criteria for full service from the U.N. agency.

### 5.3 The Payoffs of Sustained Cooperation

In a survey conducted by the IMF in 2009, it is stated that Ivory Coast authorities' new economic program provides the platform for strengthening the economic recovery and establishing the foundation for robust growth and higher living standards for the West African Country's 19 million people (Kireyev & Le Hen, 2009). The authorities' new approach automatically embraces the shift in public administration and public management. Amongst other reforms initiated by the rules, reforms in the public and financial sectors were vital. It was needed to ensure the efficient use of public resources and underpin growth in critical sectors. The programme was aimed at creating significant positive impacts on the practice of public administration in Ivory Coast in that the policy frameworks needed to deliver the programmes were to be devised in a way to make further improvements in governance, transparency, and accountability in government operations, the civil service, and the energy and cocoa and coffee sectors. In addition, policies to improve the business climate and strengthen and improve access to financing would promote private sector development (Kireyev & Le Hen, 2009). However, the Ivorian authorities in power adopted this new approach to public administration before the post-electoral crisis; it appears encouraging. More significantly, it shows the positive impact of the IMF's cooperation with the Ivory Coast.

**In 2018 the IMF has praised the Ivory Coast for its strong economic performance since 2012. Indeed, the** strong economic performance reflected the recovery following the political normalisation, improved business environment, sound program of reforms, and supportive fiscal policy. However, these factors may taper over the medium-term, including due to fiscal consolidation, unless bold structural reforms foster more private sector-led growth (IMF, 2018).

**Recently, the IMF (2021) has admitted that Côte d'Ivoire has demonstrated strong resilience to the theCOVID-19 pandemic. The Fund admitted that while economic growth is expected to have dropped by some 4½ per cent compared to the pre-COVID-19 forecast, it is still estimated at 2 per cent in 2020, ranking the Ivory Coast among sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) best-performing frontier market economies.**

The analysis of the impacts of IMF's intervention on Ivory Coast public administration and public management after the post-electoral crisis can be appreciated from various perspectives. Within three years of good cooperation, the general administration of Ivory Coast has notably changed. The Country's approach to public administration shifted considerably, but the IMF has become more comfortable cooperating with Ivorian authorities. Laws and policies are enacted, implemented, and enforced if necessary regarding public administration and public management. In a document titled '*Des Progrès considérablesréalisés par la Côte d'Ivoire depuis 2011*' Ivory Coast authorities underscored the magnitude of development progress made since 2011 due to policy reforms (Le courrier du Gouvernement, 2013). In the same vein, the World Bank acknowledged what could be regarded as the impacts of IMF's programmes in the Ivory Coast.

## Conclusion

This article showed that Ivory Coast has met to a great extent the expectations of the IMF in terms of public administration and public management reforms. Hence, lessons that the two entities can learn from the experience of cooperation are setting a comprehensive cooperation framework and mutual consideration at all stages of their dealings. In the context of IMF and Ivory cooperation, while the Fund has endeavoured to assist financially and technically, the Country strictly complied with the core principles embodied in its programmes.

Worthwhile, this article has identified the determinants of a successful relationship between the Ivory Coast and the IMF to achieve public administration reforms. The sustained cooperation between the IMF and Ivory Coast has been possible because each party strictly performs its duties. While the former laid down programmes to restructure the crumbling public administration and despicable public management, the latter devised the necessary reforms to the new paradigm. The political will of Ivory Coast authorities was one of the key determinants. Indeed, the political will is characterised by Ivory Coast's implementation of structural reforms needed to strengthen public financial management and improve the business climate. In practical terms, it is demonstrated by Ivory Coast's completion of the civil service census, the approval of reforms to the private pension system, the institution of commercial courts, the adoption of the law on enforcement of arbitral decisions, and the creation of business support centres. Another critical determinant was the technical assistance strategy developed by the IMF to lead Ivory Coast to the paradigm shift in its approach to public administration and public management. The IMF requested that Ivory Coast set an institutional framework to manage the reforms, among other technical assistance strategies. Based on the current state of affairs, the IMF and Ivory Coast cooperation will remain amicable in the foreseeable future.

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