

Strategic Change Management in International Non-Profit Organisations: Comparative Study

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Abstract

Non-profit organisations (NPOs) play a critical role in society's political and socio-economic development as more cost-effective, flexible and less bureaucratic surrogates for governments. This paper focuses on the management of strategic change in this rarely researched sector. The study critically reviewed the management of strategic change in a regional inter-governmental organisation and a regional non-governmental organisation. It investigated how change was previously managed and assessed the impact of the respective change management initiatives on the strategic direction of the organisations. The study also carried out a comparative analysis of change management strategies in the two organisations highlighting what worked well in one organisation that might not have worked well in the other and vice versa. Finally, it considered how change can best be managed in future in these and other similar organisations. The study utilised a case study approach and adopted an inductive stance resulting in general conclusions and recommendations being drawn on future change management in the organisations based on the researcher's empirical observations taking a 'phenomenological' approach. The study revealed some striking similarities just as there were acute disparities in the manner strategic change was managed in both organisations. The conclusion from this study is that the NPOs do not follow any specific model of change as espoused in the literature although some aspects of the models could be retroactively applied. This suggests that non-profits have a lesser motivation to adopt and implement change instantly and apply the change models that would be efficiently and effectively applied to commercial enterprises which may be due to the lack of profit motive in this sector. The overall implication is that there is great potential for NPOs to 'borrow' and customize some proven strategic change management practices which have resulted in improved performance and attainment of desired results in the private sector and in some NPOs internationally as attested to by this study.

Keywords: Strategic change management, international development organisations, non-profit organisations

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to Non-Profit Organisations

The genesis of non-profit organisations (NPOs), also known as not-for-profit, non-governmental or third sector organisations is traceable to the mid-19th century when the significant non-profit, the World's Young Christian Men's Association (YCMA), was formed in 1844 in pursuit of social objectives (Glaeser & Shleifer, 2001; Muravu, 2020). According to Glaeser & Shleifer (2001), Jean-Henri Dunant after co-founding the YCMA, later founded the Red Cross in 1864 after witnessing the bloody battle of Solferino. John Muir founded the non-profit Sierra Club in 1892. Since then, NPOs have continued to play a critical role in society's political and socio-economic development. The development NPO is thus an enterprise that has emerged fundamentally pursuant to social objectives through implementation of social programmes which result in positive social change. Their investment open life-long opportunities to target beneficiaries, hitherto disadvantaged, individuals, families and communities and this is their true 'shareholders' return on investment. The non-profit organisation model differs from conventional business in that 'investors' in the former don't want a return and the 'customers' usually pay nothing (Kareithi & Lund, 2012; Muravu, 2011). Ordinarily, NPOs do not earn a profit but can achieve a surplus which they utilise for self-preservation and furtherance of their objectives (Anheier, 2000; Glaeser & Shleifer, 2001; Kareithi & Lund, 2012).

1.1.1 Definition of Non-Profit Organisations

In definitional terms, NPOs are "a diverse set of institutions that operate on non-profit basis, generally serve the public sector, and are engaged in long-term development work within the framework of international development cooperation" (Kareithi & Lund, 2012, p.1; Fowler, 1997). Like all organisations, they differ in size, mission, operational mode and impact (Anheier, 2000), ranging from "grassroots or community level to national, regional or international level" (Kareithi & Lund, 2012, p.1; Fowler, 1997) thus "the diversity of NGO typology is a complex, contested and controversial matter" (Kareithi & Lund, 2012, p.1). Anheier (2000) reckons their models range from approximating a government agency; resembling a business firm while others are slightly more than a mere informal network. Fowler (1996) asserts that NPOs are unlike both private sector companies and government in that they lack the traditional 'bottom line' nor are they recipients of citizenry 'judgement' via civil strife or the

periodic electoral vote. Despite these apparent differences there is a convergence of thought among researchers as to what are the core characteristics of NPOs (Anheier, 2000; Salamon & Anheier, 1997):

Organisation: They are constituted as a formal institution differentiating them from informal entities;

Private: They are autonomous from government hence they not public sector institutions;

Non-profit-distributing: Generated surpluses are not returned to owners making them clearly distinct from businesses;

Self-governing: They control their activities which clearly distinguishes them from affiliates of other companies; and

Voluntary: Their activities and / or management are non-compulsory albeit they may have some voluntary component.

1.1.2 The Role of Non-Profit Organisations

There is reasonable amount of literature on the role of NPOs in the United States and Europe (e.g. Anheier, 2000; Billis, 1989; Handy, 1988; Hudson, 1999) and globally. Ebrahim (2003) asserts that the rapid growth of NGOs all over the world in the last three decades of the 20th century was oiled by the belief among donors that NPOs are more cost effective than governments in delivering key social services, have a better reach to societal poor and underprivileged, and have played a key role in democratization processes the world over. They have transformed into a crucial sector of the globalised economy and play a self-evidently fundamental role in assisting governments with execution of social programmes with positive impact in many countries (Anheier, 2000; Brickley & Van Horn, 2000; Muravu, 2020). Research in the NPO sector revealed that NPOs increased threefold from circa 300,000 to over 1,000,000, in the United States alone between 1970 and 2000. In the 1990s their revenues constituted over 10% of Gross National Product (GNP) thereby constituting a critical sector of the economy (Brickley & Horn, 2000). NonProfit PRO, a US think tank on non-profit strategy and management estimates the number of US NPOs at between 1.5 and 1.8 million in 2018 (Te, 2018; Te, 2018a). This means that NPOs have more between quintupled and sextupled in the last half century and the numbers keep rising each day.

1.1.3 Criticisms of Non-Profit Organisations

NPOs have been roundly criticized (e.g. Ebrahim, 2003; Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Mackintosh, 1992; Reddel, 1999;) including claims that there is lack of empirical evidence to support their achievements. They are further accused of overvaluing their societal necessity claiming it is based on perceived usefulness than demonstrable assessment of their practical achievements. The increased role of development NPOs in international development and attendant exponential upsurge in their number in the last decade of the 20th century unavoidably led to massive apprehension and focus on their performance from development practitioners, society, governments, development partners, policymakers and academia (Edwards & Hulme, 1995; Edwards & Fowler, 2002; Kareithi & Lund, 2012; Kareithi & Flisher, 2009; Unerman & O'Dwyer, 2006). Consequently, NPO research later reflected an increasing tendency of substantial attempts to demonstrate performance (Lewis, 2006; Kareithi & Lund, 2012) due to sterner official donor covenants and amplified desire by NPOs to demonstrate their achievements for “accountability, self-motivation and improvement” (Kareithi & Lund, 2012, p.1; Fowler, 1996; Patton, 2003). Further, difficulties have been identified pertaining to the assessment of operational performance of development NPOs (Fowler, 1996) but these are beyond the purview of this study. Notwithstanding these criticisms, NPOs play an actively “important role in health care, education, social services, and the arts” and are ‘a prominent feature in many other countries’ (Salamon and Anheier, 1996; Brickley & Horn, 2000, p.2).

1.2 Purpose of the Study

Given the demonstrable positive societal value of the non-profit sector, there is surprisingly little empirical work on strategic change management in NPOs among the general dearth of management literature in the sector (Muravu, 2020; Kareithi & Lund, 2012). Despite NPOs having existed for nearly two centuries not much is documented on the sector until its rapid progression in the 1970s (Kareithi & Lund, 2012). Kareithi and Lund's (2012) study on NPO research revealed i) few published NPO researchers in Africa ii) the continuous necessity for amplified NPO research. Additionally, there has been a call from scholars for additional and more systematic research in the NPO sector coming with the caveat that NGO research trends have been “based on ideological grounds in the absence of empirical verification” (Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Kareithi & Lund, 2012, p.1). The literature also claimed that insufficient NPO research imply this subject area will remain perpetually embryonic, negatively impacting access to accurate and comprehensive information which would impair funding decisions (Unerman & O'Dwyer, 2006; Fowler, 1997; Edwards & Hulme, 1995) the sector desperately needs and is hugely reliant on. This paper attempts to address the identified dearth of published strategic management literature and contribute too theory of international non-profit development organisations which is one of the most important sectors of the modern globalised political economy.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Drawing from the purpose of the study, the overall aim of the research is to develop recommendations for future

management of strategic change in the subject non-profit organisations and other similar organisations. The study will critically review the management of strategic change in international development NPOs with specific reference to an international non-governmental and a regional inter-governmental organisation. The specific objectives of the research are:

- To critically evaluate the literature on strategic change management particularly as it relates to NPOs.
- To measure how strategic change has been implemented using an inter-governmental and an international organisation as a primary point of reference.
- Based on the literature review and the research, provide recommendations for future change management for the organisations.

It will investigate how change has been managed in the past and the impact on the strategic direction of the organisations. Finally, it will recommend how change can best be managed in future in these organisations. Additionally, the study is of specific interest to the author, who has been involved in NPO general management for two decades. The paper will attempt to address the following questions:

- How has strategic change been managed in non-profit organisations in the past?
- What has been the impact of change management on the organisations' strategic direction?
- What worked well in one organisation that didn't quite work well in the other and vice versa?
- How can strategic change in NPOs be managed more effectively in future?

