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## The Enforcement of the 2008 Decree on General Public Procurement Procedures and Service Delegation in Burkina Faso: Its Influence on the Management System

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The Enforcement of the 2008 Decree on General Public Procurement Procedures and Service  
Delegation in Burkina Faso: Its Influence on the Management System

By

Kouliga Koala

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Public Administration  
International Track

In the  
Department of Government

Minnesota State University

Mankato, Minnesota

January 2016

Date: January 29, 2016

The Enforcement of the 2008 Decree on General Public Procurement Procedures and Service Delegation in Burkina Faso: Its Influence on the Management System

By

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### **Abstract**

This research project, titled, *The Enforcement of the 2008 Decree on General Public Procurement Procedures and Service Delegation in Burkina Faso: Its Influence on the Management System*, was conducted by Kouliga Koala, a student in the Department of Government at Minnesota State University, Mankato as a requirement for completing a Master of Public Administration in May 2016. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the management system in two public procurement institutions in Burkina Faso. The research examined the influence of the 2008 Decree adopted in Burkina Faso on the management system using the theory of mechanistic and organic management systems by Burns & Stalker (1961). Four characteristics of the mechanistic and organic systems were used: The accomplishment of tasks, work habits, communication style, and knowledge possession. Over-the-phone interviews were conducted. Overall, ten (10) interviewees were reached and each answered eight questions. The answers of all ten (10) were considered in the analysis. The results showed that the management system of the two institutions is organic because collaboration is mostly valued in the work relationships. Collaboration is employed so that managers' and employees' work focuses on the mission of the institution instead of traditional views of hierarchy, unquestionable instructions, and obedience.

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## **ACRONYMS**

**UEMOA:** Union Economique et Monetaire Ouest Africaine or

**WAEMU:** West African Economic and Monetary Union. It is a regional organization composed of eight West African countries.

**DGMP:** Direction Generale des Marches Publics or General Office of Public Procurement.

**DG-CMEF:** Direction Generale du Control des Marches et des Engagements Financiers or General Office of public procurement control and financial commitments.

**ARMP:** Authority de Regulation des Marches Publics or Public Procurement Regulatory Authority. It is in charge of the regulatory functions.

**ARCOP:** Autorite de Regulation de la COMmande Publique or Public Procurement Regulatory Authority. ARMP became known as ARCOP in 2014.

**ORAD:** Organe de Reglement Amiable des Differends or the Body for the Friendly Settlement of Disputes.

**PRM:** Personnes Responsibles des Marches Publics or Person Responsible of public procurement.

**ECOWAS:** Economic Community of West African States



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Background

One of the main challenges that public institutions in Africa persistently experience in this 21<sup>st</sup> century is the capacity to adapt to the rapid mutations at the national, regional, or international levels. African countries face the substantial need to make reforms in different fields of development. These reforms, which come as waves of change sometimes mean that individual countries, are subjugated to decisions from regional or international entities. Today, priority is often given to regional organizations to handle reforms. In the West African region alone, countries may see themselves working under the authority of the Economic Community of West African Countries (ECOWAS). ECOWAS comprises seventeen (17) countries in West Africa. Within it are English-speaking countries, French speaking countries, and Portuguese speaking countries. ECOWAS was created in 1975 in Lagos, Nigeria. Its goal is to foster the ideal of collective self-sufficiency for its member states and create a single, large trading bloc through economic cooperation. Within ECOWAS exists another regional organization known as the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). WAEMU is composed of eight countries including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D' Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo (See Appendix B). The eight countries use the same currency ( FCFA) and speak the same language, French, except Guinea-Bissau which speaks Portuguese. WAEMU was created in 1994 in Dakar, Senegal to serve as an organization for economic integration and cooperation. It has five (5) major goals: reinforcing the economic and financial competitiveness of member countries, assuring the convergence of the performance and economic policies of its members, creating a

common market between members through a common external tariff, a common trade policy, and free movement of persons, goods, capital, and the right of establishment in member states.

Therefore, when WAEMU decided to innovate the procurement system, it also meant that members countries would be involved. In 2005, WAEMU adopted two main directives in the public procurement field to innovate and modernize the system: the first is the WAEMU N°04/2005/CM/UEMOA Directive on Procedures of Procurement, Execution and Regulation of Public Procurement and Service Delegation. The second is the WAEMU N°05/2005/CM/UEMOA Directive on Control and Regulation of Public Procurement and Service Delegation. As one of the eight member states of WAEMU, Burkina Faso is directly influenced by the two directives. Similarly to all its peers, Burkina Faso was required to first transpose the regional legislations into the national system and then enforce them.

While these two Directives were to be transposed and enforced, working within the framework of Directive N°05/2005/CM/UEMOA implies some institutional reshaping or the creation of new institutions. The Directive requires that, in implementing the procurement procedures, the functions and mechanisms of the control of public procurement (Article 4 of Directive N°05/2005) be separated from the functions and mechanisms of the regulation of public procurement (Article 5 of Directive N°05/2005). In other words, before the two directives, the control and regulation functions in WAEMU countries were managed by one institution. In fact, before 2005, the procurement procedures in Burkina Faso were laid out in the 2003 decree known as Decree N°2003-269/PRES/PM/MFB on General Regulations for Public Purchasing

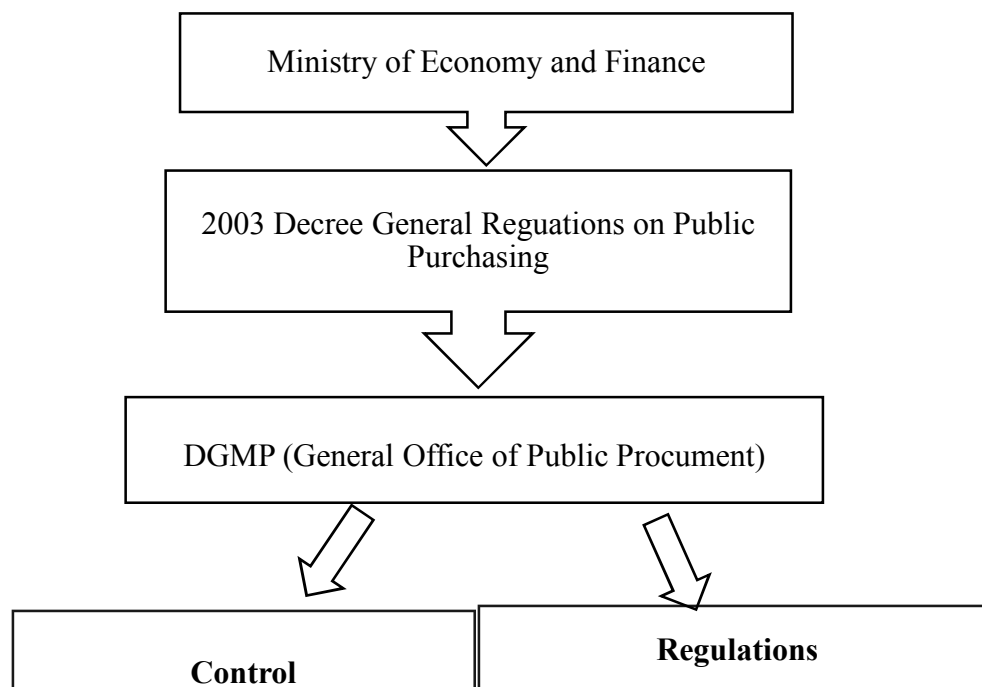
(Article 169, 2003 Decree). Under the 2003 Decree, only the General Office of Public Procurement (DGMP)<sup>1</sup> was in charge of public contracts. That means that DGMP assumed both the control and regulation functions. In 2007, with the requirements of the WAEMU's directives, Burkina Faso adopted the Decree N°2007 243/PRES/PM/MFB stipulating the "Creation, Attribution, Organization and Functions of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority" (ARMP)<sup>2</sup>. In 2008, the country adopted a decree, Decree N° 2008 - 173 /PRES/PM/MEF on General Regulation of Public Procurement and Public Service Delegation (ARMP). The decree became functional in 2008 and meant a substantial enforcement of the WAEMU's 2005 Directives. To clearly separate the functions in the system, another decree, Decree N°2009-849/PRES/PM/MEF was adopted in 2009, leading to the attribution of a-priori functions of control to the General Office of Public Procurement (DGMP). That distinction left the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority with a-posteriori functions of regulation (ARMP 2010). The two institutions are thus each involved in control and regulation roles. One can see that there has been a separation of roles and responsibilities as a way to prepare for the integration of the new procedures. In general, the implementation of the 2008 Decree was a phenomenon that was more likely to bring change at different levels of the institutions. This includes the culture, the structure, and to a greater extent the management system of the procurement institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> DGMP used to be in charge of both the control functions and the regulation functions until 2008. It became DG-CMEF in 2012.

<sup>2</sup> ARMP is the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority in Burkina Faso. It became ARCOP in 2014. The mission of ARCOP is to define policies, training and information of actors, maintaining the information system, auditing and evaluating of the system.

**Graph 1:** The system structure before 2008



Graph 1 shows that the Ministry of Economy is at the highest level of the system. Before 2008, the 2003 Decree provided the procedures for the procurement system. The General Office of Public Procurement (DGMP) was the institution in charge of both the control and regulations.

### **Problem statement**

The problem that this research wants to address exists at three levels: First, there exists very few scholarly works published in English about francophone West Africa in general and Burkina Faso in particular. Ariotti (2015) pointed out the lack of attention to francophone countries. While researching on bureaucracy in Burkina Faso, Ariotti (2015) argued that “there is a documented bias, even among top African Studies journals towards Anglophone African countries. If institutions like the bureaucracy are slow to change, omitting Francophone countries is problematic” (Ariotti 2015, p.16). Obviously

there is a lack of well-tailored research addressing institutions in Francophone countries such as Burkina Faso.

Second, the history of the public institutions in a lot of African countries is dominated by the colonial history and values. These values have influenced the environment in formerly colonized countries. The continuous need of colonial powers to dominate still influences the African environment. Moyo (2000) argued that “since the decolonization process, which started in 1957 with the independence of Ghana, most of what has passed as "administration" in Africa has been based on the administrative history of the colonizing countries, mainly Britain, France, Germany and Portugal” (p. 695). According to him, “the dominant view of administrative ethics in Africa is based on "law and order". Institutions in Africa remained the essence of colonial administrative systems, including their postcolonial offshoots. This was problematic since “...the colonial experience left behind administrative systems which were authoritarian, disciplinarian, and generally hostile to cultural and political influences from indigenous communities” (p.696). Moyo (2000) concluded that the the systems were based on “imposed obligations.” While those imposed law and order were first imposed by the colonial powers, leaders of the new independent African countries would stick to the same system to have control over the people.

Neocolonialism was also true for Burkina Faso until the revolution of 1983 led by Captain Thomas Sankara. The revolution lasted until 1987. Sankara wanted to reach full independence and create an identity for his country. Englebert (1996) argues that the renaming of “Upper Volta” to “Burkina Faso” by Sankara after one year in power was for the most part the desire for a new definition of the country’s identity. Burkina Faso

means the “Land of Upright Man.” In the words of Englebert (1996), “this confident self-baptism was meant to symbolize a departure from twenty four years of nominal independence as Upper Volta, a period of the country’s young leadership perceived as years of neocolonialism under French domination” (p.1). While the revolution is an emphasis on the values of honesty and integrity to get rid of corruption, it was also a period of administrative reforms.

In a speech delivered on radio to the Burkinabe in October 1983, Sankara stated that “the administrative reform aims at making the administration inherited from colonialism operational. To do that, it must be purged of all evils that characterize it, namely the unwieldy and interfering bureaucracy and all its consequences. We must proceed toward a complete revision of the civil service statutes. The reform must produce an administration that is inexpensive, more effective, and more flexible” (Sankara, p. 29). During his four years in power, Burkina Faso went through a lot of institutional and organizational reforms. Until today, the Burkinabe continue to identify themselves with the values of honesty and dignity established under Sankara.

Third, the lack of research on Burkina Faso mentioned by Ariotti (2016) is also true for the WAEMU directives and the 2008 Decree on General Public Procurement Procedures. Moyo (2000)’s discussion of the impact of law and order reiterate the need to look at the decree and what it means for contemporary public institutions. To implement the decree, management system was more likely impacted by the reorganization of the system. Management takes the procurement procedures to the practical level for their implementation. Management had a work system before the 2008 decree when it worked according to the 2003 public purchasing regulations. The 2003 was implemented by the

DGMP which operated as one of the institutions under the authority of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (2003 Decree). To transition from the 2003 regulations to the 2008's, the system went through changes both at the managerial and institutional levels.

From that perspective, some important questions about the conditions in which the change takes place are worth raising by looking at Burns & Stalker (1961)'s theory of mechanistic and organic management. Burns & Stalker (1961)'s reference to the theory of mechanistic and organic management systems to understand the changes is a remarkable way to make sense of the eventual impact of the decree. Their approach in this case provides a path to study the management changes resulting from the enforcement of the new procedures. As mentioned earlier, there exist very few scholarly works about Burkina Faso, hence any question about whether or not the environment is mechanistic or organic remains unanswered.

The literature on Africa provides three broad perspectives: The first perspective, defended by Milne (1970), argued that the African environment is neither mechanistic or organic because the cultures do not allow so. The second perspective, argued by Wiaguchu et al (1999), stated that the African environment is mechanistic. Research by the World Bank found that Burkina Faso belonged to this group in the 1990s. The third group, composed of Dia (1995), Mbigi (1994), and Beugre & Offodile (2010), argued that the African environment is organic because the cultures are favorable to the organic management systems. Dia's research on Burkina Faso found that despite paternalistic traits of the the Burkinabe cultures, they were favorable to the organic system. This diversity of views is what gives this research its importance to find out the prevailing management system after the adoption of the 2008 decree.

## **Justification**

Located in the heart of West Africa and landlocked, Burkina Faso is surrounded by Benin, Togo, Cote d' Ivoire, Mali, Niger, and Ghana. Proximity and linguistic similarities create a lot of interactions between Burkina Faso and its neighbors. The study uses Burkina Faso as a case to understand the regional phenomenon and its influence. In other words, it looks at the impact of the 2008 Decree on the management systems based on the mechanistic and organic system.

When WAEMU adopted the Directives 04- and-05 in 2005, all eight (8) WAEMU countries were required to first transpose the directives into their national system and then enforce them. The study uses Burkina Faso because the country transposed the directives and proceeded to the adoption and enforcement in 2008. To comply with the requirements for adoption, the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (ARCOP) was created in 2008. From 2008, the institutions started enforcing the new procurement procedures. Some countries have not gone through the transposition and enforcement phases. The fact that Burkina Faso went through the steps makes it a good case to study.

Politically, Burkina Faso has been relatively stable from 1990s until 2014 and the institutions targeted have been intact. However, in October 2014, Burkina Faso went through a popular revolution which led to a transitional government. The institutions continued to function normally under the transitional government until October 2015. In October 2015 however, Burkina Faso experienced a military coup d'etat which led to another popular protest. The protesters claimed and brought back the transitional government to power. By October 2015, ten (10) interviews were conducted with managers and employees from the two institutions. While the research targeted more



participants, the second event had a significant influence on the country's institutions. Therefore, the impact of the events on the research is that no additional participants were interviewed as expected. Overall, at the time of interviews, there was no instability that disrupted the administrative system in a way that the procurement system was affected.

### **Theoretical framework**

What the study seeks to discover is any change that the integration of the new requirements might have caused. More specifically, the goal of this study is to understand how the adoption of the 2008 Decree has affected the management system by considering the period before and after 2008. It consists of looking at the situation mainly from the point of view of both management and the employees while considering four main points: accomplishment of tasks, communication style, changes in work habits, and knowledge possession. These four aspects have been used by Burns & Stalker (1961) to determine the management system within organizations. Mechanistic and organic systems were first developed by Burns & Stalker in 1961. They identified two forms of management systems: the mechanistic form, which is appropriate to stable conditions; and the organic form which is appropriate to unstable conditions (Shafritz & Ott 2001, pp. 201- 202).

The study fundamentally seeks to determine which of the organic and mechanistic system exists before and after the adoption of the 2008 decree. The adoption of the decree is largely based on procedures and regulations. The role of management is based on effectively controlling and regulating the procurement activities. Conventionally, this role presupposes the mechanistic nature of the decree because the goal of the procedures is to create a more stable environment for procurement. Burns & Stalker (1961) equate

stability with the mechanistic system. Therefore, one may expect management to adopt a mechanistic approach. However, they do not argue that where there exists a mechanistic system or stability is dismissed the possibility of the elements of the organic system. In other words, the mechanic system may be organic and vice-versa.

The managers' roles of controlling and regulating may mean that their work habits and those of the employees are defined by the strict respect of regulations and control procedures which may require a strong hierarchical system. Unlike this assumption that the system may be mechanistic because it is made of regulatory and control mechanisms, what cannot be clearly known is the extent to which management can be organic as it responds to this new phenomenon. All the more, the organic aspect of change needs special consideration since the system tries to innovate itself. This need for change calls for a change to not only define new conditions of work or modify the existing ones but also to adapt to these conditions of the environment.

