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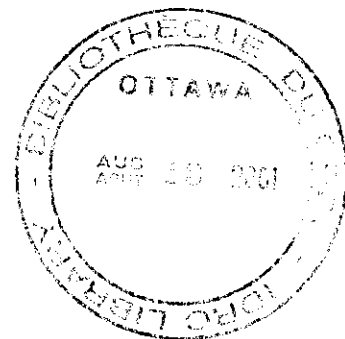
CODESRIA: REPORT OF THE

AUTO-EVALUATION 1996

Codesria, **Dakar Senegal**

April 1997

(Final Report: June 1997)

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<u>Executive Summary</u>

1. <u>Introduction</u>

1.1. The *Report* presents the synthesis and highlights from a series of institutional evaluation exercises started from October 1995.

1.2. **Background to the** *Self-Evaluation*

1.2.1. The current evaluation exercise although located in the context of a history of different evaluations of CODESRIA differ from these in 4 main ways, namely:

- it is an auto-evaluation directed mainly by CODESRIA even even when external resource-persons are being used;

- it is based on extensive consultations with and participation of major stakeholders

- it is holistic and focused on the institution as a whole

- it is action and change oriented

1.2.2. *Objective of Evaluation*

The main objective of the evaluation was to assist CODESRIA to enhance its management and institutional capacity to fulfil its mandate as a pan-African institution whose main task is the promotion of social science research in Africa by providing a pattern of critical reflections, self-examination and appraisal of the functioning and directions of the institution.

1.3. Methodology

1.3.1. *The Auto-Evaluation was made up of 3 main components namely:*

(i)   An Extensive Institutional Assessment by Prof. Herschelle Challenor and Prof. Aaron Gana.

(ii)   A study on *Communications and Information Technology* by Amos Anyimadu.

(iii)   Financial Sustainability & Endowment Fund Feasibility by Elisa Forgey.

1.3.2. Each component involved a methodology that relied on the empirical collection of data combining a wide range of sources (both quantitative and qualitative). Both the data analysis and the use of instruments involved a technique of triangulation.

1.3.3. *Subjects interviewed included:*

- CODESRIA's laureates and grantees, members of networks, and participants at events.
- Members of the CODESRIA Executive Committee
- Co-operating and competing institutions
- Members of the CODESRIA Secretariat
- CODESRIA's Donors.

1.3.4. *The study covered the following areas:*

- the Mission and Mandate of CODESRIA
- the Governance of CODESRIA
- The Operational Systems and Management of CODESRIA
- Sustainability/Institutional Development
- Institutional Culture

2. CODESRIA and Its Environment

2.1. The *Evaluation* analyzed CODESRIA in the context of its larger environment namely:

- the Political and Cultural Environment
- the Administrative/Legal Environment
- the Stakeholder Environment

The *Evaluation* found that specific factors in these environments such as the fact of location and work in a developing economy in which there is extensive fluidity and instability determine to a great extent the institutional orientation and its flexibility. CODESRIA to cope with these several environmental factors has had to be flexible and highly adaptive both in programming and in the organization of her presence in different parts of Africa.

3. The Development of CODESRIA

The *Evaluation* examined the history of CODESRIA as a basis for the understanding of certain aspects of its institutional development. It noted the important contributions of changing trends in the history of CODESRIA on:

3.1. CODESRIA's Mission and Mandate

This has changed consistently over time in response to the demands of CODESRIA's main constituencies and stakeholders. It has led to the revision of not only the objectives of the institution over time but also its name. These changes have determined programmes, expansion of membership and range of activities.

3.2. Institutional Culture

The evaluation identified the main elements of CODESRIA's institutional culture and how this affects working patterns, motivation and commitment of both secretariat staff and stakeholders. This is also closely related to the structure of incentives in the organization both for staff and for its constituencies.

3.3. Gender and CODESRIA

The *Evaluation* identified in several parts of the *Report* the limitations of CODESRIA's institutional history and culture imposed by the *Gender* imbalance in both its activities and personnel at various levels. It was however noted that there has been a lot of progress in recent times, particularly between 1991 and now as reflected in major institutional responses and reorganization to combat the question of *Gender* imbalance both in intellectual and human terms.

4. Institutional Capacity

The *Evaluation* examined the institutional capacity of CODESRIA though taking a close look at the key statutory bodies of the institution and how they function to achieve the goals of the organization while at the same time responding to the demands of good governance and strategic leadership. It assessed the role of the governing bodies and how these have carried out their oversight functions. While accepting that a lot has been done, the assessment noted certain gaps that needed to be closed in the areas of:

- human resources and human resources management
- the management and use of infrastructures and technology
- programme management

4.1. The *Evaluation* assessed the different activities and programmes of CODESRIA namely: research networks, fellowships and grants, training institutes, the Academic Freedom programme, publications and documentation from the point of view of the requirements of institutional capacity.

4.2. The *Report* also discussed the patterns and requirements of institutionalized monitoring and evaluation and the place of information technology and communications in CODESRIA's work.

4.2.1. As far as Information Technology and Communications are concerned, the *Report* examined current infrastructure and use in CODESRIA and made extensive recommendations for the installation and management of a cost-effective infrastructure.

4.3. Inter-institutional linkage was also considered as an important aspect of CODESRIA's institutional capacity. The *Evaluation* examines the current situation and recommends the need for specific formal institutional policy to govern the patterns of such interaction.

5. Institutional Performance and Sustainability

This section builds on the assessment of institutional capacity in providing a broad picture of how the institution is performing.

5.1. Stakeholder's Expectations of CODESRIA's performance are examined in terms of a matrix of the ranking of the stakeholders and their expectations of different aspects of CODESRIA's work. The conclusion is that overall expectations are high.

5.2. On performance, the *Evaluation* revealed that in spite of some administrative and management shortcomings, CODESRIA's major stakeholders are convinced that the institution is fulfilling its mission and mandate in the following areas:

1. Mobilizing African Social Scientists
2. Reproducing the Social Science Community
3. Mainstreaming and disseminating the works of African Social Scientists
4. Advocacy for Academic Freedom

5.2.1. The assessment of institutional performance is carried out in relation to these objectives through a review of the activities, strengths and shortcomings of each programme area, namely research networks, grants, institutes, publications, Academic Freedom programmes, workshops and meetings.

5.3. Other areas in which institutional performance were assessed include:

- movement towards the mission of the organization
- the efficient use of institutional resources
- the relevance of programmes and activities

Under each of these, the *Evaluation* found that remarkable and commendable progress had been made although there is significant room for improvement.

5.4. The *Evaluation* examined the question of Institutional Sustainability and offered suggestions on how this could be ensured especially in financial matters.

6.   Conclusions and Recommendations

Recommendations were distilled from the various analyses and assessments that were carried out in the different parts of the Report.

They covered all the key issues and questions, namely:

i.   Mission/Mandate and Objectives of CODESRIA

ii.   Strategic Planning in CODESRIA

iii. Institutional Restructuring at the Secretariat

iv.   Wider Level Restructuring of CODESRIA

v.   Management of Programmes

vi.   Internal Communications

vii. Governing Bodies

viii. Financial Sustainability

Chapter 1

1.1. Introduction

This document synthesizes and presents the highlights and main issues emerging from the series of exercises and documentation started in October 1995 which constitute CODESRIA's current self-evaluation. Coming at a time when the institution celebrates its twenty-third year, the evaluation and the actions that follow constitute important inputs in the management of the strategic direction and re-orientation of the institution. As recognized by the Institutional Assessment *Report*, the main *Report* by Challenor and Gana that fed this evaluation process, 'the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa' is a household name among social scientists in Africa.[1] This is because over the past two decades, CODESRIA has developed institutionally to handle diverse but interrelated activities that constitute the research process, namely project identification, mobilisation of researchers and the necessary material inputs, co-ordination of researchers, and finally, publication and dissemination of research results. Intellectually, the institution has also taken its place, serving as a major focal point for a great part of the thinking and debates in the social sciences in recent times in Africa and beyond. CODESRIA has achieved the above in a context marked by significant and ongoing changes in the nature of the global economy and politics and intellectual positions and actors.

As shown further on in the *Report*, CODESRIA in the course of its institutional development, has adapted when occasion demands to changing contexts, threats and opportunities. This has earned the institution the admiration and pride of place it has attained today. Again, as is clearly argued in this *Report*, it must continue to adapt and reorient so that it can effectively confront the wide range of challenges that it faces in today's turbulent and changing times. Failure to do this can significantly threaten its relevance and sustainability. It is with threading out the paths of these diagnoses and analyses, and the strategic orientations and redirections that they entail that this *Report* is concerned.

1.2. Background to the Self-Evaluation

Since it was founded in 1973, CODESRIA has periodically been subject to evaluations and reviews by its major donors. These have included two major evaluations and other directed at specific projects and programmes such as Publications, and the *Population and Industrial Policies Networks*.

Records of these endeavours date back to a review termed as *Report* on a visit to CODESRIA by representatives of Ford Foundation, the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Swedish Agency for Research Co-operation in Developing Countries (SAREC) in 1980. Other exercises include the 1983/84 evaluation by IDRC/Ford Foundation and the 1990 exercise carried out by a team appointed by SAREC. More recently, 1994 to be precise, SAREC also carried out a review of CODESRIA's Publications just about the same time that CODESRIA's Scientific Committee was involved in the same task.

However, this latest evaluation, of 1996, is different from previous exercises in four major ways:

    i. It is an auto-evaluation even though external resource-persons have been utilized. Its terms of reference were drafted and revised by CODESRIA in consultation and negotiation with the two main donors funding it (IDRC and Ford Foundation).

    ii. It is participatory and involved extensive consultations in the forms of workshops and meetings with major stake-holders during its various phases. These included at initiation, during the evaluation and at the report-writing phase. Also it took the notion of self-evaluation very seriously in that it utilized and took cognisance of documents and comments generated both within the Secretariat and by members of the larger African Social Science Community.

    iii. It is holistic and focused on the whole organization including the examination of: a) mission and mandate, b) governance and legislative

structures, c) management and administration, d) programmes, e) Financial sustainability, f) infrastructure, communications and information technology.

iv. It is action and ongoing change-oriented. This is in the sense that it involved both remedial action and programmed strategic change even during the very process of evaluation and reflection.

Finally, the evaluation itself was completed in the context of a transition in the leadership of CODESRIA which provided further opportunity for deeper examination and a momentum towards change. The actual evaluation process consisted of three components carried out by resource-persons external to CODESRIA. These included an extensive institutional assessment carried out by Prof. Herschelle Challenor, Dean, School of International Affairs and Development, Clark Atlanta University, Georgia, USA, and Prof. Aaron Gana, former Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Jos, Nigeria. This institutional assessment covered the mission and mandate, governance and legislative structures, infrastructures, programmes, and the various aspects of CODESRIA's management.

A component on Communications and Information Technology was carried out by Dr. Amos Anyimadu of the University of Ghana, Legon, while the study on financial sustainability and strategy was contracted to Ms Elisa Forgey of the United States (report yet to come).

Other review exercises and surveys including discussions from the Executive Committee meetings, responses to and comments on *the Draft Research Programme and Intellectual Vision 1997-2001*, the *Evaluation of the Small Grants Programme 1996*, that of the *Publications' Programme* by CODESRIA's Scientific Committee, 1995 and the presentations by staff at the consultative meetings and retreats held in August and September 1996 also fed into this process. All these documents constitute the source of data from which we construct this Auto-Evaluation *Report*.

Terms of Reference and Objectives

The main institutional assessment report (Challenor and Gana 1996) appended to this document discusses, more extensively, the process of negotiating the important elements of this evaluation exercise particularly in terms of the roles and positions of the two main institutions that funded it, the Ford Foundation and the IDRC.[2] An important part was also played by *Universalia*, a Canadian firm that served as principal facilitator for the three-day methodological workshop on October 25-27, 1995 which started off the current exercise of self-evaluation. Emerging from that event was a document prepared by CODESRIA titled *Draft Terms of Reference and Work Plan for Self-Evaluation* which contained the important questions, objectives and steps of the evaluation exercise. Although not explicitly, defining specific terms of reference, the document identified motivations and rationale and specified objectives for the exercise. Three main motivation were identified for the auto-evaluation. These are:

i.   "... the very need for organizational survival through a controlled and strategic change process which demands that CODESRIA respond effectively and anticipate clearly the major changes ongoing in its larger context. These demand that the organization sharpens or reinforces its mission and focus, and improve its performance and relevance in relation to all its stake-holders and constituencies."

ii. "...That already CODESRIA is undergoing several changes and transformations as part of responses or initiatives deriving from changes in its context. The evaluation will provide a framework for a more structured and organized change process and an action plan which will go beyond the piece-meal approach".

iii. "... that in 1993 CODESRIA marked its twentieth anniversary. During its existence CODESRIA has been subject to several internal and external evaluations. The three major evaluations were conducted by teams appointed by CODESRIA's major donors... These evaluations have been generally positive and have recommended continued support to CODESRIA. A common feature of these evaluations was their emphasis on the impact of CODESRIA on *Social Science Research in Africa*".[3]

Having provided the above-named motivations for the self-evaluation, the document then went on to state that:

"Issues relating to management and institutional aspects of CODESRIA have not been directly addressed by these (previous) evaluations. Some of the questions that a current evaluation would seek to address are: given its mandate and programmes what are the capacity, constraints or strengths of CODESRIA in terms of both material and human resources? Is the structure of CODESRIA the appropriate one for its work in Africa? What needs to be done to strengthen CODESRIA to ensure both its performance and its sustainability as an institution? What lessons have been learnt and what new challenges have emerged since the last evaluation in 1990?".[4]

From these motivations and a set of discussions on the rationale for the exercise and the risks it entails, a main objective of the whole exercise was set. This stated that:

"The objective of the evaluation is to assist CODESRIA to enhance its management and institutional capacity to fulfil its mandate as a pan-African institution whose main task is the promotion of social science research in Africa by providing a pattern of critical reflections, self-examination, and appraisal of the functioning and directions of the institution. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will after due consideration by the Executive Committee and CODESRIA Secretariat form the basis of (a) strategic management and change process".[5]

1.3. Methodology

As has been pointed out in Section 1.2 above, the *Auto-Evaluation* consisted of three main components supplemented by the results of other reviews and reflections that happened to be ongoing at the same time or which had just been completed and whose findings contribute to the attainment of the main objective of the evaluation listed above.

Each component therefore involved a methodology that relied on the empirical collection of data combining a wide range of sources and their analyses. What we therefore have here is a methodological triangulation involving the use of multiple instruments and data sources, all of which are meant to tap information contributing to the provision of answers to the questions posed on the performance, effectiveness and relevance of the aspects of CODESRIA's institutional life under scrutiny. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized for data-gathering and analyses.

According to Challenor and Gana (1996:6):

> "The report is based on data-gathered from four main sources, CODESRIA's documents, secondary sources, focus group observations and interviews and survey findings. The Secretariat provided the Consultants with a number of documents... However, it was not possible to obtain complete information on the work of the Executive Committee".

Being the main input into the *Auto-Evaluation* process, the Challenor and Gana (1996) Report spelt out clearly in detail, the extent of and scope of their exercise noting that it involved visits to seven countries selected for their diversity and intensity of CODESRIA's activities or presence of stakeholders. The countries visited were Cameroon, Ghana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal and Zimbabwe. Travelling and weather difficulties made the visit to Mozambique not possible.

As part of its sampling process, this specific component identified five major stakeholders for whom different survey instruments were prepared. These were:

- CODESRIA's Laureates, Members and Participants
- Members of the CODESRIA Executive Committee
- Co-operating and Competing Institutions
- Members of the CODESRIA Secretariat
- CODESRIA's Donors

The survey instruments which were administered directly by the resource-persons were designed to tap the five main areas of inquiry for the study namely:

- the Mission and Mandate of CODESRIA
- the Governance of CODESRIA
- the Operational Systems and Management of CODESRIA
- Sustainability/Institutional Development
- Institutional Culture

While providing greater detail of the methodology and data-gathering, Challenor and Gana (1996: 6-9) noted that either due to time-constraints or the timing of their mission, they could not effectively cover some aspects of the operations and institutional life of CODESRIA.

These included:
    i)   the General Assembly
    ii)   the operations of the Executive Committee
    iii)   the operations of Subcommittees such as the Scientific, and the Administrative and Finance Subcommittees
    iv)   the operations of CODESRIA's Documentation Unit (CODICE)

As part of their inputs into the *Auto-Evaluation* process, CODESRIA (Executive Committee and Secretariat) have been able to supplement both the data-gathering, analyses and findings of the consultants with the following sources of information:

- Observations of strategic informants and knowledgeable persons such as comments and reports of officers and Secretariat staff.

- Reports of specific evaluations and reviews of CODESRIA's programmes such as:

    (i) The evaluation of the *Small Grants Programme for the Writing of Dissertations and Theses* by Sabara Diop.

    (ii) The Evaluation of *CODESRIA Publications' Programme* carried out by the Scientific Committee of CODESRIA and two external assessors.

    (iii) The evaluation of *CODESRIA Publications' Programme* carried out by readers for SAREC/SIDA 1994.

    (iv) The preliminary findings of the study of *Flow of Scientific Information among Sub-Saharan Africa Research Networks* funded by the Dutch Foreign Affairs Ministry and co-ordinated by the Faculty of Management, University of Groningen.

- Outcomes of collective introspection and examination occasioned by the transition in the Leadership of CODESRIA Secretariat.

All the exercises above themselves involved methodologies and data-gathering techniques that combined quantitative and qualitative methods involving different instruments and approaches ranging from the carefully-controlled survey methods and documentary analyses, through rigorous content analyses and critical peer-reviews, to unstructured interviews and the 'Knowledgeable' participant and observer's opinion. It is from all of these, that analyses, trends and some conclusions are drawn in this *Report*.