This paper is structured as follows:

- Section 1 provides the study's background and sets the context, aim and objectives of the study.
- Section 2 constitutes a critical review and comparative analysis of the different organisational change models, approaches to implementing strategic change and their applicability to the non-profit sector.
- Section 3 details the method and articulates the rationale for the adopted research approach.
- Section 4 is the presentation and analysis of the research data and major findings of the study.
- Section 5 presents the study's findings and concludes by drawing implications and recommendations therefrom.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews the existing models and frameworks on the management of organisational strategic change and various approaches to implementing change and covers the following:

- Definition of strategic change;
- The purpose of organisational change;
- Change management theories;
- Change management in government;
- Change management in the non-profit sector; and
- Identifying existing gaps in current literature to be explored by this research.

2.1 Change Management

2.1.1 Definition of strategic change

There are many definitions of strategic change just as there is a myriad of authors on the subject. Moran and Brightman (2001) defined change management as 'the process of continually renewing an organisation's direction, structure, and capabilities to save the ever-changing needs of internal and external customers' (p.111). Senior and Flemming (2006) define organisational change as "winds which are many and varied - from small summer breezes that merely disturb a few papers to mighty howling gales which cause devastation" (Knight & Marshall, 2008 p.55). The literature is clear that change can be rapid or moderate, significant or negligible, can take place over a long period of time or abruptly and it can occur at the strategic or operational levels.

2.1.2 Purpose of Organisational Change

There is abundant literature on organisational change and approaches to implementing change. Key change management writers are agreed that change is now 'the stable state' of modern organisations (French & Bell, 1995; Kotter, 1995; Gravenhost et al 2003). Organisations change in response to various factors like changes in the external environment, market changes or due to internal demands. It can therefore be argued that in an era of rapid change like the 21st century, no organization is immune to change hence change becomes a perpetual necessity.

2.1.3 Change Management Theories

As acknowledged already, a lot has been written about change management. Knight and Marshall (2008, p.55) admit that there is a 'myriad excellent textbooks on Change' confirming the abundance of quality literature on generic strategic change. Below we discuss some key theories on management of change. The theories are presented in chronological order covering over half a century and reflects how change management theory evolved rather than importance.

2.1.3.1 Lewin's 'Forcefield Analysis' Model of Change

Lewin's (1947) 'forcefield analysis' is one of the earliest change models which is a decent starting point for any change management inquiry pipeline. Lewin provides a unique way of appreciating planned change through "unfreezing, changing and refreezing" in his Force Field Analysis model (Schein 1996, p.71; Rahim & Panicker 2000, p.3). The model highlights the importance of identifying what Lewin calls "driving and restraining forces of change". Schein (1996) stated, "I found Lewin's basic change model of unfreezing, changing and refreezing to be a theoretical foundation upon which change theory could be built solidly" (p.59). He openly admitted that he was amazed at 'the depth of Lewin's insight and the seminal nature of his concepts and methods' (p.71). He conceded that the limited aspects of Lewin's theory on which he reflected in his (Schein's) work 'have deeply enriched our understanding of how change happens and what role change agents can and must play if they are to be successful' (p.71). Lewin's model is criticized for being highly 'simplistic' and 'mechanistic' on its assumptions regarding organisational stability because organisations are dynamic and can never be 'frozen'. Some authors argue that the model is more suited for small scale incremental and isolated change. Further, it underplays organizational power and politics and its 'top-down' approach ignores 'bottom-up' change. Despite the criticisms, the model has withstood the taste of time and continues to influence planned change in organisations nearly three quarters of a century after its proposition.

2.1.3.2 Greiner's 'Growth Phase Model'

Also called Greiner's Organisational Life Cycle, is a natural second model for consideration because it describes the various stages through which organizations grow and develop. Greiner (1972,) identified five (later six) phases in the growth of an organization. Each phase is followed by a 'point of crisis', a key change or decision point, which signals the start of the next phase. They are:

Creativity phase: This is often the entrepreneurial stage which is capped by a 'crisis of leadership'.

Direction phase: Division of labour results is followed by a 'crisis of autonomy'.

Delegation phase: Characterized by formal system of control and ends with a 'crisis of control'.

Coordination phase: The organization has reached its peak and performance starts to decline hence there is need for strategic change. A 'crisis of red tape' ensues.

Collaboration phase: New evolutionary path, matrix organization, simplified control mechanisms ending by a 'crisis of uncertainty/internal growth'.

Greiner (1998) added a sixth phase, *Extra-organisational solutions phase*, which is characterized by strategic alliances, mergers, holdings, organisational networks. Organisations need appropriate strategies and structures to cope with each growth phase. Greiner's framework explains why certain management styles, organisational structures and coordination mechanisms work in certain phases yet may not work in others. The model also highlights that at the crisis point, some painful and far reaching decisions will have to be made. The major weakness of Greiner's model is that it does not provide solutions for transitioning change from one stage to the next. This model can be applied together with models and techniques for diagnosing the prevailing change situation to help prescribe the most suitable change approach.

2.1.3.3 Tushman et. al's 'Frame-Breaking Change'

Tushman, Newman and Romanelli (1988) developed a framework of change implementation like Grundy's in certain respects. Based on numerous organisational studies and case history, they proposed an organisational life model consisting of 'periods of incremental change, or convergence, punctuated by discontinuous changes.' They put forward two types of converging change: 'fine-tuning' and 'incremental adaptations'. The former is aimed at improving what is already done well with the latter involving minor changes to align to small shifts in the organisation's environment. Tushman *et al* note that these two types of change are suitable for minimal change but where major changes in strategy, structure, people and processes is required the organisation will have to undergo 'discontinuous' or 'frame-breaking' change. The major strength of Tushman's model is that it is based on wide research and investigation.

2.1.3.4 Grundy's 'Major Types of Change'

Grundy (1993) maintained that it is important for managers to identify the type of change they intend to implement as it determines how to approach the change. Grundy identified three 'varieties of change' which are reflected in Figure 1 below. 'Smooth incremental change' is change that emerges 'slowly in a systematic and predictable way'. 'Bumpy incremental change' is characterised by periods of relative quiet followed by an accelerated pace of change. 'Discontinuous change' is marked by rapid change 'in strategy, structure or culture or in all three'. Grundy's 'three types of change' model is criticised for being overly simplistic. Grundy confirms that the model had not yet been empirically tested and this supported the contention that it is based on 'observation' rather than 'investigation and research'.

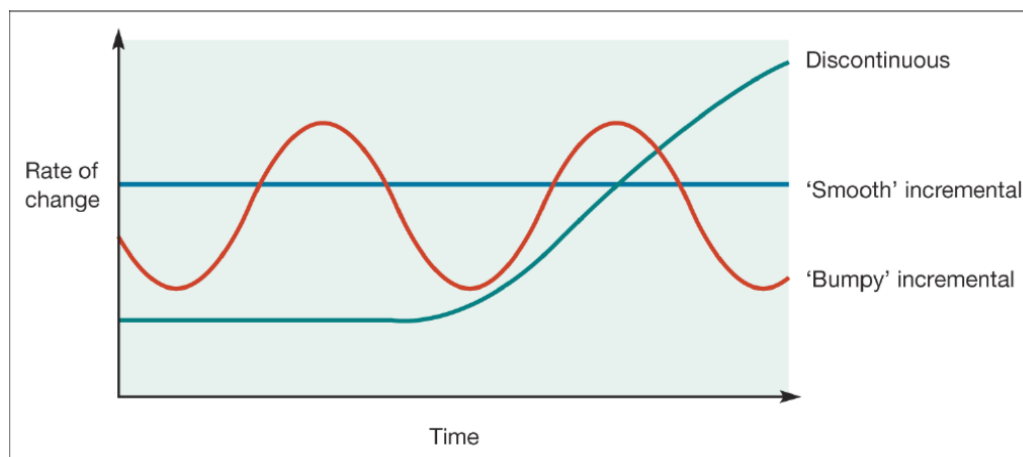


Figure 1: Grundy's Major Types of Change
Source: Grundy (1993)

2.1.3.5 Kotter's 'Eight Stages of Change'

Kotter's (1995) popular Eight-Step Change model for planning, implementing and sustaining change is an important tool in any leader's toolbox of change. The steps are:

- i) Establish a sense of urgency
- ii) Form a powerful coalition
- iii) Create a vision
- iv) Communicate the vision
- v) Empower others to act on the vision
- vi) Plan for and create short term wins
- vii) Capitalise on early wins to motivate others to pursue further change
- viii) Institutionalise new approaches

Kotter notes that failure to address any one of the steps is a significant error which can negatively affect the change process outcome and that making fewer errors can spell the difference between success and failure.

2.1.3.6 Strebel's 'Break Points'

Linked to an organisation's competitive environment, Strebel (1996) introduced the concept of 'breakpoints' as a way of identifying when organizations must change their strategies in response to changes in competitor behavior. This 'evolutionary cycle of competitive behaviour' begins with the innovation phase when a new business opportunity is discovered. This results in 'divergence' competitors' behavior to exploit the new opportunity. The second phase 'convergence' follows due to saturation as competitors converge on quality and re-engineering strategies. Beyond this a new business opportunity is identified to bring a new break point and the cycle re-starts. Strebel's model is useful in exploring the organisation's external environment particularly the economic and technological aspects. Strebel further provides useful hints on how to decipher patterns in the environment that indicate the imminence of a breakpoint.

2.1.3.7 Balogun and Hope Hopley's 'Change Kaleidoscope'

Balogun and Hope Hailey (2004) introduced the change *kaleidoscope* which sets:

- i) The overall organisational change context to be considered to avoid quick fixes to change problems.
- ii) Eight contextual features (time, scope, preservation, diversity, capability, capacity, readiness and power).
- iii) Six design choices (change path, change start-point, change style, change target, change roles and change levers) as reflected in the change *kaleidoscope* (Figure 2).