No previous studies about the impact of the decree exist. Thus, there is no previous finding confirming either of the following two assumptions: The first that since the decree is based on procedures, it is more likely that the management system is mechanistic; and the second that since the decree is a phenomenon of change, the management system is more likely to be organic. All that is so far known is that the environment might have changed in that a new institution was added and that the new procedures constitute another substantial change in management work system.

To understand these changes, this research addresses the question: Did the adoption of the 2008 Decree to innovate the procurement system result in an organic type of management in the procurement institutions in Burkina Faso? In other words, does the

adoption of the 2008 decree influence the procurement institutions in a way that they present the characteristics of an organic management system after 2008? Since little is known about the management system before 2008, answering this question in its entirety to discover the real changes that have occurred in the management habits means addressing the periods before and after the adoption of the decree in 2008. In order to account for these changes, hearing from managers and employees in the procurement institutions is primordial. The study will therefore answer the question by interviewing managers and employees from the two main procurement institutions in Burkina Faso.

### **Expected results**

One expects different types of answers. Since the adoption of the decree consists of integrating new procedures for decision making, it is possible that management may have gone through some changes. The characteristics found will determine the type of system that exists after 2008. Second, the management system may have remained the same, meaning that there was no change in the existing system, were it mechanistic or organic. This lack of change could be noticed if the answers about the characteristics are the same for the period before and after 2008. Third, it may be that the national conditions of procurement have been unstable and managers and employees strove to adapt to a permanently changing situation. In other terms, management may have been swinging between the organic and mechanistic system. Finally, there is the possibility of mixed systems, which means that the answers may show the co-existence and balance of features of both systems.

## **Summary of Chapters**

This paper is organized as followed: In Chapter One, I introduced the topic and provided a background about how the 2008 decree came to exist. I stated the purpose of the study and the reason it was worth pursuing. Chapter Two contains the literature about the mechanistic and organic management system, the literature on the African environment, the Burkinabe environment, and innovation and change. Chapter Three consists of the method used, which is the phenomenological approach. Chapter Four presents the analysis of data as they address the four characteristics considered in the study. Chapter Five discussed the results and the limitations. Chapter Six ends this paper with a presentation of the results and recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this research is to discover whether the adoption of new procedures results in the existence of an organic management system. Therefore, this chapter will explore the literature on the mechanistic and organic systems and elaborate on the impact of change and innovation on the management systems. It will also elaborate on the literature about each of the four characteristics retained for the research purpose. It will eventually consider the African and the Burkinabe environments. Finally, it will summarize the consistent views throughout the literature so as to answer the question: so what?

### **Mechanistic and organic management systems**

One aspect of the research is to understand the adoption and implementation of new procedures and management responses. Daft (1982) stated that “a mechanistic structure is needed when an organization must adapt to changes in goals, policies, strategies, structure, control systems and personnel” (p.8). In the same line, “low employee professionalism, high centralization in decision making and high formalization of behavior facilitate the top-down process of administrative innovations” (p.8). Robey (1991) explained that “applying the term “mechanistic” to organizations brings to mind a machine-like system designed for efficiency” (p. 83). Conceived this way, Daft (1982) and Robey (1991) equate mechanistic systems with formal organizations. For Burns & Stalker (1961), management in the formal organization is mechanistic in the sense that “it holds that throughout the organization, there is a strict definition of authority and responsibility.” The formal organization becomes then necessary to achieve organizational goals because it is by nature “impersonal, logical, and efficient” (p. 107).

Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998) defined mechanistic structure as “a top-down and highly directed system in which the champion or top manager formally structures the teams, constrains empowerment, never diffuses knowledge to low levels, and works with one method and one ideology” (p. 25). This denotes that the management system is based on high formality, hierarchy, and rigidity in the organization work processes.

Unlike the mechanistic structure, “an organic structure is needed when changes in organizational products, services, and technology are necessary” (Daft 1982, p.8). Robey (1991) explained that “high professionalism, low centralization and low formalization facilitate the bottom-up process of technical innovation” (p.8). He also refers to organic systems as entities which properties resemble “living organisms” and systems that “are frequently proposed as solutions to mechanistic systems” because “organic implies a fluid quality, more like a living organism than a machine” (Robey 1991, p. 83). For Robey (1991), organic systems adapt readily to changing external conditions because their structures are flexible; and interpret novel situations and adopt appropriate copying responses” (pp. 87-88). Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998) found that the organic systems tend to be emergent with top management commitment, and top managers let teams evolve as necessary, universalize empowerment, diffuse knowledge to low levels, experiment with what works and use an agnostic approach” (p. 25). This description provides a view that the management system is based on low and flexible formality and hierarchy in the organization work processes.

In elaborating their theory on mechanistic and organic systems of management, Burns & Stalker (1961) state that “both types represent a rational form of organization in that they are both in our experience explicitly and deliberately created to maintain and exploit

the human resources of a concern in the most efficient manner feasible in the circumstances of the concern” (p. 119). From their understanding, the two main approaches are available to management depending on whether the organizational conditions are stable or unstable: One approach is understanding that mechanistic management is appropriate when the conditions of organizational operations are stable. The other approach is understanding that organic management is appropriate when the conditions in which the organization operates are unstable. The two types are better understood by their distinctive characteristics, which help determine and recognize each type of system. The characteristics are summarized and presented in table1

**Table 1:** Characteristics of mechanistic and organic systems

Source: Burns &amp; Stalker (1961), p.119

<b>Mechanistic</b>	<b>Organic</b>
The specialized differentiation of functional tasks	The contributive nature of special knowledge and experience to the common task of the concern
The abstract nature of the individual task	The “realistic” nature of the individual task
The reconciliation of the distinct performances by the immediate supervisors	The adjustments and continual redefinition of individual tasks through interaction with others
The precise definition of rights and obligations and technical methods attached to each functional role	The shedding of responsibility as a limited field of rights, obligations and methods.
The translation of rights and obligations and methods into the responsibilities of the functional position	The spread of commitment to the concern beyond any technical definition
Hierarchic structure of control, authority and communication	A network structure of control, authority, and communication
The reinforcement of the hierarchic structure by the location of knowledge of actualities exclusively at the top of the hierarchy	Omniscience/knowledge is no longer imputed to the head of the concern
A tendency for interaction between members of the concern to be vertical i.e. between supervisor and subordinate	A lateral rather than vertical communication through the organization, communication between people of different ranks, also resembling consultation rather command.
Insistence on loyalty to the concern and obedience to supervisors as a condition of membership	Commitment to the concern’s tasks and to the technological ethos and material progress and expansion is more highly valued than loyalty and obedience
Greater importance and prestige attached to internal (local) than general (cosmopolitan) knowledge, experience, and skill.	Importance and prestige attached to affiliations and expertise valid in the industrial and technical and commercial milieu external to the firm

Similar to Burns & Stalker (1961) in content, Robey (1991) laid out the characteristics and the conditions associated with each of the mechanistic and the organic structures. His approach is summarized in Table 2 below.



**Table 2:** Characteristics and conditions of mechanistic and organic systems

Source: Robey (1991), p. 88

<b>Mechanistic</b>	<b>Organic</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>	
Jobs narrow in scope	Broadly defined jobs
Rules and procedures	Few rules or procedures
Clear responsibilities	Ambiguous responsibilities
Hierarchy	Diffuse channels
Objective reward system	Subjective reward system
Objective selection criteria	Subjective selection criteria
Official and impersonal	Informal and personal
<b>Conditions</b>	
Tasks and goals are known	Tasks and goals are vague
Division of tasks	Indivisible tasks
Simple task	Complex task
Valid performance measures obtainable	Valid performance measures unobtainable
Employees responsive to monetary rewards	Employees motivated by complex needs, some intrinsic
Authority accepted as legitimate	Authority challenged

Even though the two systems are different and the characteristics that closely define each type of system are different, Burns and Stalker (1961) specified that the two systems were “a polarity, not a dichotomy”. Similarly, Robey (1991) supported this view, arguing that “it is possible to shift from organic systems to mechanistic systems” (p. 82). The inverse is also true. Furthermore, Burns & Stalker (1961) argue that the relation to each other is elastic so that there is relative stability and relative change oscillating between them (p. 122). This clarification is brought in to show that the two systems are not two extremes that exist apart. It simply means that hierarchy and division of tasks exist in organic structure, but the stratification in work processes is less visible than in mechanistic systems. Another clarification is that there is commitment in mechanistic organizations. However, “the commitment from individuals who accept to be used as a

resource by the organization is more extensive in organic systems than in mechanistic systems” (Burns & Stalker 1961, p. 122). In addition, mechanistic systems may have their shared beliefs and values, but the development of shared beliefs about the values and goals is more noticeable within the organic structure than within the mechanistic structure. These clarifications are good to keep in mind as one plans to innovate or introduce change or study changes within an organization. Being aware can help fully analyze the environment and conditions of the organization.

There are also implications of the systems as related to the influence on managers. On the one hand, while organic systems are loose in structure, managers may become uneasy as they do not hold much authority, thus managers may yearn to have more definition and structure (Burns & Stalker 1961, p. 123). On the other hand, some managers may deliberately recognize the rationale of non-definition of tasks and encourage pervasiveness of the working organization as an institution (Burns & Stalker, p. 125). Basically, assigning characteristics to the system does not mean that they are making recommendations of the best systems for organizations to use. The most important is knowing the characteristics, which may assist managers to better deal with changes and employees or anticipate on effective measures to take to be more responsive to their organization needs.

Dickson & al (2006) discuss organizational climates and climate strength as being one way to determine the structure of an organization. Mechanistic or organic organizational climates are defined as “shared perceptions regarding policies, practices, and norms indicative of mechanistic or organic organizational forms” (p. 352). Climate strength is “the degree to which there is agreement among an organization’s members

regarding the practices and policies as well as the shared values that characterize the organization” (Dickson & al 2006, p. 351). They found that organizational climates are stronger in mechanistic organizations where members have a similar understanding of the norms, practices, and expectations associated with climates related to areas such as safety, service, ethics; and where there is less variability among members’ perceptions and more formalized practices in mechanistic organizations” (p. 353). They then found that in organic systems, there is “greater variability among members’ climate perceptions; that practices are less formalized” (p. 354). The reasoning is that it is easier for members in mechanistic organization to agree on policies and actions than in organic organization; and that “the organizational form influences many salient environmental features, including management practices, socialization activities, and the types of people who fit an organization” (Dickson & al 2006, p. 354).

### **Impact of change and innovation on management systems**

Management is influenced when there is a need for change or innovation. Managers are therefore constrained to understand and manage change and innovation whether or not they have control over the new environment. Environments are full of unexpected challenges that managers need to address to ensure that work and performance lead to the achievement of organizational goals.

Whether an organization is mechanistic or organic, it will sooner or later necessarily go through change and innovation. There are different factors that can lead to change in an organization. It may mean responding to external threats from other organizations or internal challenges such as integrating new changes for the sake of innovating and adapting to a changing situation. For Burns & Stalker (1961), “extrinsic

factors” are identifiable at different rates of technical or market change while change itself appears to be novelties such as new scientific discoveries or technical invention and requirements for products of a kind not previously available” (p. 96). The need to innovate can also bring about change or help determine the management system of an organization. Scott (1969) defines innovation as “the generation, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services” (p.124). For Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998), “innovation can be seen as both a process and a product or service; the generation process results in innovation as an outcome for the generating organization, while the adoption process delineates how that outcome is assimilated in the adopting organization” (p.3).

However, it remains that the most important aspect of innovation is “the capacity to change and adapt” (Scott 1969, p.124). Aiken & Hage (1971) also found that innovative organizations are those which have mechanisms to infuse and stimulate new ideas; a staff with persons with training in a variety of disciplines to bring about a cross-fertilization of ideas. Other cited mechanisms for introducing new ideas in a continuing basis include attending meetings and ongoing programs with other organizations, and mechanisms that permit communication both formal and informal among the various parts of the organization. Furthermore, “an innovative organization will be adaptive, because it is able to implement many new ideas while an adaptive organization may not be innovative because it does not generate many new ideas” (Scott 1969, p.124). In that sense, either the mechanistic or the organic form can be adaptive, but they may or may not necessarily be innovative. For Pierce & Delbecq (1977), the discussion about organic and mechanistic forms needs to go beyond the simple conception that “the organic

organization is more predisposed to innovation, while the mechanistic organization is predisposed to resist change efforts” (pp. 35-36). What often remains unquestioned is the idea that “organic structures facilitate idea initiation and proposal development” (Pierce & Delbecq 1977, pp. 35-36). The issue with that however is that the same organic characteristics “inhibit the decision to adopt the necessary mechanisms for implementation” because organic managers lack some formalization and centralization of decision making to decrease conflict (Pierce & Delbecq 1977, pp. 35-36).

Mechanistic organizations can become innovative by instituting “an organic overlay” whereas organic organizations can facilitate timely adoption and implementation by institutionalizing mechanisms (Pierce & Delbecq 1977, pp. 35-36). In organic structure, “venture systems, matrix systems, structured decision bodies for adoption and project groups for implementation can be used while in mechanistic setting, structured decision bodies to focus resources and project or program groups with adequate authority and thrust to implement are acceptable” (Pierce & Delbecq 1977, p. 36).

For Hull & Hage (1982), each of the mechanistic and organic systems plays a specific role as far as innovation is concerned. For them, “the mechanically-type of organization has the best opportunity for maximizing productivity while the organic type has the greatest potential for stimulating innovation” (p. 565). At the same time, they rejected the general conception that the organic type is “the one best way to organize for innovation”, arguing that the mixed mechanical-organic form is a model especially found in organization sharing mixed structures for performing large scale and complex work (p. 573). A combination of scale and complexity denotes four types of work situations or

possible models: small scale, non-complex; large scale, non-complex; small scale, complex; large scale, complex (Hull & Hage 1982, p. 566). Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998) also suggest a complex model that results from the complexity of combining stable, unstable and predictable, unpredictable. The model provides four environmental sets of conditions: stable and predictable; stable and unpredictable; unstable and predictable; and unstable and unpredictable (p. 11). Thus, innovation can occur in any of the environmental conditions, which may not necessarily require the existence of organic characteristics.

### **Characteristics of mechanistic and organic organizations**

As shown above, since the development of Burns & Stalker (1961)'s theory of mechanistic and organic systems in the 1960s, an extensive literature sprouted, providing some analysis, sometimes adding to the theory, or addressing specific aspects of it. Some researchers have focused on one or more of the characteristics and conducted some research in organizations. For the purpose of this research, the literature comprises four aspects of the mechanistic and organic management systems: accomplishment of tasks, change in work habits, communication style, and knowledge possession

#### ***Task accomplishment***

Burns & Stalker (1961) discuss task organization in mechanistic systems as follows: one finds each person's task more and more clearly defined by his supervisor, so that he is capable not only of knowing what to do in normal circumstances without consulting anyone else, but also knows just how far he may allow a situation to depart from the normal (p. 82). It can be deduced that each employee has a specific task predetermined under the authority of his supervisor. The employee knows in advance

what to do because he knows how to do it. Similarly, Robey (1991) argued that the outstanding feature of mechanistic organization is its “predictability.” In mechanistic organization, “every task is preplanned, and quantity and quality of task performance are highly regulated. A highly specialized system of roles, clear reporting relationships, and an unambiguous reward system achieves this stability. Ambiguity and confusion are non-existent” (p. 84). In other words, an employee’s requirements can be summed up as predictability in the roles, hierarchical definition of relationships, and clarity in the performance of each employee as he performs his tasks. The managers have expectations that will be met only if the assigned tasks are executed within the lines of specific duties. Manager’s role therefore is to ensure that each employee focuses on the task as defined by authority. Therefore, the sign of good performance is measured based on knowing your jobs, focusing on it and following the procedures to accomplishing it.

The manager in a mechanistic organization is concerned with predicting and stabilizing task because “the form of the system varies with the nature of the concern’s task” and “the degree of stability or rate of change calls for different systems by which the activities of the concern are controlled, by which information is conveyed throughout the organization, and by which decisions and actions are authorized” (Burns & Stalker 1961, p. 97). That means that a change in the responsibilities and duties of the employee can affect the whole level of the organization. Since the manager wants to maintain stability and predictability, he is preoccupied with preplanning the task. For Robey (1991), despite the efforts of managers to maintain tasks stable, task uncertainty is very frequent and higher in organizations; which means that organizations most of the time exist in an organic form.

However, Robey (1991) also argued that despite this frequent change, managers prefer the mechanistic design. The rationale is that it allows them “to maintain control through concrete measures and systems” due to “the persistence of bureaucracy in companies, government agencies, and in many large corporations” where top managers are held accountable in various ways” (p. 93). Maintaining the mechanistic structure is one way for managers to show that they assume their roles and report to taxpayers where the money goes” (Robey 1991, p. 94). Scott (1969) argues that the conception about “Man” may have led to a redefinition of the tasks and how “Man” could be used to maximize production. This “new concept of Man” brought about an “increased knowledge of his complex and shifting needs, which replaces the oversimplified innocent, push-button idea of man” (Robey 1991, p.148). This implies that the work processes in the organization become more flexible and open to allow more flow of interpersonal interactions as necessarily as they may be for the accomplishment of tasks and responsibilities. The organic organization is thus more likely to accept change, allows situational changes and constantly update tasks as long as this will lead to the accomplishment of tasks. This conception which corresponds to the definition of the organic type, is shared by Dessler (1976). Dessler (1976) argues that organic organization usually manifests itself in “a relatively flexible organizational structure” where managers may devise specific plans “to meet contingencies” to deliberately avoid “clearly defined functions and lines of responsibilities in the firm” (p. 57). Unlike the mechanistic type where tasks are preplanned, and the methods for accomplishing them are rigid, tasks are not preplanned in organic type. There is no clear authority; and tasks can be accomplished in collaboration with another employee.