1.4. Structure of the Report

For the effective presentation of the important elements of this auto-evaluation, the rest of this report is structured into the following five parts: Chapter 2 deals with the *Environment and Contexts* in which CODESRIA operates while Chapter 3 provides a picture of the Development of the Institution focusing mainly on history, mission, culture and incentives. Chapter 4 examines that complex of questions dealing with institutional capacity embracing questions of governance and strategic leadership, human and other resources, programme and process management and inter-institutional linkages. Chapter 5 analyzes institutional performance under which the movement towards the attainment of the mission is examined. Here the efficient use of resources and the relevance of the institution are scrutinized. The final chapter provides the conclusions, recommendations and actions been taken or planned for change.

Chapter 2

CODESRIA and its Environment

2.1. The Larger Environment

No institution exists in a vacuum. It must operate in a larger context consisting of several elements. This context within which an institution such as CODESRIA operates is the larger environment. Depending on the scope and reach of the organization, that environment can be defined as encompassing a city, country or a region. Major aspects of this environment has been described by Lusthaus, Anderson and Murphy (1995: 15-22) as consisting of an administrative/legal environment, technology environment, political environment, social and cultural environments and stakeholder environment. In this section of the *Report* a brief and sweeping overview of the key elements of the environment is conducted. How do they impact on the performance, effectiveness and relevance of CODESRIA particularly with regard to its meeting the most significant elements of its mission and mandate. The thrust of the analysis here is to bring out how the environment supports or hinders the sustainability and institutional development of CODESRIA.

First, before going any further, it is necessary to point out the peculiar situation of CODESRIA as a Pan-African institution and the node of a network of institutions and researchers which is fluid. Located in Dakar, Senegal, CODESRIA by the very nature of its larger mandate of 'handling several but interrelated activities that constitute the research process through project identification, mobilisation and co-ordination of researchers and material inputs, and finally publication and dissemination', must of necessity deal with African social science researchers and institutions beyond Dakar, Senegal. Thus, the immediate environment of Dakar, Senegal does not constitute its sole basis of operations. Through networks of researchers and institutions, CODESRIA has had to operate for instance in Ife and Maiduguri in Nigeria, in Cairo, Egypt, in Khartoum, Sudan, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in Arusha, Tanzania, in Bangui, Central Africa Republic, and Kinshasa, Zaire, in Gaborone, Botswana and Johannesburg in South Africa.

Thus, activities and operations, and of course the expectations of constituents transcend several national, regional and cultural boundaries. Lacking both the resources and political clout of multinational corporations and the larger international and intergovernmental institutions, CODESRIA has had to utilize a wide range of individual and collective actors and to rely on collective institutional memory and contacts with strategic actors to know and use what is optimally achievable and doable across these contexts. For situations like these, it is obvious to any operator in these multiple contexts that there are no fixed rules of 'best practices' and that 'planning' even several months ahead can be faulted by fluid political and economic conditions and sudden and unexpected changes. Yet across all of these, CODESRIA must, and has had to reach some of its stakeholders and constituents, delivering programmes, mobilizing activities and peoples and, in some cases breaking the icy grip of isolation, oppression and despair that African social scientists living under dictatorial and economically depressed regimes have had to cope with.

Being able to overcome the constraint of these multiple environment, has involved flexibility, building up credibility and trust with contacts over the years, and a commitment to using local resources to deal with questions specific to different locales. This experience is not quantifiable but it is part of the institutional culture, and a major factor in institutional performance.

2.2. The Administrative/Legal Environment

CODESRIA's immediate environment is her location at Dakar, Republic of Senegal. A predominantly black African but multi-cultural and multi-racial country located in the most northerly part of West Africa, Senegal, which has had an elected government since its independence in 1960 provides a cosmopolitan, multi-cultural and tolerant milieu. It operates a unitary republican system with a legal system based on the *Code Napoléon* and its 1963 Constitution. With a population of 8.58 million and telecommunication facilities and linkages with Europe, North America and to some extent the rest of Africa, this Francophone country has provided not only a physical location but also a legal framework and a political and intellectual environment of tolerance that has facilitated CODESRIA's main objectives and her operations.

This has been facilitated more effectively by the diplomatic status that the Republic of Se.. _ accorded to CODESRIA in 1977. CODESRIA was the first non-governmental organization in Senegal to be granted such a status. The implications of this are both material and intellectual. On the material level, according to Thandika Mkandawire (1993:4-5), former Executive Secretary of CODESRIA:

"... it meant that CODESRIA was exempted from taxation in Senegal, No systematic evaluation of these privileges has ever been made. However, considering that CODESRIA spends considerable amount of money on salaries and materials, the exemption of taxation makes Senegal one of the major financial contributors to CODESRIA. We should add that over the years the government has covered part of the rent."

Thus, one can presume that the Government of Senegal is one of CODESRIA's major donors, although the extent of support still awaits close documentation and analysis beyond the scope of this present evaluation.

However this financial support does not preclude a fundamental political and moral support for CODESRIA's functions:

"... the diplomatic immunity gave CODESRIA an intellectual immunity that is rare in Africa in which dictatorships, political repression and censorship were norms ... It meant that CODESRIA could interact with the considerable intellectual community of Senegal without fear that this might some how offend the host country. It meant that CODESRIA could publish all its scholarly publications without fear of censorship. It meant CODESRIA could hold conferences in Senegal on any themes. It meant that delegates to CODESRIA's conference would enter Senegal without any fear of interference by Senegalese authorities. It also meant greater credibility of CODESRIA as an institution since CODESRIA was not seen to be beholden to the host country's political authorities". (Thandika Mkandawire, 1993:5).

With these points, one can specify that CODESRIA operates within a legal environment that is most supportive of its functions. However as Challenor and Gana (1996:26-27) have remarked:

"Despite these extremely significant advantages, being headquartered in Senegal is not entirely without problems. The most obvious of which are the labour laws of Senegal, which place certain restrictions on the discipline of staff, especially lower-cadre staff".

Again, this last point must be situated within the context of the political development of Senegal and its acceptance of very strong European social laws, particularly those deriving from the French Socialist and social democratic political and economic ideologies and policies. Having had the Socialist Party of Senegal as the governing party of the country for over three decades, it is not surprising that social laws of employment deriving from the Socialist International currents should define the formal employment sector. What this means for institutions like CODESRIA is the need to have a careful staff recruitment, training and personnel policy that ensures the transmission of the dominant norms of the institution to all cadre of staff so that they can be effectively motivated. Further discussions of the administrative and legal environment will be treated with regard to how they impinge on the institutional culture and the mobilization of human resources at the level of the Secretariat.

2.3. Stakeholder Environment

The notion of 'stakeholder environment' derives from the increasingly popular notion of 'stakeholder'. A concept that is increasingly used in management analysis, apart from a vague notion of 'stake-holder economy', it lacks the rigour of being integrated into a larger systematic framework that attempts to rigorously explain or interpret social reality.

Its definition remains vague, even in the voluntary management literature. According to Human and Zaaiman (1995:180):

> "Stakeholders can be defined as all those individuals, organizations and communities with which your NGO interacts. These could include members of the community which you serve: other organized groupings such as the church; other NGOs ..."

The definition is expansive and covers virtually every social actor in the institution's milieu. Human and Zaaiman also included business interests, political parties, state structures, legislative structures, the donor community and the media in their coverage of stakeholders. Specifically as regards the institutional evaluation process, Lusthaus Anderson and Murphy (1995:17) define stakeholder environment as consisting:

> "... of those people and organizations external to the research institution who are directly concerned with the organization and its performance. Examples of stakeholders are suppliers, clients, sponsors, donors, potential target groups and other institutions doing similar or complementary work".

This latter definition contains a clearer focus as it is about those directly concerned with the organization and its performance. However it still has not completely resolved the problem of stakeholders, their roles and the priority to be accorded to them.

These problems with definitions are pursued here because their ambiguity raised serious questions as to the objective of the *Auto-Evaluation* during the various processes of consultation and data-gathering.

The need for clarification and to avoid seeing any of these categories as homogenous groups was raised very clearly at the workshop to review the *Draft Terms of Reference* for the *Self-Evaluation* held with researchers and institutions based in Senegal on 23 January 1996 in Dakar.

In the minutes of that workshop, the distinction between 'stakeholders' and 'constituencies' was emphasized. It was noted that the *Draft Terms of Reference* emphasized 'stakeholders' as against CODESRIA's constituencies which included individual researchers, faculties of social sciences and professional associations. The workshop also recommended that attention be paid to younger scholars, women and non-academic staff of the CODESRIA Secretariat. The main institutional assessment carried out by Challenor and Gana had their attention drawn to these questions and took cognisance of it in their methodology and analyses.

As a result, Challenor and Gana (1996:6-7) identified five major stakeholders:

1. CODESRIA's Laureates, Members and Participants
2. Members of CODESRIA Executive Committee
3. Co-operating and Competing Institution
4. Members of the CODESRIA Secretariat
5. CODESRIA's Donors

Given all of these, obviously one cannot identify one specific environment or even the existence of homogenous interests or a convergence of interests. Each category not only differs from the other but is also internally differentiated.

Even at the very broad level of the dynamics of economies and access to resources, the conditions of the first group (of laureates, members and participants) are not homogenous. Researchers and research *Institutes* do not experience the same conditions of academic freedom and access to resources in Nigeria, Zaire, Tunisia, Senegal, Cameroon and South Africa. Within some countries such as South Africa, significant differences exist between the conditions of the historically black universities and the liberal 'historically white universities (though changes are underway). Among disciplines, strong differences exist between, say, economists and anthropologists in terms of access to resources.

The same comments about diversity and plurality apply to both competing and co-operating institutions and even Donor Agencies. As for the latter, although there are more homogenous trends in terms of basic economic principles and questions of accountability, fiscal discipline, significant differences occur in national policies, dominant cultural and ideological trends and orientations to research in Africa, or the studying of certain themes and concerns as they apply to Africa.

The outcomes of the consultations and inquiries on 'stakeholder environment' are mainly the need to recognize the plurality, diversity and even contradictions in the conditions, interests and composition of the various 'stakeholders'. The lesson is that CODESRIA must remain clear about, and attentive to its mandate and mission and the means to attain them. Consequently she must prioritize the extent to which the different stakeholders assume some importance. In the final analysis, this depends on specific contexts and can be resolved by good and transparent governance and a sensitive management. Later parts of this *Report* presents information on such prioritization.

2.4. Other Aspects of the Environment

Other aspects of the environment such as those of technology, socio-cultural and political environments are discussed in other parts of this *Report*. These are dealt with as they touch on issues such as human resources, the management of programmes and the operational systems of CODESRIA. These issues also touch other questions discussed in connection with questions such as mission/mandate, and institutional culture of CODESRIA.

2.5. The Environment as the Context for the Organization

In spite of the positive discussions on the immediate environment of CODESRIA, and the diversity that characterizes the different aspects of the environment, for the operators and managers of CODESRIA, the overall context characterized by what has been called 'the African Crisis', that is the long drawn out economic crisis of the past two decades which were accompanied by policies meant to ameliorate them such as the *Structural Adjustment Policies* (SAPs), but which rather created some more social problems.

It is this environment that Thandika Mkandawire summarized as the context within which CODESRIA had to operate within the continent. He stated that:

> "Over the years CODESRIA has had to deal with an environment that was not always enabling and that often set up serious hurdles that had to be overcome at considerable intellectual and material costs. These barriers included the sheer size of the continent and the poor communication links among the African states; the multiplicity of languages in which research was conducted; the political repression under which member *Institutes* and researchers operate, the lack of research tradition in most universities and later the collapse of the embryonic research structure as austerity and negligence began to take its toll on African universities (Mkandawire, 1993:2-3)."

Indeed, it is the totality of this context, particularly as it affected intellectuals and researchers, that determined a whole range of CODESRIA's programming and orientation. The collapse of normal university research was one of the factors that put pressure on CODESRIA to move into the areas of training such as the *Institutes*. The problem encountered with the reproduction of future generations of African social scientists also contributed to the introduction of the *Small Grants Programme for Thesis Writing*, a programme geared at students carrying out post-graduate studies in African universities. Future programming might need to consider whether changes in context demand a review of CODESRIA's involvement in these programmes.

A related element of this context is the emergence and proliferation of independent research institutions and non-governmental organizations since the 1980s. These *Institutes* and research NGOs such as the *Centre for Advanced Social Science* (CASS) in Port Harcourt, Nigeria founded by Claude Ake, the *Southern African Political Economy Series* (SAPES) Trust in

Harare, Zimbabwe, founded by Ibbo Mandaza, and the *Center for Basic Research*, K. Uganda, first directed by Mahmood Mamdani. Other related institutions were regional re. centres such as the *Arab Research Centre*, Cairo, Egypt and the *Organization of S. __. Science Research in East and Southern Africa* (OSSREA), based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. There is also the more discipline-focused, *African Economic Research Consortium* (AERC) based in Nairobi, Kenya.

Some of these institutions, as well as some professional associations such as Association of African Political Scientists (AAPS) have had some initial assistance and support from CODESRIA both during their initial formation and at several points in their lives. Other players in the field doing research are the various *Policy Research Institutes* funded by the African Capacity Building Foundation, namely in Ibadan, Nigeria, Kampala, Uganda, etc.

Interestingly, some of these institutions play very ambiguous roles in their relationship with CODESRIA. They often regard themselves as members of CODESRIA's constituencies and are at times defined as stakeholders. Also, these institutions often at the same time operate as co-operating and competing institutions. They co-operate with CODESRIA in carrying out some projects such as *Institutes*, National Working Group Studies, etc. They also often compete with CODESRIA not only for funding from the same donor sources but in presenting more regionally-specific programmes such as *Small Grants* and in recent times *Institutes*. In many cases, this ambiguity in their situations make it difficult to really place the comments and opinions of their leading functionaries with regard to CODESRIA. There is often, simultaneously, a grudging support and respect for CODESRIA's niche, and achievements and often, there are criticisms and hostile judgements of CODESRIA's people and activities. Future CODESRIA's long-term programming and strategic planning must take the active existence of these institutions into consideration as regards presence in their regions of operation, the need to reduce the duplication of projects and the emphasis on CODESRIA's capacity to define pan-Regional, multi-lingual, multi-disciplinary and thematic research problems and questions. A related niche in dealing with the activities of these institutions is CODESRIA's credibility and capacity for dealing with sensitive questions which are often too explosive to be co-ordinated at the regional level. An interesting example is the Conference on *Conflicts in the Great Lakes Region* which was organized by CODESRIA in September 1995. These and other experiences, particularly in providing intellectual leadership on subjects such as 'Academic Freedom', and

'African Perspectives on the Structural Adjustment Programme' are aspects of how CODESRIA has initiated and negotiated changes and new programming openings in the multi-layered environment which constitute its context. This indeed is its comparative advantage. CODESRIA's continuing relevance and sustainability will depend on both the maintenance of this type of creative intellectual leadership, a flexibility of presence and operations and a political sensitivity at regional levels that take the existence of different elements of the environment as important variables.

Chapter 3

CODESRIA: The Development of the Institution

3.1. Introduction

In this section of the *Report*, the development of CODESRIA as an institution is examined in order to analyze its implications for and impact on current performance, relevance and the sustainability of the organization. This effort traces both the heritage, and the changes and adaptation that have characterized such a heritage and history. The analyses cover four broad elements a brief history of CODESRIA, the nature of its mission and mandate, its culture and the pattern of incentives in the organization. These different elements are presented in relation to significant developments in the contexts in which they are situated.

3.2. History

Two clear strands, even though inseparable, characterize the history of CODESRIA. These are the intellectual and institutional developments of the institution. Given the very nature of the institution as an organization that provided, '... an intellectual space where Africans could define their own parameters, agenda and terms for discussion, debating and researching their societies and their development[6], these two strands in its development fed on, and co-determined each other. And as Challenor and Gana (1996:10-15) tried to show, these two elements of the historical development of CODESRIA responded to and followed significant political and economic developments in the larger society and all over the African continent. The dominant trends in the politics of the 1960s and early 1970s that marked the emergence of CODESRIA in 1973 were the nationalist and anti-colonial struggles and the commitment to the development process in terms of the transformation of the productive forces and the material and social condition of the lives of the majority of African people.

According to Mkandawire (1993:5-7), these gave rise to two strands in the intellectual self-perception of its member *Institutes*. These were anti-colonialism and the commitment to work that straddled the interface between policy and research.

The anti-colonialism strand contained strong nationalist elements with a heavy if at times strident strain of 'resistance' scholarship. This tendency termed part of the 'Resistance Front' by Abdallah Bujra, Executive Secretary of CODESRIA from 1975-1985, was according to Mkandawire (1993:6):

> "... resisted not only the political and economic domination of Africa by European powers, but questioned the pervasive hegemony of the former colonial powers on different aspects of African societies. The legacy of this heritage was to reflect itself within CODESRIA by its concerns over Africa's position in the world system, the continued dominance of foreign powers over African research institutions, the search for an authentic African perspective on the development problems and for the 'decolonisation' of African intellectual existence, etc."