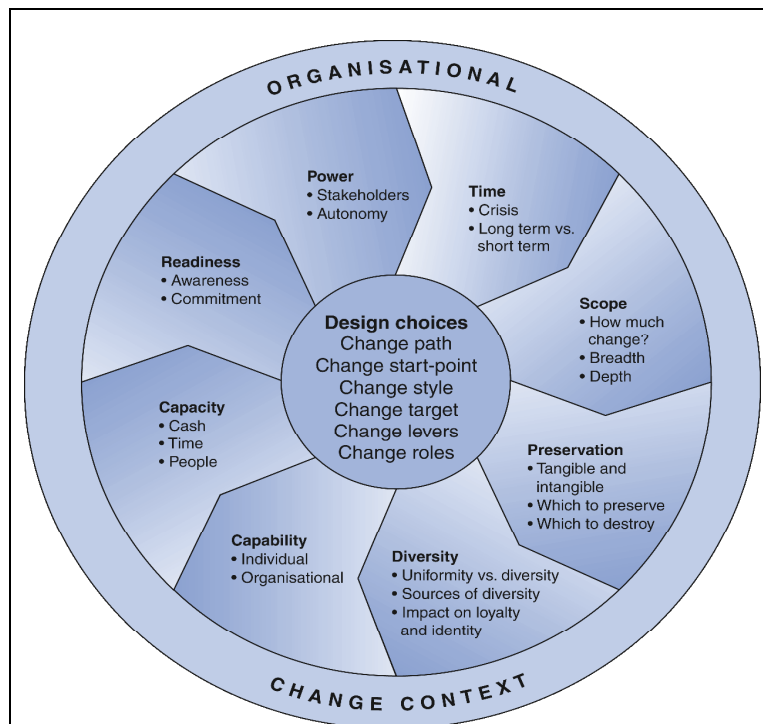


Figure 2: The Change Kaleidoscope

Source: Balogun & Hope Hailey (2004)

The change *kaleidoscope* exposes the unenviably numerous implementation decisions that a change agent is faced with and must make in context of the organisation.

2.1.3.8 Mintzberg's 'Change Cube'

Mintzberg *et al* (2003) present organizational change process by plotting it in terms of a series of dichotomies from 'formal to informal', 'conceptual to concrete', 'micro to macro', 'evolved to planned' and 'top-down' to 'bottom-up'. An organisation can change its direction (strategy) or its present state (structure). Coined the 'Change Cube Model', the authors' purpose was to enable readers to gain insight into how change affects the configuration of the various organisational elements. Since a change in one element of strategy or structure results in change in other more concrete elements, these inter-dependencies are better managed when 'cause-effect' relations are well-comprehended.

2.1.3.9 Types of Strategic Change

Balogun and Hope Hailey (2005) and Johnson and Scholes (2005) identified the following four types of strategic change (see Figure 3).

Adaptation: Refers to incremental change which doesn't require shift in the present paradigm.

Reconstruction: Is change which may be rapid and could result in upheaval in the organisation but does not demand fundamental change to the existing paradigm.

Evolution: Is a change in strategy which requires a paradigm change but over time.

Revolution: Refers to change which requires rapid and major strategic and paradigm change.

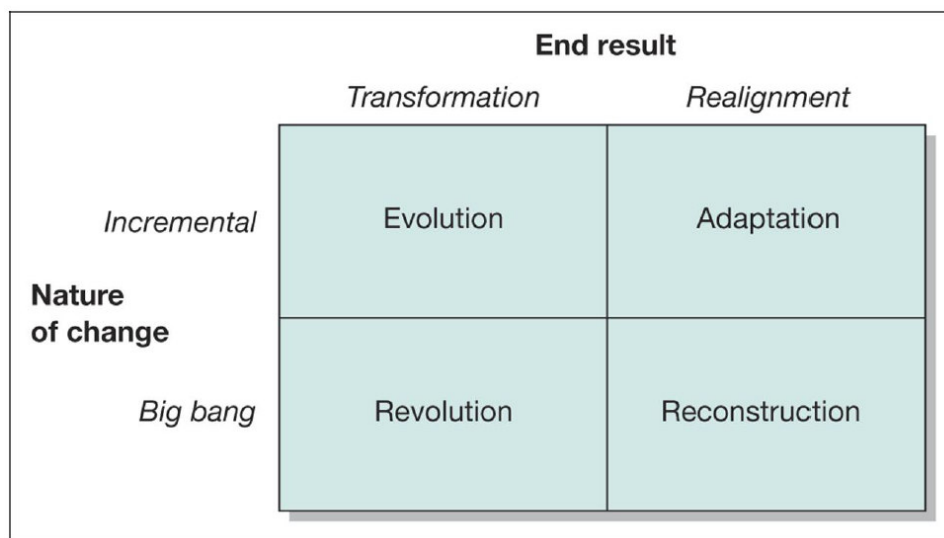


Figure 3: Types of Change

Source: Balogun & Hope Hailey (2004)

The figure identifies four types of strategic change plotted against the nature of change and the end state.

2.1.3.10 The 'Cultural Web'

Culture is 'how things are done around here' (Drennan, 1992). Johnson (1990), Johnson and Scholes (1999), Johnson *et al* (2005) and Knight & Marshall (2008, p.270), devised the cultural behavior model as a technique for managing change. They tried to explain why firms often fail to adjust to environmental change as quickly as required. The model is concerned with the manifestations of culture in organisations and identifies six interrelated elements, namely:

- Symbols / titles*: Symbolic aspects of the organization,
- Power structures*: Core assumptions and important beliefs
- Organisational structures*: Formal or informal systems
- Control systems*: Measurements and reward systems
- Rituals / routines*: Interactive behaviour and rituals
- Myths / stories*: Embed organizational history into the present

Johnson (1990) concluded that firms developed a way of comprehending their organisation – a paradigm or shared mindset – out of which they could not think if it were particularly strong. Together with Lewin's forcefield analysis, the 'cultural web' is a useful means of identifying obstructions to and potential accelerators for change.

2.1.4 Styles for Managing Change

Styles of change management describe how the change process is actually managed. They are not new at all but to some extent reworking and expansion of the 'design choices' in the Balogun and Hope Hailey's change model. They sit on a continuum ranging from "coercion" in which change is forced on people, through 'collaboration' and 'participation' in which employees are involved on what and how to change, to 'education' and 'delegation' in which change is mostly delegated.

2.1.5 Resistance to Change

Even with the best planned change process, some reaction to change is inevitable. Negative reactions are bound to be experienced in overt behaviour or passive resistance. There are four basic reactions to change and these can be countered in various ways.

Disengagement: Refers to psychological withdrawal from change which is countered by involving the affected individual to freely identify and address their concerns.

Disidentification: The individual's identity feels threatened by the change and they must be involved to establish change ownership and commitment.

Disenchantment: Is usually expressed as negativity, anger or coalition building. The anger must be managed, acknowledged as normal and not held against them.

Disorientation: The employee become lost and confused and change must be explained to minimise the ambiguity that they experience.

Managers must be able to diagnose these reactions especially because each brings with it significant and different concerns such that there is no 'one best way' to address them. The traditional view of managing resistance to change is to treat it as something to be overcome but the contemporary view holds resistance simply as some form of feedback which can be used very productively to manage the change process. The key strategies for managing resistance to change are communication, participation, empathy and support.

2.1.6 Synthesis of Change Management Theories and Concepts

The literature review has revealed that change can be ‘strategic’ or ‘operational’, ‘transformational or incremental’, ‘planned or emergent’, ‘evolutionary or revolutionary’, ‘continuous or discontinuous’, ‘re-engineering or learning’. A lot of organisations have made a huge investment in knowledge and learning, yet Gravenhurst *et al.*, (2003) argue that organisations never seem to get it right given that the outcome of change is, in most cases, not what was planned. It would therefore appear that no one has ‘cracked the code’ of change just yet and the reality is that 70% of all change initiatives result in failure (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004; Beer & Nohria, 2000). Gravenhurst *et al.* (2003) further argue that this is because the pace of change is so fast that old projects are dumped before anticipated results are realised and new ones taken on board abruptly. In some cases, change leaders and agents fail to realize the need for urgency of the change, the speed of change is either hurried or slowed, change objectives are not properly aligned or are too general and leaders have either too much or too little authority to be effective (Beer *et al.* 1990; Kotter 1996; Pfeffer 1992; Gravenhurst *et al.* 2003). If change is to be successful, there is a need to study what hinders or facilitates far-reaching change in the “characteristics of organisations, and in the design and management of change processes” (Gravenhorst *et al.*, 2003, p.84). Figure 4 below, Barbara Senior’s Nature of Change, is a summary of the similarities and congruences between the change theories and research positions discussed in this paper. It highlights the need to consider the environmental forces of change followed by the type of change. It represents the view of significant authors on change literature but there is need to evaluate the potential value of each of these models, concepts and ideas.