### *Change in work habits*

Since the task in the mechanistic setting is preplanned and regulated based on specializations, the changes in work habits may be difficult to conceive. Yet, a subordinate or an employee “has insufficient authority, insufficient information, and usually insufficient technical ability to be able to make decisions” (Burns & Stalker, p.82). Mechanistic systems embody rigidity and lack of flexibility because they employ a highly controlled approach to ensure that activities are taking place in a predictable manner. Burns & Stalker (1961) found that in one of the firms:

The system of management was explicitly devised to keep production and production conditions stable; defined which information or instructions arrived at any one position in the hierarchy, what information and instructions might leave it and their destination. Such definition was a matter of fixed, clear and precise routine (p.82).

This predetermination is what may lead to rigidity. Beyer et al (1997) argue that the weakness of predetermined tasks is the rigidity it can introduce. They explained that some units of the organization such as research and development which perform less structured tasks with less measurable outcomes may find it difficult to apply uniform and ritualistic tools and techniques to their work processes (p. 29).

For the sake of maintaining stability and control of the elements of production, the rule becomes that everyone should focus on their position, and “each position in the hierarchy had its authority, information and technical competence specified once for all” (Burns & Stalker 1961, p. 82). In other words, change may consist of only systematically replacing the missing element of the organization. Once replaced, managers, subordinates and employees will continue to exercise authority. The communication style may still have the same level of rigidity. Thus, an external phenomenon will have less impact in

rendering managers' conception about task flexible. Employees and tools necessary to accomplish the tasks are replaced, but do not really change from one system to another.

One thing that is therefore more likely to influence work habits is task uncertainty. Robey (1991) defines task uncertainty as “the lack of patterning among elements necessary to execute a task. Any task may be conceived as an operation on input elements to produce output” (p. 90). This means that managers have less control over the tasks and may not know how to divide and assign them to the employees. As tasks become less and less predictable, the organic type of management also becomes dominant thus providing the opportunities to adapt and focus on the essential parts of the jobs. Robey (1991) argues that task uncertainty seems to exist in almost all organizations because there is a constant need for changes and updates in individuals' responsibilities.

He stated:

Task uncertainty is important because the degree of uncertainty affects the extent to which task activities themselves can be preplanned or structured. The more patterning and information present in the inputs, the greater the opportunity to structure task activities for the operators. As inputs become less certain and predictable, task activities become more difficult to specify in advance. A fit between uncertainty and organization structure is likely to result in more effective attainment of output goals (Robey 1991, p. 91)

This implies that being able to adapt to task uncertainty through adjustments is more important than trying to figure out the type of structure one desires. Scott (1969) argues that a change in managerial behavior, the way managers use their power on employees can contribute to set a structure that makes employees comfortable. For him, this is materialized by “a new concept of power, based on collaboration and reason, which replaces a model of power based on coercion and fear” (p.148).

### *Communication style*

Burns & Stalker (1961) explain that the communication system in mechanistic setting is dominated by instructions and orders from supervisors. The style of communication is command-like and defined by authority. Courtright et al (1989) conducted a research on the communication patterns in an authority-based plant and a self-managed plant. They found that “competitive interchanges, interruptions, and statements of nonsupport typified interaction at the authority-based plant” (p. 797). The communication system represents one of a mechanistic structure where there is a “greater overall level of disagreement, conflict, and managerial attempts to dominate” (Courtright & al 1989, p. 797). Unlike this mechanistic nature, they concluded that “communicative forms are consultative in organic systems” because “managers ask lots of questions, extend and elaborate upon the ideas of others to promote discussion of issues and sharing of information, and avoid orders and instructions to allow subordinates to contribute to decisions” (p. 798).

Scott (1969) discusses communication in an innovative organization. In such organization, communication will be freer and more legitimate in all directions; and the freer the communication system, the broader the work assignments. Group processes will be more and more openly used than at present and the organization will not be as highly stratified. All this concurs not only to the increase in the freedom of communication but also to the decline in the importance of the extrinsic rewards of positional status (p. 134). In addition, the lack of preoccupation with overlap and duplication, the lessened emphasis on authority, new humanistic-democratic organizational values would have replaced “the depersonalized mechanistic value system of bureaucracy” (Scott 1969, p.

148). They would have worked in the direction of a greater amount of interpersonal communication and multiple group membership (Scott 1969, p. 134).

Similarly to Scott (1969), Courtright et al (1989) found that communication in organic systems involves more two-way communication, more managerial information and advice than orders and decisions. Managers of the self-managed plant exhibited fewer order-giving, decision-rendering, and other command-style forms of communication compared to the managers of the traditional plant (p. 798). In other words, communication is dominated by a style resembling consultation rather than command. He also noticed that exchanges reflected discussion and elaboration. In addition, employees use one-across moves primarily to extend the thought or idea contained in a previous utterance.

### ***Knowledge possession.***

For Dougherty (2004), the mechanistic system is not favorable for knowledge production. She argues that conventional approaches to organizing are ‘anti-practice’ and not conducive to knowledge production for two reasons. On the one hand, “they push the activities into the background, which eliminates the common ground for knowledge creating, sharing and replicating...” (pp. 43-44). On the other hand, “conventional organizing de-legitimizes practice by focusing attention on generic outcomes that do not frame everyday activities coherently and sensibly. People cannot articulate new ideas and combine them with old ones, so the organization cannot learn” (pp. 43-44).

For Burns & Stalker (1961), special knowledge or expertise in the mechanistic organization is detained by the top level. In other words, the amount of knowledge possessed by someone depends on the person’s position. Knowledge possession follows a

hierarchical order, namely a top-down style. Managers at the top levels detain the useful information, training, and expertise while those at the lower levels have less. This type of organization is conceived as “a pyramid of knowledge.” There is limited information “as one descends through the hierarchy, one finds more limited information, technical and local about these circumstances, and also more limited control over the resources of the firm” (Burns & Stalker 1961, p. 82). This is influenced by the conception that the head of the organization needs to be more and more omniscient in order to clearly define tasks. Knowledge is then expressed throughout the body of the organization but only “through the lines of command, extending in a clear, explicitly, titles hierarchy of officers and subordinates” (p. 125).

As far as organic organizations are concerned, Wang & Ahmed (2003) discussed that the new focus consists of developing new types of organizational forms to facilitate knowledge management and knowledge flow. Knowledge is managed differently in organic setting than in mechanistic setting. In organic structure, effective management of knowledge reflects “boundary-lessness since knowledge-based organizations need to break away from the restriction of spatial boundaries; fluidity or effective knowledge management rather than a stock of it; inter-activeness or effective knowledge or tacit knowledge; flexibility for effective production of knowledge-based outcomes because structures should be flexible rather than definite” (Wang & Ahmed 2003, pp. 57-58). Knowledge flows throughout all layers of organic organizations. Similarly, Dougherty (2004) found that people generate practice-based knowledge for innovation if they collectively enact three kinds of activities in their everyday work including interweaving designing and using, participating in the whole flow of designing, and using and

reflecting in action (pp.43-44). This idea of combination, participation and flow through collective action is a piece of evidence that information and knowledge sharing are flexible and interactive.

It is important to clarify that the above literature on mechanistic and organic management systems comes from research based on Western or developed countries. It has helped the understanding of the original theory of mechanistic and organic management systems. It is time now to look at some literature about these management systems in the African context and how they meet and react with the African environment or vice-versa.

### **The African environment and the mechanistic and organic systems**

This section will contain four parts. The first part will describe the general African context. The second part presents three thoughts about the African environment. The first will present the argument that the African environment is neither mechanistic nor organic. The second thought is that the African environment including the Burkinabe environment is mechanistic. The third argues that the organic system fit both the African environment and the environment in Burkina Faso.

#### ***The general African environment***

Nzelibe (1986) supports that the environment in which the organization operates may provide a different view of what each of the mechanistic and organic systems is. For him, “whereas Western management thought advocates Eurocentricism, individualism, and modernity, African management thought emphasizes ethnocentrism, traditionalism, communalism, and cooperative teamwork” (p.12). To clarify, traditionalism has to do with “adherence to accepted customs, beliefs, and practices that determine accepted behavior, morality, and the desired characteristics of the individual in African society”

(Nzelibe 1986, p.12). Communalism stems from the belief that the individual is not alone, but belongs to the community (p.12). Also stressed is teamwork or psycho-cultural components which refers to interactive communication patterns and organizational behaviors that promote the welfare of the entire group (p.12).

Milne (1970) argued that culture can sometimes be an obstacle to the introduction of innovative ideas as it relates to mechanistic and organic models of public administration in developing countries. To him, it cannot be merely concluded that “mechanistic systems exist in developed countries whereas organic systems exist in developing countries” (p. 57). He argued that “the cultures in developing countries do not permit either mechanistic or organic organizations to work effectively” (p. 57). The most important therefore when comparing developed and developing countries is to evaluate them in terms of effectiveness. He states that “administration in developed countries is more effective than administration in developing countries because of its superiority in both mechanistic terms, and in organic terms” (p. 64). For him, cultures in developing countries is the main obstacle to setting an effective organization, because “the cultures neither permit effective control and coordination from above, as in the mechanistic model, nor do they permit lateral, or mutual, control or coordination, as in the organic model” (p. 64). Thus, reforms must take into account the cultural conditions of these countries which may reduce the effectiveness of the organization or the possibility to set a specific type of organization.

#### ***Neither Mechanistic nor Organic system fit with the African environment***

Milne’s approach is an inference that the cultural values of the environment where the organization operates influence change and innovation efforts. Similar to his findings,

Dia (1995) defines five cultural obstacles and five cultural assets resulting from paternalism and hierarchy. The hindrances are “the myth around the chief's authority, the quasi veneration of age in not only social but also professional contexts, the belief in magic powers, the seasonal and ceremonial value of time, and subservience to groups and community” (p. 222). These obstacles sometimes lead to extreme dependence on authority.

The favorable traits are “easy communication, a team mentality, a sense of discipline, enthusiasm leading to commitment, and a great sense of loyalty and trust” (Dia 1995, p. 222). The favorable traits are good for strengthening discipline in the workplace and social conflict mediations. Dia (1995) concludes that this understanding of cultural aspects allowed managers to make changes that helped in the redesign of the Compagnie Ivoirienne d' Electricite (CIE) management structures and increase productivity.

Addressing the traditional values in Kenya and in Sub-Saharan Africa in general, Beugré & Offodile (2010) argue that Africans “prefer more stable, predictable situations rather than change and uncertainty that bear the unknown, appear conservative, do not encourage change but rather direct people to accept things as they are without question” (p. 538). In addition, “these traditional values also emphasize blind obedience to authorities” and “most Africans favor absolute obedience to authority, which authority is related to “formal status rather than to knowledge and specialized skills” (p. 538). Dia (1995) similarly argues that paternalism and hierarchy have other impediments as “subordinates' creativity and innovativeness will not be encouraged by the autocratic



chief or even welcomed by the employee, and a hierarchical management structure may result in a stable but highly inefficient organization” (p. 223).

Waiguchu & al (1999) argue that the immediate tendency of Africans once appointed as managers is “to make an organization decision alone, get things done without soliciting the support of his subordinates, prepare the work schedule alone, and then distribute it to his staff, rule his staff with an iron hand, and give directives to his subordinates to be obeyed without question and criticism” (p. 111). Addressing the communication style, he states: “the general tone of management in Africa is prescriptive, often authoritarian, inflexible, and insensitive. Communication is constricted, unidirectional, fabricated and rigid. The personality cult of the leader is highly emphasized” (Waiguchu & al 1999, p.110).

#### ***Organic system fit with the African environment***

Addressing the management system of a company in South Africa, Mbigi (1994) argues that “the traditional African community is characterized by an organic structure in which primary and informal relationships are of great significance, as well as formal relationships” (pp.46-47). Thus, “key features of the traditional African communities such as ceremonies, rituals and symbols “have to be expressed in the organizational forms that are being evolved in Africa” (Mbigi 1994, pp.46-47). Mbigi (1994) argues that “the new organizational forms in Southern Africa need to gravitate towards organic structural designs rather than mechanistic bureaucratic designs. In essence, the company in Southern Africa has to be more than a mere economic unit and become a thriving, enterprising community as in the traditional African community” (pp.46-47).

Addressing different ways that can be used for reforms and innovation, Dia (1995), cites decentralization, delegation, and the improvements of methods and processes as the starting point of the adaptation of management into the electricity company of Ivory Coast (Dia 1995, p. 223). These measures were helpful in increasing performance.

Other factors that may predict or dictate the possibility and success of innovation include cultural values of managers and employees. Winston & Dadzie (2007) researched on two corporates firms in Ivory Coast, West Africa. They found that the corporate cultural practices of most firms are “pluralistic in nature and transcend the four mutually exclusive types of clan, adhocracy, hierarchy, and markets posited under the competing values model” (p. 108). In other words, collective cultural values were found to be the most dominant cultural values of the two largest types of corporate cultures. In terms of performance, the firms which combined “informal, collective cultural values performed better than firms that emphasized formal, rules-based corporate cultures” (Winston & Dadzie, p. 108). In short, the organic type works better than the mechanistic type. This implies that the cultural environment in which the organization exists is important to consider when making changes or innovating. Mbigi (1994) shows how he used the *pungwe*<sup>3</sup>; key features of the traditional African communities such as ceremonies, rituals and symbols; to open up communication in order to meet management challenges while combining them with the conventional management techniques. He states: “I started to adopt traditional management practices, values and philosophies, consciously integrating them with Western management techniques and values. I adopted the traditional *pungwe*

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<sup>3</sup> *pungwe*; key features of the traditional African communities such as ceremonies, rituals and symbols.

as a management innovation, as a major forum for communicating my strategic vision, as well as for implementation” (p. 42). From his experience with a company in South Africa, Mbigi (1994) provided an example that:

The transformation of the company could not be ordered by formal edicts. It was a process which relied heavily on powerful emotions, hopes, vision and multiple leadership roles. Indeed, the transformation of a company is driven by a powerful vision. Rational management systems only assist. It is the spirit of the organization, drawn from its historic past, but containing solutions to present problems and future hopes, which is fundamental to transformation (Mbigi 1994, p. 42).

Mbigi (1994) believes that “the development of harmony through the creation of collaborative relationships based on respect, human dignity and trust” is necessary to improve management practices (p. 45). A change in the manager’s behavior such as more flexibility and more interpersonal communication channels may lead to changes in the ways that employees approach their tasks, colleagues, and superiors.

Dia (1995) found that within the *Companie Ivoirienne d’ Electricite (CIE)* in Ivory Coast, communication was important in reinforcing trust and solidarity; which were big components of management system. In the firm, “communication was regularized through weekly staff meetings about policies, procedures, and guidelines; field visits by managers; and the open office concept” (p.225). These sessions contributed to the sharing of information. Mbigi (1994) also found that in South Africa, “the *pungwe* open-air sessions were effective and critical in raising business awareness, improving morale, creating a new spirit in the company, and shifting industrial relations from confrontation to co-operation (p. 42). For him, the *pungwe* proved to be a major strategic innovation that junior managers and supervisors should incorporate into their management practices.

### *Mechanistic and organic fit with the environment in Burkina Faso*

Addressing the administrative system, it emerges from World Bank (2014) that the public administration system in Burkina Faso was very centralized and reforms to address the persistent structural problems through decentralization were unsuccessfully tried first in the early 1990s and second in 1998. As such, “these reforms were meant to address key factors affecting the performance of the public administration in Burkina Faso such as the highly centralized nature of decision-making authority” (p.3). According to the World Bank report, the administrative system was built on a notion of *ex ante* controls rather than *ex post* performance monitoring.

However, the World Bank findings did not mean that the environment in Burkina Faso is insensitive to change. From another perspective, some researchers found that the environment in Burkina Faso is favorable to new initiatives and change. Dia (1995) found that the sociocultural environment in Burkina Faso was favorable for the implementation and success of quality control circles (QCC). The success was due to several factors that made it a favorable context for adapting the QCC, solving problems, and improving enterprise productivity.

He first argues that “although tribal identity continues to operate as the foundation of social relations throughout the country, intertribal relations are generally smooth. It is much easier to improve conditions at this level than when personal and tribal group identity are tied to hierarchy” (p. 231). He also argues that there remains “considerable flexibility in decision-making authority and group structure” despite the fact that all tribal groups in Burkina Faso are generally strongly patrilineal and hierarchical. There is no extreme formality as is generally observed in certain places (Dia 1995, p. 231). Lastly,

flexibility is made possible because “interpersonal, face-to-face relations in Burkina Faso are generally frank, direct, and fundamentally trusting. It is significant that the Burkinabe accurately describe themselves as hardworking, direct, trustworthy, and respectful of authority” (Dia 1995, p. 231).