Indeed, strong elements of this heritage still determine research and discourse in CODESRIA's many platforms and events. But gradually over the years, particularly with the younger generations of researchers, 'the tendency to resistance' is being replaced with a tendency not only to assert but to also assume a position of presence and ownership of the discourses on Africa as a natural right defined by their condition and position as African researchers. This tendency to ownership and participation found more vigorously in current CODESRIA's activities and events is indeed the evidence of the fruition of the struggles of the pioneers of CODESRIA to provide African scholars an unencumbered intellectual space to study, think explain and interpret the dynamics, processes and structures that characterize Africa's multiple yet interrelated social and economic realities. That the *Draft Research Programme 1997-2000* written in 1996 envisages and *aims at charting a path that firmly places African discourses of global social reality alongside and face to face with discourses emanating from other regions* is a reflection of the point at which we have arrived. That is, in spite of the inequality and polarization of the global system, African contributions can be said to have arrived at a point in which they can confidently and self-consciously engage in confrontations and exchange with scholars from all over the world without the burdens of having to resist all contrary positions as involving domination or control.

The second intellectual strand, that of the interface between policy and research, contains a more complex story of twists and turns than the clearer and more straight forward 'anticolonialism'. Again according to Mkandawire (1993:6):

> "The second strand, more pronounced after independence was that of a self-perception of the research institution as national 'think tanks' for the development process. This could not be otherwise. After all CODESRIA was created by 'Development *Institutes*' whose mandate and self-perception placed them at the forefront of policy research in their respective countries. The choice of priorities was also symptomatic of this perception."

This early intellectual strand in the history of CODESRIA is interesting because, twenty years later, CODESRIA is considered more as an institution that principally encourages and generates fundamental or basic research in preference to policy-oriented or development research.[7] Mkandawire (1993:6-7) has attempted to trace these developments and how the divorce between the state and the academic community resulting from the growth of the authoritarian state and its increasing monolithism led to the emergence of an increasingly distant and critical stance from research institutions such as CODESRIA. This divorce, characterized by Mkandawire (1993:7) as the 'shredding of the interface between research and policy-making', created a considerable amount of soul-searching among the social science community in Africa culminating in CODESRIA organizing an important meeting in 1985 on the utilization of the Social Sciences.

An important outcome and contribution of CODESRIA to this debate was the problematization of the notion of policy and the consumers of policy. CODESRIA at every opportunity in its own debates and at dialogues, with its donors sought to point out that 'the consumers of policy-oriented research were not only states or donors but society at large...', that is, a problematized civil society also.

In these days of 'the rediscovery of civil society' and its plural composition and trends, that position on the plurality and variety of consumers of policy-oriented research sounds like conventional wisdom reinforced by the endless call to intellectuals to contribute to the empowerment of civil society with their research and knowledge.

Again, this heritage can be seen to clearly influence even the redirection of CODESRIA's intellectual activities towards what is seen as greater social relevance through the creation of both the *Academic Freedom Programme* and the new *Outreach Programme* in *the Research Programme 1997-2001*.

As for the history of the institutional development of CODESRIA, Challenor and Gana (1996-15-26) putting together various sources have told a brilliant story. They pointed out that most observers of CODESRIA's historical development refer to three periods in its evolution: namely, (i) the 1960 to 1975 - *the period of pre-establishment and formation*; (ii) 1975 to 1985, *the period of institutional consolidation and the development of its principal programme modalities*, and (iii) 1985 to 1996, *the period of institutionalization of the programmes and expansion of the Secretariat*.

As Challenor and Gana (1996) fully examined, each of these periods contained specific features of institutional development covering structure, the nature of management and staffing, the focus of programmes, and the extent of available resources for programme implementation and delivery.

The primary phase, that of foundation, is a story of heroic struggles built around the mainly anti-colonial strand of the intellectual history presented above. Fully presented in detail in the Challenor and Gana (1996) *Report*, it showed the efforts of the *African Directors of Social Science and Research Institutes in Africa* such as Samir Amin and H.M.A. Onitiri struggling to create a space with the main objective of changing 'the priorities and perspectives in African Social Science Research in ways that would further African development' (Challenor and Gana, 1996:16).

The second phase clearly described in the writings of one of the protagonists, Bujra (1993) showed the struggle to establish CODESRIA in IDEP in 1973 and to create a tradition of programming with the most minimal, and mainly borrowed, facilities and resources. This phase witnessed initial transformation leading to the more established CODESRIA that characterized the third phase.

The third phase from 1985 through the present is described by Challenor and Gana (1996:20) as perhaps 'the golden age of CODESRIA'. This was the period of the expansion of its programmes, the strengthening of its management, the diversification of its membership base in Africa, the retention of strong donor support and the emergence and attainment of several new programme objectives.

The current evaluation takes its basis and its main concerns from this phase, particularly its latter period from 1990. It is perhaps not necessary to go any further into the Institution's current history as information and evidence from this will continuously be used to provide the necessary background and context for analyses, and conclusion drawn in parts of this *Report* that follow. What is important to note here is that while the history constitutes a heritage with multiple elements some of which constrain the performance and ongoing sustainability of the institution and others which enhance and facilitate the ongoing making of a relevant and sustainable institution, a lack of recognition or understanding of the history of the institution and its context could be more damaging and unproductive. This is because such ignorance can provide misleading and false diagnoses of the problems or mistaken analyses of problems and solutions. What this means is that determinants of relevance and sustainability, and even their components are not fixed and immutable. As the available history of CODESRIA demonstrates, specific intellectual strands and principal characteristics of the institution today emerged from certain experiences and contexts. What an evaluation such as this can indicate is the extent to which such experiences remain pertinent and current, and how the changes they are undergoing and which has produced them indicate new responses, directions and initiatives? Perhaps, the preliminary conclusion one can draw is that the history has had a more positive effect on performance and relevance. Such a judgement, however, requires further consideration of other important aspects of the development of the institution such as its mission and mandate and culture.

3.3. Mission and Mandate

The mission of an institution has been described as 'its ultimate aim', the very reason for its existence and the source of the answers to major questions such as 'why the institution exists, the people it serves and how and with what means it serves them' (Lusthaus et al, 1995:23).

Depending on how self-consciously they relate to the notion of an institutional mission, not all institutions produce mission statements or explicit statements on who they are, why and what they seek to do. Other organizations say the same things in their charters and statement of objectives. More significantly, given the age and circumstances of the institution, the mission and mandate (that is, what it is established to do) often change either in some minor aspects or in major ways.

CODESRIA, as its documented history shows has not been different from other organizations that have survived and thrived and in the process modified or revised their missions. It has not only adapted its mission but modified them successfully if subtly in the over two decades of its existence. This is also evident in the modifications in its name which have occurred without being recognized as significant by any commentator but which apart from being significant have signalled subtle changes in orientation, composition and constituencies.

Beginning with modifications in the name as a reflection of the changes, CODESRIA started off as *Council of Directors of Economic and Social Research Institutions in Africa*. In the early part of its life, it changed from this, thereby extending its constituencies, composition and activities to become *Council for the Development of Social and Economic Research in Africa*. In 1992, at the 7th General Assembly, a motion was passed which changed the name to the *Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa*, a name signalling the attainment of a condition of formally embodying an assembly of all social scientists rather than just economic and social researchers in Africa.

This motion was expressed in the new *CODESRIA Charter* passed at that General Assembly. In fact, apart from the change of name, that new *Charter* also reflected a subtle shift in composition of the Council and the membership. That *Charter* approved the inclusion of individual and Associate members. What the records show however is that the new *Charter* has not been effectively implemented since the *1992 General Assembly*. Although the *Charter* allows for individual and associate members, the latter have scarcely been absorbed into CODESRIA where the obligations, rights, duties and in some cases the dues of the former have not been specified. If CODESRIA's membership and financial bases are to be broadened, there is the need to systematically reconstitute and implement the membership categories indicated in the *Charter* of CODESRIA absorbed by the *1992 Seventh General Assembly*.

A further important illustration of the changing nature of the mission and objectives is clearly indicated by its historical development narrated earlier. CODESRIA's documents reflect these changes in objectives as follows.

When the *African Directors of Research Institutions* were constituted in the late sixties as the *Council of Directors of Economic and Social Research Institutions in Africa* (CODESRIA), 'their objective was to change the priorities and perspectives in African social science research in ways that would further African development' (Challenor and Gana, 1996:16).

By the time, it published its first brochure in 1980, the objectives had changed to:

> "CODESRIA's main objective is to activate concerned African social scientists to undertake fundamental as well as problem-oriented research in the field of development from a perspective which is more relevant to the needs of the African people and thus challenging the existing or orthodox development theories which have often led many African countries to stagnation and underdevelopment. It is hoped that research co-ordinated by or associated with CODESRIA will lead to producing new ideas, and alternative strategies to the development problems of Africa".[8]

This objective represents an obvious development-oriented approach. However, CODESRIA's constituencies decided to move away from this direction through the proclamation of its highest legislative structure, the General Assembly.

As reported in the *CODESRIA Bulletin*, Nos. 1 and 2, 1992, p. 9:

> "During the *Sixth General Assembly in 1988*, for instance, there was a consensus to move away from purely policy oriented themes that had dominated CODESRIA's research priorities. Consequently, 'development' which accompanied each previous research theme of CODESRIA was to be dropped i.e. education and development, etc. As such a formulation cast research themes within a rigid developmentalist mold".

It is interesting to note that in spite of the injunction by the *6th General Assembly* to drop the development-concern in CODESRIA's research themes, these did not lead to a major revision of CODESRIA's main objective as embodied in the quotation cited earlier on. What has happened is that successive Executive Committees in their Plans and Development

Programmes have set themselves more institution-specific objectives.[9] As recent as 1993, the initial objective without its development-orientation was restated as:

> "CODESRIA's major commitment has always been to the development of the social sciences in Africa mainly by activating African social scientists and social science faculties to undertake fundamental as well as problem-oriented research from a perspective which is more relevant to the needs of Africa".

The emphasis remains on research and the activation of actors engaged in the research process to carry out fundamental and problem-oriented research which are relevant to the needs of Africa. However this basic objective is translated into four operational concerns:

1. "Concern with the Scientific development of the social sciences in Africa even when their domestication in African conditions is being pursued. While CODESRIA recognizes the need for instrumentalist social science, it has retained a very strong interest in open and fundamental research;

2. concern with development of the requisite infrastructures of the social sciences including the professional organization of social scientists;

3. concern with the development of a continental perspective which expresses the specificity of the problems and development process in Africa;

4. concern with defending the principle of independent thought and research and liberties of researchers".[10]

These form the operational bases of the mission as perceived in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The lesson of these discussions for the evaluation here is the fact that the institution has never reflected an imprisonment or entrapment by its declared mission. This is because, it has often created for itself through the auspices of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and other committees, the opportunities to continuously reflect on them, and revise and amend them whenever it is felt necessary.

3.4. Institutional Culture

Without resorting to an overly anthropological notion of culture (Diagne and Ossebi 1996)[11], an institutional culture can be seen as that set of ideas, beliefs and orientations that give meaning and value to modes of action and social interaction. At the organizational level, it constitutes the phenomenon or elements through which actions and orientations are explained and rationalized, and the source of individual and collective motivation. However, it is by itself

not an abstract or reified notion. It is embedded in history, and experience and reinforced and supported by the values of the larger social system in which the institution is located. For CODESRIA, that larger social system is both Senegal from which a large part of the local staff is recruited and the pan-African Social Science Community which constitutes its constituency and provides its professional staff.

In several parts of their *Report*, Challenor and Gana (1996) grappled with making sense of and explaining the impact and importance of culture on CODESRIA's programmes and relevance. They overtly and covertly touched many aspects such as (1) the larger Senegalese culture, (2) the culture of CODESRIA's current leadership (3) the academic background and culture of the professional staff, (4) the larger academic culture, and (5) the cultural elements residing in the politics of African nationalism and its intellectual expressions.

These different elements come together to form what can be called the institutional culture of CODESRIA. However, one further distinction must be made between the institutional culture of the CODESRIA Secretariat and that which in the perception of participants is the institutional culture of the CODESRIA 'community'.

Perhaps the following extracts from Challenor and Gana (1996) can help specify the questions above:

i. The institutional ethos of CODESRIA is greatly influenced by historical circumstance and the academic nature of its top professional staff. Having spent its early years as a small organization, CODESRIA has a collegial anti-bureaucratic culture. There appears to be very little in the way of structured, regular information dissemination meetings and something of a divide between international and local staff. International personnel invariably work long hours and often weekends, while generally local support staff who may feel less ownership of CODESRIA, as is the case in most bureaucracies tend to work only during the appointed hours of operation (Challenor and Gana, 1996:45-46).

ii. With respect to socio-cultural factors, it is not clear to what extent the norms and values that govern social relations in Senegalese society affect the management of CODESRIA. This will have to await a scientific determination through a well-researched study. However, it is clear from our observations that the atmosphere of excessive conviviality, which has no doubt, created a friendly atmosphere, may have also engendered a somewhat casual attitude to work. This is reflected in the difficulty that senior officers of the Secretariat, apart from the Executive Secretary, have

in ensuring that the minimalist bureaucratic ethos for which CODE'
noted is enforced (Challenor and Gana, p. 27).

iii. At the continental level the prevailing norms of accountability nia,
impacted the legendary transparency of the Secretariat, but there is a greater
need for efficiency and frugality in programme implementation (Challenor
and Gana, p. 27).

The first two citations above obviously focus on the institutional culture in the Secretariat. The
citations taken out of their context of the historical development of the Secretariat from a small
close-knit family-type enterprise to today's massive structure will miss out the basis of the
'anti-bureaucratic' collegial culture. Given the background of the professionals as academics,
this element of the culture is not necessarily bad. It is the kind of culture found in small-scale
organismic firms of professionals such as medical doctors, engineers, management consultants,
etc. Where it is counter-productive is when all the personnel across the hierarchy do not share
or feel committed to a self-motivating, non-bureaucratic working culture.

Although the lack of commitment identified by Challenor and Gana does not apply to all local
staff, its existence shows the need to either restructure CODESRIA Secretariat working and
organizational methods, or/and to pay more attention to recruiting local staff with similar
values and training with the international staff and providing more training for local staff not
only in terms of their work but also as part of ensuring that they share the dominant
professional values of CODESRIA's leadership.

The second citation explores the same questions. Conviviality is not necessarily a bad character
trace but when it is excessive, it can affect performance. Both cultural elements contain their
positive and negative parts. What is at stake is how they impact on the changing structure of
CODESRIA and how they threaten performance and sustainability. The question is, has
CODESRIA changed in terms of scope, demands, and components without changing aspects
of its institutional culture which served it in times gone-by? This evaluation agrees with
Challenor and Gana (1996) in saying yes, it has changed but it must still re-orient
administratively and structurally, particularly at the Secretariat level.

However, the third citation deals with a very important internal cultural element of CODESRIA Secretariat. The so-called 'legendary transparency' is the product of two decades of *non-negotiable honesty and transparence in the management of the finances and resources of CODESRIA*. This is reflected in an attitude and approach of obligatory frugality, transparence and modesty and the recognition that 'honesty is not the best principle' but the only principle.

A related cultural trait is also that of 'the spirit of commitment'. This is an orientation and belief that serving CODESRIA is serving a noble and larger cause, i.e. promoting the production of knowledge on Africa by Africans and involvement in the struggle to provide a relevant interpretation of African realities. Such a spirit of commitment and sense of duty tend to produce a very high motivation to succeed and achieve and to ensure that CODESRIA's products excel in quality. Thus, the outputs are not linked merely to individual researchers and regional groups but more to a pan-regional community. What needs to be done as part of CODESRIA's strategic planning is the sifting out of the cultural traits supportive of the attainment of CODESRIA's mission in a relevant manner and setting into motion ways and means of institutionalizing them.

3.5. Incentives

Having noted that elements of institutional culture contribute to the motivation of personnel in CODESRIA Secretariat and in its other programmes, this section delineates very briefly the pattern of incentives that derive from participating in CODESRIA's programmes and in serving CODESRIA. The incentives related to CODESRIA take different forms and come from many different sources. There are those that are purely research-based applying to members of its constituency whose involvement with CODESRIA are mainly as participants in its programmes and consumers of its outputs. For these, participation in CODESRIA has to do with the extent to which it supports their career and strengthen them in their primary duties. This applies to the opportunity to carry out the kind of research they want to do without any hindrance, the chance to be published without any censorship and the possibility of gaining recognition and peer-acclamation. As noted in the *20th Anniversary Report of the Executive Secretary*:

> "Despite the pauperisation towards which it was constantly driven, the social
> science community responded to the moral incentives of academic-peer

appreciation of one's scientific performance, desire to contribute to the store of knowledge and betterment of life for fellow human beings or citizens, the joy of seeing one's name emblazoned over an article or a book cover, the pleasures of intellectual debate, etc. CODESRIA, with its meagre resources and material incentives, would never have stimulated so much production among social scientists, if the material incentives were the main, let alone the only driving force" (Mkandawire, 1993:4).

Challenor and Gana (1996:36-37) explored the bases of these incentives in their study:

Although recommendations were made to strengthen CODESRIA, the Council commands great respect and wide support among its stakeholders. Among the notable comments made were, 'CODESRIA is a force that can eliminate Afro-pessimism'. 'It is the most precious body our community has'. Others stated:

- "CODESRIA is perhaps the best thing we have left in Africa that is functioning...
- CODESRIA has been very important. It has helped me to evaluate myself, to share other experiences, to lose any inferiority complex. It provides an affirmation of the African capacity to think about African problems.
- CODESRIA is an excellent organization, therefore we have to fight for it. CODESRIA is one of the rare research institutions that organizes meetings and produce publications. It is necessary to exert maximum effort to conserve those institutions that work; and
- CODESRIA is a life-line for a community of pauperized academics who find it impossible to financially to sustain its work".