Environmental Forces for Change			Types of Change				
Ansoff & McDonnell (1990)	Strebel (1996)	Stacey (1996)	Tushman <i>et al.</i> (1988)	Dunphy and Stace (1993)	Balogun & Hope Hailey (2004)	Grundy (1993)	Stacey (1996a)
Predictable	Weak	Close to certainty	Converging (fine-tuning)	Fine-tuning	Adaptation	Smooth incremental	Closed
Forecastable by extrapolation	Moderate	Close to certainty	Converging (incremental)	Incremental adjustment	Evolution	-	Contained
Predictable threats & opportunities	-	-	-	Modular transformation	Reconstruction	Bumpy incremental	-
Partially predictable opportunities	Strong	-	-	Corporate transformation	Revolution	-	-
Unpredictable surprises	-	Far from certainty	Discontinuous or frame breaking	-	-	Discontinuous	Open ended

Figure 4: Environmental conditions and types of change
 Source: Senior and Fleming (2006)

The above comparative table evaluates the various models, theories, concepts and research positions of authors discussed in this paper, by considering environmental forces of change and the type of change.

2.2 Change Management in Government

Some change authors have attempted to apply existing models of change to government with differing levels of success. This section considers two such attempts by Ostroff (2006) and Panicker & Rahim (2007), how they fared, what gaps they identified and whether there are any proposed developments to plug hitherto existing gaps in attempting to apply conventional change models to public agencies.

2.2.1 Ostroff’s Change Management in Government

In his 2006 *Harvard Business Review* article, Ostroff asserts that high performing government agencies resemble well-run companies in respects such as having “worthy goals; well designed, rational processes; strict accountability; and effective leaders” (p.1). Yet fundamental differences their purposes, cultures, and the operational context conjure mean they experience intrinsically different challenges.

Ostroff (2006) identified four obstacles unique to bringing about successful change and significant, sustained performance improvement in the public sphere. These were:

- i) Agency leaders are appointed based on policy command and cronyism, and not meritocracy.
- ii) Bureaucratic and time-consuming appointment of agency leaders leaves insufficient time for actual implementation of meaningful change.
- iii) Agency operational rules meant to safeguard public sector governance and accountability lead to inflexibility.
- iv) Multiplicity of agency stakeholders who can disapprove of the agency operations any moment.

Based on his vast experience as both a public and private sector consultant, Ostroff identified five principles which he believes characterise successful public sector change efforts and can help achieve desired efforts. These are:

- i) Improving performance against agency mission.
- ii) Win over diverse stakeholders.
- iii) Create a change roadmap.
- iv) Take a comprehensive approach.
- v) Be a leader not a bureaucrat.

In summary, Ostroff (2006) observed that leaders of government agencies operate under encumbrances not common in the private sector. But he noted that the best of them have improved performance by “adopting and adapting” some goals and methods that have been proven in business.

2.2.2 Rahim and Panicker’ Organisational Change in Government

Rahim & Panicker (2007) admit that there are numerous models of organisational change but the essential framework for most of them follow the Lewinian model, conceding that the entire organisational change process revolves around this very simple model. They performed a literature review on organisational reform and government and added one important aspect which they felt was missing from the literature.

2.2.2.1 Prerequisites for Successful Change

Conner’s (1993) prerequisites for successful organisational change are ‘pain’ and ‘remedy’ (Rahim & Panicker 2007, p.7). The later justifies breaking from the status quo while the former will solve the problem or take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the current situation.

2.2.2.2 Addressing Resistance to Change

Rahim and Panicker (2007) also reviewed the literature on managing resistance to change. Koch (2006) believes people refuse to change because ‘change hurts’ such that response to change is predictable and universal: humans simply avoid it. Harvey (1996) believes resistance to change does not exist hence using Lewin’s force field analysis to help managers overcome change resistance is a sheer waste of time (Rahim & Panicker, 2007, p.7). He also claims people don’t resist change but resist punishment. Therefore, instead of focusing on resistance to change as a concept, the change agent should set conditions which make change rewarding or punishing in an organisation. Rahim & Panicker (2007) claimed, to be most effective, change implementation must minimise surprises and incorporate systems for ‘clarifying and familiarising employees with the new ways of operating’ (p.8) supported by Peters (1994) and Adams (1988).

2.2.2.3 Model for Organisational Change in Government

Rahim and Panicker (2007) considered the existing models of organisational change, (including Ostroff’s model), and concluded that none could be applied directly to governments. They argued that the fundamental nature of political leadership coupled with lack of typical shareholder accountability made application of existing models weak. They developed a model for organisational change in government. First, they considered that most changes occur either due to a ‘push’ (internally driven need for change) or a ‘pull’ (external factors which force you to change) sometimes called ‘supply-led’ or ‘demand-driven’ change. They reckoned that government requires a major effort for both demand and supply led efforts to be successful. They therefore proposed a ‘Push & Pull’ model for government as opposed to the conventional ‘Push vs. Pull’. They also suggested that normal incremental models of change may not be sufficient to bring about the required changes in government due to the sheer magnitude of changes and the proliferation of thinking or culture which must be changed. ‘Reforming’ had to occur after changing the existing form. For government, they proposed to change Lewin’s model of “Unfreeze=>Movement=>Refreeze” to “Melt=>Reshape=>Refreeze” as reflected in Figure 5 below.

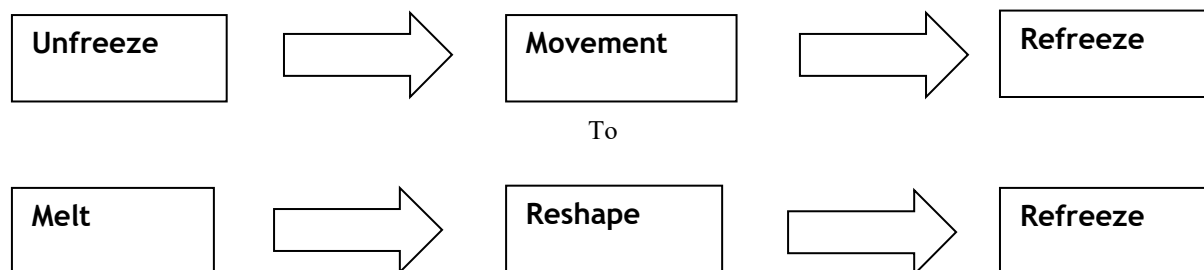


Figure 5: Government organisational change model

The above figure reflects Panicker & Rahim’s (2007) proposal to change Lewin’s model of change for it to be applicable for government organisations. The implications of applying this model are that:

- i) Change needs must be even more pronounced;
- ii) Attempts must be made for radical rather than incremental change; and
- iii) An action research model may need to be applied bearing in mind the unique context of the respective government organisation.

The overall organisational development (OD) process will still consist of the usual stages of diagnosis, feedback, planning and implementation. Once change is adopted, the following steps are suggested for governmental OD:
Systems approach: adopt a holistic approach to incorporate all potential change elements.

Envisioning: create critical mass for change.

Appoint change agents: preferably internal as opposed to external consultants.

Address culture issues: most critical aspect involving change in work environment and shift in staff mindsets.

Rahim and Panicker (2007) refer to ‘making dinosaurs dance’ (p.2) in their thesis for a reason. They reckon that 21st century government is “a large behemoth, often pulled down by its own size and complexity” (p2). They thus analogise: like dinosaurs, government lives in an era of discontinuous change. But unlike, dinosaurs, government cannot afford the luxury of making itself extinct. It must and has to change. They concluded, “If you pull the right strings, the dinosaur can dance. Caveat. Use very strong strings” (p.20). This implies that, with the right tools, attitudes and conditions, change management in government can potentially yield positive and desired results.

2.3 Change Management in Non-Profit Organisations

Clearly, the models of organisational change proposed in literature are meant for ‘for-profit’ organisations making them unsuitable and can therefore cannot be directly transplanted to the non-profit sector. Rahim and Panicker (2007) came closest when they developed their model for change management in government complimented by some glimpses of Ostroff’s principles on change management in government. But this still falls far short for applicability in NPOs. Granted, NPOs share the same problem with government when it comes to shareholder accountability, readily observable and quantifiable outputs, and profit objectives or lack thereof. However, NPOs are much smaller in size and possess the flexibility to respond to changes in the environment far much more than government does. Some are even run on commercial lines and hence are a ‘half-way house’ between government and commercial enterprises.

Anheier (2000) argued, “The management of non-profit organisations is often ill understood because we do not understand these organisations well, and it is frequently ill conceived because we operate from the wrong assumptions about how non-profit organisations function” (p.2). His thesis was that current management and organisational theories do not fully address the question as to whether NPOs are fundamentally different from both the ‘for-profit’ enterprise and the public agency to require separate management models and practices. This seemingly simple question inadvertently leads to other challenging ones like whether NPO management could be a variation of business management? Or does it approximate public management and administration? Or is the management of the non-profit enterprise dissimilar to both, requiring models that fit neither the corporation nor the public agency? Armed with the earlier NPO definition, it is justifiable to ask if the non-profit form is intrinsically associated with distinctive features that lead to characteristic behaviours and outcomes in terms of strategic change management.

Many distinguished writers have made and supported such claims, for example:

- The essence of NPOs is their dual functions as ‘value-guardians’ and ‘service-providers’ (Kramer 1981; Anheier, 2000).
- The value orientation of NPOs is their essential feature (Hudson 1999; Paton 1996; Anheier, 2000)
- Trust and voluntarism are at the centre of NPOs (Tonkiss & Passey 1999; Anheier, 2000).