As if a solution to the issues of centralization cited by World Bank (2014), the implementation group in Burkina Faso had rejected bureaucracy and embraced quality through group effort and put forth the importance of democratic work principles. This move was to ensure that “directors of an organization do not monopolize or guard problem solving for themselves alone but expect the workers to be equally involved” (Dia 1995, p. 235). This led to the conclusion that “corporate productivity therefore seems to be strongly related to ability to design and use processes that reflect specific cultural characteristics of the given society while remaining open to outside influences and challenges” (p. 235). It is to be understood that cultural values of Burkina Faso permit innovation, flexibility and change despite the existence of apparent societal factors of formality, rigidity, and conflict.

In short, the literature may be summarized as followed: Burns & Stalker (1961), Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998), Robey (1991), Dickson & al (2006), and Daft (1982) agreed to the existence of the mechanistic and organic systems. The overall argument is that organic organizations are more favorable to change and innovation while mechanistic organizations rarely provide such opportunity. Aiken & Hage (1971) also found that innovative organizations are those which have mechanisms to infuse and stimulate new ideas. For Hull & Hage (1982), the mechanistic type of organization has the best to opportunity of maximizing productivity while the organic type has the greatest

potential for stimulating innovation. Pierce & Delbecq (1977) argued that mechanistic organization needs an organic overlay to become more effective whereas organic organizations can facilitate timely adoption and implementation by institutionalizing mechanisms. Hull & Hage (1982) argued that the organic type is not the only best way to organize for innovation. The mixed mechanical-organic model based on scale and complexity denotes four types of possible work situations: small- scale, non-complex; large scale, non-complex; small scale, complex; large scale, complex. Based on stable and predictable, Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998) found four sets of environmental conditions: stable and predictable; stable and unpredictable; unstable and predictable; and unstable and unpredictable.

Specific characteristics of mechanistic and organic organizations retained for this research include task accomplishment, work habits, communication style, and knowledge possession. Burns & Stalker (1961) and Robey (1991) addressed pre-planning, predictability and clear division while Dessler (1976) argued that such approach should be avoided. As for the change in work habits, Beyer et al (1997) and Burns & Stalker (1961) discussed the rigidity of predetermined tasks and Robey (1991) discussed task uncertainty; which lead to the need for mechanistic systems. Dessler (1976) proposed a less defined task structure, even at the lower levels. Courtright & al (1989) found consultative communication patterns in organic plants; which interactive patterns are command-like and conflictual in mechanistic plants. Scott (1969) argued that in organic organization, communication will be freer and legitimate in all directions. As for knowledge possession, Burns & Stalker (1961) argue that there is a pyramid or hierarchy of knowledge in mechanistic systems while there is pervasiveness in organic ones.

Dougherty (2004) argues that the mechanistic system is not favorable for knowledge production. Wang & Ahmed (2003) discuss that in organic structure, effective management of knowledge reflects boundary-lessness, fluidity, inter-activeness, and flexibility. Dougherty (2004) found that people generate practice-based knowledge for innovation if they act collectively together.

Nzelibe (1986) argues that African management will be mostly characterized by ethnocentrism, traditionalism, communalism, and cooperative teamwork. For Dia (1995), decentralization, delegation, and the improvements of methods and processes can be effective in improving management practices. Dia (1995) also argues that paternalism and hierarchy in African culture constitute an obstacle to effective management because they lead to extreme dependence on authority. However, paternalism and hierarchy have the advantage of strengthening discipline in the workplace and mediating social conflicts. Mbigi (1994), Winston & Dadzie (2007), Dia (1995) argue that understanding the cultural values of African society can be helpful in introducing change and innovation. They also believe that communication through sessions is important to reinforce trust and solidarity and to shift relations from confrontation to cooperation. Mbigi (1994) advocates the development of harmony through the creation of collaborative relationships. Contrary to them, Waiguchu & al (1999) argue that communication in Africa is rigid and authoritative and is based on instructions and orders. Milne (1970), Beugré & Offodile (2010), found that the African context is often authoritative and resistant to change. Similarly, World Bank (2014) showed the failure of reforms to address centralization in Burkina Faso.

From this, it can be deduced that generally, the organic management is mostly used or is said to be more favorable when introducing change and innovating. The literature also seems to suggest that the organic type is used more in organizations in Africa. This development however is not to conclude this research about the management system of the procurement institutions. Only by studying the characteristics in a methodological way will the study be able to clearly determine the type of management systems that mostly prevails in the two institutions in Burkina Faso.



### **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter discusses the research design and the phenomenological approach followed in the research. It contains a description of the qualitative research methods, the use of the phenomenological approach, data collection procedure, a discussion of the credibility and the limitations of the method.

#### **Qualitative research methods**

Common research methods include qualitative research and quantitative research. Keohane et al (1994) explained that the styles of quantitative and qualitative research are very different. Quantitative research uses numbers and statistical methods while qualitative research covers a wide range of approaches, none of which rely on numerical measurements.

Such work (qualitative research) has tended to focus on one or a small number of cases, to use intensive interviews or depth analysis of historical materials, to be discursive in method, and to be concerned with a rounded or comprehensive account of some event or unit. Even though they have a small number of cases, qualitative researchers generally unearth enormous amounts of information from their studies. Sometimes, this kind of work in the social sciences is linked with area or case studies where the focus is on a particular event, decision, institution, location, issue, or piece of legislation (Keohane et al 1994, p. 4).

For them, “the differences between the quantitative and qualitative traditions are only stylistic and are methodologically and substantively unimportant” as long as both methods follow the “logic of inference”, both can be “systematic and scientific” and can yield good research results (Keohane & al 1994, pp.4-5). Thus, qualitative research method can be used to understand phenomena and situations. For the purpose of this study, the specific qualitative research approach used is the the phenomenological approach.

#### **Phenomenology**

Smith et al (2011) define phenomenology as a “philosophical approach to the study of experience (p.11). It is used to record the experiences of participants. It is an effective method that allow participants to reflect on the deeper and more detailed aspects of their experiences. Riemen (1986) believes that “the phenomenological approach is primarily an attempt to understand empirical matters from the perspectives of those being studied” (p. 271). Thorne (2000) explains that “the aim of phenomenology is to produce a description of a phenomenon of everyday experience in order to understand its essential structure” (p. 51). Thorne (2000) explains that “the phenomenological approaches typically challenge the research to set aside or “bracket” all such preconceptions so that they can work inductively with the data to generate entirely new descriptions and conceptualizations (p.69).

Giorgi (2000) described three steps of the phenomenological method, which evolved from the philosophical method to become more scientific. The first step is “the phenomenological reduction” which refers to retaining “the natural attitude.” In other words, “one also brackets past knowledge about the phenomenon in order to be fully present to it as it is in concrete situation as which one is encountering it” (p. 5). The second step is “description”. It is the use of language to articulate the intentional objects of consciousness within the constraints of intuitive evidence (p. 5). This is realized by making sure that “descriptions are obtained from others from the perspective of the natural attitude (Giorgi 2000, p.7). The third step is the “search for essences.” The researcher wants to make sure that the findings are durable in essence; that there is an essence to be presented to the community of scholars as it is related to the discipline and theoretical framework (p.6). In other words, “scientific essences are both more

contextualized and more dependent upon the unique perspective of that discipline” (p.8).

Giorgi (2000) further provides five steps which he called the concrete steps of the human scientific phenomenological method. It consists of:

- Collection of verbal data; which collection is done by generally asking broad and open-ended questions. For Giorgi, in this step, “what is sought is a concrete, detailed description of the subject’s experience and actions, as faithful as possible to what happened as experienced by the subject” (Giorgi 2000, p.8).
- Reading of the data, where “one only retains a global sense of the data” by reading through the data before making an analysis (Giorgi 2000, p.8).
- Breaking of the data in some kind of parts or “meaning units” or “meaning discrimination”. That means “the parts must be determined by criteria that are consistent the scientific discipline” (Giorgi 2000, p. 9).
- Organization and expression of the data from a disciplinary perspective; meaning that the phenomenological approach is “discovery oriented” and “one has to let unexpected meanings emerge” (Giorgi 2000, p.9).
- Synthesis or summary of the data for purposes of communication to the scholarly community. This is where the researcher derives “a single structure for all the subjects” (Giorgi 200, p. 10).

After the interviews are completed, the raw data as recorded were transcribed verbatim for each participant. These transcriptions were subject to the phenomenological analysis method by Colaizzi (1978). The analysis of data occurred according to his procedural steps (Riemen p. 280-281); (Thorne 2000, p. 58).

- The transcriptions were then translated into English.
- Significant statements were extracted from each description, phrases and sentences that directly pertain to the mechanistic and organic systems. Statements that contained the same or nearly the same statements were eliminated.
- Meanings were formulated by spelling out the meaning of each significant statements. In this difficult step, the meaning arrived at must not sever the connection with the original description. The formulations discover and bring out those meanings hidden in the various contexts of the phenomenon that are present in the original descriptions.
- Clusters of themes were organized from the aggregate formulated meanings. This allowed for the emergence of themes common to all of the subjects’ descriptions.
- An exhaustive description of the phenomenon resulted from the integration of the above results
- All the participants’ descriptions were transcribed as provided in the original French version.

- The exhaustive description of the phenomenon is as unequivocal a statement of the essential structure of the phenomenon as possible.
- The descriptions of the statements not straightly related to the characteristics were analyzed using the same process as with the statements related to the characteristics.

As is common with other research methods, credibility of the research is a concern. According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), there are seven stages of interviews which are: thematizing an interview project, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying and reporting (p. 19). At each step, there is validity. In the case of qualitative interviews, “validity refers to ordinary language to the truth, the correctness, and the strength of a statement” and “reliability pertains to the consistency and trustworthiness of research findings” (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, p. 245). In phenomenological philosophy, “objectivity is an expression of fidelity to the phenomenon investigated” (p. 27). In other words, “in focusing the interview on the experienced meanings of the subject’s life world, phenomenology has been relevant for clarifying the mode of understanding in a qualitative research interview (p. 26). For Kirk and Miller (1986):

Objectivity is the simultaneous realization of as much reliability and validity as possible. Reliability is the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research, and validity is the degree to which the finding is interpreted in a correct way (p. 20).

Huberman & Miles (2002) seem to justify the use of phenomenology as an effective research method, stating that “it is one thing to recognize a need for qualitative research as one of our methods, and it is another to develop it in ways that continue to assure consensual validity and replicability (p. 276). Credibility and validity are also considered in the data collection process using the phenomenological method.

Some authors have used the phenomenological approach in their research. These studies vary in the number of participants or in the length of the interview. Beck (2013)

conducted a phenomenological study using the experiences of three (3) participants to study anxiety as experienced in social situations. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis of the interviews with the participants, Řezáč et al (2013) interviewed eleven (11) juvenile delinquents who were also participants of a probation program. Participants were asked to share their experience with group therapy. O' Sullivan & al (2013) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study on the lived experiences of recalled mentally disordered offenders with dual diagnosis. For their study, O' Sullivan & al interviewed (5) participants (O' Sullivan & al 2013, p. 405). The length of interviews varied from 37 to 106 minutes (p. 406).

### **Data collection Process**

This research used qualitative phenomenological methods, focusing on interviews with participants as the primary method to gather the necessary data. The interviews started after June 10, 2015 when the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the research proposal (MSU IRBNet ID#753341). The last interviews were conducted in August 2015. The process followed was the one described in the original research proposal for IRB. Ten (10) participants, including managers and employees, were recruited from two institutions in Burkina Faso: The General Office of Public Procurement Control and Financial Commitments (DG-CMEF)<sup>4</sup> and the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (ARCOP). The institutions signed a permission letter agreeing that interviews be conducted with managers and employees. Participation was voluntary and participants gave their verbal consent to be interviewed and recorded. The

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<sup>4</sup> As a result of reforms in 2012 by the Ministry of Economy and Finance, DGMP and the General Office of Financial Control (DGCF) became one institution known as DG-CMEF. It is in charge of the control function only.

interviews were conducted over the phone. Eight (8) open-ended questions were asked to each of the 10 participants. The questions (see Appendix C) were articulated around the accomplishment of duties and responsibilities, change in work habits, communication style, and knowledge possession. For each question, the participants provided a description of their experiences before and after the adoption of the 2008 decree.

The ten (10) participants recruited included top-managers, managers and service managers. Seven were managers or top managers while three were employees. Another specificity is that six (6) participants were from the institution in charge of regulation (ARCOP) while four (4) participants were from the institution in charge of control (DG-CMEF). In total, four participants worked in the procurement institutions before and after 2008. The remaining six (6) participants started work after 2008. The six were asked questions about their experience after 2008.

Because Burkina Faso uses French in the workplace and the participants spoke French, the interviews were conducted in French. To fully understand the participants' ideas, follow-up questions were asked when necessary to clarify the participants' answer. When no further clarification about interview questions was required, the recording was considered completed. All interviews were audio-recorded. The length of time of the interviews varied from seventeen (17) to thirty (30) minutes. The participants were given the necessary time to elaborate on their experiences. For the purpose of this research, interviewees are each assigned a code. An example of the codification system is presented below:

M.I.N.01: Manager Interviewee Number 1.

N.I.N.09: Non-manager Interviewee Number 9

**Table 3:** Code of interviewees

<b>Interviewee number</b>	<b>Code</b>
Interviewee 1	MIN01
Interviewee 2	MIN02
Interviewee 3	NIN03
Interviewee 4	MIN04
Interviewee 5	NIN05
Interviewee 6	MIN06
Interviewee 7	MIN07
Interviewee 8	MIN08
Interviewee 9	NIN09
Interviewee 10	MIN10

In addition to the interviews, other primary sources were used. They include *The Management of Innovation* by Burns & Stalker (1961), where they discussed the mechanistic and organic management systems based on studies on organizations. Some secondary sources include *Designing Organizations* by Robey (1991). The article “Interaction Patterns in Organic and Mechanistic System” by Courtright et al (1989); “the spirit of African management” by Mbigi (1994) *Management of Organizations in Africa: A Handbook and Reference* by Waiguchu et al (1999); and a publication by the World Bank in 2014 on Burkina Faso called *Burkina Faso - Public Sector Modernization Program Project*.

Government documents which served as the basis of this research include the Decree 2007 on the Creation, Attribution, Organization and Functions of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (ARMP), Decree 2008 on General Regulations of Public Procurement and Service Delegation in Burkina Faso. Other documents which used include the WAEMU N°05/2005/CM/UEMOA Directive on Control and Regulation of Public Procurement and Service Delegation in the West African Economic and Monetary Union; and WAEMU N°04/2005/CM/UEMOA Directive on Procedures of

Procurement, Execution and Regulation of Public Procurement and Service Delegation; the 2003 Decree on Regulations of Public Purchasing.

### **Limitations of the method**

There are some limitations to this study. The goal was to capture the experience of participants before and after 2008. However, because of rapid changes in personnel, the majority of participants did not work in public procurement before 2008. Therefore, participants who started working only after 2008 were asked questions about their experience after 2008. The researcher conducted the interviews while he was in the United States. The participants were in Burkina Faso. A face-to-face interview may have made the research more lively were the researcher in Burkina Faso to meet the participants. Participants would have been more comfortable and reassured with expressing their ideas. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) argued that these limitations are inherent to qualitative research. They stated that:

The aim of the qualitative research interview is not to end up with unequivocal and quantifiable meanings on the themes in focus. The task of the interviewer is to clarify as far as possible whether the ambiguities and contradictory statements are due to a failure of communication in the interview situation, or whether they reflect genuine inconsistencies, ambivalence, and contradictions in an interviewee's life situation (p. 31).

That is to say that the inherent challenges to research will be painstakingly studied, understood, and considered as the process goes on.



**Definitions of terms**

*The Mechanistic management system* puts forward hierarchy, formality and rigidity in the structure. All characteristics fall under the division of labor and the hierarchical system of communication. Refer to I) of the literature about definitions of the mechanistic system by Burns & Stalker (1961), Robey (1991), Daft (1982), and Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998).

*The Organic management system* is loose in hierarchy and formality and rigidity. All characteristics follow the system of informal and flexible structures. Refer to I) of the literature about definitions of the mechanistic system by Burns & Stalker (1961), Robey (1991), Daft (1982), and Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998).

*Accomplishment of tasks* refers to the division of tasks, duties and responsibilities (Refer to Chapter Two). It can be rigid based on specialization and competences.

*Change in work habits:* This refers to the ways tasks are accomplished and orders or instructions are given. It is about the change in tasks or communication between managers and subordinates or the rigidity and flexibility in task accomplishment (Refer to Chapter Two).

*Communication style:* This refers to vertical or lateral communication or the types of communication channels (Refer to Chapter Two).

*Knowledge possession:* Top managers may be the experts and holders of special knowledge in the organization; or expertise and knowledge may exist throughout the organization including the subordinates and employees (Refer to Chapter Two).

*Collaborators:* During the interviews, the term is used to refer to everyone no matter what their positions. There is no subordinate, but only equal individuals working towards the same mission ( Refer to Chapter Four).

## CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

The research question was stated as followed: Did the adoption of the 2008 decree to innovate the procurement system results in an organic type of management in the procurement institutions in Burkina Faso? In other words, does the adoption of the 2008 decree influence the procurement institutions in a way that they present the characteristics of an organic management system after 2008? Taped interviews of ten (10) participants were transcribed and translated, and the significant statements extracted became the raw data for analysis. As the significant statements were being extracted from the original transcriptions, it became apparent that it would be of value to list the statements pertaining to each of the four characteristics under the convenient characteristic. In the final step of analysis, however, the essential characteristics of the management systems were retained for the purpose of the analysis.