Challenor and Gana (1996:36-37)

However, work-related incentives within the CODESRIA Secretariat reflect a different set of issues. Challenor and Gana (1996) who had taken great pains to examine motivation, incentives and commitment amongst CODESRIA's personnel at Dakar had important comments on this related to management and administrative issues. Discussing human resources conditions in general:

"Responses to the questionnaire... also reveal that there are pockets of disenchantment over lack of career prospects and/or advancement which requires urgent attention (Challenor and Gana, 1996:31)".

Exploring these issues further they noted:

"Although persons have moved among the various programs and sections of the organization, there appears to be little upward job mobility. Sixty seven percent indicated that they had not been promoted, although they had received raises, since coming to CODESRIA (Challenor and Gana, 1996:46)".

These points raised above point at a major institutional structuring and incentive pattern that requires some serious attention. It appears that the CODESRIA Secretariat because of the 'non-bureaucratic' orientation of its managers and their rather fixed tenure promotes an orientation that is against having a career within the organization. For the academics, given the orientation towards CODESRIA as a place of service on 'leave of absence' from Faculties and *Institutes*, it is not much of a problem. But even that is changing as African Universities and *Institutes* are becoming less tolerant of long and extended leaves of absence. And anyway, their stay in CODESRIA if well-effected often promotes their chances to find other academic and related positions. But for non-academics, some of whom have spent over ten years in the service of the institution, the lack of career prospects and promotion can be frustrating. This is in spite of the fact that they get pay-raises, are trained and acquire new skills (Challenor and Gana, 1996:46).

The frustration of the internal incentive structure demands that CODESRIA rethink its human resource and personnel policy paying special attention to recruitment patterns and methods, ensuring ongoing training and devising incentives that can capture the ongoing aspirations and commitment of staff. An ad-hoc staffing policy that pays no attention to the special needs of the different tiers of staffing can only affect effective performance and the capacity of the institution to attain the goals it sets itself.

3.6. Gender and CODESRIA

The story told above of history, mission and mandate and institutional culture cannot be complete without an important other side of the story - that is, that until recent times, it has been a male-dominated and significantly gender-blind pattern of development. This is reflected not only in the intellectual history of CODESRIA but also in the structuring of its institutions, the recruitment of its top-most professional staff and the proportion of female participation in its programmes and activities.

Since the Sixth General Assembly, however, a series of struggles to confront this intrinsic male domination and gender-blindness commenced. Fought both at the intellectual and political levels and mainly within the institutions, these struggles (yet to be fully documented) resulted

in 1991 in a workshop on *Gendering the Social Sciences In Africa*. At that workshop, a major process of institutional self-awareness was triggered.

That workshop and the struggles it entailed have led to programming spin-offs such as the Gender Institute and an increasing gender-sensitivity in CODESRIA's publications and activities. That so much more remains to be done is reflected in the intense and robust debates that characterized the attempts to introduce a resolution on 'Gendering CODESRIA' at the Eight General Assembly in 1995.

However, the progress made from that event has been the setting-up of a Gender Steering Committee to advise the Executive Committee on further important areas that need to be tackled and the comprehensive and extensive *Report* of that Committee. CODESRIA's future programming and planning must reflect and confront in very practical terms the outcomes of that Committee's work. This is because all features of CODESRIA require a correction of its history of gross gender-imbalance

Chapter 4

Institutional Capacity

4.1. Introduction

Challenor and Gana (1996:29) citing Lusthaus et al (1995:29) identified institutional capacity as 'measured through six main related areas that determine an institution's performance. These are its strategic leadership, human resources, other core resources such as infrastructure, technology and finance, its programme management, process management and the linkages it forges with institutions similar in mission and goals'. Strategic leadership refers to all those activities that set the course for the organization and keep it on the trajectory set for it or it set for itself in service of its mission. It is associated with risk, vision, and ideas. The outcome of strategic leadership, it was pointed out, is aligned direction or action. Continuous engagement in the process of changing, adapting, and following a path that makes sense to its members are the hallmarks of a strategically led institution.

In this part of the *Report*, the six key elements of institutional capacity are examined as they affect the performance, relevance and the sustainability of CODESRIA. The intention in this exercise is not to provide extensive and cumbersome narratives that go into minute details of these features, but rather to present clear and concise analyses and commentaries that cut through the mass of details to deal with structures, processes and dynamics that constitute and affect the institutional capacity of CODESRIA.

4.2. Governance and Strategic Leadership

Governance and strategic leadership are two important features of *Executive functions* to borrow C.I. Barnard's immortally famous terms, in organizational analysis and operations.

These two features tend to encompass each other and constitute key determinants of the sustainable management of modern day organizations. The components of strategic leadership, we are informed, are, 1) leadership which is both formal and informal 2) strategic planning

which refers to the pattern of calculated responses to the environment that facilitate the achievement of organizational goals; and 3) entails designing and implementing programmes that lead to long-term organizational success. Other components of strategic planning include governance, whose processes are determined by the *Executive Bodies* and the *Constitution*, which provides the legal and policy framework and direction for organizational functioning (Challenor and Gana:29-30).

4.2.1 Statutory Bodies

Perhaps, the key mechanisms in the strategic leadership and governance of CODESRIA are its governing bodies. These include mainly the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and its subcommittees and the Secretariat headed by an Executive Secretary.

a. The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the formal apex of these legislative and statutory bodies. It is constituted by all *African Social Science Research Institutes*, and Faculties, and other individual researchers who are full members of CODESRIA. It determines CODESRIA's orientation, considers the comprehensive activity *Report* of the Executive Secretary and defines the priority research areas. The body meets every three years and elects the Executive Committee and its President and Vice-president.

Because it meets only once in three years, it is easy to dismiss the important role that CODESRIA's General Assembly plays in governance and strategic leadership. Yet, its role is not as deficient as a non-participant observer might think. First, the General Assembly is the highest legislative body of CODESRIA with the power to amend the *Constitution* and the *Charter of CODESRIA*. As was pointed out in the discussion of the mission of CODESRIA, the General Assembly in the exercise of its powers had modified not only research directions but even the very name and parts of self-identity and mission of the institution. At the 8th General Assembly in July 1995, it decisively demanded an institutional and intellectual reconsideration of CODESRIA's gender programming and a report back in 1998.

Secondly, the General Assembly is taken seriously both by the other statutory bodies and those who participate in it. It hands assignments out to the Executive Committees and demands an accounting from them during each session. What Challenor and Gana (1996:40) refers to as 'a rather acrimonious debate' reflects the robust and often intense manner with which important issues are not only perceived but debated. Participants at the General Assembly see themselves as the body representing the wider CODESRIA's constituency and scrutinize both the narrative and financial reports of the Executive Committee and the Secretariat. They often demand explanation for any ambiguous or unclear figure, line item or expression. The point is whether this is a ritual and of what use it is. It is a welcome ritual useful in reinforcing democratic ideals and providing a formal opportunity for representatives and members of the constituencies of CODESRIA to participate in an event in which the institution publicly accounts to its stakeholders and constituents. It also public reiterates the fact that CODESRIA is a membership organization. Of course, being a membership organization has its own problems, but it is an institutional choice that only the General Assembly has the constitutional powers to rescind and which one doubts it will exercise. It however does not fundamentally erode the performance of CODESRIA. More significantly it is at the General Assembly that one sees the convergence of the ownerships of CODESRIA, that is the researchers who own the products and the *Institutes*, Faculties and Executive Committee who formally 'own' the institution.

The basis and mode of participation at the General Assembly is another question that has been raised several times. Traditionally, there are the representatives of the regular institutional members, the Faculties and *Institutes*, then there are former officials (committees and Secretariat) of CODESRIA. Also automatically invited are current members of committees, co-ordinators of networks, members of affiliated and related social science professional associations, and of course a selected number of paper-presenters and other individual participants. A major problem though is whether these participants actually reflect the Social Science Community or only its powerful sections. This question arises in relation to gender balance and the participation of women. It also applies to the participation of younger researchers. Increasingly, since the 7th and 8th General Assemblies, CODESRIA has tried to open up the participation to include more women and younger researchers. More can and should be done to ensure this. The introduction of individual membership can also facilitate this. Another source of tension is the determination of the voting rights and the weighting of the votes of say institutional members who were the founding members and who pay higher

membership fees with that of individual members and those of professional associations. Each General Assembly since the 7th in 1992 has witnessed this debate which is often resolved in the principle of equality of voting rights. Thus the General Assembly, in spite of the limitations of the periodicity of its convocation, manages to play some strategic leadership's role and contributes to the governance of CODESRIA. It does these within the limits of its capacity and available resources that a pan-continental membership organization can muster.

b. The Executive Committee

This is the Board of CODESRIA. It is made up of 10 members who must be social scientists, two from each of CODESRIA's regions - West Africa, Southern Africa, North, Central and East Africa. The Executive Secretary is an ex-officio member. Challenor and Gana (1996:41) point out some problems of the inadequacy of certain patterns of representation on the Committee particularly that of *Gender*. This is in spite of the *Charter* that demands that election to the Committee must take cognizance of geographic, linguistic and gender distribution. As pointed out in 3.6. of this *Report*, this is one inequality and imbalance that require serious attention. It cuts across all aspects of CODESRIA. In this case there are only 2 women in the ten-member Executive Committee. From 1973, there have been a total of 5 women out of over 50 Executive Committee members.

The functions of the Executive Committee are broad including the oversight of CODESRIA's programmes, the appointment of members of the two statutory Committees, the Scientific Committee and the Administrative and Financial Committee, and the appointment of the Executive Secretary and other international staff. It also delegates the power of the daily running of the institution to the Secretariat headed by the Executive Secretary.

Challenor and Gana (1996:41-44) examined the perceptions of the Executive Committee by other observers and the position of the Executive Committee on their tasks, functions and roles. On the specific nature of strategic leadership functions, it was found that:

> "Laureates were about equally divided between whether the Executive Committee's role was to merely ensure the implementation of General Assembly decisions (18%), or to actually define the policies of CODESRIA (20%). An even higher percentage of Executive Committee respondents (27%) perceived their role to be the definition of CODESRIA's policies, rather than to

ensure the implementation of General Assembly's decisions. In contrast, the Executive Committee's general oversight functions were broadly recognized by all the different stakeholders. No laureate nor Co-operating Institution respondent considered assistance with fund-raising a function of the Executive Committee in the initial question about the Committee's responsibilities. Yet when asked specifically if the Executive Committee should play a role in ensuring the financial viability of CODESRIA, 59 percent of the Laureates and 57 percent of the Institutional respondents agreed. Although the role of the Executive Committee is to ensure the high scientific quality of CODESRIA's work is a frequently mentioned function, none of the Institutional respondents and only 2 percent of the Laureates cited this as one of the Committee's functions. Neither the Laureates nor the Institutional respondents listed information dissemination about CODESRIA in the regions nor increasing regional participation in the Council's programs as functions of the Executive Committee" (Challenor and Gana, 1996:42).

This long extract from the Challenor and Gana study effectively underlines the general perceptions by CODESRIA's stakeholders of the functions, roles and expectations of the Executive Committee of CODESRIA. The members, themselves in their responses are in broad agreement on their roles. They contain key elements of providing strategic leadership in relation to CODESRIA's mission and preserving the positive aspects of the Institution's values and culture. Ultimately they are the key guardians of the performance and sustainability of the institution and are expected to take their responsibility seriously.

The fundamental question is, apart from the two or three times a year that they meet, what institutional mechanisms exist that ensure that they are willing and able to perform their oversight functions? How credible and effective are these? Perhaps, the most obvious of these mechanisms are the reporting channels from the Secretariat to the Executive Committee. Ensuring the sustainability and monitoring the performance of the institution demands that there must be credible, open and regular channels. It is necessary to put in place durable mechanisms for ensuring a systematic and detailed reporting of the activities and programmes of the institution. These should also contain ongoing participatory monitoring and evaluation structures that incorporate the efforts of different categories of staff in the establishment. In fact monitoring and evaluation of activities, functions and programmes should be built into the managerial functions and capacity of the institution. These points are necessary because as Challenor and Gana (1996:44), the normal Executive Committee meetings and the way they are prepared do not ensure the attainment of the monitoring and evaluation functions.

c.   *The Secretariat*

This is the third of the statutory bodies of CODESRIA. It is the administrative and managerial core of the institution. Deriving its powers from the Executive Committee, it initiates and manages projects and programmes and conducts a wide variety of negotiations and interactions with external bodies and individuals. Given its key presence, it is often confused with the totality of CODESRIA which is a body greater than it. Thus whatever signals it gives are interpreted as that of the totality of CODESRIA.

Several questions that relate to the Secretariat have been discussed under mission, institutional culture and incentives and will be discussed in other parts of this *Report*. What is important in the discussions here is that the leadership of the Secretariat must possess the key elements of the strategic leadership stated above along with the values and cultural traits most central to the sustainability and performance of CODESRIA. The leadership must also be self-motivating, transparent, inspiring, self-regulating and committed to team-work, work habits and orientations that ensure the sustainability of the institution. As pointed out above, finding ways of institutionalizing these elements to ensure the spontaneous and automatic commitment and performance of the Secretariat leadership and staff is perhaps the biggest challenge CODESRIA faces in these times that have been marked by the fragility and collapse of many African institutions. The Governing Bodies of CODESRIA must concretely address this issue as a basic component of directing and managing strategic change in CODESRIA.

4.2.2. Structure and Niche Management

These are two further features of strategic leadership. They are significantly related to questions of programme and process management. They however precede them in that they embody the construction of workable frameworks for the effective running of the organization, namely the system of working relationships, and the capacity and vision to identify the institution's comparative advantage and thus effectively occupying and dominating the space that such advantage provides. In the examination of CODESRIA's environment and mission, what makes CODESRIA unique in the Social Sciences in Africa was mentioned. These include: (i) bilinguality (multilinguality) (ii) multidisciplinarity, (iii) a pan-African reach and orientation (iv) a political and intellectual credibility that even when it does not guarantee political

neutrality presupposes the definition of an 'African best interest' (v) a commitment to democratic ideals (vi) a commitment to academic freedom, and (vii) a perceived leadership in generating intellectual ideas relevant to Africa. All of these permit not only the definition of a CODESRIA niche, but managing it effectively in ways that guarantee the continuous relevance of CODESRIA's performance and its institutional sustainability.

Another important element is CODESRIA's structure as *the node of a networking institution*.[12] This presumes a particular kind of structure that is flexible and that balances hierarchies, environments, goals and needs. It is not a *research center* or *research institute*. The node is therefore not expected to carry out the research with its own staff, but rather to facilitate the work of its members and constituents. The institution is also not an implementing agency on which Donors and other international bodies can 'dump' projects. The effective management of CODESRIA demands the recognition of this structural issue.

4.3. Human Resources

The history of human resources development in CODESRIA is that of an evolution based on the needs and resources available to the institution. This means that over the two decades of its existence, CODESRIA's staffing policy and programme, except in the latter part of the third phase of its historical development, were not based on strategic human resource planning but rather improvised responses to needs.

As CODESRIA has expanded and acquired more resources it has found itself carrying personnel with skills, ideas and orientations from a previous phase of its development. The very circumstance of the institution's development and the absence of both a personnel policy and framework for human resource planning and development, particularly for the middle and lower cadres of its staff, continue to plague effective programme management and general administration. The situation complicates and affects placement of staff in what could be their most appropriate and effective functions. It also creates a structural unevenness in terms of the calibre and qualification of newer recruits who tend to be better trained and qualified. This disparity in professional background and training within the local staff and the conflicting expectations about appropriate remuneration or what should constitute the bases of remuneration and advancement continue to create tensions in the administration of personnel and human resources policy.

CODESRIA in response, struggles to modify and revise the management of its human resources, to update and modernize basic administrative features, record keeping, job descriptions, advancement and other personnel procedures. Challenor and Gana (1996:46-47) address these issues in detail. Part of the proposed ongoing reforms in CODESRIA since September 1996 has been to tackle the questions of rationalizing and routinizing basic human resources procedures and practices. It involves training and retraining existing staff and specifying new recruitment policies. It also includes the development of job descriptions, elaborating administrative and financial procedures, specifying personnel policy (including welfare), defining performance appraisal and promotions procedures, and strengthening communication channels. The completion of the tasks of rationalizing human resource management procedures is a priority to which CODESRIA should define a clear and appropriate time-frame for implementation. The evaluation reveals that a lot needs to be done to professionalize the management and handling of these. For instance, there is no single staff in CODESRIA trained to perform these functions. The challenge for strategic planning and management includes the structural integration of the basic forms of human resource planning and management into CODESRIA's routine administration.

4.4. Other Core-Resources: Infrastructure and Technology

Efforts here are closely related to the human resources questions. Again, a history of limited resources have affected the pattern of the provision and allocation of resources and equipments. Certain departments such as Publications which lack computers, have obsolete printing equipments and inadequate modern storage facilities for manuscripts underline the inadequacies of the infrastructure. There is also of course, the external environmental issue of power cuts and fluctuations and the occasional obstructions to telephone lines and mailing system which affect external communications and internal performance. Ongoing proposed reforms in CODESRIA, however, have involved an inventory of equipments and infrastructures and an analysis of their status with a view to resolving possible inadequacies. As will be discussed more extensively under the section of this *Report* devoted to communications and technology, the inadequacies of internal infrastructures including that of physical space represent some constraints on both working patterns and performance. An illustration is the case of electricity power failures and surges which occur more frequently in Dakar around June, July and August. Given the lack of an electric power generator in CODESRIA, work on computers, printing machines, faxes and all other such equipments is often stalled at times for

as long as five hours once the national electric authority disrupts power supply to the institution. This often affects production deadlines if it continues for more than one day which regularly happens in the months mentioned. Thus a necessary aspect of CODESRIA's strategic planning which does not exist now is systematic policy and planning on technology and equipments. This planning needs to include not only the acquisition of equipments and technology but their periodic maintenance and upgrading.