Anheier (2000) concludes that each of these proposals may be valid to a certain degree and may be applicable to some NPOs but certainly not all. He reckons that some NPOs mirror Kramer’s behaviors, but others just do not. True, some are ‘value-led’ or ‘value-based’ but others function following no known value system or ideology. Others don’t exhibit any notion of ‘voluntarism’ and may not have any volunteers at all. More so, some authors consider NPOs as “trivial and inconsequential” (Anheier, 2000, p.2; Perrow, 1986, pp. 172-173). Yet the trend over the years has been exactly the opposite. Some NPOs have emerged as dominant economic forces while others have become indispensable political actors (Salamon et al, 1999; Meyer et al, 1997; Lewis, 1999; Anheier, 2000). Over time, many NPOs have adopted the language, management practices and even the philosophy of business enterprises globally. The author can testify to this reality based on his experience spanning two decades in various managerial roles in international development organisations. Anheier (2000) asks why and how this happened but more worryingly the literature is clear that NPOs and non-profit management are still not so well understood. The pertinent question is why?

2.4 Summary

The models of change reviewed in this section attempted to conceptualise strategic change, some in overly simplistic terms such as Grundy’s three types of change. Overall this section revealed that there is no one-size-fits-all model or framework for managing change but rather provides impetus for organisations to adopt a nuanced approach and to analyse situations when change is desirable and help map out the most suitable approach to bring about the desired change. It was noted that, in reality, change is much more complex, manifests itself differently in different organisations and occurs at different organisational levels and functions, and in different forms. All models

exhibited commonalities in two aspects. Firstly, change, whether internally or externally driven, is multi-dimensional and comes in various forms, shapes and sizes. Secondly, leadership of organisational change is management's most important role in the 21st century. Furthermore, the literature review has illustrated that existing models of organisational change are more suited to the commercial business enterprise and none can be directly transposed to non-profit entities. Rahim and Panicker's (2007) model for organisational change for government was a spin-off from this clear deficiency. Our view is that their model cannot be applied to NPOs too because of the fundamental differences between these enterprises and public agencies. The literature highlights the importance of change and suggests ways to approach it but offers little empirical evidence to support the proposed theories and approaches. This paper attempts to cover this glaring knowledge gap in the literature.

3. Method

This section discusses the rationale for the research approach and methodology adopted to facilitate replicability and support the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

3.1 Research Methodology

The primary objective of the research is to critically evaluate strategic change management in the non-profit sector and develop recommendations for future management of strategic change in NPOs. The specific objectives of the research are:

- i) To evaluate the generic literature on strategic change management and its application to NPOs.
- ii) To critically review how strategic change has been implemented using an inter-governmental and an international organisation primary case studies / points of reference.
- iii) Based on the research findings, provide recommendations for future change management in these and similar NPOs.

From the literature review, the increasingly important role of NPOs since the 1970s and their continued mushrooming to date the world over was self-evident. Yet, as the author can testify from decades of experience in these organisations, they are characteristically slow in adopting change. When they do finally embrace the change, it is handled in a *laissez faire* manner. The gap which exists in how NPOs manage strategic change was identified and confirmed through the literature review. To address the research questions adequately, the study was supported by both primary and secondary data. Use was made of unstructured interviews as the main means of collecting primary data. This was supplemented by information from secondary sources such as the respective organisation's annual reports, internet sources, unpublished and published literature.

The research adopted an inductive stance since general conclusions and recommendations on future change management in non-profit organisations were drawn based on the researcher's empirical observations taking a phenomenological approach (Ghauri *et al*, 1995). The research method or technique employed was primarily 'qualitative' since the findings are not a result of applying 'statistical methods or other procedures of quantification' (Ghauri *et al*, 1995, p.85). The qualitative method suited the study most since the objective was to gain an in-depth insight into a specific phenomenon. Moreover, the outcome was based on studying human experiences and organisational behaviour on the subject of strategic change management (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Ghauri *et al*, 1995). Since the researcher's aim was to gain insights as opposed to testing a hypothesis, in an area where there is limited theory available as guidance, the research strategy was descriptive and premised on comparative case studies (Ghauri *et al*, 1995). This method was chosen since 'how' and 'what' questions were addressed, the researcher did not have full control over events and focus was on a real life, current phenomenon (Yin 1989; Ghauri *et al*, 1995, p.88) in more than one organisation with the objective of comparative analysis and drawing some general conclusions. The methodology comprised the following:

3.1.1 Literature Review

This entailed a review of relevant published literature on strategic change management.

3.1.2 Secondary Data Collection

This involved literature search and review of existing historical material, records, correspondences, reports and websites. As an insider, the author had access to extensive organisational information that is normally not accessible to external researchers. Secondary data was used to supplement and 'triangulate' or 'validate' the primary data. (Arkley & Knight, 1991; Bloor, 1997; Halloway, 1997; Groenewald 2004).

3.1.3 Primary Data Collection

The field research involved unstructured face-to-face or 'in-depth' interviews coupled with direct observation and interaction with Executive Management of the two target organisations. The objective was to establish their views and perceptions on the management of strategic change in their respective organisations thereby facilitating an in-depth exploration of change management practices and the impacts on their strategic direction.

3.2 Research Tools Design and Distribution

The author paid close attention to ethical research using the following documents:

3.2.1 Informed Consent Form

The form was designed to obtain prior informed consent of the respective target organisations and participants. It provided research details and clarified the participants' role, rights and obligations including confidentiality, anonymity and the right to withdraw from the research anytime.

3.2.2 Standard Ethics Protocol

The protocol further reinforced the participant's role, rights and obligations. The protocol was read to the interviewee before each interview and a copy was deposited with the participant after the interview.

3.2.3 Interview Questions

With 'unstructured' interviews there is no pre-determined list of questions, but a clear idea and storyline is required about the issues and circumstances to be explored. The researcher used the following questions as the basis for exploring the pertinent research issues and in guiding the overall framework of the interview.

- What were the key strategic changes which have occurred in the organisation since its formation?
- How has change been managed in the past and how did it impact the organisation's strategic direction?
- How can the organisations ensure that change is managed in a more effective way in future?

3.3 Interview Process

Use was made of unstructured or in-depth interviews because of the nature of the research which is a qualitative inquiry and the data must capture people's 'language and behaviour' through their 'words and actions' (Berry, 1999). Qualitative interviews are one of the most important and commonly used data collection methods in qualitative research (Myers & Newman, 2007). It was the main data gathering method employed in this study. Data was collected through face-to-face interviews that were audio recorded with participants' prior consent. The participants agreed to be audio-taped based on mutual trust of confidentiality and the interviews were held in a friendly environment since most of the participants already knew the researcher. The longstanding rapport countered interviewer suspicion and distrust normally directed to external researchers right from the start. The interviews were conducted over a three-week period and each lasted between one hour and one and half hours. Rough interview notes were taken during the interview and more detailed field notes drafted soon after the interviews. The interview data was transcribed by the researcher within a day after the interview for use in qualitative data analysis. A transcribed copy was sent to each participant for confirmation.

3.4 Sample Selection and Justification

The following two organisations were chosen for the comparative case study:

3.4.1 Organisation 1: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

COMESA is a regional inter-governmental organization consisting of 19 Member States (MS) in Eastern and Southern Africa which was formed to "contribute to regional economic integration through trade facilitation and infrastructure development in various sectors" (www.comesa.org). COMESA was formed in 1981 as the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for its member states and transformed into COMESA in 1994 through the signing of the COMESA Treaty. Its headquarters is based in Lusaka, Zambia. COMESA's vision is "To be a fully integrated, internationally competitive and prosperous economic community with high standards of living for its people and ready to merge into the African Union" (COMESA Annual Report, 2009).

3.4.2 Organisation 2: Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)

MISA is a regional non-governmental organisation that was created in 1992 to promote a free, independent, pluralistic and sustainable media environment in Southern Africa. MISA's Regional Secretariat is based in Windhoek, Namibia supported by National Chapters in 11 Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) countries. MISA's vision is for "A southern Africa region in which the media enjoys freedom of expression, independence from political, economic and commercial interests, pluralism of views and opinions." (www.misa.org).

3.4.3 Rationale for Sample Selection

The two case studies were chosen since the author decided to carry out a comparative study using the inductive approach but seeking general explanations. These chosen cases were current and immediate past employers of the researcher respectively and were readily accessible to the researcher. The researcher also considered resource constraints such as time, funds and travel logistics for conducting the research. A comparative analysis will show what was done well in one organisation and may not have been done so well in the other organisation and vice versa. The researcher chose a total of ten participants, five from each organisation's Executive Management comprising of directors in COMESA and regional managers in MISA. Boyd (2001) considers two to ten interviewees as 'sufficient to reach saturation' (Groenewald 2004, p.11), while Creswell (1998 pp. 65, 113) believes 'long interviews with up to 10 people' is ideal for a phenomenological study (Groenewald 2004, p.11).

3.5 Data Analysis

The following methods of data analysis were employed:

3.5.1 Field notes

Although field notes are normally classified as a secondary data storage method, they are also a form of data analysis as according to Lofland and Lofland (1999) they are ‘part of the analysis rather than the data collection’, by virtue of the fact that they involve ongoing interpretation (Groenewald, 2004, p.15).

3.5.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted right from the point of data collection since the interviewer had to interpret responses to interview questions as well as ask probing questions. Ghauri et al (1995) refer to this as simultaneous data collection and analysis. Final analysis and interpretation of the data was done using Hycner’s (1999) simplified ‘explicitation process’ applying the following steps (Groenewald, 2004, p.17):

- i) Bracketing and phenomenological reduction.
- ii) Delineating units of meaning.
- iii) Clustering of units of meaning to form themes.
- iv) Summarizing and validating individual interview and modify as necessary.
- v) Extract general and unique themes from all interviews and form a composite summary.