### Characteristics

#### *Statements about task accomplishment*

This section provides an analysis of the answers to the question: Could you please describe your department or position and how you, your subordinates, or colleagues accomplish each job's tasks and responsibilities after the adoption of the 2008 decree on the regulation of public procurement in Burkina Faso? The participant was then asked to relate to their experience before 2008 (See Appendix C).

*After 2008:* The statements show that each manager and employee has a specific position, specific duties and responsibilities that they assume. The institution, headed by a manager, is divided into offices, with a manager or director as the head of each office. Within the offices, the manager has two services under him, each led by a service manager. For example, MIN01 explains that “there is the service of... and the service of

.... When there is something, the two services divide the tasks. The service manager of ... takes care of what concerns him, and the service manager of ... also takes care of what concerns him. The manager of the office then coordinates” (MIN01). After the service managers come the support agents and then the secretaries. Every employee intervenes in their field of competencies for which they are initially hired and responsibilities are shared accordingly. At least six interviewees, MIN01, NIN03, NIN05, MIN02, NIN09, MIN10 have described their position, duties and responsibilities in a way that they are responsible for the tasks. Each employee’s position is distinct from other employees’. Each plays a role in the institution and they are hired to work their position according to their field of competencies. For example, NIN03 explains: “I work for the office of .... In that office, there is the service of ... which does everything related to texts, and my service which is in charge of .... Everyone is in their field of competencies” (NIN03). Clearly, there is a division of tasks and responsibilities among employees within the two institutions.

However, some interviewees answered that work is done in collaboration with others if necessary. They still maintain some independence in their work. MIN04 describes it: “my tasks as related to ... with the permanent secretary are based on collaboration but that does prevent from having a certain independence because the office of ... is a technical one” (MIN04). Employees support each other or ask for help from others. This is present in the statement that “when there is a problem, I can submit it to a collaborator to have his opinion. I may not agree with him. If that is the case, he will come in the office with the case and we will discuss it” (MIN04). Thus, the division of tasks and responsibilities does not prevent employees from giving a hand to others or getting

guidance from others to better accomplish their tasks. Also important is the idea that outside experts can be called in to help make certain decisions. MIN05 brings it up that “it exists in the procedures that a specialist can be called in to settle an issue, but it is not formalized in a very specific way so that the institutions we call are more often institutions that we have professional relations with” (MIN05). There are some informal channels which employees may refer to as they accomplished their tasks.

***Before 2008:*** MIN08 draws our attention that “one should note that with the 2008 decree, one of the most visible innovations was the separation of the regulation functions from the control function...” In the past it used to be the DGMP that played those two roles. Therefore, “it was judge and party at the same time because the preliminary recourse and the reviews of public procurement had to be known by DGMP before one could introduce a complaint before the administrative judge and that was dictated by the 2003 decree” (MIN08). The procurement was managed by one institution in charge of controlling and resolving disputes. The procedures were not well developed as far as settling disputes are concerned. That is because “...traditionally, it is the same office that controlled and resolved the litigations. In this case, the bidders were afraid of taking a legal course” (MIN04). Thus, before 2003, the office dictated the actions of its employees. The work process was strict and the top managers regulated every task.

### ***Statements about Work Habits***

This section provides an analysis of the answers to the question: Could you please explain how easy or difficult it was for you, your colleagues or subordinates to work according to the procurement procedures after the adoption of the 2008 decree and how often did you have to make adjustments and changes to organizational work processes, if

at all? The participant was then asked to relate to their experience before 2008. (See Appendix C).

*After 2008:* The question on work habits and modifications brought about a lot more answers and details than any other question. The general agreement is that it is easy to work according to the procedures in place because the procedures are used for guidance. NIN03 answers that “from my point of view, we can say that the 2008/173 procedures are defined according to the types of awards. If it is a small award that you want to make, there are some technical procedures” (NIN03). The procedures include different aspects to make the system accessible and fair to the parties involved. There are also alternatives to deal with unusual and complex situations. As stated by MIN04, “for the case of public procurement, we evolved from the fact that there is really no basis to make the four main principles of public procurement prevail. If the solution that we arrive at is in conformity with the four principles, we prefer to follow that solution and we sometimes simply justify that choice by saying that it is because there are no texts regarding that specific case” (MIN04). In case the procedures do not address a given issue, the body or commission in charge can come up with a solution that reflects better the four principles of the procurement system.

However, managers and employees also face some difficulties and insufficiencies when they try to enforce the procedures. NIN05 states: “the difficulty that we have is mainly how to make a decision as someone who is involved with the instruction of cases and at the same time as someone to whom clients come for counseling. When we are in this kind of situation, it is like we are being judge and party” (NIN05). This makes the

system look partial and unfair in applying the procedures. This dilemma ceased to be an issue with the 2008 decree.

In addition, parties involved in the bid, contract, and award process sometimes attempt to interpret the texts or procedures in the way that they are beneficial to them, which sometimes leads decision-makers to strictly enforce the rules. For MIN04, “during the settlement of a dispute, we cannot modify a text. Either the text exists or it does not exist. If the text exists, even if it is bad, we enforce it. And later, we may propose some measures to correct the text. But we cannot decide during a dispute settlement that we cannot enforce a text because it is bad. No, we enforce it” (MIN04). This denotes the rigidity that exists when enforcing the procedures in exceptional circumstances. At the same time, if the rigidity is due to a bad procedure, modifications may take place after a problem from the enforcement of a text has been identified. In that case, the deliberating body will have to submit the problem to the higher authority for modification.

Some changes were made to the procedures, especially concerning the threshold. For example, “in the past, the regulations almost said nothing about bid offers or it used to be that the bidder is committed to the maximum and the administration is committed to the minimum. Today, we propose that it be clearly stated that the award is based on the minimum” (MIN04). MIN07 explains the changes in fuel procurement: “since they are goods with regulated prices, there is no impact on competition and when we launched the competitive bid offers, it ended up with unfruitful results because the actors were not interested since they are goods which prices were already regulated so that it did not urge competition. Thus, the regulations allowed dealing directly with gas companies, but the threshold was raised to 250 million. The second modification that is the 2013/142, totally

eliminated the threshold for acquisition since there was really no impact in terms of competition” (MIN07).

The study also found that with the 2008 decree, the volume of procurement has considerably increased because awards are now made in townships. That is because “... there has been a boom in procurement, which is why at the level of duties, it is not easy. You receive a lot of bid offers.... That could be explained by the credibility of the system. We may have the bids but if the institutions are not credible, people will not bid, but if they believe that they stand a chance, if they have the right to complain, to make their arguments prevail, they adhere to the system” (MIN08). Another important change in the procedures consisted of reviewing or waiving the threshold of bids for townships.

Management came to the conclusion that:

The threshold of procurement was very weak and did not allow an effective absorbing of budgetary credits that were allocated, especially in rural townships which have a fair number of urgent needs. Therefore, it was agreed on that the quotations of awards concerning the awards which amount was less than 1 million be raised to a threshold of 5 million to allow the bodies, notably the rural townships to absorb these budgetary credits and to really meet the needs of their populations” (MIN07).

Raising the threshold motivates local government entities to participate in bids that take into consideration their concerns to meet the needs of citizens. This makes the procedures more flexible in the sense that they guarantee some fairness for all actors with important budgets and those with small budgets to apply for the bid they want” (NIN03). The procedures are more concerned with addressing needs of different actors through effective enforcement. The increase of the volume of bids is also due to “more transparency than in 2003 regulation” (MIN08). Therefore, the duties and responsibilities of employees have increased and required an unprecedented speed in the review process.



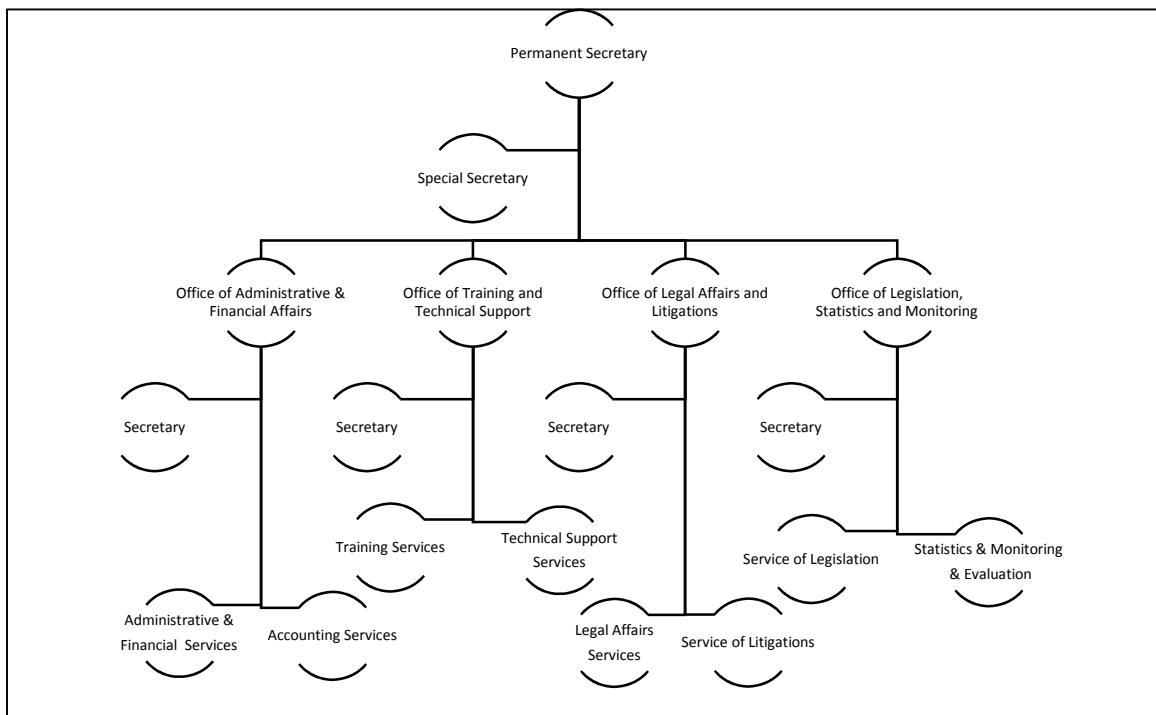
The creation of delegations also facilitated the application process and increased the volume of bid applications.

Since the adoption of the decree in 2008, from structural and institutional point of view, the management systems and decision making bodies went through innovations, and modification to the names, the procedures, and the composition of the institutions. For instance, “the regulations about the 2008/173 decree were modified by the 2012/123 of March 2012 which modified the 2008/173 decree (MIN07). Another modification was the 2014/554 decree on creation, attribution, authorization and functioning of the authority of regulation (MIN02). That is to say that before 2008, the regulatory body, ARMP, “did not exist...there was a permanent secretariat established within DGMP that took care of the settlement of disputes” (MIN07). The General Office of Public Procurement was in charge of everything. However, “with the transposition of WAEMU directives, there has been a complete scission that says that the control function and the regulation function must be separated; which led to the creation of ARMP which became ARCOP in July 2014. ARCOP ensures the regulatory functions and the DGMP which became DGCMEF which is responsible of the a priori control” (MIN08).

Some of the changes remarkably concerned the commission of dispute settlements. The attempt to remediate has led to the reorganization of the commission. Thus, “those with the public power have decided to review this body by creating the body for the friendly settlement of disputes (ORAD). There has also been the innovative introduction of a recourse called the preliminary recourse” (MIN06). The creation of the “body for the friendly settlement of disputes” was meant to address issue of rigidity because the dispute settlement body was also “tagged at some point of juridism with the

rule of law by strictly enforcing the rule of law while the case may not mean just the enforcement. There was late deliberation because “the committee has seven (7) days to render a decision as public procurement is characterized by fidelity” (MIN06). However, the deadline was always not met. Below is the organizational chart of ARCOP operational since 2008 to take charge of procurement regulations.

**Graph 2:** Organizational Chart of ARCOP



Graph 2 shows the different offices and services of the new institution ARCOP, created following the adoption of the 2008 decree.

### *Statements about the communication style*

This section provides an analysis of the answers to the question: How easy or difficult was it for you to maintain clear lines of communication with your subordinate, superior or colleagues at work after the 2008 decree? The participant was then asked to relate to their experience before 2008 (See Appendix C).

*After 2008:* At the level of institutional communication, office meetings and office committee meetings are cited as one way to communicate. At least six interviewees, NIN03, MIN04, MIN07, NIN09, MIN10 refer to service notes, general assemblies, office meetings, and meeting of the office committees. Other regular ways of communication include emails, phones, newspapers, website, and debates. Sometimes, there is a deficit of communication especially for some lower level employees who may not get the information about big and important activities and decisions taken during meetings of top officials. As NIN05 puts it, “when a decision is taken at the top level of the hierarchy, that is to say at the level of the council of regulation, it is not always obvious that those of us who are at the lower level have this information on time. We do not have the information on time. It is one of the difficulties that we have but we are working to correct it. Some propositions were made to improve our system of communication” (NIN05).

MIN04 affirms that “there are some information that an employee at a certain level cannot provide to the person asking for it without going through the hierarchy. But it is not because he must go through hierarchies. It is just a way to make the information official. But it is true that in some institutions, agents are subject to professional secret, and I think that this is the case with the award commissions because there is some confidential information that the bidder should not know” (MIN04). The participants make the difference between confidential information and professional secret, which may make impossible to share the information with the subordinates. They are unanimous that the interpersonal relations are very good and they communicate freely with one another between colleagues, between managers and service managers and others. As MIN04

explains, “when you come in our office, the office is like a classroom where we discuss. Sometimes, you cannot even tell who the director is. And if someone has an issue, we raise it. Often in the office of the secretary, we read a newspaper, we may come across an issue and raise it and discuss it. I can walk into the office of an employee if I need something; or that I want to discuss this and this, and we discuss it” (MIN04).

Training sessions are also used as a medium of communication to inform employees, partners and offices of different changes in the procedures. For example, “when there is a new procedure, we communicate with different actors, we have training and information sessions for the actors through which we try to inform them how that would work” (MIN08). The debate “may even end up with propositions to modify the regulations. This is to say the interpretation is not unanimous. And so, we debate during office meetings and when we reach a decision, we take it to the permanent secretary, and there again, we discuss it. Maybe he does not agree with what we propose, and we can debate it at that level again. If our point of view is supported by the majority, it is considered. It is a matter of arguments” (MIN04). For MIN07, communicating by concertation is the best way to make effective decisions: “one can make a decision and later realize that it is not applicable on the ground. It is not worth it. Therefore, one should put concertation first in order to make good decisions...the decisions are matured because we are in a technical field therefore, we must meet all involved actors and ensure that we make good decisions” (MIN07).

**Before 2008:** In the past, there used to be no effective and reliable channels of communication between the big institutions of procurement and the small or rural or regional towns. In fact, according to MIN08, the bid applications from these areas were

sent to the institutions in the capital city for reviews because there were no procurement bodies established in these areas. The applicants therefore only prepared the applications and have them carried to the capital city by bus drivers. It was difficult to communicate new information or provide timely training to people in those areas. He repeats that: “as I said, in 2003, we were not deconcentrated. For example, someone who is 300 kilometers from Ouagadougou, he sends his application to be considered, there are some problems of transmission, they must send through carriers. But today, there is a representative next to them who communicate them the necessary information” (MIN08). After 2008, the general office has established some PRMs in the regional and rural areas to communicate with the people in those areas as far the procurement activities are concerned. In short, there used to be a deficit of communication before 2008. This is due to lack of specialized bodies and the lack of communication means such as emails or internet access for information sharing. For MIN08 however, the “the communication system has considerably evolved compared to 2003” (MIN08).

### ***Statements about Knowledge Possession***

This section provides an analysis to the question: Considering yourself, your subordinates or colleagues, could you describe who possessed the skills and special knowledge to make decisions or address issues about public procurement prior to the 2008 decree? The participant was then asked to relate to their experience before 2008 (See Appendix C)

***After 2008:*** Of the four questions, the question on knowledge possession ranked second in terms of extensive information and details. It is important to clarify that participants also refer to decision-making power, education level, and professional

training and experience when asked the question on knowledge. At least four of the seven managers agreed that “it is a priority that those who are at the top of the hierarchy should have more capacities than those working under him. He must be able to train them by transferring and passing down the knowledge to them” (MIN02, MIN01, MIN04, NIN05). Their answers support that managers should have more knowledge and competencies than their subordinates. This is also observed in the structure. NIN09 ensures: “I believe that it is exactly the hierarchical system. The center of decision is the minister, and then the general manager, at the level of deconcentrated offices, the power of decision is limited. There are many things we need to refer to hierarchy. Now, in terms of initiatives, we must be careful. Initiatives to move things forward; yes, it is authorized. But there are certain decisions one must refer to hierarchy. The hierarchical system is very strong. At the level DGCMEF, the hierarchical system is respected” (NIN09). The system is hierarchical when it comes to decision-making, meaning that there is some respect for hierarchy with some room left for taking initiatives. NIN03 explains that “some decisions are taken at the office level. The manager is the one who has the competences to make that decision. But we can make some propositions. If it is at the permanent secretary level, it is the secretary who statues on the matter” (NIN03).