4.5. Programme Management

As has often been pointed out, CODESRIA's programmes have developed historically in response to CODESRIA's mission. The programmes have however been significantly affected by important features such as the way CODESRIA was founded, its governance structure and its financial regime.

Although CODESRIA had developed programmes over the years that have become accepted and won the support of its constituents, one important fact that the Evaluation revealed is the absence of a regular monitoring and evaluation system for CODESRIA's programmes. Thus, apart from the periodic evaluations carried out every three to four years, and the reporting to the Scientific Committee and Executive Committee, there is no institutionalized regular assessments and monitoring of programme development and management for effective performance and relevance. Putting such a system into place within CODESRIA is both a strategic and structural imperative. Current tools used for monitoring programme management is the multi-year plan of activities. Even then, this needs to be further developed with specific targets and indicators and built-in mechanisms for correcting and revising performance shortfalls and/or over-optimism. An attendant budgetary and financial management capacity is a necessity for the effective implementation of this.

Also, although CODESRIA's programmes are related through the fact of service at different stages to research and training, there appears to be evidence of inadequate programme co-ordination between the different sections. Lines of hierarchy where they institutionally exist are also unclear. These require a revisit. It is in the light of dealing with these crucial questions that the discussions of the different programmes are undertaken. The discussions, are not meant to be detailed as other CODESRIA's documents such as *Annual Reports* and *General Assembly Reports* routinely deal with this.

4.5.1. Research Networks

CODESRIA operates its research programmes principally through research networks - namely the Multi-national and National Working Groups. This has been one of the most successful of CODESRIA's programmes for very many reasons. Apart from providing the knowledge necessary, it has helped to bring African scholars together across linguistic and other barriers to work on specific themes. The Multinational Working Group (MWGs) is one major mechanism of implementing research programmes. Challenor and Gana (1996:53-54) have provided some background to the evolution of the MWGs as a mode of programme implementation. There is little need to go into the details of the steps by which an MWG is constituted here, what actually occurs is the actual process of research work which often consists of teams of between 10 to 20 scholars. As Challenor and Gana (1996:55) noted:

> "The Multinational Working Groups are complex networks and some of the initiatives have failed. By 1993 CODESRIA had set up over 22 Multinational Working Groups consisting of 378 researchers. In their 1991 Report on CODESRIA, Vlyder and Ornäs pointed to the highly uneven distribution of 170 researchers who by that time had participated in MWGs. According to their analysis although the researchers came from 39 countries, a disproportionate numbers came from only a few countries".

These countries are mainly Nigeria, Senegal, Algeria, Tanzania, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Morocco and Tunisia. Countries like Angola and Mozambique and the Central African states had insignificant or no participation.

As of 1997, the broad pattern of the distribution has not changed with Nigerian researchers given their population size and number of universities still dominating the networks. It needs to be pointed out that certain important issues emerge in the management of MWGs. The first is the provision of effective intellectual leadership to specific MWGs from within the Secretariat. Often, given the use of Co-ordinators who are supposed to be intellectually competent, this is not expected to be a problem. But it has turned out to be so, given the uneven nature of the intellectual output of the networks. The second problem is that of the adequacy of administrative and bibliographic support from CODESRIA. CODICE, the CODESRIA Documentation Centre, has been praised quite often for its support. However, there have been some criticisms of administrative support such as the sending of contracts and payments,

response to letters and inquiries and other forms of delay in treating and processing issues related to the MWG.

What is at stake now, is how CODESRIA can tighten the management of the MWGs so that this much praised programme can improve its completion rate, shorten the working period and submit its products with the level of quality and care expected of it. Not all the blame lies with the Secretariat in this case of programme management, a related source is with co-ordinators and researchers who miss deadlines for submissions, revisions and responses to editorial queries. However, clear mechanisms, rules, rewards and sanctions applicable to external co-ordination require to be put in place and approved by the Governing bodies.

A second major approach to Networks is the use of National Working Groups (NWGs). The principal objectives of the NWG programme are:

- To contribute to the enhancement of national research capacity
- To provide teaching material at the national level
- To provide material from different countries that could be used in universities
- To contribute to knowledge of the African situation
- To encourage interdisciplinary contacts at national level
- To complement the work carried out by MWGs
- To support teams of researchers working on a common programme to publish their research results.
- To nurture a tradition of publishing in the countries

The NWG is a new approach to research projects not only within CODESRIA but on the continent. While it provides detailed 'on the ground' data, CODESRIA had no precedence to learn from with regard to how to manage it. So it was a highly *laisser-faire* approach. The NWGs are self-selecting groups both in terms of members, their own co-ordinators, and themes. This has been a successful and nationally-visible project which between 1982 and 1993 has generated 42 groups. It has also constituted a recruitment base from bringing new researchers and particularly young people into CODESRIA's activities.

Both MWGs and NWGs generate manuscripts for CODESRIA's programmes and some of these have contributed to the significant renewal and updating of local knowledge. Some of the issues of greater support from the Secretariat, particularly in the form of providing resource-persons to help with Methodological Workshops and assessment of manuscripts are possible areas of improvement of programme management of these networks.

4.5.2. Fellowships and Grants Programme

As of the time of the evaluation CODESRIA had two main fellowship programmes, the *Reflections on Development Fellowship Programme* coming to its end and the *Small Grants Programme for the Writing of Theses and Dissertations*.

a. Reflections on Development Programme

This is a fellowship funded by Rockefeller Foundation whose funding cycle of ten years ended in 1995. Designed to sustain and enhance the capability of Africans to conduct basic research on development and encourage the tradition of publishing, this sabbatical fellowship was quite successful benefiting over 40 fellows who have produced high quality books, monograph and articles.

b. Small Grants Programme for the Writing of Theses & Dissertations

This programme started in 1988 is intended to support national research capacity through aiding post-graduate training at African universities. Through it, CODESRIA is trying to fill the gap in scholarships available to students. The programme is essentially geared to Masters and Doctoral candidates and is meant to supplement their training.

Since its inception 3,273 candidates have applied for the programme by its *9th Competition* (1988-1995) and 879 of these were awarded (Diop, 1996:8). Of these, 410 dissertations and theses have been completed and submitted to CODESRIA, showing a 47 percent completion rate.

In terms of distribution of grantees, students in Economics and Sociology have provided 54% of the grants' beneficiaries. The number of female beneficiaries of the grants has also increased from 14% in 1991 to 20% in 1994-95. This exceeds significantly the percentage of female participants in CODESRIA's activities which is around 9%.

But as Challenor and Gana (1996:60) noted:

> "Based upon the number of laureates who submit their thesis or dissertation to CODESRIA, females appear to have slightly more difficulty in completing their work than men. By January 1996, 60 of the 168 females had finished their research, while nearly half of the men 308 out of 647 had done so. Anglophone laureates accounted for 48 percent of all laureates through 1995. Francophones represented 42 percent, Arabophones comprised 9.6 percent, Lusophones only 0.02%".

The distribution of the grants by countries revealed Nigeria at the top with over 34% of grantholders over 8 rounds. This is followed by Senegal with 13% of beneficiaries.

Among CODESRIA's programmes, the *Small Grants Programme* is the most popular and has being acclaimed as most successful. In spite of this, there are major areas of programme management improvements. These are: (i) the management of mailing to grantees. Efforts should be made to guarantee the prompt transmission of documents to laureates (ii) the management of records and information. This requires effective computerization for codification, access and retrieval (iii) the co-ordination of payments between internal CODESRIA's sections (iv) the management of the supply of books (v) reorienting and expanding the selection process (vi) above all, there is the provision of intellectual leadership to the programme to ensure maximum benefits from it. This includes the institution of methodological workshops, providing not only bibliographic support but also guidance and publication of selected outstanding theses and dissertations. This should also involve more regular monitoring, say every six months of grantees' progress. Other efforts include broadening the participation base of hitherto excluded groups and countries through encouraging and enhancing the submission of fundable proposals.

4.5.3. Training Institutes

The *Training Institutes* represent CODESRIA's efforts to strengthen methodological skills and knowledge of mid-career scholars in selected fields. The first of these the *Governance Institute* was launched in 1992 and in 1994, the *Gender Institute* started. They are today one of the most important tools used by CODESRIA to consolidate its capacity-building and training activities.

Both *Institutes* taking approximately 6 weeks each run between July and September of each year. Participating laureates are between 12 and 20 in number. The *Institutes* are organized around a Director appointed by CODESRIA who prepares the curriculum and leads a programme which comprise lectures by resource-persons and presentations of research proposals by laureates. The participants are accommodated by CODESRIA. They are obliged to attend working sessions, paid some stipend and allowed 1000 pages of photocopying. They are also provided with extensive bibliographic support by CODICE.

For the Governance *Institutes*, the themes have been as follows: 1992, *The State, Civil Society and Democratization in Africa*; 1993, *Structural Adjustment, Democratization and Governance in Africa*; 1994, *Institutions, Constitutions and Democratic Governance* and in 1995, *Local Governance and Democratization in Africa*; 1996, *Citizenship, Rights and Governance*.

As for the *Gender Institute*, it has so far not focused on specific topics or themes since it is designed to raise general awareness about *Gender* and to help facilitate the *Gendering of Social Science Research.*

The *Institutes* have been successful academically in spite of the perennial problems of logistics related in particular to accommodation and access to computers. Laureates have remarked on how they have not only deepened their knowledge of the specific issues but also contributed to their later teaching as they use the opportunity of their six weeks of access to CODESRIA's library to prepare their lectures and courses. Efforts are being made in CODESRIA Secretariat to resolve the logistics problems and seek additional funding for the *Institutes*. The outputs of

the *Institutes* have also been published after due peer-review either as articles in *Africa Development* or as *Monograph Series*. Part of the considerations for improving the management of the *Institutes* is to link them up with research networks or to form networks from the themes they covered. In that way, some of the participants would have benefited from extensive and rigorous exposure to the confrontation of the questions of interest.

4.5.4 Publications' Programme

Closely linked to CODESRIA's research activities and that of its mandate to mobilise the African Social Science Community, the Publications' programme is one of the major preoccupations of CODESRIA. The programme has achieved some tangible progress in the quality, diversity, appearance, frequency and out-reach of its various publications.

The Publications' programme of CODESRIA consists of the quarterly Journal *Africa Development*, a quarterly *Bulletin*, a *Book Series*, a *Working Paper Series*, a *Monograph Series, Directories and Bibliographies*. An emerging element is also a support to other African Journals through which CODESRIA provides resources for printing while specific African institutions manage the journals.

a. *Publications' Policies*

Unlike most other Publications' programmes which have nominal Editorial and Advisory Boards, CODESRIA has a scientific committee composed of members of the Executive Committee of CODESRIA and independent scholars who hold office for a period of three years . The committee has provided valuable policy guidelines and monitoring of CODESRIA's Publications and distribution programme. Briefly, the most important policy guidelines include the following:

- the need for a systematic implementation of the principle of peer-review of all CODESRIA publications;
- Regular (if necessary free) distribution to CODESRIA member *Institutes*, all African universities, at least one central library in each African country;

- The application of differential pricing of CODESRIA books in Africa and the rest of the world;

- Selling of books in local currencies and bartering of books with other African publishers.

Where the journal and the *Bulletin* are conceptualised as a medium of communication of the African Social Science Community as a whole, the main thrust of the *Book Series* was to be devoted to the structured and organised research activity of CODESRIA — the output of the National and Multinational Working Groups. However, CODESRIA also encourages the publication of outstanding unsolicited manuscripts.

b.   *Africa Development*

A major achievement with *Africa Development* is the regularity with which the journal has been published. First published in 1976 it has had an unbroken appearance till now. Between 1976 and 1995 this bilingual journal has published 422 articles on a variety of social science questions with the main concentration in economics.

Also *Africa Development* since 1993 has started to pay greater attention to gender issues and gender representation in every issue. This has broadened the access of a hitherto underrepresented yet important constituency in the African Social Science Community.

Africa Development is also indexed and included in electronic bibliographic listing such *as International African Bibliography; Documenttieblad; Abstracts of Rural Development in the Tropics; Documentionseliensi Africa;* and *A Current Bibliography on African Affairs.*

c.   *CODESRIA Bulletin*

It is the most widely read of CODESRIA's Publications. It is now printed at 2500 copies which shows a slight increase compared to 1992. The reason is clearly because it carries themes and issues which lend themselves more to debates mostly when they deal with important issues. It is cited by many researchers and is now acknowledged as the major African forum for discussing development issues. *CODESRIA Bulletin* is still sent to all, African

University Libraries, subscribers to *Africa Development*, members of National and Multinational Working Groups, members of CODESRIA's committees and also to African researchers upon request. It is sent to others on subscription to cover postage and part of production cost. The table below shows the evolution of the distribution of *CODESRIA Bulletin* from 1992 to 1994.

CODESRIA Bulletin Distribution Profile: 1992-1994

Year	1992		1993		1994	
Destination	French	English	French	English	French	English
1. Africa						
*Institutes**	410	482	410	482	410	490
Individuals**						
GNTs	764	1085	813	1156	829	1270
Subscribers	22	3	40	90	40	90
	6	19	23	13	23	13
Exchanges						
2. America	6	90	-	98	-	101
3. Asia	-	25	-	26	-	26
4. Europe	21	112	38	105	38	108
Total/Year	1223	1844	1324	1970	1340	2098

**Institutes*, Directors, Libraries, Faculties*
**Individuals, National Working Groups, Multinational Working Groups, Grantees, Summer *Institutes*

CODESRIA also publishes *Monographs and Working Paper Series*. However, the *CODESRIA Books Series* is the most important of the products. Consisting mainly of outputs from MWGs and NWGs, Challenor and Gana (1996:73) have pointed out some of their strengths and weaknesses:

Books published by CODESRIA are quite well received if not widely distributed in Africa. The CODESRIA has established contacts with book distributors in Algeria, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe. In most cases the distributors prefer to carry mainly those books focusing on their respective countries. Despite differential pricing arrangements and advertisement in such magazines as *West Africa* and *Jeune Afrique*, book sales in Africa remain sluggish.

As they noted, distribution is not the only problem for the CODESRIA's Publications programme. They also pointed out problems emerging from outdated equipments and obsolete technology that perennially break down. There is also the fact of the small staff that carry out not only title initiation but the various aspects of the work of origination and distribution.

CODESRIA's Publications are consistently evaluated either within or by external bodies. In a recent evaluation of the Scientific Committee, three major weaknesses in the publications programme related to gender, thematic and linguistic biases were identified. These are problems that can be tackled at policy levels. Other problems identified include the extent of errors in the products, problems with the management of manuscripts and inadequacy of the responses to inquiries. Other outstanding questions also relate to stock management and dealing with excessive and dated stock in CODESRIA's storage.

The evaluation shows the need to professionalize CODESRIA's Publications' programme through the use of more commercial outlets for origination and distribution, the reequipping and restructuring of the programme to ensure adequate and flexible responses to the challenges it faces. Editorial capacity particularly for copy-editing and proof-reading needs to be strengthened. Also requiring confrontation is the human resource challenge of running the programme as a cost-recovering unit.

A significant element of this restructuring is envisaged to be a retraining and recruiting programme and an overhauling of current obsolete technology and techniques utilized in production and distribution.

A major challenge for CODESRIA Secretariat is the finding of resources to effect this process of restructuring and professionalization of CODESRIA Publications' programme.

4.5.5 Documentation

An equally successful programme within CODESRIA is the Documentation and Information Unit which has two main functions, to service the research needs of the Secretariat, as well as those of the research networks and individual scholars. CODICE has developed its acquisition base extensively since 1992 with acquired 1000 new material (books,

reports, theses, conference documents, etc.). CODICE has also acquired 250 core periodicals and many newsletters in the library.

A major function of CODICE is also the building of an internal data base capacity. These include:

	(i)	Bibliographic Data Base
	(ii)	Data Base of Social Scientists
	(iii)	Data Base of Research and Training *Institutes* in Africa
	(iv)	Data Base of Development Research Projects in Africa
	(v)	Global Data Base on Training and Research *Institutes*

An important component of its activities is also the acquisition of electronic data bases. CODICE has acquired some CD-ROM data bases but is limited in its acquisition of on-line data bases by the limitations of infrastructures external to CODESRIA.

CODICE plays a leading role in international information networking of research *Institutes* through its position in the International Development Information Network (IDIN) and other regional and global networks in which it participates. CODICE has also received accolades from various parties in terms of its direct servicing of the *Institutes*, the Grants' programme, the Research networks and individual researchers. It prepares bibliographies, specialized lists and other documents for all these clients. It also provides a small service to library users. However CODICE is constrained in its work by the inadequacy of resources to expand its acquisition base, the lack of its own direct photocopying and scanning facilities, its limited equipment structure and its situation of perennial under-staffing and limited space. Some of these are real problems whose solutions depend on large infusion of resources. But there are others which it can begin to tackle immediately. One such problem emerging from this evaluation is the absence of a clear-cut acquisitions and document-exchange policy for CODESRIA. The definition of these and the generation of resources will contribute to further enhancing the performance of a unit that has attempted to operate professionally.

4.5.6. Academic Freedom Programme

The main objective of the CODESRIA programme on *Academic Freedom in Africa* is to protect and enhance academic freedom and the rights of researchers. Activities undertaken therefore mainly consist of:

i. monitoring academic freedom on a continuous basis. The main output of the monitoring exercise is the publication of an annual report on *The State of Academic Freedom in Africa*. When and where necessary, feasible and opportune, CODESRIA also approaches the authorities in countries where serious violations of academic freedom have taken place, so as to draw their attention to specific cases;

ii. assisting academics in distress, i.e. those academics who are finding it difficult to pursue their academic endeavours. This mostly takes the form of small grants allocated to individual researchers;

iii. supporting the efforts of academics to protect and promote academic freedom by organizing national level seminars, symposia and workshops on academic freedom;

iv. maintaining a legal defence fund;

v. encouraging research on human rights and academic freedom

The programme was launched in 1993. However, a full-time programme officer was recruited to run the programme only in 1994.