As the study pursued phenomenological attitude, the researcher drew meaning out of the individual cases hence no data categorisation or quantification was necessary. More so, coding was not required since the analysis was to provide ‘new integrative insights’ from understanding a specific phenomenon and the findings synthesized into a final written ‘logical, consistent and persuasive report’ (Ghauri et al, 1995).

4. Findings

4.1 Overview of Findings

This section presents the findings of the primary research in the context of the literature review. The term ‘explicitation’ has been preferred to ‘analysis’ which, according to Hycner (1999) is a misnomer in phenomenology as it implies ‘breaking into parts’ as opposed to ‘investigation of the constituents of a phenomenon while keeping the context of the whole’ (Groenewald, 2004, p.17). The research produced several important general findings on the management of strategic change in the studied organisations. The explicitation of the primary data obtained from the qualitative interviews resulted in clear themes for both organisations which fully address the research questions and can be linked directly to the specific objectives of the research. The findings were analysed and presented according to the themes as shown below:

- The key strategic changes and how was change managed by NPOs
- The impact on the organisations’ strategic direction
- What may have worked well and not so well in the organisations

Finally, the section winds down with a comparative analysis of change management in the NPOs studied to draw what worked well in one organisation that didn’t quite work well in the other and vice versa.

4.2 Strategic Change Management in COMESA

4.2.1 Key Strategic Changes in COMESA

From the interviews, it emerged that between 1981 to 2010 COMESA went through several strategic changes and the key ones are presented in these findings.

i) *Transformation from the PTA to COMESA*: A major change in COMESA was its transformation from the PTA which was formed in 1981 to COMESA in 1994 (see Figure 6 below).

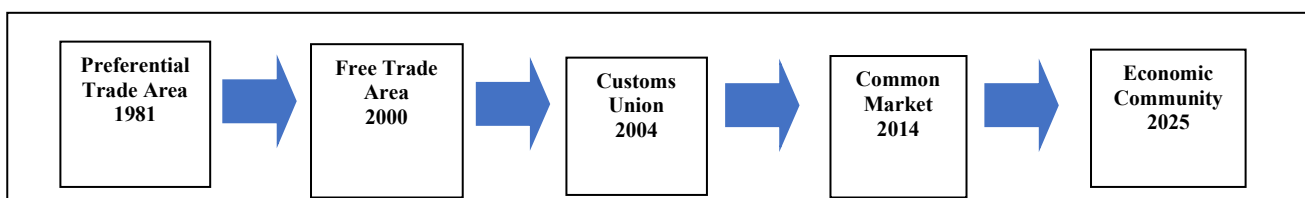


Figure 6: Transformation of COMESA

Source: Muravu (2011)

The figure above reflects transformation of COMESA from PTA in 1981 to its long-term strategic goal of achieving Economic Community status by 2025.

ii) *Formation of the Free Trade Area (FTA)*: The FTA was formed in 2000 and involved elimination of tariffs on COMESA originating products by nine Member States with the expectation that the others would soon follow suit.

iii) *Launching of the Customs Union (CU)*: COMESA launched the CU as successor to the FTA in 2009. A CU is as a merger of two or more customs territories into a single customs territory, where MS engage in free trade among themselves and apply a common external tariff to third party imports.

iv) *Changes to the organisational structure and creation of COMESA regional institutions*: COMESA adopted a comprehensive decision-making structure which evolved over the years from the one originally set by the PTA

Treaty to reflect the changes that the organisation experienced during its life cycle. The COMESA Secretariat (CS) which originally adopted its organisational structure from its PTA predecessor in 1994 underwent various restructuring exercises since then. Also, several regional institutions were created to promote sub-regional co-operation and development. These include the COMESA Clearing House, the COMESA Trade and Development Bank, the COMESA Bankers Association, the COMESA Leather and Leather Products Institute, the COMESA Re-Insurance Company, the Africa Trade Insurance Agency and the Regional Investment Agency.

v) *Formation of the Tripartite Arrangement:* In 2008 COMESA, the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) adopted a Tripartite arrangement. This required each Regional Economic Community (REC) to promote economic and social development and growth through regional integration as building blocks to the African Economic Community (AEC) pursuant to the Final Act of Lagos signed by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Heads of State in 1980.

4.2.2 Strategic Change Implementation in COMESA

The interviews revealed a lot of insight on the approaches to implementing strategic change in COMESA, which are discussed under six key dimensions of organisational change espoused in literature (Beer & Norhia, 2000, p.16). These are: change goals, leadership, change focus, change process, reward system, and use of external consultants.

4.2.2.1 Change Goals

The change goals in COMESA have mainly been to meet the dictates of the PTA / COMESA treaties coupled with need to meet the demands of the operational environment or in response to external changes. This is summed up in what one of the interviewed directors had to say:

COMESA as an organisation is essentially closed to the founding Treaty, which cannot be amended. The PTA Treaty's life only ended with the signing of the COMESA Treaty in 1994. The milestones which are set up in the treaty become the main drivers of change, coupled with changes in the external environment. (Director 1, COMESA)

Most of the COMESA strategic changes that were identified by the interviewees as detailed above were pre-determined by the Treaties or were founded through signing of agreements or Charters while changes to the organisational structure was a response to the demands of the external environment.

4.2.2.2 Change Leadership

The study revealed that the decision-making process in COMESA, being a regional inter-governmental organisation, is quite complex. Predictably, the structure and operations of such a regional organisation will mirror that of the 19 governments of which it is a hybrid. Yet it is the decision-making process which determines the speed and effectiveness with which change can be implemented. One interviewee said:

The whole process starts internally with the management team strictly guided by the treaty, previous Policy Organs decisions and the general goings-on. Once a need for change is identified by management, it goes through the rank and file of the various Policy Organs up to Authority level. Once the decision is made it reverts to management for implementation. For me this is not top-bottom or bottom-up approach but mixed. However, I should hasten to say that during implementation literally everyone is involved. (Director 2, COMESA)

4.2.2.3 Change Focus

The study indicated that COMESA has traditionally focused on streamlining the structures and systems (organizational "hardware") per the archetype (theory) E of change (Beer & Norhia, 2000) as a way of managing change. For example, in 1997, the CS revised its structure to address the changing environment, operations and activities through introduction of a programmatic approach. In 2004, COMESA further commissioned a mid-term review of the organisational structure in order to assess its appropriateness considering its planned programmes, vision and priorities for the future. The then new Secretary General adopted a new approach altogether reflected in his 'not-business-as-usual' statement below:

The previous approaches left COMESA entangled in a 'policy and procedure trap' at the expense of results. But my interest is on delivery and results and this starts at the top. When you look at my mission reports there are concrete results there. Yet I have seen minutes and reports which unfortunately are long on issues and short on results. For 2011, technical personnel will have to ensure that things happen on the ground. I will not allow missions and meetings that are not results-oriented. This may sound harsh, but the lesson I have learnt over the last couple of years is that when you have Managers who do not share the vision of the leader, it is difficult to get results. (Secretary General, COMESA)

4.2.2.4 Change Process

From the study it emerged that change is well planned and adapted from the overall framework, the Treaty.

COMESA always has a clear, comprehensive, and shared action plan and this helps in terms of achieving internal coordination and it also tends to foster confidence among both internal and external shareholders. The plan is, to the leadership, ... a compass ... not only providing the overall strategic direction but telling quickly when we are getting off-course. (Director 3, COMESA)

Once change decisions are approved by the Authority, they revert to management who then decide the best way to execute them or to implement the change. Depending on the size, nature, complexity of the change and (non)availability of in-house capacity, some change was approached through formation of in-house task forces comprising members from various departments or was thrown back to the departmental or unit head to manage. Action plans have ensured clearly defined roles and responsibilities while setting up of change programme task forces ensured the “best brains” are working on the organisational transformation.

4.2.2.5 Reward System / Culture Change

The study also looked at the issue of the reward system as it applies to change management in COMESA as reflected in one interviewee’s sentiments below.

As it happened, COMESA’s reward system has been both in financial terms in the form of improved remuneration for professionals as well as reinforcing culture change. This may sound contradictory but it’s not. Remember that we are competing for regional human resources with other RECs, such as SADC and EAC. Financial rewards addressed the short-term need for market competitiveness while culture change provides us with capabilities for future success. (Director 3, COMESA).

COMESA ensures fair and competitive remuneration for its staff by conducting salary surveys every two years and adjusting its remuneration regime accordingly. Culture change management emerged as a major issue given that COMESA employs over 200 professional staff, sourced from its highly competitive labour catchment area of 19 MS, within its 12 divisions and units. These different nationalities bring together their diverse cultures, history and values to one place. To tap into this cultural diversity, the CS holds regular staff retreats and Total Quality Management (TQM) sessions to encourage information and experiential sharing among staff.

4.2.2.6 Use of External Consultants

From the study, it was clear that COMESA utilises its in-house resources to the highest extents possible as recommended in literature. This is reflected by the fact that COMESA has a highly competent professional work force over 50% of which are holders of advanced degrees and / or professional qualifications. However, COMESA engages external consultants to carry out specific assignments such as in-country technical / feasibility studies.

4.2.3 Impact of COMESA’s Change Management Approaches on its Strategic Direction

We address whether the change approaches adopted by COMESA met desired change programs’ objectives.