As stated before, managers believe that they should have higher degrees and more experience than their subordinates as well. MIN01 simplifies as follows: “what I can say is that the manager has higher degrees in most cases, and has more experience than the service manager, and the service manager has more experience than those who follow him...” (MIN01). Non-managers support that top managers have the competencies to make decisions. However, non-managers have the possibility to make propositions that

can be taken into consideration by top management. Some managers themselves also stated that knowledge is not formal and that they also learn from their subordinates. MIN04 recognizes that “knowledge is not formal, because one may not know sometimes. It may happen that I learn from the service manager of ...because he may have conducted some research that I did not do in that specific field. So, during the resolution of the problem, I learn from him; as he may submit a case and I will correct and tell him a better way to handle it. Thus, he also learns from me” (MIN04). Managers do not see themselves as upholders of all knowledge or omniscient. They are open to learn from their subordinates who hold some important information in their field of expertise. In fact, “...experience exists at all levels. At some point, the service manager can make propositions about responsibilities, activities, and measures to the director who may accept them or reject them” (NIN03). No manager imposes their will on subordinates. For managers, “there is no such thing that I impose my decision because I am the director. Here in this office, the debate is open. It is really the collaboration between us that matters the most” (MIN04).

Sometimes, managers call in specialists and experts to help settle complex issues. When an office or a commission has some difficulties rendering effective decisions, it could call in an outside competent authority or expert to assist them. For NIN05, “currently in Burkina Faso, we face a situation where there are a lot of frauds in the application materials, which compels us to contact the competent authority that delivers the documents to confirm the validity of the documents before we can make a decision.... Or when we are really short of time, we simply ask the contracting authority who initiated the bid to check with the competent authority and based on its findings, make a

decision” (NIN05). Thus, other institutions provide their expertise. This is because “it exists in the procedures that a specialist can be called to settle an issue, but it is not formalized in a very specific way so that the institutions we call are more often institutions that we have professional relations with” (NIN05).

***Before 2008:*** There was only one institution that did both the a-priori and a-posteriori control of the bid applications. MIN04 shares that “... traditionally, it is the same office that controlled and resolved the litigations.” The decisions were guided by the regulations contained in the 2003 decree on public purchasing regulations.



## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

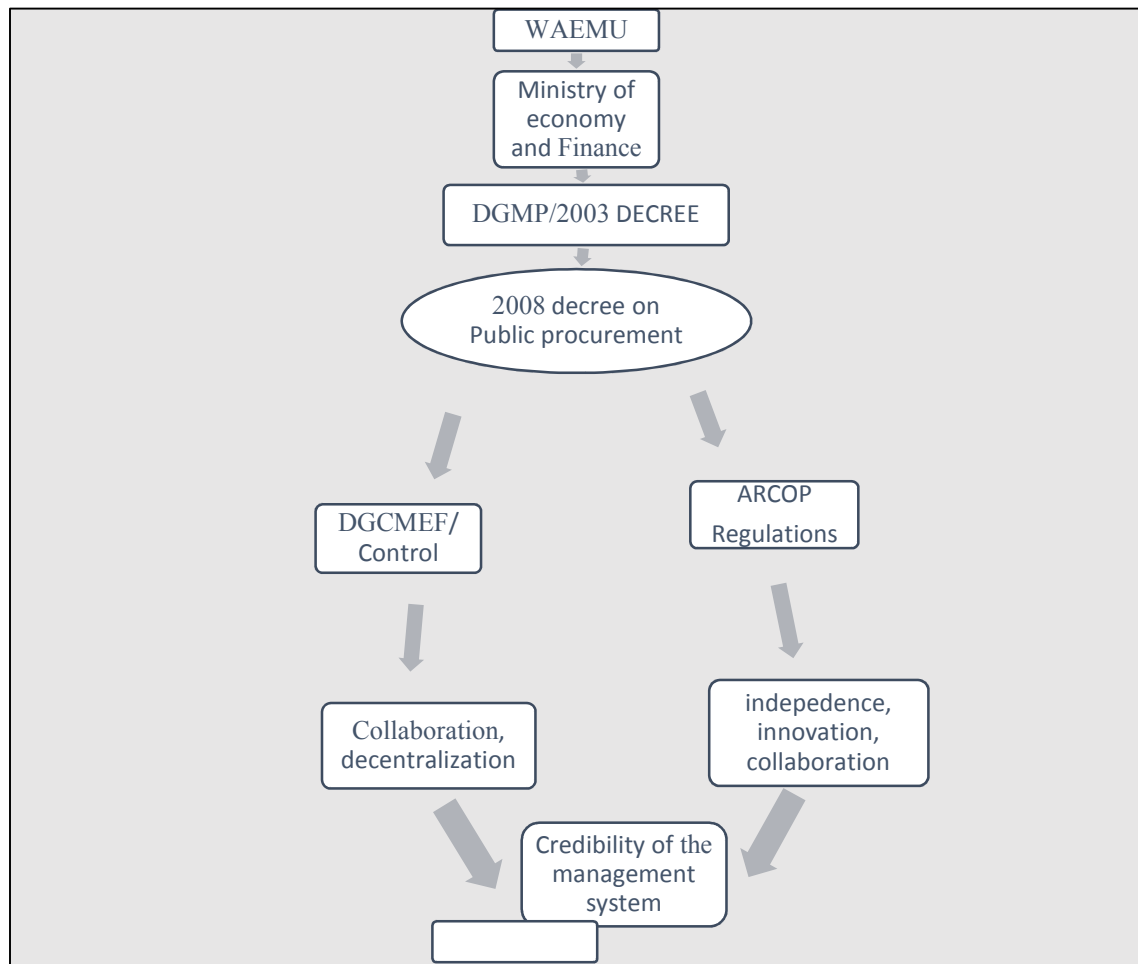
This chapter discusses the results by looking at the four characteristics of the organic and mechanistic systems based on relevant statements referred to in the previous chapter. This will particularly discuss the period, the management institutions, collaboration and the implications for WAEMU.

Some general statements found seem to support the idea that the management system was mechanistic before 2008 and became organic after 2008. On the one hand, there seems to be the presence of mechanistic system. For example, Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan (1998) argued that mechanistic structure consists of a top-down manager formally controlling the structures and knowledge. Similarly, the study found that because the top managers detained all decision-making and command-like power before 2008, “it was not possible to contest the award of bids due to an all-powerful administration” (MIN04). The system resembles a mechanistic approach where every aspect of management was centralized and controlled by the individual at the top of the hierarchy. Waiguchu et al (1999) argue that this is true because “African managers tend to make decisions and then distribute it to his staff, rule his staff with an iron hand, and give directives to his subordinates to be obeyed without question and criticism” (p. 111).

On the other hand, the findings showed that the organic traits were stronger after 2008. Damanpour & Gopalakrishnan 1998 argued that in organic systems, top managers are more like to let teams grow and empower them with knowledge and opportunities. Similar to their approach, MIN08 and NIN09 revealed that the 2008 decree brought about de-concentration and delegation of powers and authority by the general manager to his collaborators (MIN08). Collaborators became detainers of some authority for decision

making as well. There were more freedom and flexibility in the structure of work process and organization. The study does not conclude based on the general statements. A lot of results from the interviews correspond to assumptions made by researchers. Therefore, an in-depth discussion of the results is needed to draw a conclusion. Below is a graph of agencies, institutions, and decrees that interact in the decision process.

**Graph 3:** Interactive view of the procurement system before and after 2008



Graph 3 sums up the evolution and changes that occur with the institutions of procurement. At the top is the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA). The adoption of the WAEMU Directives N°04 and N°05 to reform the management system had influenced the Ministry of Economy and Finance to also reform the

procurement institutions. The Ministry had the authority over DGMP, the procurement institution that works under the 2003 decree. In response to the WAEMU directives, the Ministry had to review DGMP responsibilities and the 2003 decree regulations. This was basically the main reason of the adoption of the 2008 decree: To reform the old institution and purchasing procedures and replaced them with or add new ones. For example, Article 1 of the 2008 decree is a vocabulary section composed of 41 Key terms, which is not the case with 2003 decree (2008 decree, p7-10). The 2008 decree was therefore adopted, resulting in the creation of two institutions: DG-CMEF and ARCOP. DG-CMEF controls to ensure that bids and contracts procedures are in conformity with the regulations. ARCOP regulates by auditing, training, settling disputes through friendly and legal process. The separation was consequential and influential on the management system. The study found that DG-CMEF management is now based on collaboration, decentralization, and innovation. ARCOP management is built on collaboration, independence, and innovation. The management system overall became more credible.

## **Characteristics**

### ***Task accomplishment***

The findings confirm Robey (1991)'s argument that task in mechanistic organization is defined by predictability, clear division of tasks, and hierarchy. MIN01 explained that in the office, there were two services and the two services divide the tasks. The manager of the office coordinates the work of the two services. Similar statements were made by NIN03, NIN05, MIN02, NIN09, & MIN10. MIN07, MIN08, MIN10, and NIN09 assert that collaborators must submit their work to the service manager, and the service manager approves and it last goes to the general manager for signature. Burns & Stalker (1961)

argued that each position in the hierarchy had its authority, information and technical competence specified once for all” (p. 82). Thus, the study identified the division of tasks and responsibilities and an existing hierarchy within the organization after 2008 but they are not as strict as the Burns & Stalker’s description.

The study found dominant characteristics which remind of a task structure in an organic system. Dessler (1976) for example stated that an organic organization is usually flexible and focuses less on clearly defined functions and lines of responsibilities. In other words, managers and subordinates may accomplish their task in collaboration with others. Similarly, MIN04 states that subordinates can submit any problem to a collaborator to have his opinion. The study found that working together to get work done was one way to assume one’s duty. NIN09 confirms that “those who work here work in collaboration. Everyone does their best to review the application and if they do not understand, they talk to others and we can explain to them. For now, it is working fine” (NIN09). An employee can expect to get help from another employee. In certain circumstances, the organization might call in an expert when it faces complex decisions (NIN05). The 2008 procedures allow managers the flexibility to reach out to independent experts or consultants for advice to make decisions. For Beyer & al (1997), predetermined tasks impede the possibility to have experts’ advice, which makes the system weaker because of the rigidity it can introduce. Thus, the use of collaborative and informal means is part of the system.

The existence of the characteristics of the two systems after 2008 may mean that the system is a mixed mechanistic-organic one. The division of task structure and hierarchy are certainly built in, but managers and subordinates work together to

accomplish their tasks. Overall, the organic management features are dominant when it comes to task accomplishment.

### *Change in work habits*

Findings have shed light on the work habits after 2008. The study found that managers paid attention to predictability and stability in the procedures. This confirms Robey (1991)'s approach that uncertainty influences the planning and structure of task activities. When there is less information available, task activities become more difficult to predict.

This corresponds to the finding that decision makers cannot modify the procedures during the settlement of a dispute. They have to enforce the current procedure and later make some propositions to modify it (MIN04). This firm statement refers to a mechanistic approach to decision making because it is rigid. The goal is for managers to ensure that the process is stable in order to control any eventual change. The study found that managers can be particularly rigid when they realize that bidders or suppliers deliberately want to go around the procedures (MIN04). It further means that managers' approach is situational and the action of the decision maker may change in reaction to the environment around him. The idea of predictability and rigidity found in the study are also situational and not a built-in system. Therefore, the idea that the system might be mechanistic is downplayed by the fact that the possibility exists to make change to the system after some challenges are noticed.

Aiken & Hage (1971) found that innovative organizations are those which have mechanisms to infuse and stimulate new ideas, train staff in a variety of disciplines, new ideas in a continuing basis, and permit communication. In that sense, the study reveals

that management system was innovative in that there is good interpersonal communication, debate to exchange ideas, opportunity to make propositions and a lot of training sessions for members. For example, it was found that the general manager attended a lot of training meeting and came up with the innovative idea of “collaborators” to avoid terms that reinforce hierarchical relationships. When issues are noticed, management can allow change and innovation to address them. An example was the dispute settlement commission which was reviewed because most decisions made were rigid and unfair to some bidders or companies (MIN06). This example of innovative organization corresponds to Burns & Stalker (1961)’s description of organic systems.

Furthermore, there is flexibility to present a solution to unusual cases, and from there adopt the solution as a procedure. The procedures may not address certain issues in a very specific way. Managers can then come to a solution that addresses the issue as long as this solution is in conformity with the four main principles of public procurement” (MIN04). This means that the solution found to address a specific issue can become part of the procedures. Similar changes to the regulations about the minimum and maximum for the bid were made (MIN04).

Findings about the period before the 2008 decree corresponds to Burns & Stalker (1961)’s argument that mechanistic systems are more regularly controlling of employees’ actions, information, and communication for the sake of stability in the system. They argued that such system was explicitly devised to routinely keep the conditions stable and decide the information and instructions for each position. Similarly, the management system before 2008 was based on instructions and limited information for subordinates (MIN04). Subordinates barely had the possibility to give their point of view and make

propositions for change. The system was centralized and had power over both the control and regulations functions, setting up the criteria, receiving the bids, reviewing them and deciding on the most advantageous bids. However, this changed with the 2008 decree procedures which led to the separation of the control functions and the regulation functions (NIN09). The separation led to changes in the work habits of management.

### *Communication style*

For Waiguchu et al (1999), the general tone of management in Africa is prescriptive, often authoritarian, inflexible, and insensitive. Communication is constricted, unidirectional, fabricated and rigid. The personality cult of the leader is highly emphasized (p.110). This type of communication style was not supported by any interviewee. Similar to Waiguchu et al (1999), Burns & Stalker (1961) found that there is a tendency for interaction between supervisors and subordinate of the concern to be vertical (See Table 1) in mechanistic organization. The study found that in case of concern, the subordinate addresses his immediate supervisor and the supervisor does the same up to the top (MIN07 & MIN10). There are expectations for support agents to communicate to service managers; who will directly communicate with managers, and managers communicate with general managers. Even though this description seems to present a bottom-up hierarchical system, it is downplayed by the idea that this occur only when there is need for more effective work and for effective flow of communication. In addition, the process upwards stops when a solution is found. Therefore, the system does not prescribe a mandatory bottom-up control of the communication system. Another revealed characteristic is the deficit of communication for lower employees. It was found that when a decision is taken at the top level of the hierarchy, it is not always obvious that

those of us who are at the lower level have this information on time (NIN05). It further means that the top-down communication system is cut off and does not reach the employee at the bottom. This seems to justify Burns & Stalker (1961)'s argument that in a mechanistic setting, the employee at the lower level is not given enough information. The study confirmed that there is some information that an employee at a certain level cannot provide to the person asking for it without going through the hierarchy (MIN04, MIN02). The presence of the mechanistic system here is weakened by the interviewees' statements that in such case, subordinates can make propositions through debates or by meeting the managers in person.

For Coutright et al (1989), organic systems are characterized by a consultative communication system. This fits in the example that managers and their subordinates are at the same level during debates and discussions (MIN04). In other words, the content of communication consists of information and advice rather than instructions and decisions (Table 2.1). Scott (1969) argued that less authority and humanistic-democratic values (p. 148) increase interpersonal communication (p. 134). Interviewees unanimously stated that they have good interpersonal relations with their supervisors (NIN05). Dia (1995) also found that good interpersonal relations in Burkina Faso are valued and exist in the workplace (p. 231). Burns & Stalker (1961) stated that in organic setting, a lateral rather than vertical communication through the organization, is dominant (Table 2.1).

Meetings were also use to communicate some information. Dia (1995) found that there were weekly staff meetings about policies, procedures, and guidelines, field visits and open offices (p. 225). NIN03, MIN04, MIN07, MIN10, and NIN09, through similar assertions, agreed that service notes, general assemblies, office meetings, and meeting of



the office committees serve as communication sessions. Training sessions were also used as a communicative channel. Mbigi (1994) realized that open-air sessions were an effective way to shift relations from confrontation to co-operation (p. 42). The same scenarios were found by the study. When there is a new procedure, the information is shared with different actors through training and information sessions” (MIN08).

In contrast, before 2008, the administration was all powerful (MIN04) and communication was based on giving orders and instructions. Waiguchu et al (1999)’s argument that communication is rigid and authoritative is therefore true for the system before 2008 (p. 110). There was one general office which at the same time controls and regulates the procurement. There were no delegated representatives with power and authority to communicate the procedures to the local and regional agencies involved in bidding and contracting. People or towns located at 300 kilometers from the capital city hardly had access to information or could hardly get their application to the general office in Ouagadougou (MIN08).

The system remained centralized for lack of communication tools and agents. The power to make all decisions and give unquestionable orders constitutes some characteristics of management system before 2008. Therefore, the communication system before 2008 was mechanistic while it became organic after 2008.

### ***Knowledge Possession***

Dougherty (2004) argued that in conventional organization, people cannot articulate new ideas and combine them with old ones, so the organization cannot learn because activities are not coherent and sensible (pp. 43-44). NIN09 “believes that the power of decision is limited” (NIN09). Initiatives from subordinates are permitted but

will have to go through the hierarchical system. Burns & Stalker (1961) confirmed that knowledge in hierarchical system is expressed through the lines of command and hierarchy of officers and subordinates” (p. 125). The hierarchical possession of knowledge was confirmed by the emphasis on the education level of managers and subordinates. The person with higher education or degree is expected to occupy the highest position and seen as the most qualified personnel (NIN09). Managers believe it is their responsibility to have and gather more knowledge and experience in order to guide their collaborators (MIN02, MIN01, MIN04, and NIN05). There is the belief that knowledge is likely possessed by the superior, or knowledge is thought to be in the structure or the decision from the top must be the right one. However, even though managers believe they should have more knowledge, the goal is to share that knowledge with subordinates or collaborators. There was effective sharing of knowledge or information with subordinates because the managers want to be able to train them by transferring and passing down the knowledge to them (MIN02). Despite the hierarchy and the eagerness of managers to have more knowledge, the great amount of knowledge sharing reduces the chances of a mechanistic system as it might have existed.