Given the state of political developments and human rights in most African states, this programme is at the very heart of the working of CODESRIA's main constituencies. In 1990, CODESRIA organized a major conference to deal with the question of Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of the Intellectual. From that conference, the *Kampala Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility* was adopted and widely distributed. *The Annual Report* of the programme, *The State of Academic Freedom in Africa* is a serious effort to understand 'the dynamics and socio-political processes in which researchers work and give insights into the root causes of violations and intellectual freedom' (Challenor and Gana, 1996:71).

The *Academic Freedom* programme has actively pursued the attainment of its different objectives through a wide variety of cost-effective activities. Some of these have been widely successful regional conferences such as the Conference on *Academic Freedom, Social Research and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region* held in Arusha in September 1995 and a number of national conferences sponsored in different countries in Africa.

Given the actual conditions in Africa today and the increasing recognition of the need for researchers to link with activists and policy constituencies, the *Academic Freedom* programme is a turn in CODESRIA's programming not focused solely on research activities but rather linked to other conditions and activities. It is perhaps this realization that leads CODESRIA to link this programme in the same structure with a planned *Outreach* programme. What such programming will demand will be thorough planning and clearly-specified objectives that ensure their equal claims to resources and that minimize their ghettoization in a predominantly research-oriented institution.

4.5.7. Special Projects

As a result of its track record of delivering research and its credibility with the African Social Science Community, CODESRIA has had to house certain research projects such as the Network on *Industrial Policy*.

Others such as the *ADAE* Network on *Education and Finance* are also managed by CODESRIA but with a greater degree of integration into CODESRIA's programmes. Increasingly, the class of projects termed 'special projects' i.e. projects not completely conceived or designed by CODESRIA but housed or managed by it are becoming important elements of activities.

This evaluation sees the need to reflect carefully and design criteria for the acceptance and managing of special projects. Perhaps, the first fundamental point is that such projects must not conflict with CODESRIA's mission and mandate. They must also be directed at serving its primary constituencies i.e. researchers, or provide significant linkages between them and others. In other words, their relevance must be undoubted. Such projects must also not disrupt the internal institutional structuring of CODESRIA and must not only be in synergy but also

bring some significant value-added factors to the overall programming and planning of CODESRIA. A good example here is that they must add to valorizing the mission of CODESRIA. Other questions related to administrative and intellectual integration are important. CODESRIA's rules and procedures and fundamental values must apply. Thus projects cannot support racism, sexism and other such prejudices.

All in all, a main outcome of these exercises in evaluation is that a review of programme management procedures and priorities is necessary in CODESRIA. This realisation is effectively and clearly apprehended in the proposed institutional reforms programme which emerged after the retreats of the Secretariat. However, a necessary input into reform is a process of strategic planning and management reorientation. The discussions above essentially constitute a set of diagnoses to be moved forward with a set of planned actions.

4.6. Process Management

This is the concrete actualisation or operationalisation of the institutional vision in action through planning, decision-making, communications and monitoring and evaluation.

For the purpose of this evaluation, discussions here will focus on planning, decision-making and monitoring and evaluation.

4.6.1. Planning

All through our analyses of programme management, the question of strategic planning as an institutional imperative returns ceaselessly.

The discussion of process management raises this question again. The evaluation reveals that CODESRIA operates with a dual plan cycle, that of three-year plans and yearly programme planning within that.

What this exercise underscores is the need for a more rigorous programming and financial planning regime structured around the three-year and the one-year periods. However, the planning should be a professional exercise with specific targets, indicators of performance and criteria for evaluation and monitoring. The proposed reforms in the Secretariat have

commenced with a more rigorous annual budgeting and planning system than was the case in CODESRIA. However, the exercise should be participatory: that is, involving all the staff and the necessary data and information required for planning need to be made available ahead of time to the different programmes and departments. Budgetary and planning discipline are also important prerequisites for management. If necessary, CODESRIA should seek resources to secure professional advice for ensuring overall institutional strategic planning and more detailed sectoral planning for programmes and human resources management. The resources should be to assist with training and the development of internal institutional capacity to conduct and manage both planning and plan implementation exercises.

4.6.2. Problem-Solving and Decision-Making

These are closely related to the planning and management systems but depend more on the need to utilize personal judgements to cope with non-routine and unexpected circumstances and outcomes. The larger African environment is oftentimes unstable and unpredictable in terms of the threats and opportunities it poses for programming and research initiatives. These features emphasize initiative, judgement and careful but quick choices between alternatives. Programme officers and others involved in leadership position must make such choices both in terms of programmes to pursue or options within programming directions. Strategically-placed functionaries should be empowered and provided sufficient resources such as information to make these choices. This element should be incorporated into general management process.

4.6.3. Communications

Communications as the exchange of vital information between different parties can be internal or external. For institutions like CODESRIA built on the generation and circulation of information, communications is a key feature and resource. Communications can also be vertical or horizontal. Horizontal communications is essential to programme co-ordination and harmonization of activities. Vertical communication is central to institutional control and co-ordination. It is a central element of motivation, commitment and the extraction of dependable and spontaneous performance from personnel. All of these point at why communications is central to the overall good health of the organization.

Findings from this evaluation show that all is not well with the communications process in CODESRIA.

Challenor and Gana (1996:33) pose the vital questions that probe this process in CODESRIA. They find that:

> "The issue of internal communication within CODESRIA came up repeatedly, despite the fact that 71 percent of the respondents to the questionnaire for Secretariat members indicated that they were well-informed about CODESRIA's programmes. While weekly meetings are held for top level management and Program Managers, the support staff does not participate in these meetings and one gets the sense that they are not always informed about the substance of these gatherings. Some Sectional Managers hold section level meetings, but this is not done throughout the organization. Twenty percent of the respondents suggested general staff meetings were not held, because it was not part of the organizational culture. It is noteworthy that the responses about the need for and value of staff meetings are clustered by categories of personnel. Staff from the Assistant Program Manager level down advocated more staff meetings, while higher level professionals who meet regularly either did not respond to such questions or did not indicate the need to see such meetings organized" (Challenor and Gana, 1996:48-49).

The institutionalization of effective lines of communications to support effective programme implementation is an ongoing management task and function that CODESRIA must pay serious attention to whether through meetings, internal newsletters, the use of the internal networks, or more intensive programme co-ordination. Effective communication lines must be opened and kept open.

4.6.4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are processes used by organizations to collect and use feedback. These tools are linked to planning and decision-making. As was pointed out in the discussion of programme management in CODESRIA, sustainable and systematic processes of evaluation and monitoring are central to ensure periodic review, early warning systems, and spontaneous self-correcting mechanisms.

These processes need to be built into all programmes and all departments. They should include modes of systematic information gathering, storing, and retrieving this information for effective use. These can then be used for learning improvement and change. Evidence available to the evaluation show that apart from ad-hoc post-project evaluations often embodied in the institutes, there are no systematic evaluations of CODESRIA's projects and meetings. These should be built into all phases, activities, events and meetings. The evaluation also shows the need for a performance data base that contains information on both institutional and programming performance. An institution-wide annual performance appraisal mechanism for *all* staff in the Secretariat needs to be instituted. This should be open and participatory and should list all activities effected with the ranking of their usefulness to CODESRIA.

4.7. Information Technology and Communications in CODESRIA

In this part of the *Report*, an assessment of *CODESRIA's Information Technology Management and Communication* is carried out with the specific intention of assessing its impact on institutional performance and relevance. The assessment carried out by a resource person with the professional competence focused on the `changing nature of technologies and methodologies of research dissemination particularly with the emergence of the Information Technology Revolution'. The emphasis on communications here is that of external communications.

As even the most casual observers know, the world today is experiencing an Information Technology Revolution which is changing the way the world is seen, our perceptions of distance, the way routine tasks are done and the speed in which they are done, and generally the processing, retrieval and storage of information. The assessment however did not touch on the overall question of management information systems within CODESRIA or the other functions and challenges of the information technology revolution. It deals with general computing in the context of CODESRIA's management only when this is firmly related to tasks of information gathering, processing, storing and dissemination. The assessment also while based on the appreciation of existing infrastructure for informatics in CODESRIA, emphasizes the prospects of new, soft and hard information technologies for the effective discharge of CODESRIA's mandate. The operative methodological orientation for the assessment is based on a process-centred attitude to information strategy planning and emphasizes typologies of systematic information flows within CODESRIA.

4.7.1. CODESRIA's Current Information Infrastructure

There can be little doubt that both in terms of inputs for research and the quality and quantity of research output, CODESRIA is arguably the leading social research entity within Africa. This status entails a complex system of information flows. Simply, we can focus on three major flows: between CODESRIA and its funders and similar bodies; internal processes within CODESRIA for the administration of its academic programmes; and the system of exchanges between CODESRIA and the wider African Social Research Community. An effective approach to the assessment of this complex info-structure may be to concentrate on the modal means by which these flows are transacted and to try to draw their relative merits. As already mentioned, the emphasis is especially on computer-mediated communications, one of the possible means for such transactions. Other means include ordinary telephony like print-on-paper based faxes, telephone calls, ordinary post and physical meetings. The effective strategy here would be to give emphasis in assessment to the deployment of computer-mediated communications within CODESRIA but with a view to facilitating the means of effecting information flows.

The experience of CODESRIA shows that it is clear that the most important type of information flow, in terms of the expenditure of staff time especially, is the second of the three identified above, that is, internal processes within CODESRIA for the Administration of its academic programmes.

It is also clear that the pre-eminent mode of carrying out information and communication activities within CODESRIA is print-on-paper fax. The underpinnings of this assessment require that computer-mediated communication is necessary to enhance its activities in this wise. It also points to the need to contribute to enhancing the third type of information flow, that is transactions between CODESRIA and the wider African Social Research Community. The operative trends noted above are the outcome of complex interplay between established work patterns at CODESRIA and the effective range of information technology options available within the CODESRIA Secretariat especially.

a. *Computer Hardware Situation*

The computer hardware situation — the combined capacity and its distribution — within the secretariat is an obvious, important determinant of the scale of computer-mediated communication within CODESRIA. The computer servicing contractors of CODESRIA undertook an inventory of computer resources in February and March, 1996, which remained still accurate in June and July 1996. The results of the stock-taking is summarized below:

It may be said that CODESRIA is quite well endowed with hard computing power. There are the least 25 computers (of which at least 23 are networked), seven of these have a Pentium processor and two have a random access memory (RAM) of 16 MB and 13 have a RAM capacity of at least 8 MB. However, the inter-departmental distribution of computing facilities, mismatch of computer peripherals and add-ons, and rigidities in cross department use of computing facilities within the CODESRIA Secretariat have resulted in profound computing constraints in key points of the information management system within CODESRIA.

Within the secretariat, CODICE is the fulcrum of computer-mediated communication. However, in relation to its operations, it faces a significant telematics capacity constraint. On paper, the hardware facilities available to CODICE are acceptable. CODICE has three computers, one of which is a high specification Compaq Deskpro with a Pentium processor and 16 MB of RAM. The dedicated server for CODESRIA, a Compaq Prosignia with similar specifications, is also housed in CODICE and, theoretically, available when the network is not in use. However, various small bottlenecks very significantly limit the computing throughput of CODICE. The centre of CODICE's computer-mediated operations is the Compaq Deskpro machine on which CODESRIA's subscription to the INTERNET is installed. Unfortunately, this is also the only machine with a working printer, an old, slow dot matrix machine with a current value of perhaps no more than $30.00. The high value telematic services possible on the machine, are, in view of the distinguishing factors noted above, often interrupted. Whenever a CD-ROM search has to be made, whenever something has to be printed in CODICE, CODESRIA's access to the global information infrastructure has to be cut out. This situation is obviously not good enough. It is recommended that CODESRIA should seek to implement a more open computing architecture. Immediately, networking of printers and other peripherals can be undertaken, as has been done to a limited extent in the accounting section. As a matter of urgency, the needed simple cabling must be undertaken to ensure that the

working printer at CODICE is virtually shared rather than the present saddling of the most important computer in CODICE. In the near future, the printer at CODICE must be replaced with a more efficient one and/or an architecture which supports cross-departmental printing of output must be put in place.

Another constraint on the ability of CODESRIA to sustain a suitable telematic capacity level is the nature of CODICE's access to an external phone line. There is no dedicated external phone line to CODICE. To connect to the point of presence of its Internet provider, SONATEL, Dakar, it shares a line with the main reception. This is the line which is normally used for faxes, thus, one of the busiest lines within the secretariat. Normally, CODICE is able to access its Internet service only after 3.00 p.m., when the fax traffic tends to slow down. One understands it is not likely that CODESRIA can get a new line for the main telephone exchange serving it is fully subscribed. This situation robs telematics at CODESRIA of its cardinal advantage: near instantaneous, interactive communication. Although CODESRIA has a full TCP/IP Internet connection, which should deliver the above-mentioned advantage, CODICE's phone line constraint has resulted in the system running, effectively, as a store and forward system. The annoyances of the store and forward system are deepened by the current configuration of the computer mailing system at the CODESRIA Secretariat. There are no live extensions of the Internet subscription at CODICE to other machines in the secretariat. Electronic messages can be sent from machines which are on the network but these messages are not automatically queued for despatch to the global information infrastructure. They have to be sent to the portfolio of the local system operator on the local network who manually despatches them.

The framework of computer-mediated communication within CODESRIA outlined above does not allow a good quality service. Understandably, the users are critical of the service. Interviews at the Secretariat show that the staff, especially the professional staff, have very critical reactions to the lack of at least a live electronic mail connection on their desks. These shortcomings have resulted in electronic mail not being the mode of communication of choice. Also, if the professional staff want to use the other INTERNET resources, such as the world wide WEB and telnet, they have to go to the premises of CODICE, and then, generally, only after 3.00 p.m. As a professional staff member, who is keen on utilizing such resources who — was considering personally subscribing to an INTERNET service — put it, 'its too much of a bother'. Hence, the log of email usage on the CODICE machine does not indicate high use.

Hardly anyone in the secretariat apart from the system operator uses the other, generally more enhanced, INTERNET resources.

Within the telephone line constraint outlined above, the framework for computer-mediated communications within the CODESRIA Secretariat needs to be urgently improved. Several possibilities are available. It is clear that none of the obvious options can be easily implemented. With due consideration, it is first recommended that CODESRIA invests in add-on systems which can integrate fax and email as an almost joint, single service. Second, on the other side of the technological spectrum, CODESRIA should consider investing in a Fidonet store and forward electronic mailing service, as a back up to its TCP/IP service and as a way of getting individual electronic mail service for at least its professional programme staff. The integration of fax and electronic mail is at the cutting edge of on-line business ventures now. Many possibilities are being offered. For CODESRIA it would be obviously beneficial to invest in some of the established possibilities. In view of the phone line constraint, it may be a good idea for CODESRIA to invest in what has become known as 'smart modems'. The INTERNET service at CODICE uses an American Robotics 28.8k modem supplied pedigree. It delivers a throughput often above its specified level and the system operator is understandably happy with it. However, newer modems can distinguish between voice and data, and, in certain conditions, between faxes and fully digital electronic mail. Such an intelligent modem maximizes the telephony service that can be secured from a given phone line. Another way of achieving such integration is through subscribing to an external service which enables forms of telephony multi-tasking, typically including, as a minimum, the ability to receive faxes with all the flexibility of print-on-paper faxes through an electronic mail account.

It is also desirable that a less technologically demanding telematic option be deployed within CODESRIA. In order to ensure some telematic capability on the desk-tops of all professional officers, it would be necessary for CODESRIA to subscribe to a Fidonet or a similar system. Such systems, which have been developed with conditions in the Third World in mind, are exceedingly robust and fault tolerant. There are a number of providers in Dakar, the most established being, perhaps, ENDA. The major advantages of a Fidonet system, from CODESRIA's perspective, are, first, that it can run quite well from PABX extensions. In other words, it should be just as likely for professional officers to get a path into the global information infrastructure as they can currently get to make local telephone calls. Also,

subscriptions are cheap enough for it to be easy to have a distinct subscription for each programme officer. With the great data compression capability of most Fidonet systems, it is not unlikely that these subscriptions would pay for themselves in saved telephone time if the on-line activities of professional officers approaches what is needed for effectiveness in the contemporary information society.

The difficulties of computer-mediated communication from the CODESRIA Secretariat must be set beside the relative attractions of the other modes of communication. Print-on-paper fax is the dominant mode of communication in all the three modal types of information flow outlined above. There is a relatively simple process for transmitting faxes from the secretariat. After a suitable officer has authorized a fax it is sent to the Administration department, largely for registration, and then on to the receptionist for transmission. Interviews with staff at the Secretariat, especially those at the secretarial level, pointed up a number of factors which explain the prominence of faxes, even if we hold the difficulties of computer-mediated communication constant. First, extant studies have shown that faxes significantly persist even in situations of great information technology endowment because of their relative tangibility as against cyber-based competition. At CODESRIA respondents alluded to the point that faxes land on their desk as paper, they can be minuted on, etc. There are also peculiar reasons within CODESRIA for the dominance of fax. Partly because E-Mail is new, fax addresses are better known than E-Mail addresses. There is a clear case for better management of a CODESRIA's relevant database of E-mail addresses. Indeed, given that most of CODESRIA's Africa-based correspondents would be on Fidonet systems, which are difficult to call up on the various email address directories because of their special domain name structures, it may even be possible to release such a database commercially. It is therefore recommended that a process of systematic compilation of CODESRIA-relevant electronic mail addresses be initiated as a necessary step in the enhancement of the use of electronic mail in place of print-on-paper fax.