4.2.3.1. Positive Impacts:

A prominent finding was that, overall, COMESA’s change management approaches positively impacted on the strategic direction of the organisation. The following examples support this view:

- i) COMESA’s specialised regional institutions, played a key role in their respective areas of competitive advantage and had positive impact on its regional integration and economic development agenda.
- ii) Since inception, the CS was structured to be lean and efficient and this aspect has always been reflected in all subsequent changes to its organisational structure. The effect of change on the CS’s structure has been achievement of efficiency and cost effectiveness. The divisional structure that was introduced in 1997, for example, resulted in a CS that was aligned to meet the region’s changed needs and requirements.
- iii) The establishment of the FTA changed the interplay of economic relations between COMESA MS forever. The study revealed that the FTA was growing at over 20% per annum and intra-COMESA trade increased from US\$3.1 billion to US\$14.3 billion from 2000 to 2008 respectively. The achievement of the CU is another proof that COMESA’s approaches to managing strategic change have positively impacted on the regional governments’ attempt to improve the welfare of their citizens.
- iv) The Tripartite arrangement has been a very significant step towards the overall goal of the African Union to deepen the economic integration of the African continent. The proposed road map, draft legal and institutional instruments for establishing the Tripartite FTA have been developed the by the TTF with a proposed Tripartite FTA establishment date of 1 January 2012. The other impact of change management on the Tripartite is that the three RECs have already started to implement joint programmes in various sectors and initiatives. For example, the launch of Africa’s first One-Stop Border Post between Zambia and Zimbabwe in Chirundu in 2009 has totally changed the way in which the three RECs operated in the past. (COMESA Annual Report, 2009)
- v) The holding of annual retreats helped to develop common values that have led to the formation of a distinctive COMESA corporate culture. TQM sessions helped to build rapport and team spirit, and to generally exchange information amongst staff.

As a recognition of excellence in change management at regional level, the COMESA Secretary-General, was in October 2010 awarded the *Drivers of Change Award* in the Government Category by the Southern Africa Trust for his instrumental role in establishing the Tripartite. “Through his leadership, a future that looks promising is being crafted for Africa”, noted the award’s judges. The award recognises individuals or organisations from Southern Africa that are making real impact, “especially in developing effective public policies and strategies, to overcome poverty.” (COMESA News, 2010, p3)

4.2.3.2. Negative Impacts:

The only albatross on COMESA’s good record on achievement of positive change management results is the

characteristic slow pace of change. One interviewee lamented:

Change in COMESA is painfully slow. This causes delays in achievement of the organisation's overall mandate. If you thought a year later is late, wait until you hear that a change decision that's made in COMESA today can be implemented after five, even ten years. (Director 2, COMESA)

From the study, it is apparent that COMESA has largely met its change management objectives through the adopted approaches to implementing change.

4.3 Strategic Change Management in MISA

4.3.1 Key Strategic Changes in MISA

The study established the following major strategic changes have occurred in MISA since its inception.

i) *Transformation to a regional office*: MISA transformed from a modest one-person office in 1992 to a fully-fledged regional office employing more than 30 staff, including the author, by 2010. By 1994, MISA employed three staff and in 1996, it transformed itself from a regional network of activists into a membership-based organisation. MISA developed rapidly from 1997 following the creation of a Chapter Development Fund (CDF) to finance its growth within the entire SADC region.

ii) *Expansion of MISA's mandate*: MISA's original mandate of championing press freedom was expanded to include broadcasting as a direct response to the founding of the African Charter on Broadcasting in 2002, which provided principles for the broadcast media. This led to the broadening of MISA's mandate to encompass freedom of the electronic media as opposed to print media only.

iii) *Transition from "core funding" to "strategic financing"*: From inception, MISA was funded by several external donors on a core funding basis. In 2002, MISA entered into a "basket funding" agreement in which its main donors agreed to support MISA's 3-year "Strategic Partnership Programme" (SPP). A second SPP (SPP2) was signed with the same donors for the 5-year period from 2006-10 and extended to a 3rd SPP (SPP3) for 3 years to 2013.

iv) *Adjustment to MISA's governance structure*: The study revealed that, a major problem for the organisation was that there was no clarity on the decision-making process. The governance structure needed to be adjusted for MISA's ownership, control, roles and lines of command to be clarified.

v) *Formation of new sister organisations*: During its first decade, MISA created 3 new sister organisations to off-load some of its non-core, yet complimentary, activities in discharging its overall mandate. The MISA autonomous subsidiaries included the Southern Africa Media Development Fund, the Southern Africa Media Entrepreneurial Development Fund and the Nordic SADC Journalism Centre.

vi) *MISA major restructuring exercise*: In 2003 MISA's RS carried out a major staff restructuring exercise which was meant to professionalize the organisation by ensuring that it was properly staffed to deliver on the new SPP strategic plan.

4.3.2 Strategic Change Implementation in COMESA

Just as in the case of COMESA, the interviews of executive management were an eye opener on MISA's approaches to strategic change implementation. For comparative purposes, the author pursued the same dimensions which were examined in the COMESA case study.

4.3.2.1 Change Goals

The study established that change in MISA was determined by the strategic priorities identified through the strategic planning process which made extensive use of external consultants.

Change for MISA has been internally driven using the organisation's strategic planning process as well as externally driven through demands of donors. Some changes have been undertaken to provide a constant fit to the changing demands of the operational environment. (Regional Manager 1, MISA)

For example, the SPP originated from two processes i) MISA's own strategic planning process which commenced in 1999, designed to transform MISA from a core-funded to a project-activity-funded organisation and ii) the participatory evaluation / review undertaken by consultants in 2001 on behalf of donors. The development of country chapters was in line with the 1991 Windhoek Declaration, one of the organisation's formative triggers, while diversification into broadcasting and restructuring were in response to changes in the external environment.

4.3.2.2 Change Leadership

Leadership in MISA is two-pronged in that change direction is set from the top while encouraging participation at all levels as reflected by one interviewee.

Change leadership in MISA is essentially combined. The leader gets everyone involved but keeping the overall direction. This excludes the bizarre case in 2003 when a restructuring process driven by the Regional Governing Council affected everyone including the Regional Director and his deputy with the result that both lost their jobs. As I have said, this is the odd exception in MISA, not the rule. (Regional Manager 2, MISA)

4.3.2.3 Change Focus

It emerged that MISA as an organization concentrated on 'structure and systems' to the detriment of corporate culture. MISA and its donors commissioned a joint evaluation and review in 2002. It began implementing the

recommendations from 2003 which included an SPP and staff restructuring. An OD process commenced in 2006 to correct the emergent complex governance structure which had begun to impede the organisation's natural progression as reflected in one interview's response below:

MISA's change focus has been on organisational restructuring.... For example, a major problem was that the decision-making processes were not clear. The constitution contradicted the Deed of Trust on MISA's ownership. This legal contradiction, emanating from MISA's registration as both a membership organisation and a trust needed to be urgently addressed. (Regional Director, MISA)

Furthermore, as MISA evolved from infancy to maturity, there was a need for the organisation to have a clearer distinction between governance and management structures / issues. The Board's responsibilities were shifted to governance, leaving management issues to the Regional Director.

4.3.2.4 Change Process

The study revealed that change management process in MISA followed a comprehensive 'checklist' which was prepared after each strategic plan, evaluation or review.

Following each sanctioned review, both the donors and the RGC mandated management to implement the recommendations. More accurately, the recommendations came with a proposed action plan indicating the importance and urgency of actioning each recommendation. Management were therefore given a *fait accompli*...they were just mandated to operationalize the change and report progress to the next donors' or governors' meeting. (Regional Manager 2, MISA)

This view was corroborated by one OD process Term of Reference (ToR) which specifically required the consultant to prepare a 'detailed implementation plan' with the involvement of Regional Secretariat (RS). Where necessary, there was clear role-sharing between MISA and external consultants. But how did a consultant-based prescriptive approach ensure management ownership of the change process by the executors? This was addressed from two fronts:

First, MISA and the donors agreed on a participatory approach to evaluation at ToRs stage. This approach followed a process which involved all identified stakeholders to articulate and present their needs, interests and expectations. Second, the leadership of the change process rests with RS management and the RGC who articulate and approve the action plan to achieve the desired changes. (Regional Director, MISA)

The 2003 staff restructuring exercise involved re-advertising all RS staff positions in response to implementation of the new strategic plan and the 2001 review which had questioned the RS's ability to be a pro-active service organ for the National Chapters in its then existing state.

4.3.2.5 Reward System

MISA's reward system was principally based on financial incentives. The SPP1 review, for example, made "harmonization of remuneration standards in MISA" a key recommendation. This was achieved through a job evaluation exercise which was outsourced to an external HR consultancy firm which also developed job descriptions and implemented a job grading system. Unfortunately, MISA's culture of change had not supported investment in the culture change itself resulting in the 'bizarre case' referred to earlier when:

The RGC became 'overzealous' and in attempting to professionalize the organisation decided to advertise all senior positions including that of the Regional Director and his deputy. Earlier, I said this was 'bizarre' because the senior management who were supposed to lead the change found themselves in a weird position where they had to compete with some of their ambitious juniors for their jobs! Regional Manager 2 (MISA)

4.3.2.6 Use of External Consultants

MISA also made extensive use of consultants as agents of change. The numerous evaluations and reviews that were demanded by MISA's donors were conducted by various consultants. One interviewee said:

Apart from the physical surveys and assessments of the regional office and its chapters, the consultants were required to arrange regional workshops, conduct interviews and were responsible for designing and implementing up to reporting. (Regional Manager 1, MISA)

This manager's view was supported by the ToRs for one review / evaluation which expressly stated that "the assessment and recommendations of the technical review should strive to operationalize the lessons learnt identified during the evaluation process (i.e. how can MISA and the donors use the lessons learnt)."