Furthermore, some organic structure to the knowledge aspect was found. Burns & Stalker (1961) argued that knowledge in organic settings are not retained by the head only (See Table 1 chapter two). Managers believe that experience exists at all levels, and propositions are taken into consideration (NIN05 & NIN03). This is a sign of innovation as Scott (1969) sees innovation as the generation, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services. Interviewees also supported that knowledge is the act of learning from one another by sharing research results with all employees who need

them (MIN04). Knowledge grows from the possibility to take and absorb new ideas and make updates through research.

The study shows that outside specialists and other authorities are allowed to contribute their knowledge on certain issues (NIN05). In instances of fraudulent documentation, the managers may refer the case to the competent authority to analyze the evidence and make a decision. This also resembles the organic system where importance and prestige attached to affiliations, and expertise valid in the industrial and technical and commercial milieu external to the firm (See Table 1 chapter two) are valued.

Before 2008, the knowledge system followed a strict hierarchy and the general manager's decision prevailed. This runs contrary to the effective management of knowledge. Wang & Ahmed (2003) argued that organizations should not limit the boundaries, the fluidity, inter-activeness and flexibility of knowledge necessary for production (pp. 57-58). Before 2008, knowledge was limited because there was no person responsible for procurement (PRM) to communicate and provide information to agencies and local entities (MIN08). It was not possible to share, create, replicate knowledge or learn from practice (Dougherty 2004pp. 43-44).

### **Comparing DG-CMEF and ARCOP**

After the interviews, it appears necessary to compare the two institutions. Robey (1991) made the assumption that larger organizations may prefer the mechanistic design to maintain control through concrete measures and systems because "top managers are held accountable in various ways such as reporting to taxpayers where the money goes" (pp. 93-94). DG-CMEF seems to fall under this category. It is still an institution under the Ministry of Economy and Finance, which is a big government department. The

description shows it maintains a stronger hierarchical system when it comes to positions and a stronger emphasis on the education level as a sign of knowledge. When compared with ARCOP, DG-CMEF seems more mechanistic than ARCOP. The separation of the control and regulation functions occurred in 2008 with the creation of ARCOP. MIN04 explained that the system of all-powerful administration ended with the separation and establishment of ARCOP which is now in charge of regulation.

After 2008, management in both institutions became more open and flexible towards their collaborators. They look at the results as the sign of good working conditions and success of the organization; and accomplishing the mission was more important than anything else. ARCOP emphasizes or enjoys some independence in their work, communication, and knowledge system. Even though DG-CMEF seems more concerned with hierarchy, the study found that it has become organic with the adoption of the 2008 decree; that is with the operationalization of the ARCOP in 2008 to take over the regulation functions and the introduction of collaborative work system.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration is one of the unexpected themes but important finding in this study. It comes in as what Pierce & Delbecq (1977) called a necessary “organic overlay” for mechanistic organizations to become innovative (pp. 35-36). The research revealed that subordinates no matter what their position in the two institutions are now referred to as collaborators. Managers felt disturbed when they were to repeat the word “subordinate” (subordinates as you said...) used during the interview. The idea of collaboration affects the work conditions as employees work together to accomplish their duties. The interpersonal and institutional communication became less formal and participation

therein became wide open. Dessler (1976) defended a similar structure where tasks are less defined and where the personnel regard their work as “a contribution to the overall task of the firm” (p. 57). NIN09 provides similar answers that there are not necessarily superiors or subordinates because they all contribute to the same mission. Collaboration is between everyone, the general manager, the manager, the services managers, support agents and secretaries. This philosophy was driven by the new general manager who set up “relations of collaboration and not relations of hierarchical superiors to subordinates” (NIN09). The change is similar to Scott (1969)’s view that a change in managerial behavior from coercion and fear to collaboration and reason can contribute to set a structure that makes employees comfortable. Nzelibe (1986) also supports that traditional African management thought emphasizes communalism and cooperative teamwork. This has a significant impact on the system. Working together changes the way the duties are accomplished, opens the communication system, brings more flexibility, and allow more sharing of knowledge and larger participation in decision making. Mibigi (1994) argued that developing harmony through the creation of collaborative relationships is necessary to improve management practices.

### **Manager vs non-manager answers**

There were more similarities than differences in managers’ and non-managers’ answers. Non-managers agree that there are channels to make propositions to the supervisor or top managers. It is not a closed system. Managers also confirm this argument. Non-managers and managers have the same views on the difficulties encountered with enforcing the procedures and all have a good knowledge of the procedures and the work system. The only difference was about the institutional

communication. One non-manager raised the concern that those at the bottom do not receive the information on time while managers' answers did not bring up that information. Both however agree that there is no problem with interpersonal communication and relationships.

### **Period consideration.**

Some interviewees experienced the management system before and after the adoption of the 2008 decree while others only experienced the system after 2008. This is due to rapid change in the personnel of the institutions. Overall, there are no major differences in the answers for the period after 2008 except that the first group provided some information about the period before 2008. There is no disconnection in the answers provided by the two groups. In other words, the after-2008 experience of someone who experienced the two periods did not vary from the experience of another person who has been there only after or from 2008. They had the same experience concerning the period after 2008.

### **WAEMU influence**

Findings show that it is the WAEMU Directives on public procurement that led to the separation of the control and regulation functions between ARCOP and DG-CMEF. Directive N°04 is based on procurement procedures, execution and public procurement regulation and the Directive N°05 is more about the institutional aspect. It is the Directive N°05 that really prescribed the separation of control and regulation and made it mandatory for all WAEMU member countries (MIN07). Before 2008, there was no division of the functions; instead they were all under one general institution. WAEMU's directives brought change in management system by adding one more institution.

ARCOP is now an independent with new bodies such as ORAD and preliminary recourse introduced to make work more efficient and fair. In both, concentration of powers and authority became decentralized to allow innovation. Hierarchy became less important to a greater extent in favor of collaboration. This confirms (Daft 1982)'s argument that an organic structure is needed when changes in organizational services are necessary (p.8). WAEMU Directives were necessary to make changes for better services and decision-making.

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

### Implications

The study looked at the results before the adoption of the decree in 2008 and the results after the adoption of the decree in 2008. The question researched was: Did the adoption of the 2008 decree to innovate the procurement system result in an organic type of management in the procurement institutions in Burkina Faso? With regards to the characteristics about task accomplishment, work habit, communication style, and knowledge possession, the research found that there have been some changes in the system at three levels as a result of the adoption of the 2008 decree:

First, at the institutional level, the functions of control were separated from the functions of regulations after the establishment the creation of ARCOP as opposed to the period before 2008 when DGMP accumulated the two functions. The division of these functions led to the division or reorganization of management as far the duties and responsibilities they perform are concerned. Today, one does the control and the other does the regulations. The two institutions are more open to innovation and change.

Second, at the level of management, management before 2008 was mechanistic in terms of communication style, knowledge possession, and work habits. The centralization of management made task accomplishment hierarchical as well. Top managers dictated the work system for managers and subordinates reported to them. The research found that after 2008, with separation of functions, management became more decentralized and the system was more fair and just. The existence of mechanistic characteristics are no longer important compared to the period before 2008. In other words, the system presents more organic characteristics: tasks are accomplished in collaboration, innovations and



propositions are accepted and integrated, communication is lateral and based on collaboration. Knowledge is shared, new research, and ideas are welcomed.

Third, at the level of the procedures, the 2008 decree brought about some innovative ways to make the procedures more flexible. The separation of the functions made the enforcement of the procedures more effective because the decision-making bodies became independent and innovative. The changes introduced have developed more detailed procedures and improved them as well. Not only did this happen, but also the procedures were made more flexible to all parties involved in the process. In fact, what the 2008 decree did was first to establish control mechanisms, policies, and strategies in order to help integrate change. It was suggested that the system would have a mechanistic structure as Daft (1982) explained that such system is needed when an organization must adapt to changes in goals, policies, strategies, structure, control systems and personnel” (p.8). One must recognize that this structure was actually set up to manage change effectively. The addition of “collaborative relations” therefore seemed to be a follow-up of a system that needed to innovate.

In light of all these aspects, the answer to the research question is: the 2008 Decree to innovate public procurement procedures brought about an organic management system. Not only did the creation of a new institution and the separation of functions led the detailed development and improvement of procedures which led to more transparency, credibility, independence, but management also decided to work through an “organic overlay” as argued by Pierce & Delbecq (1977). The organic overlay in this case is collaboration. The idea that all employees are seen as collaborators switched the nature of communication, knowledge, and tasks in the institutions. The management system is

now mission-driven instead of being process-based as was the case before 2008. The 2008 Decree was a result of the WAEMU requirements. In that perspective, it is to be affirmed that the WAEMU Directives have significantly influenced the management system to move it from a mechanistic system towards an innovative and organic management style.

### **Recommendations**

One way to fully understand the impact of the 2008 Decree will be to conduct the research in all WAEMU countries and compare the results. One might choose to look at the management system from two or more WAEMU members' states and compare them. Burkina Faso was only one of the eight countries that are subject to the WAEMU directives.

Future research needs to look at African cultural values and their implications for the management systems. The literature review on African scholars shows that culture might or might not be a significant driver of change and innovation or might dictate the type of management system. This question altogether applies to the cultural values of Burkina Faso. After finding that the management system is organic and based on collaboration, the next question could be: Is there anything specific about the Burkinabe culture that makes collaboration possible? Within two years, the people of Burkina Faso ousted their long ruler and opposed the military takeover. Could the values of integrity and trustworthiness discussed by Dia (1995) have been the cause of easy collaboration? Or did the values of integrity and honesty put forth by President Sankara play a role in the fact that employees embraced the idea of collaboration introduced by the general manager?

For the two institutions investigated, managers should continue to focus on the overall mission of the institutions. They will then be able to motivate the employees to commit to achieving the goals. They should continue to provide more communication opportunities and options so that they take full advantage of ideas and suggestions for improvement and innovation. The question however is how much collaboration is needed or is enough. Would too much collaboration further improve the system or could it produce adverse effects?

As the research is being closed, it is important to mention corruption; which is pervasive in works about Africa. Does the fact that the system is organic make corruption more likely or less likely? The question has been partly answered by the research since it found that the overall system became more credible. However, it remains important due some difficulties encountered by managers and employees in their day-to-day operations.

With regards to the difficulties related to the interpretation of the procedures, managers might need to develop some ethical training to inform the parties involved about the negative consequences of fraudulent attempts. Sanctions and suspensions of companies involved in fraud are only part of a system that discourages bad practices. Proactive approaches should be of planning processes to end the phenomenon. Understanding the cultural values that may lead to an undesirable interpretation of a procedure can be an effective start tool. Working out these difficulties will make the enforcement easier since managers tend to make the system strict because of intentional distortions of procedures.

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**APPENDIXES**



## Appendix A:

Summary of the 2008 decree on General Procurement: translated into English. Click link for full decree in French: <http://arcop.bf/index.php/decrets>. *Décret n°2008-173/PRES/PM/MEF du 19 avril 2008 portant réglementation générale des marchés publics et des délégations de service public*

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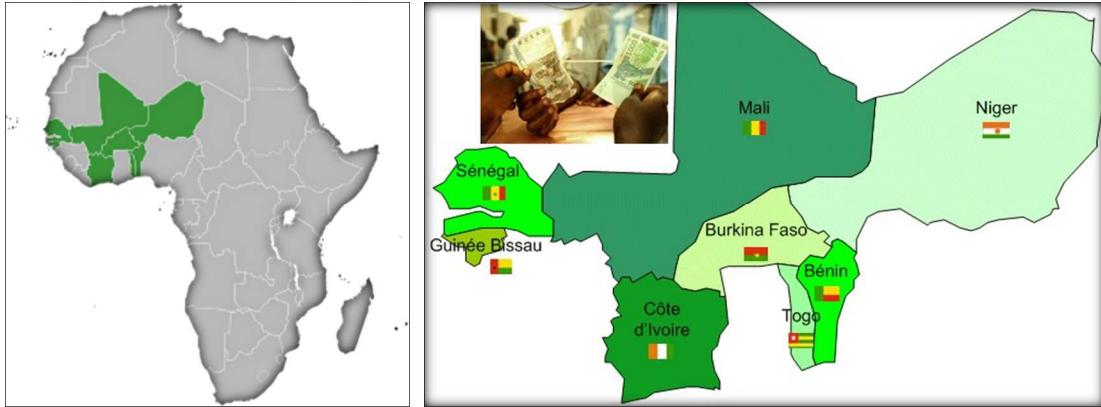
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## Appendix B: Map of WAEMU countries

Map 1: On the left is the WAEMU map within the African continent. On the right is the actual isolated map of the eight countries; on the top left is a picture of the common currency that they all use. WAEMU member countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinée-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.



*Source: <http://www.bretagne-solidarite-internationale.org/mediastore/fckEditor/image/carte%20uemoa.gif>*

## **Appendix C: Research interview questions**

*I. Please answer to the following questions about your work and responsibilities within your organization before the adoption of the 2008 decree on Public Procurement in Burkina Faso?*

1. Could you please describe your department or position and how you, your subordinates, or colleagues accomplish each job tasks and responsibilities before the adoption of the 2008 decree on the regulation of public procurement in Burkina Faso?
2. Could you please explain how easy or difficult it was for you, your colleagues or subordinates to work according to the procurement procedures before the adoption of the 2008 decree and how often did you have to make adjustments and changes to organizational work processes, if at all?
3. How easy or difficult was it for you to maintain clear lines of communication with your subordinate, superior or colleagues at work before the 2008 decree?
4. Considering yourself, your subordinates or colleagues, could you describe who possessed the skills and special knowledge to make decisions or address issues about public procurement prior to the 2008 decree?

*II. Please answer the following questions about your work and responsibilities within your organization after the adoption of the 2008 decree on Public Procurement!*

1. Given your answer on skills and knowledge before 2008, and considering yourself, your subordinates or colleagues, who would you say possesses these skills and special knowledge to make decisions or address issues about public procurement after the adoption of the 2008 decree?
2. Given your answer to the previous question on communication style, has it been easier or more difficult to maintain clear lines of communication between you, your subordinates, your superior and your colleagues at work after the 2008 decree?
3. Given your answer on your experience with the procedures before 2008, could you please explain how easy or difficult it is for you, your colleagues or subordinates to work according to the procurement procedures of the 2008 decree and how often do you have to make adjustments to organizational work processes, if at all?
4. Given your answer about your department, duties and responsibilities before 2008, could you please describe your department or position and how you, your subordinates or colleagues accomplish your duties after the adoption of the 2008 decree on the regulation of public procurement?

## **Appendix D: SURVEY CONSENT**

You are requested to participate in research supervised by Dr. Scott Granberg-Rademacker on The Enforcement of the 2008 Decree on General Public Procurement Procedures and Service Delegation in Burkina Faso: Its Influence on the Management System.

This survey should take about 8 to 15 minutes to complete. The goal of this survey is to understand the management system in the field of public procurement before and the adoption of the 2008 decree on regulation of public procurement in Burkina Faso. You will be asked to answer questions about this topic. If you have any questions about the research, please contact Dr. Scott Granberg-Rademacker at [granbj@mnsu.edu](mailto:granbj@mnsu.edu) OR Kouliga koala at [kouliga.koala@mnsu.edu](mailto:kouliga.koala@mnsu.edu).

Participation is voluntary. You have the option not to respond to any of the questions. You may stop the interview at any time by hanging up your phone. Participation or nonparticipation will not impact your relationship with Minnesota State University, Mankato. If you have questions about the treatment of human participants and Minnesota State University, Mankato, contact the IRB Administrator, Dr. Barry Ries, at 507-389-2321 or [barry.ries@mnsu.edu](mailto:barry.ries@mnsu.edu)

Responses will be anonymous. However, whenever one works with online technology there is always the risk of compromising privacy, confidentiality, and/or anonymity. If you would like more information about the specific privacy and anonymity risks posed by online surveys, please contact the Minnesota State University, Mankato Information and Technology Services Help Desk (507-389-6654) and ask to speak to the Information Security Manager.

There may be risks of participating which may occur but that is only if your answers are known to your supervisor. However, remember all information you provide is confidential.

There are no direct benefits for participating for all participants. Society might benefit by the increased understanding of the expected impact of on management as a result of the adoption of decrees such the 2008 decree on public procurement.

Verbally replying “yes” to the question: do you agree to be recorded? will indicate your informed consent to participate and indicate your assurance that you are at least 18 years of age. Verbally replying “no” indicates that you decline to participate in the survey. Now, I will go ahead and ask you if you agree or disagree to participate in the phone interview:

Do you agree to participate in in the phone interview survey on the influence of the 2008 decree on public procurement on the management system in Burkina Faso?