The CODESRIA Secretariat is a major crossroad of African travelling. Physical couriering is not an insignificant mode of information flow within CODESRIA. Indeed the potential of this form can be made a bit more formal. In this wise, it is recommended that a movement board detailing travel plans of people at the secretariat at a point in time be created and prominently positioned in the secretariat building. Ordinary 'snail' post is also a significant means of dissemination in the CODESRIA world. The most important source of information on

CODESRIA is arguably the *CODESRIA Bulletin*. Posters have also become important in the dissemination of information about CODESRIA. These traditional modes of publication must be linked more fully to the new electronic modes. In this wise, it is recommended that a section on 'Internet Resources' be included in the *CODESRIA Bulletin*. All other CODESRIA print publications should prominently display CODESRIA's electronic addresses.

It can be seen that a combination of hardware and work culture constraints combine to make the effective institutionalization of computer-based communication in CODESRIA difficult. The recent uploading of a WEB site for CODESRIA can, however, contribute to a significant improvement of the standing of computer-mediated communication in the CODESRIA world. The uploading of the site makes CODESRIA's message potentially available to a very large audience. For the same reason the site must be well maintained and promoted. According to a note on the Homepage, it was last updated in July 1996 (the syntax of this announcement is clumsy). In INTERNET terms, that is a long time ago. The basic information on the site comes from a general CODESRIA flyer which appears to have been intended as a largely one-off publication. It is important that the impression that the CODESRIA site remains the same for months be avoided. It may be that the consideration within CODESRIA is that the current uploading is on trial. However, attitudes on the net do not give a long hand to such trials, even if the sites are advertised as 'under construction', which does not apply to the CODESRIA site. It is recommended that an editorial committee, including the technical Webmaster(s) be formed to oversee the contents of the CODESRIA WWW Homepage. It must ensure that the site is regularly updated, perhaps by generating html versions of the *CODESRIA Bulletin* and upholding it.

The process of publicizing the site is very important. Searches conducted on the major search engines show that only excite <http://www.excite.com> captures the CODESRIA Homepage. It is likely that the CODESRIA homepage is being subsumed under its patron on the Internet, the CAS at the University of Illinois, as this new quotation from one of the most authoritative pointers to African Internet resources seem to underline:

University of Illinois at Urbana Center for African Studies has useful links to: African Studies Library and Publishing Information; on-line catalogs; Africa Studies on the INTERNET; electronic sources; CODESRIA WEB Site; Conferences in African Studies; HABARI On-line; News clippings; http://wsi.cso.uiuc.edu/CAS/

It is recommended that a considered campaign of informing important web indexers, including all the major search engines, about the uploading of the page be launched. Searches must be done on the web to ensure that wherever CODESRIA is significantly mentioned, such as on the homepages of IDIN and EADI, there is a hotlink to CODESRIA's new Homepage.

The information infrastructure of CODESRIA is not well-conditioned for taking advantage of the immense prospects of the instruments of the new information society. The recommendations emphasized above have been made toward ensuring that we are re-positioned to take these benefits. It must be noted that with the upsurge of information society initiatives in international development co-operation — including Denmark's 'Global Research Village' programme, the EU's ISAD, USAID's Leland Initiative and the World Bank's InfoDev — this is a good time for CODESRIA to be proactive on the issue.

4.8. Inter-institutional Linkages

The very mission and overall context of CODESRIA define for it a situation where inter-institutional linkages are central to its functions and existence. First and foremost, CODESRIA's constituency and stakeholder environment of social science researchers is multi-institutional and plural. These are University Faculties of Social Sciences, University-based research institutes and public and private independent and national research institutes. As Challenor and Gana (1996:77) also noted: 'historically CODESRIA has played a catalytic role in the development and strengthening of national and social science research organizations'.

As part of this catalytic role, CODESRIA has contributed both financial and other forms of support including technical assistance to the establishment of a wide range of centers such as:

- The Organization of Social Science Research in East Africa (OSSREA);
- The Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, Harare;
- The Arab Research Centre, Cairo, Egypt;

- The Centre for Basic Research, Kampala, Uganda;
- The SAPES Trust, Harare, Zimbabwe;
- The Institute for South African Studies, National University of Lesotho.

Most of the financial support apart from outright grants has been through supporting a core National Working Group project which often provides the basis for these institutions to kick start. CODESRIA also continues to provide ongoing support and accommodation to the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD) whose secretariat is housed at CODESRIA. It has also given modest grants to support the activities of:

- Association of African Historians
- Association of African Philosophers
- Association of African Political Scientists (AAPS)
- The African Association of Anthropologists
- The Association of Francophone Sociologists
- The Social Science Research Council of Nigeria
- The Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities

Outside of Africa, CODESRIA participates in networks of social science research institutions such as:

Inter-regional Co-ordinating Committee of Development Associations (ICCDA) which is made up of five regional organizations including Association of Development Research and Training Institutes of Asia and the Pacific (ADIPA), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; the Association of Arab Research Institutes and Centres for Economic and Social Development (AICARDES) in Tunis, Tunisia; the Latin American Social Science Council (CLASCO), Buenos Aires, Argentina; and the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI) in Tilburg, Netherlands. Established in Cairo, Egypt in 1976, ICCDA now embraces over 600 social science research and training institutions that constitute its regional members.

Other forms of inter-institutional co-operation includes co-operation and collaboration with UN agencies, other social science research councils and institutes and centers for African and African-American Studies in the United States, Europe and other parts of the World.

All these contacts and activities contribute to the opening up of African social science researchers to international contacts and collaboration and facilitating not only their integration but the playing of an autonomous role in such context.

The lesson in these interactions drawn by the evaluation is again that history and circumstances have driven CODESRIA's participation and involvement in networking so far. With the changing contexts of world politics and knowledge exchange, the institution requires policy directions that broadly orient the patterns of its networking ensuring their correspondence to its larger mission.

Chapter 5

5.1. Institutional Performance and Sustainability

In analyzing institutional capacity, many issues and questions related to overall institutional performance, and sustainability were raised. Some of these issues are those that can be subsumed under the variables of institutional efficiency, others concern institutional effectiveness.

What emerges in the investigations and reflections is that both concepts of efficiency and effectiveness are context-specific and depend more clearly on the organization's goals, how those goals are met, whether they are met with an optimal and most appropriate deployment of resources and means available. This evaluation in coping with all these questions also had to confront the question of the current validity of goal definitions even before tackling the measuring of goal attainment and its means. Raising the question of the validity of the definition of goals brings us to the question of relevance and not only who defines it, but also the prioritization and hierarchy of the definitions. For a membership organization operating in multiple and multilayered environments and answerable to varying constituencies and stakeholders, answering these questions is a difficult task without an eternally-fixed boundaries of response. CODESRIA's very nature and the need to ensure its sustainability demands a management and governance system and orientation with a capacity for quick, informed and responsible sense of initiative and response. In such circumstances, a dynamic and consistent understanding and interpretation of CODESRIA's mission and mandate based on good and responsible judgment and a clear sense of history along with a commitment to the present is imperative.

In this Chapter, as CODESRIA attempts to cope with the specification of the features of institutional performance and the demands of sustainability, these questions and issues are examined in all their ramifications, particularly how they have contributed to the generation of an action plan.

5.2. Performance

Performance along with relevance is at the very core of institutional sustainability. But it is a troublesome notion. Challenor and Gana (1996:34) confronted the heart of the problem when they demanded how it was to be measured. They wondered whether it was through a quantitative yardstick in terms of outputs or through the subjective evaluation of stakeholders and constituents of the institution. In their view, the problem is resolved by examining the various factors that contribute to performance such as the organization's unique motivation, its capacity and forces in the external environment. However, they pointed out that in the final analysis `...performance relates to organizational purpose, that performance must reflect achievements relative to the resources used by the organization; and that performance must be considered within the environment in which the institution does its work.' (Challenor and Gana 1996:34).

The points above raise other important questions about types of performance and expectations of performance. This is in many ways linked to stakeholders, their expectations and appreciation of performance.

5.2.1. Stakeholders' Expectations of CODESRIA's Performance

In the discussion of stakeholders' environment under 2.3. above, the wide variety of CODESRIA's stakeholders and the need to prioritize them was pointed out. The reason for this is mainly to ensure that the decisions taken within the institution in terms of relevance and performance are the correct decisions, as regards who the organization is responding to, how important these are and how much their objectives and expectations correspond with the mission and mandate of CODESRIA.

This is because performance is most usefully determined in terms of how the institution is meeting its goals and not the goals of others. Although, the data was not explicitly collected, it is possible to attempt the tabulation below as a guide to ordering stakeholders' expectations of CODESRIA's performance.

Two dimensions are used, the stakeholders are ranked in terms of their presumed importance to CODESRIA. This is ranked as *high, medium* and *low* based on the three criteria of *investment, involvement* and *commitment* to CODESRIA. Investment is not quantified as monetary only, even though it is important, it is seen also as intellectual, political and even emotional as in the case of staff. The stakeholders are also further disaggregated extensively than was done in 2.3. Their expectations of performance were also ranked as *high, medium, low, indifferent* and *not sure*. These were broken into the categories *programme performance* and overall *institutional performance*. These are scored and from them we get a broad picture of the pressure on CODESRIA to perform. Although this tabulation is presented as hypothetical, it is constructed on the basis of the available facts and can be utilized as a mode of testing future performance of CODESRIA.

Stakeholders' Expectations of CODESRIA's Performance

Stakeholders	Ranking	Overall Performance	Basic Research	Policy Research	Training	Publications	Advocacy Outreach
General Assembly	High	High	High	Low	High	High	High
Executive Committee	High	High	High	Medium	High	High	Medium
Secretariat	Medium	High	High	Medium	High	High	High
Active Members/Participants/	High	High	High	Low	High	High	High
Laureates	High	High	High	Low	High	High	High
Long-term Donors	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
Other Donors	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
Govt. of Senegal	High	High	Not sure	Not sure	Not sure	Not sure	Not sure
Co-operative/Comp. Institutions	Low	Medium	High	Indifferent	Medium	High	Low
Other NGOs	Low	High	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium

Given the chart above, one can hypothesize that stakeholders' expectations of CODESRIA's performance is generally high although there are subtle areas of differences. However, the overall expectation in terms of institutional performance is high.

5.2.2. An Overview of Performance

Given the above, how has CODESRIA performed?

Drawing on a long list of performance indicators that deal with efficiency, effectiveness and relevance. Challenor and Gana (1996:34-36) attempted to tackle this question. Their conclusion is:

> "The general conclusion is that for long-term sustainability, a research institution must produce research that remains relevant to the needs of its stakeholders and must be able to generate resources to support its activities. As data in the following chapters indicate, *CODESRIA has done relatively well in all areas of performance measurement. Indeed if we are to go by the judgments of its constituents, CODESRIA has done exceedingly well*". (Challenor and Gana 1996:36) (emphasis ours)

Thus in the area of overall institutional performance, in spite of the administrative and management shortcomings, CODESRIA's major stakeholders are convinced that it is fulfilling its mission and mandate by:

1.   *Mobilizing African social scientists*

According to Thandika Mkandawire (1993:5):

> "The involvement in CODESRIA of leading African social scientists CODESRIA's mobilization of more than 2000 social scientists for its conference is proof of this. As the list of papers presented at CODESRIA testify, large numbers of social scientists have participated in the intellectual debates that took place within CODESRIA. And about 1,987 people have presented papers at CODESRIA's conference".

This is not to mention the over 22 MWG consisting of 378 researchers and the over 42 NWG with an average of 6 researchers per group that CODESRIA has set up since 1982.

2.   *Reproducing the Social Science Community*

Both the Small Grants programme and the *Institutes* have been geared towards the task of reproducing the social science community based in Africa through supporting post graduate training and utilizing and further strengthening the capacity of young social scientists.

Since the inception of the Small Grants Programme in 1988, 879 grants have been awarded and 410 dissertations and theses have been completed and submitted to CODESRIA showing a 47 percent completion rate.

For the *Institutes*, beginning with the Governance Institute in 1992, with an average attendance rate of 13 laureates per session, 65 laureates have benefited from the programme. Some have since been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor and full Professor after their attendance at the Institute. They have claimed that the Institute has not only exposed them to its thematic concerns, it has greatly improved and affected their teaching.

The Gender Institute which commenced in 1994 has equally benefited participant at the rate of 15 laureates per year thus producing not less than 47 participants.

3.   *Mainstreaming and Disseminating the works of African Social Scientists*

CODESRIA's Publications have been wide ranging. These include the journal *Africa Development* which is the longest running uninterrupted African-published journal since its inception in 1976, the *Books Series* and *Monograph Series*, the *Working Paper Series*, and of course the *Bulletin* whose popularity is reflected in an increasing circulation. CODESRIA has so far published 55 books in French and English, and these have attained international award winning status with *The Modern Economic History of Africa 19th Century*, Vol. I. Paul T. Zeleza winning the Noma Award (the highest award) for Publishing in Africa in 1994. Also in 1993, the book, *La Natte des autres: Pour un développement endogène* edited by Joseph-Ki-Zerbo won the 'Prix Rencontre'. The book *Le Sénégal: Trajectoire d'un Etat* edited by Momar Coumba Diop received honorable mention for the same prize.

Again, prizes and numbers are not enough but they indicate an active existence that cut across international and disciplinary boundaries. Again:

> Most CODESRIA's researchers were active in a wide range of national, pan-African and international institutions and intellectual fora. Their full intellectual contribution can, therefore, not be judged by their direct inputs to CODESRIA. CODESRIA's own publications are not an accurate record of the debates that took place within CODESRIA let alone in the African Social Science

Community at large. The list of papers, some of which were published in CODESRIA's books and journal indicates some of the key thematic preoccupations of CODESRIA. It is also significant that considerable attention was paid to the `social sciences' with respect to both their epistemological and institutional status in Africa (Mkandawire 1993:5).

4.   *Advocacy for Academic Freedom*

Being mainly an institution for academics, CODESRIA by its very nature was drawn into the advocacy for academic freedom in Africa:

"In the course of its research activities, CODESRIA was constantly confronted with the problem of limitations of academic freedom in the African research environment. This impacted directly on CODESRIA's own work as certain subjects were made off-limits in some countries (e.g. militarism, democratization or ethnic conflict) or as researchers simply withdrew into sullen silence in response to an oppressive environment. In 1990, CODESRIA organised a major conference on academic freedom with the express purpose of drawing attention to the unbearable conditions that African researchers met". (Mkandawire 1993:25).

From these, grew the Academic Freedom programme which has become the leading forum for the advocacy of the human rights of the academic world.

Having said all of the above, how has CODESRIA performed in relation to its own planning and plan expectations. With these, there are definite shortfalls. Let us examine some of these:

a)   <u>Research Networks</u>

The 1993-98 Plan[13] noted a shortfall in the number of MWGs envisaged over the previous plan period. Instead of the 18 planned groups, only 11 were operational.

The Plan envisaged the setting up of six new networks every year between 1993 and 1998, it is evident that for a host of reasons, this was not possible. Evidence show that from 1993 to 1997, only about 6 MWGs have been set up. The reasons for this range from lack of funding to late release of funds. But the absence of plan realisation means that CODESRIA needs to review its planning and relate it to institutional capacity in setting targets.

For NWGs, the plan is also to have 6 every year, CODESRIA has been more successful with these initiating an average of 4 every year.

b)   <u>Grants</u>

Although CODESRIA plan is to give about 300 grants annually several factors in the larger environment affect this. The actual grants given reflect both the funding available and the quality of proposals sent in. CODESRIA's current plan is to strengthen the capacity of candidates through methodological workshops.

c)   <u>Institutes</u>

Both the Governance and Gender Institutes envisaged laureate attendance of 16 per year. The Governance Institute since 1992 with an average attendance of 13 laureates has not met this target. The shortfalls were in 1993, 1994 and 1995 with 10, 12, and 13 laureates respectively.

The Gender institute on the other hand has managed to meet its target of 16 laureates with a total figure of 47 participants over 3 years.

d)   <u>Publications</u>

The periodicals have met their targets of regular appearance over the past four years. However the plan aimed at 12 titles per year for the *Book Series* has not been met. An average of 8 books per year has been published over the past three years although there has been a remarkable increase in the number of *Monograph Series, Green Books* and other *Working Paper Series.*

e)   <u>Academic Freedom Programme</u>

The programme performed tremendously in terms of its involvement in the struggles for human rights and the protection of academic freedom. It held or sponsored at least 10 meetings all over Africa. It started the publication of the *Annual State of Academic Freedom Report* with the maiden issue in 1995. Subsequent issues are yet to be released.

These, then, are a few pointers at CODESRIA's planning and plan-implementation. They point at problems of plan implementation or on another scale, overall systematic planning in terms of setting targets and matching institutional capacity with planning goals. The lesson is that CODESRIA requires a professional and rigorous process of planning.

5.3. Movement towards mission

Perhaps the first point to reiterate here is that most of the responses to the fact whether CODESRIA's mission remains relevant are positive. As Challenor and Gana (1996:37) conclude from their survey:

> "There is a broad consensus on the nature of CODESRIA's mission and mandate. Principally defined by stakeholders as an organization that fosters social science research by African scholars, it is also viewed as an organization that has been able to bring African scholars together across regional and linguistic lines. The survey reflected some interesting differences of emphasis by the five main stakeholders groups. While the laureates cited as the top three attributes that characterize CODESRIA's mission as promoting social science research bringing scholars together and tied for third place, publishing books and financing research. The cooperating/competing institutions, probably because of their regional emphasis included as second in their citation of characteristics of CODESRIA, its pan-African vocation. Secretariat views of the CODESRIA's mission and mandate tended to be more elaborate. One respondent referred to CODESRIA as a 'state of mind' and an entity that provides a platform for the establishment of a moral community of social scientists based on shared values".