MSU IRBNet ID#753341

Date of MSU IRB approval: 06/10/2015

## Appendix E: Relevant statements from interviewees

### Statements about Task Accomplishment

- My tasks ...are based on collaboration but this that does prevent from having a certain independence because the office of legal and contentious affairs is a technical one (MIN04).
- And as collaborators, it is the same thing. When there is a problem, I can submit it to a collaborator to have his opinion. I may not agree with him. If that is the case, he will come in the office with the case and we will discuss it (MIN04).
- It exists in the procedures that a specialist can be called to settle an issue, but it is not formalized in a very specific way so that the institutions we call are more often institutions that we have professional relations with (NIN05).
- There is the service of... and the service of ..... When there is something, the two services divide the tasks. The service manager of xxx takes care of what concerns him, and the service manager of xxx also takes care of what concerns him. The manager of the office then coordinates (MIN01, NIN03, NIN05, MIN02, NINO9, MIN10).
- That is, the collaborators submit the application to the service manager, and in last resort, I approve so that it goes to the general manager for signature (MIN07, MIN08, MIN10, NIN09).
- Before 2008, it was fine except that the mechanism of contestation was not very well developed. It was not possible to contest the award of public procurement because we saw an all-powerful administration. If it says this thing, you must follow. It is like during a legal dispute in court against the State<sup>5</sup>, it was not really transparent (MIN04).
- In terms of transparency in procurement, there is more transparency than with the 2003 regulations (MIN04).
- I believe that in terms of accomplishment of tasks, it has very much facilitated the instruction/ reviews of work because we have an interlocutor who is the PRM whom people address when it comes to management of procurement applications (MIN08).
- But now, since the organism of settlement of disputes was made independent, this situation has evolved a lot. Because traditionally, it is the same office that controlled and resolved the litigations. In this case, the bidders were afraid of taking a legal course (MIN04).
- Now that this organism was made independent ...; they are no longer afraid of contesting the ministry. ... the system of an all-powerful administration ended with the separation and establishment of the institution in charge of control and the institution in charge of regulation (MIN04).
- But from the point of view of the tasks that we do currently, the action of control of decisions taken by the procurement bodies, it is practically the same control of bid applications, concerning the competitive bid offer and the control of the results of procurement commissions. Concerning the control functions therefore, these actions have remained. Now with the evolution of regulations, we adapt according to prevailing regulations (MIN07).

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<sup>5</sup> This refers the country, not the State like in the federal system.



## Statements about communication style

- If I want to discuss with my manager on a particular issue, I can go if she is not busy with someone external to the office (MIN01, NIN03).
- There is no such thing that I impose my decision because I am the director. Here in this office, the debate is open. It is really the collaboration between us that matters the most (MIN04).
- There are some information that an employee at a certain level cannot provide to the person asking for it without going through the hierarchy. ... But it is true that in some institutions, agents are subject to professional secret, and I think that this is the case with awards commissions because there are some confidential information that the bidder should not know (MIN04, MIN02).
- There are also the service notes, general assemblies, office meetings, and meeting of the office committees (NIN03, MIN04, MIN07, NINO9 MIN10, NIN09).
- When you come into our office, the office is like a classroom where we discuss. Sometimes, you cannot even tell who the director is. And if someone has an issue, we raise it. Often in the office of the secretary, we read a newspaper, we may come across an issue and raise it and discuss it. I can walk into the office of an employee if I need something; or that I want to discuss this and this, and we discuss it (MIN04).
- When a decision is taken at the top level of the hierarchy, that is to say at the level of the council of regulation, it is not always obvious that those of us who are at the lower level have this information on time... As for interpersonal communication, there is no problem at that level. I can go and say hi to others, or go see the director. We have good interpersonal relations (NIN05).
- When the collaborators have some difficulties or a concern, the concern is sent to the service manager who may directly settle if there is no particular issue. If it is above his competences, he send the concern to me and we exchange and we see what solution is available or if it is above my competences, I refer to the hierarchy, the general manger, to find a solution (MIN07, MIN10).
- When there is a new procedure, we communicate with different actors, we have training and information sessions for the actors through which we try to inform them how that would work (MIN08).
- I do not think that the communication system is hierarchical. First of all, it depends on the nature of the information that is to be provided to the external person. Participant (MIN02)
- All the decisions that are made on settlement of disputes are posted on our website. We have a trimestral newspaper that synthetized the results of the commissions, which are made available to the public (MIN02)
- In our workplace here, the primary tool of communication is the telephone. In addition to the phone, we use emails (NIN03)
- The system of communication, it is generally in writing. Mails are not very preferred comparatively to the international systems that we know such as banks where one can give their point of views directly by emails. But it is slow in writing, it is because we must write letters, hand it over to liaison agent. In short, we would gain more by using electronic system. But there too, there are some limits. There are some ministries where the internet connection is very weak; we are not able to check emails. There are problems of power shortages (MIN08)
- When there is a new text/procedure, we communicate with different actors, we have training and information sessions for the actors through which we try to inform them how that would work (MIN08)

- One must say that before 2008, we also try to move towards materialization, that is the use of the electronic management of the procurement (MIN08).
- As I said, in 2003, we were not deconcentrated. For example, someone who is 300 kilometers from Ouagadougou, he sends his application to be considered, there are some problems of transmission, they must send through carriers. But today, there is a representative next to them who communicate them the necessary information (MIN08).

### Statements about work habit

- During the settlement of a dispute, we cannot modify a text. Either the text exists or it does not exist. If the text exists, even if it is bad, we enforce it. And later, we may propose some measures to correct the text. But we cannot decide during a dispute settlement that we cannot enforce a text because it is bad. No, we enforce it (MIN04).
- For the case of public procurement, we evolved from the fact that there is really no basis to make the four main principles<sup>6</sup> of public procurement prevail. If the solution that we arrive at, is in conformity with the four principles, we prefer to follow that solution and we sometimes simply justify that choice by saying that it is because there is no texts regarding that specific case (MIN04).
- We hand over some propositions to the secretary of legislation as is required for the reviewing of the texts, to take this and this issue into account because during the settlement of dispute, we have this and this difficulty enforcing the text (MIN04).
- That means that when they come for a complaint case, they want to know what could be the position of ORAD<sup>7</sup>, and if we tell them that they do not stand a chance, they eventually will not move forward with the case. But if we tell them that they stand a chance, they will move forward with the case. The difficulty that we have is mainly how to make a decision as someone who is involved with the instruction of cases and at the same time as someone to whom clients come for counseling. When we are in this kind of situation, it is like we are being judge and party (NIN05, MIN08).
- We made some modifications to the texts on the procedures of public procurement and on the administrative texts of the commissions of awards and commissions of reception (MIN01).
- The text about ARMP was adopted in 2007, but the operationalization itself was in 2008 when the detachment was really realized with the 2008/173, when we saw the separation of the control function from the regulatory functions. This emanates directly from WAEMU directive 2005 which prescribed the separation of the control functions from the regulatory functions because we have the directives 2004 and 2005 (MIN07).
- If at the level of the mechanisms, there is the possibility to render justice, to recognize the rights when they are not recognized, it means that somehow, they trust the system or the mechanism (MIN06).
- One should note that with the 2008 decree, one of the most visible innovations was the separation of the regulation functions from the control function. In the past it used to be the DGMP that played those two roles. Therefore, it was judge and party at the same time because the preliminary recourse and the reviews of public procurement had

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<sup>6</sup> The four principles are: The economy and efficiency of the procurement process; freedom of access to public procurement; equal treatment of candidates, mutual recognition; transparency of procedures, and through rationality, modernity and traceability process (Article 2, 2008 decree)

<sup>7</sup> Organ/body for the Friendly Settlement of Disputes

to be known by DGMP before one could introduce a complaint before the administrative judge and that was dictated by the 2003 decree (MIN08).

- There has been a considerable improvement because before 2008, everything was concentrated because it was only one general manager; when it comes to public procurement, he was the only one who signed all the decisions. But with the 2008 decree, it is as if there has been a de-concentration of powers, he has delegated some of his power to his managers and collaborators (MIN08, NIN09)
- Among other modifications, we came to the conclusion that the threshold of procurement was very weak and did not allow an effective absorbing of budgetary credits that were allocated, especially in rural townships which have a fair number of urgent needs. Therefore, it was agreed on that the request for quotation concerning the awards which amount was less than 1 million be raised to a threshold of 5 million to allow the body, notably the rural townships to absorb these budgetary credits and to really meet the needs of their populations (MIN07).
- From my point of view, we can say that the 2008/173 procedures are defined according to the types of awards. If it is a small award that you want to make, there are some technical procedures. Everything is well defined. That allows all actors, those with important budget and those with small budgets to apply for the bid they want. The regulations guarantee some flexibility. For example, for the contracts that are less than 20 million Fcfa, I can call for a procedure called request for quotation or price investigation... While there is another procedure called bid offer which is more complex and requires the constitution of a committee for example (NIN03)
- The problem is simply that people act as if they do not know the texts. In fact, they want to avoid the text in order to take advantage of something or avoid the difficulties that the text poses to them. It is the enforcement or the interpretation, say the interpretation that is good for them that they use more often (MIN04)
- I should say that there has even been a number of criticisms especially concerning the settlement of disputes. It is that body that through some decisions that they make committed some acts that were interpreted by others as being prejudicial to the administration and to the private sector. This led the institution to want to review this body (MIN06)
- It is all the more disturbing because the advice we provide to the client may not be accepted by the members of ORAD<sup>8</sup> since the members of ORAD are also independent. It is true that we provide them with technical advice as specialists on issues of public procurement, but they also possess some knowledge about public procurement that allows them to not necessarily consider the solution that is proposed to them (NIN05)
- Also, we have some issue about the eventual interpretation of texts. There are some people who actually come for preliminary recourse, but they will put down “request for explanation”. So, when we face this kind of issues, we try to see whether he in fact according to the content of the letter, is contesting the results. If it becomes clear that he is contesting, even if he writes request for explanation, we assume that it is a preliminary recourse. But in general, we are careful because it may give the impression that we are favorable to some people (NIN05)

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<sup>8</sup> This refers to the body in charge of friendly settlement of disputes

- It is true that often we have this kind of difficulties where we have to call someone else to help out. Otherwise, the general principle is to simply enforce the regulations. If we have a problem at the level of the settlement of disputes, we enforce the texts and based on the texts, we eventually say who is right and who is wrong” (NIN05)
- There is especially the fact that decisions are sensitive and sometimes they must be deliberated in a relatively brief deadline because the committee has seven (7) days to render a decision; as public procurement is characterized by fidelity; we cannot lose time when rendering decisions (MIN06)
- In the field, we believe that since they are goods with regulated prices, there is no impact on competition and when we launched the competitive bid offers, it ended up with unfruitful results because the actors were not interested since they are goods which prices were already regulated so that it did not urge competition. Thus the regulations allowed dealing directly with gas companies, but the threshold was raised to 250 million. The second modification that is the 2013/142, totally eliminated the threshold for acquisition since there was really no impact in terms of competition (MIN07)
- Now one of the innovations is the creation within ministries of the persons responsible of public procurement (MIN8)
- Also maybe another difficulty at our level... is the amount of applications because we get a lot of applications.... the difficulty means that the application that was decided on was not well elaborated. It requires that we take time to examine it and address the insufficiencies by correcting them (NIN09)
- With the transposition of WAEMU directives, there has been a complete scission that says that the control function and the regulation function must be separated; which led to the creation of ARMP which became ARCOP in July 2014 which ensures the regulation and the DGMP which became DGCMEF<sup>9</sup> which is responsible of the a priori control (MIN08)
- Today, the volume of procurement has considerably increased. That can be said to be related to the development as a whole. In all townships, awards are made. With the 2008 decree, one must recognize that there has been a boom in procurement, which is why at the level of duties, it is not easy. You receive a lot of bid offers therefore, we have to review a lot. That could be explained by the credibility of the system. We may have the bids but if the institutions are not credible, people will not bid, but if they believe that they stand a chance, if they have the right to complain, to make their arguments prevail, they adhere to the system. (MIN08)
- There has been a considerable improvement because before 2008, everything was concentrated because it was only one general manager; when it comes to public procurement, he was the only one who signed all the decisions. But with the 2008 decree, it is as if there has been a de-concentration of powers, he has delegated some of his power to his managers and collaborators (MIN08, NIN09)
- The insufficiencies may occur as a result of the lack of knowledge of the procedures. For example, it is formally forbidden to specify a brand in the bid but it happens often to see

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<sup>9</sup> DGMP became DGCMEF (General Office of control of Public Procurement and Financial Commitments)

some brand indicated in the bid. That makes it necessary to take time to do some observations and explain (NIN09)

- I will not say that it is difficult but as any procedure, there are some insufficiencies, I believe that this is what leads to the reviewing of procedures in order to correct the insufficiencies; which means that the current regulations also have some insufficiencies. Participant (MIN10)
- In terms of transparency in procurement, there is more transparency than with 2003 regulation. I believe that in terms of accomplishment of tasks, it has very much facilitated the instruction/ reviews of work because we have an interlocutor who is the PRM whom people address when it comes to management of procurement applications (MIN08)
- Before 2007, we were a central body linked to the ministry of economy and finance. In 2008, the office was established as a general office. But you know following the institutional reforms of the MEF, there are some bodies that were reshaped to make action much more efficient, so that the general office has been merged with the general office of financial control to become the general office of public procurement and financial commitments (MIN07)

### **Knowledge possession**

- It is a priority that those who are at the top of the hierarchy should have more capacities than those working under him. He must be able to train them by transferring and passing down the knowledge to them (MIN02, MIN01, MIN04, NIN05).
- But I should say that experience exists at all levels. At some point, the service manager can make propositions about responsibilities, activities, and measures to the director who may accept them or reject them (NIN05).
- However, this does not really matter because knowledge is not formal, because one may not know sometimes. It may happen that I learn from the service manager of ... because he may have conducted some research that I did not do in that specific field. So, during the resolution of the problem, I learn from him; as he may submit a case and I will correct and tell him a better way to handle it. Thus, he also learns from me (MIN04).
- It exists in the procedures that a specialist can be called to settle an issue, but it is not formalized in a very specific way so that the institutions we call are more often institutions that we have professional relations with (NIN05).
- I believe that it is exactly the hierarchical system. The center of decision is the minister, and then the general manager, at the level of deconcentrated offices, the power of decision is limited. There are many things we need to refer to hierarchy. Now, in terms of initiatives, we must be careful. Initiatives to move things forward; yes, it is authorized. But there are certain decisions one must refer to hierarchy. The hierarchical system is very strong. At the level DGCMEF, the hierarchical system is respected (NIN09).
- The post of manager is a post reserved to highly qualified personnel. They are Category A staff. Some colleagues are category B, D, and A. Category A are those who have the Master II, or Master I with at least two years of professional training, and also those who passed professional national competition examinations (NIN09).
- Even if the manager and the service manager have the same degrees, the manager overall has more experience. In our office, a lot of people have been trained especially in public procurement (MIN01).

- Some decisions are taken at the office level. The manager is the one who has the competences to make that decision. But we can make some propositions. If it is at the permanent secretary level, it is the secretary who statues on the matter. But I should say that experience exists at all levels. At some point, the service manager can make propositions about responsibilities, activities, and measures to the director may accept them or reject them (NIN03).
- One can make a decision and later realize that it is not applicable on the ground. It is not worth it. Therefore, one should put concertation first on order to take good decisions (MIN07).
- As manager myself, I am obliged to have knowledge and competences both in training and administration (MIN02)
- It is true that often we have this kind of difficulties where we have to call someone else to help out. The general principle is to simple enforce the regulations. If we have a problem at the level of the settlement of disputes, we enforce the texts and based on the texts, we eventually say who is right and who is wrong (MIN04)
- It may happen that at the time the ORAD session is taking place that we do not have enough elements to make a decision in an objective way, while we have seven (7) days deadline to decide. When this kind of situation occurs, we diligently contact the competent service that can take care of the situation... Currently in Burkina Faso, we face a situation where there are a lot of frauds in the application materials, which compels us to contact the competent authority that delivers the documents to confirm the validity of the documents before we can make a decision. In that case, we can call the competent service during the session or we may send a mail requesting a quick reply. Or when we are really short of time, we simply ask the contracting authority who initiated the bid to check with the competent authority and based on its findings, make a decision (NIN05)
- Thus, it is necessary that we have some personnel that is competent enough to generate the information, enlighten and support the different actors (MIN06)
- It is a young personnel that is ambitious; and that may, if their expertise is not well internally allocated, want to leave. That can be a threat to the competencies within the organization. The fact that salaries may not meet the expectations may lead them to look elsewhere (MIN08)
- In terms of expectations, I should say that applications that are reviewed at our office, we really need a qualified personnel. It is true that we work with everybody and there is no problem, and everybody does well. But the bid regularly require that we have qualified personnel. Otherwise, those who work here work in collaboration (NIN09).
- It is a special office that requires that the agents who are affected there have a certain level. I should that the minimum one needs to be effective and do well is the baccalaureate, if not the Master's.... some training sessions are organized to allow them to build on their skills ... there are some specialized institutions of public service ..., they will be initiated in public procurement... (MIN10)
- Before 2008, it was the same mechanism, because the decisions are not authoritative. The decisions are matured, because we are in a technical field therefore, we must meet all involved actors and ensure that we make good decisions (MIN07).
- ...Traditionally, it is the same office that controlled and resolved the litigations (MIN04).