Given the broad consensus, the question is to what extent is CODESRIA moving towards attaining this broad mission. More specifically, can the different elements of the mission be prioritized and specified as distinct but interrelated elements that must be pursued simultaneously but with more weight given to some than the others.

These are important questions based on a perception and correct reading of institutional priorities. Also, given that CODESRIA is a membership organization, the answers must be generated through the mechanisms and channels approved and appropriate to the institution's self-perception of itself. In other words, for CODESRIA, performance does not conflict with relevance. It must in fact enhance and promote relevance. This is currently being done with regard to the finalization of the proposals of the Secretariat for *Institutional Reforms* and the *Draft Research Programme*. The extensive consultation that characterized this self-evaluation

process also served the construction of the new *Research Programme and the Draft Institutional Reforms*. Although clear elements of the reforms such as improved programme and process management patterns and procedures are already emerging and being implemented, fundamental issues about priorities and main institutional changes must respect the institutional culture and governance stipulations of the institution. Thus overall strategic planning and redirections, although having commenced with the action plan discussed at the end of this *Report* can only be finally put in place after the approval of the relevant legislative bodies.

However, all these indicate deliberate and considered steps in the movement towards not only attaining the mission of CODESRIA (a fact which Challenor and Gana 1996 confirm as being done) but improving on that movement by ensuring that the attainment is surer, more efficient and clearly more effective in terms of impact.

5.4. Efficient use of resources

Efficiency is broadly defined in terms of the optimally rational use of resources to attain specified ends. This is determined mainly these days by the use of appropriate cost structures.

At the broadest qualitative level, this evaluation process points out obvious gaps that can be plugged in the use of resources in terms of savings and costs cutting. This includes:

(i)   communications costs and more efficient use of new technologies

(ii)   Travels costs

(iii)   Energy consumption costs

(iv)   More rational allocation and deployment of human resources

(v)   A rationalization of the use of space

(vi)   A rationalization of the use of time by personnel and programmes

(vii)   Tighter and more efficient programme management

(viii) Rationalization and systematization of procurement procedures and mechanisms (using competitive bidding and optimalizing the tax-free facilities of CODESRIA)

(ix)   Rationalization of contracting and consulting services

What all of these imply from the evidence emerging from the evaluation is the restructuring and strengthening of the management procedures, and the use of planning at all levels and an adherence to plan discipline. All of these bring us back to the points raised above under programme and process management.

While some of these points are included in the proposed Secretariat reforms, a more professional inquiry not available to this evaluation process that of costing is in order. This is not only directed to costs of products such as books but also the costing of activities and projects in terms of unit costs so as to determine their efficiency. This comprehensive exercise will not only provide a much needed input into planning but also clearly help to specify the competitive advantage of CODESRIA in running projects and programmes. Although anecdotal information from donor partners indicate that some of CODESRIA's projects such as the National Working Groups mobilizing 10 researchers and providing publications such as books and scientific articles at a total cost of about US $30,000 represent one of the most cost-effective disbursement of small grants.

5.5. Relevance

The history and development of CODESRIA seemed to be completely tied around the question of relevance. Relevance to African interests, relevance to African social scientists who work with it or consume its products, and relevance in terms of consonance or fit with global trends in social science research.

In different parts of this *Report*, perceptions about CODESRIA's relevance have been indicated. Challenor and Gana (1996): in their travels and surveys underlined this aspect of the institution. They noted that: `Out of all the fifty five responses, (they received from their interviews) there was only one categorically negative comment, which related principally to the council's administrative performance (Challenor and Gana 1996:37).

More significantly, they concluded their discussion of the views of stakeholders on CODESRIA as follows:

> "It is also quite apparent that CODESRIA's stakeholders do not believe it has lost its relevance. Nearly one third (29%) of the laureates, members and participants who participated in the survey indicated that CODESRIA is even more important today, because of the adverse economic conditions in Africa".

What is striking from the emphases on relevance is the need for CODESRIA to be attentive to this `special quality' of how it is appreciated and perceived, what one can call `a niche quality' and perhaps the basis of its comparative advantage. Such an attentiveness can contribute immensely to the capacity to retain the quality of relevance even during processes of rethinking and reconsidering institutional conditions and strategic reorientation.

5.6. Institutional Sustainability

Institutional sustainability is the goal of all organizations — that is survival and thriving as ongoing concerns.

For CODESRIA, the question of sustainability has always been an important part of its existence. More recently, given the current donor environment, the question of financial sustainability has come to the fore as a major aspect of its sustainability (Challenor and Gana 1996:87). Various aspects of the question of financial sustainability confront CODESRIA as an organization: Challenor and Gana (1996:87) identify membership dues drive as a major course of action. This should be directed at the various categories of members. They declaim the current situation in which members' dues are not effectively pursued by the Secretariat. It is felt that paying dues will not only contribute to the resources of the institution but will also deepen the sense of ownership encouraging further commitment and the emphasis of rights, duties and obligations of both members and the institution. CODESRIA needs to overhaul its data base on members and make the dues-collecting and membership enlargement activities more important.

Apart from the dues of members, financial sustainability will need to be built on the diversification of CODESRIA's funding sources. This diversification needs to move CODESRIA from dependence on funding external to Africa towards a shift to more Africa-based funding. The contributions of African governments, a position not often supported by CODESRIA's constituents, are a relatively untapped source except for the case of the Government of Senegal. As Challenor and Gana (1996:88) pointed out, there are no clear agreements on this among the people they interviewed. Over two-thirds of the Executive Committee members they interviewed agreed that CODESRIA should seek funding from African governments while 49% of others (laureates, members of Secretariat, etc.) were of the

opinion that CODESRIA should not accept funds from African governments or only under certain conditions.

Another important direction, conceived as part of this general evaluation exercise is the pursuit of endowment funding for CODESRIA. Although there is general agreement by the Executive Committee that this is an important direction to go, any definite steps must await the study commissioned on this matter by the Secretariat.

It is indeed imperative that CODESRIA conclude all efforts (institutional and legal) that can facilitate both a membership dues and endowment drive.

Chapter 6

Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Introduction

In their *Report*, Challenor and Gana (1996:91-105) offered 36 recommendations which covered virtually all the areas of operations and organizational life of CODESRIA. Apart from dealing with specific sectors and activities of the institutions, these recommendations also cover issues like mission and mandate, institutional culture and motivation, relevance and sustainability. The concern of all the recommendations is to ensure the improved performance and overall sustainability of CODESRIA as an institution. In this *Auto-Evaluation Report*, various recommendations deriving from the different exercises that contribute to this synthesis and distillation are presented and prioritized.

6.2. On Mission/Mandate/Objectives

The evaluation finds that to a great extent the mission, mandate and fundamental principles of CODESRIA remain valid and doable. Rather than fabricate new dicta, the evaluation reaffirms the following from *CODESRIA Plan of Activities 1993-98* (pp 2-3):

1. CODESRIA has to avoid the temptation to move towards the instrumentalist direction which would at worse reduce the institution into a clearing house for consultancy work which is already tying down large numbers of researchers to short-term consultancy.

2. CODESRIA must try as much as possible within these constraints to encourage open and fundamental research and to be sensitive to the need for researchers to determine what they work on. If this is not done, it will be all too easy for research to be dissociated from social needs and to become an alienating activity. Most importantly, unless this approach is encouraged, there is very little chance of advancing the Social Sciences in Africa.

3. The broad and flexible approach to research also means that CODESRIA will retain interest in policy-oriented research. This is inevitable and desirable given the urgency of the problems of development. *CODESRIA's Charter* has acknowledged the need to engage in fundamental and 'problem-oriented research in the field of development from a perspective which is more relevant to the needs of the African people'.

4. CODESRIA must maintain its commitment to develop scientifically a comparative and a continental perspective expressing the specificity of the African experience. The commitment to African specificity, means that CODESRIA has to be truly African in the sense of the spread of participation in its research activities and openness to all currents of thought.

5. CODESRIA must remain committed to the critical perspective in its research. This means a perspective which looks at social science methodologies and theories in a critical manner and tries to find in the light of this critique, a manner of proceeding that will be most appropriate for our historical specificities in Africa.

6. CODESRIA must retain its commitment to promote and defend the principle of independent thought and research and the liberty of researchers. Insofar as CODESRIA can provide some facility to allow people to work independently, it contributes not only to social science and development but also to the creation of some scope, however limited, for democracy and pluralism and human rights in Africa.

These recommendations are high priority and will cost CODESRIA no more than its continuing sense of commitment to its mission.

6.3. Strategic Planning

A process of strategic planning involving some key members of CODESRIA Executive Committee and the Secretariat is recommended. This planning should also cover preparation and management of annual operating plans and budgets and sectoral plans for human resource development, equipments and technology and communications. In a way, the exercise can

follow the broad patterns being initiated by the Association of African Universities at their workshop in Swaziland in August 1995.

6.4. Institutional Restructuring at the Secretariat

The evaluation reveals the necessity and recommends the restructuring of the Secretariat and internal working methods. This should include:

i. Continuation and completion of ongoing administrative and financial management reforms, namely strengthening staff capacity and completing general procedures and rules for administration, personnel, staff conduct, etc.

ii. Clearer definition of responsibilities, programme co-ordination and staff welfare.

iii. The incorporation and institutionalization of process management elements such as planning, and monitoring and evaluation into all CODESRIA's activities.

iv. The paying of greater attention to the recruitment of CODESRIA staff (both international and local), checking that they share some of the organization's basic values, apart from their qualifications and ensuring effective orientation and ongoing training for them.

This recommendation is high priority.

6.5. Wider-Level Restructuring of CODESRIA

It is recommended that CODESRIA revisit its membership criteria and implement effectively the 1992 changes in the *Charter* that concerns this:

i. Membership should consist of certain obligations like paying of defined dues and should involve specified rights and advantages.

ii. CODESRIA should implement as soon as possible current legislative and other efforts that attempt to rectify gender imbalance and gender blindness in its programmes, activities, participation and staffing.

iii. CODESRIA should make all efforts to integrate more actively into its activities Arabophone and Lusophone researchers and research institutions. This integration should include *all* programmes particularly research networks, institutes, small grants, publications and academic freedom.

6.6. Management of Programmes

All CODESRIA's programmes require reorientation and strengthening in terms of working methods, basic management and the rapidity and flexibility of response to both internal and external demands. It is recommended that programme management be professionalized through the institutionalization and use of basic management techniques, procedures, and technology and recruitment of more middle-level personnel. The bases of co-ordination, performance appraisal, lines and modes of reporting, also should be specified and reinforced. This recommendation is high priority and should be linked with the strategic planning initiative.

6.7. Internal Communications

The evaluation identified extensive complaints about internal communications processes and channels. As Challenor and Gana (1996:94) stated 'Ways should be found to increase internal communications within the Secretariat'. This should take the form of more regular and productive meetings and the use of internal bulletins and bulletin boards. Meetings however should be managed so that they are productive and not turn into seminars.

6.8. Governing Bodies

The evaluation recognized the need to reform some aspects of operations of the governing bodies namely:

i. The Executive Committee should consider the restructuring of the Executive Committee to address issues like gender imbalance and the participation of professional associations.

ii. Meetings of the Executive Committee and strategic oversight committees should be at least two times a year.

iii. The exact situation and powers of the Scientific Committee and Administrative and Finance Committee should be specified and incorporated into the amendment of the *Charter*.

iv. The evaluation recommends the harmonization of all texts and documents governing CODESRIA's activities, staff condition and conduct. Such harmonization should stipulate the supremacy of the *Charter* above all internal documents. This is a high priority recommendation that must be concluded by the 1998 General Assembly.

6.9. *Financial Sustainability*

It is recommended that CODESRIA set into motion:

i. More efficient financial management and cost-reduction practices in the Secretariat.

ii. Means and ways of ensuring greater cost recovery of some of CODESRIA's activities and outputs such as publications, documentation, etc. should be closely studied and implemented.

iii. More extensive diversification of funding sources covering not only international donors, but also African Governments, African and other Southern Foundations and membership dues and donations should be sought.

On diversification, it is recommended that CODESRIA complete as soon as possible the investigation of the institutional, legal and other prerequisites for an endowment fund and the setting into motion of the various processes for implementing the venture. This is a high priority recommendation that must lead to the formal launching of the endowment fund at the 1998 General Assembly.

6.10. Conclusions

It needs t o be restated that this document represents an exercise in auto-evaluation and that while it has been guided by a principle of institutional honesty, it is written with a strong belief in the sustainability, viability and increasing relevance of CODESRIA as an institution with the competitive and comparative advantage to perform more effectively than any other the major tasks it has defined for itself. This *Report* takes as its final comments the concluding remarks of Challenor and Gana (1996:105) in their *Report*:

> '... we are convinced that CODESRIA is an invaluable organization that has stood the test of time. It is the sole pan-African organization that provides a platform and resources for the African scholarly Social Science Community. At a time when universities have been weakened by declining resources and in some cases politicization, CODESRIA is an even more important oasis for academics deprived of basic equipment and opportunities for free and stimulating discourse. As the international donor community continues to accord priority to basic education rather than university training, CODESRIA must remain a constant reminder of the capacity and desire of African scholars to pursue social science research critical to African economic, cultural and social development. It may be that as African policy-makers and international donors recognize through CODESRIA's activities the value of this scholarship, that increased resources and greater academic freedom will be accorded to African universities'.

Chapter 7

Plan of Action

7.1. Introduction

Given the consultative and participatory nature of the *Auto-Evaluation*, it was examined by some of the legislative bodies of CODESRIA namely the Scientific Committee at its meeting in April 1997 and the Executive Committee at its 43rd meeting in May 1997. There was also an expanded Scientific Committee workshop in April 1997 which was convened mainly to deliberate on the *Draft Research Programme of CODESRIA for 1997-2001*. This workshop also considered the *Draft Auto-Evaluation Report* along with that programme.

With these consultation the *Auto-Evaluation* has been formally adopted by the Executive Committee which then elaborated a plan of action for its implementation along with ongoing reforms.

7.2. Related Activities resulting from the Evaluation

The Executive Committee having adopted the *Evaluation* has set into motion the following activities related to implementing the necessary changes that it involves:

1) A committee to harmonize all the governing texts of CODESRIA namely the *Charter*, the *Internal Regulations, Terms of Reference of Sub-Committees*, etc. The Committee holds its first meeting late July and is expected to submit a report, suggestions for harmonization and reconciliation and items for amendment to *CODESRIA's Constitution*.

2) A strategic Planning Session in October 1997 to involve both the Executive Committee and the Secretariat Staff to conclude the plans for the implementation of CODESRIA internal restructuring. This will be guided by a Synthetic Report on the Restructuring and redirection of CODESRIA. The (2) *Report* will synthesize reform priorities and implementation plan, research programming plan and a financial sustainability programme.

3) A plan for internal reorganization with a new organigramme to be produced by the Executive Secretariat of CODESRIA for consideration by the Executive Committee of CODESRIA in October and approval and implementation of its November/December 1997 meeting.

4) A Financial Sustainability Plan and Implementation Strategy to be submitted to the Executive Committee of CODESRIA at the Strategic Planning Workshop in October. The Plan will be built around the new vision, structures and programmes that are currently being discussed and accepted.

7.3.   It is planned that by December 1997, all the initial preparatory work operationalizing the major directions, objectives and philosophy of the planned institutional change in CODESRIA would have been completed. This will then constitute the basis for programming and institutional funding campaigns and the legislative changes that the General Assembly of 1998 will have to make.

NOTES

1. Challenor, H.S. and Gana, A, 1996, *CODESRIA's Evaluation*, unpublished doc. P. 1.

2. Challenor and Gana, 1996, op. Cit., pp. 2-4.

3. CODESRIA 1995, *Self-Evaluation of CODESRIA, Draft Terms of Reference and Work Plan* unpublished doc. pp. 3-4.

4. CODESRIA 1995, *Self-Evaluation of CODESRIA*, p. 4.

5. CODESRIA 1995, op. Cit. p. 5.

6. Abdalla Bujra, 1993, 'Goodwill message on the occasion of CODESRIA's 20th Anniversary' in T. Mkandawire, *Report of the Executive Secretary to the 20th Anniversary*, 29 November to 1 December 1993, Dakar, Senegal, p. 11.

7. See: 'Report of the Executive Secretary' to the Seventh General Assembly, *CODESRIA Bulletin*, Nos. 2 & 2, 1992, p. 6.

8. See: CODESRIA, *10th Anniversary 1973-1983*, CODESRIA, Dakar, 1983, p. 1.

9. See: The various research plans of CODESRIA. For instance, CODESRIA (n.d.), Development Programme 1986-1990, Dakar, Senegal, unpublished.

10. *Development Programme 1986-1990* cited in T. Mkandawire, *Report of the Executive Secretary to the 20th Anniversary*, p. 1.

11. See: Souleymane Bachir Diagne and Henri Ossebi, *The Cultural Question in Africa: Issues, Politics and Research Prospects*, CODESRIA Working Paper 3/96.

12. On networks as a mode of organizing research, see: Anne K. Bernard, 1996, IDRC Networks: An Ethnographic Perspective, IDRC Evaluation Unit, Ottawa, Canada.

13. CODESRIA 1994, *Plan of Activities 1993-98*, unpublished, Dakar, Senegal