4.3.3 Impact of Change Management Approaches on MISA's Strategic Direction

Just like in the case of COMESA, it is important to establish if MISA's change management approaches met the desired objectives by assessing their impact on the organisation's strategic direction.

4.3.3.1. Positive Impacts

Clearly MISA experienced challenges in managing change since inception, but its change management approaches has mainly positive impact on the organisation's strategic direction. To quote one consultant, MISA "is presently met with the challenge of managing success - not failure!" (Chigudu & Associates & Danicom, 2003).

i) The OD review resulted in a streamlined corporate governance structure which could meet the strategic priorities of MISA and respond quickly to MISA's changing needs and environment.

ii) MISA also rightly offloaded some of its responsibilities to sister organisations and remained with a programme-

focused structure. Each of the three new organisations 'specialised' in its area of competitive advantage, but nonetheless they could collaborate where each organisation's key competencies were required. This brought a new era, for example, in terms of ready availability of media finance, training, research and development than hitherto experienced when MISA was still a single organisation.

iii) Change management in MISA saw the establishment of a SADC-region wide organisation within a decade from scratch. The setting up of the CDF in 1997, provided financial support that led to the creation of a fully-fledged RS supported by 11 National Chapters and employing 75 staff within the region by 2010. As seen from the interviews, MISA employed the strategic planning process coupled with external donor demands as a key driver of change management. This enabled MISA to broadly meet its overall objectives.

iv) In 2002, the strategic planning process resulted in the SPP basket funding arrangement which guaranteed MISA's long-term funding arrangements and provided a new sense of security, stability and enhanced capacity to work within a longer-term perspective for the entire MISA organisation. The SPP also introduced five operational programmes and one administrative programme which would become the backbone of MISA's operations for at least a decade. It also resulted in considerably lighter administrative burdens due to simplified and harmonised reporting to donors.

4.3.3.2 Negative Impacts

As the study revealed, an organisation that started from humble beginnings to become a regional institution in record short time was fraught to be subjected to numerous structural challenges. Some deficient structural and organisational practices, which emerged over the first decade, began to have a negative influence on MISA's ability to act under optimum conditions such as being able to implement all the activities planned under the SSPs. This triggered the numerous change management initiatives whose positive impacts were discussed above. The following were MISA's approaches to implementing change which seem not to have born the desired results.

i) *'Bizarre' handling of the restructuring exercise:* The way the staff restructuring was handled left a lot to be desired. There was speculation, fear, anger, suspicion and lobbying prior to finalization of the process due to uncertainty about the future of staff members. When some senior staff were made redundant, this increased tension even further. The negative impact of the exercise reverberated throughout the organisation long after it was completed, to the extent that most interviewees seriously doubted if this particular exercise yielded the desired benefits.

ii) *Deficient organisational culture:* From an organisational culture point of view, the deficient manner in which the same staff reshuffling exercise was handled created more internal friction than it resolved. This was further exacerbated by the poor communication system in the organisation which resulted in bad information, experiential sharing and learning which left MISA struggling to fulfil its function.

Notwithstanding these deficiencies, the evaluations revealed that MISA's change management approach enabled it to meet its overall change objectives.

4.4 Comparative Analysis of Strategic Change Management in NPOs

In order to justify the comparative case study approach adopted for the research this section analytically compares strategic change management in the two-case study organisations based on the study's findings.

i) *Bureaucracy vs. flexibility:* As an inter-governmental organisation, COMESA mirrors some characteristics and practices of a quasi-governmental organisation. Our view is that it is problematic enough to be a government agency, but it is worse when the bureaucratic inefficiencies of 19 governments are replicated in one organisation. MISA on the other hand is more structured around the lines of a non-government organisation and has much more flexibility to adopt private sector practices. Table 1 below reflects the similarities and differences in change management practices based on the studied six key dimensions of organisational change per Beer and Norhia (2000).

Table 1: Comparative analysis of change management practices in COMESA and MISA

Dimension	COMESA	MISA
Change goals	Externally driven by Members States and to address the demands of the external operational environment	Determined by strategic priorities identified through the strategic planning process, externally driven through demands of donors and also in response to changes in the external environment.
Leadership	Management team strictly guided by the treaty, previous Policy Organs decisions and existing operational circumstances	Two-pronged as change direction is set from the top while encouraging participation at all levels
Change focus	Streamlining structures and systems or organisational “hardware”	Concentrated on structure and systems to the detriment of corporate culture. Also, separation of corporate governance and management.
Change process	Well planned and adapted from the Treaty with action plans reflecting clearly defined roles and responsibilities	Followed a comprehensive ‘checklist’ or ‘detailed implementation plan’ which was prepared after each strategic plan, evaluation or review.
Reward system	Use of both reward system and culture change	Principally based on financial incentives and “harmonization of remuneration standards”. Unfortunately, did not supported investment in culture change
Use of external consultants	Change implementation is mainly through “inhouse” capacity with occasional use of external consultants based on complexity of change initiative	Change implementation made extensive use of consultants for the numerous evaluations and reviews and the consultants were responsible for designing, implementing and reporting change initiatives to donors.

Table 1 shows comparative analysis of change management practices in COMESA and MISA based on the studied six key dimensions of organisational change. (Source: Muravu, 2020)

- ii) *Key change drivers*: COMESA’s change is driven by its highest decision-making organ, the Authority, while MISA’s change is driven by the internal strategic planning process coupled with demands of its external funders.
- iii) *Strategic Planning*: Both organisations make extensive use of the strategic planning process as a vehicle of change. COMESA has a longer strategic planning horizon as reflected by its 25-year strategy supported by 3 to 5-year mid-term strategic plans. This reflects the long-term nature of government planning. MISA’s strategic plans ranged between 3 to 5 years.
- iv) *Agents of change*: Both make use of external consultants as agents of change although MISA relies heavily on them while COMESA balances them with in-house resources.
- v) *Pace of change*: COMESA’s change process is frustratingly slow due to the bureaucratic processes’ governments must undergo before implementing change. This has resulted in long delayed, partially implemented or change initiatives that are never implemented. On the other hand, MISA’s change process has been comparatively fast since it was responding to a fast growing organisation which would have been seriously hampered by any delays in implementing the requisite changes.
- vi) *Delegation of non-core activities*: Both organisations delegated non-core, but complimentary, activities to autonomous institutions which specialize in specific areas of core competence and operate from different countries to the regional offices reflecting the regionality of the parent organisations and semi-autonomous nature of the subsidiary institutions.

4.5 Summary

The paper exposed the key strategic changes in the case study organisations, the attendant change management practices and offered an assessment of whether the approaches to implementing change met the desired objectives including their impact on the strategic direction of the organisations. An interesting, but hardly surprising trend which emerged from the study was that technical or operational managers tended to concentrate on detail for operational changes while support or service directors concentrated on administrative changes although both sets mentioned the other changes in passing.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The following synthesises the study’s findings with the original aim and objectives leading to development of recommendations for the management of strategic change in international non-profit organisations. The specific objective was, subject to evaluation of strategic change management literature and primary research, to critically

review how change has been implemented in an inter-governmental and an international organisation. The research first sought to establish how strategic change was managed in the past and what has been the impact on the organisations' strategic directions. Secondly, we needed to assess what worked well in one organisation but might not have quite worked well in the other and vice versa. Finally, we interrogated how NPOs can ensure that change is managed most effectively in future. The following are conclusions and recommendations on strategic change management in COMESA and MISA.

5.1.1 Conclusion on Change Management in COMESA

COMESA has responded to the need for change remarkably well, for an inter-governmental organisation of its size, and has made several notable achievements to date. Through its various change management initiatives, COMESA has achieved sustainable economic and social progress in its MS through increased co-operation and integration in all fields of development. The CS has played a crucial role to ensure that COMESA attains its overall objectives. As noted from the study, most COMESA operations are premised on treaties, charters and agreements that were signed by Heads of State. This implies that decisions on change implementation are made based on unanimity of the MS. Yet failure by some MS to join the FTA for over a decade suggests that such unanimity doesn't in fact exist or alternatively could it be that the largest trading bloc in Africa is still grappling with challenges and failing to persuade some of its MS to move to the next level of integration? Delays in implementation of change decisions cannot be tolerated in the 21st century's fast changing operational environment because potential opportunities that are identified will invariably be lost. There were positive signs that this could change. The COMESA SG, addressing the 28th Meeting of the COMESA Council of Ministers said, "The important message and lesson from these developments is that the region must of necessity, through regional integration, move at the speed of a Cheetah..." (COMESA Post Summit Publication, 2010, p.12).

This was echoed by the incoming Chairman of the Authority, who openly admitted that COMESA had not done well in speedy implementation of its decisions. Addressing the 14th Summit of COMESA and quote:

It is encouraging to know that we have taken several serious decisions at this Summit to advance the cause of our organization. As the Chairman of the COMESA Authority, I will ensure that all Summit decisions are implemented without any delays. (COMESA Post Summit Publication, 2010 p.7)

This realization of the need for speedy implementation of change decisions by these eminent and most influential leaders of COMESA is refreshing and may signify the beginning of a new era for strategic change management in the organisation.

5.1.2 Conclusion on Change Management in MISA

The study concluded that MISA's internal housekeeping has been defective, its strategic planning process somewhat discordant and its donor relations management unfocused. These aspects were draining MISA of financial and human resources, which could be used more productively towards MISA's involvement in championing media freedom in SADC. More specifically, although MISA and its development partners had effectively collaborated in the past, the unpredictability of donor funding had reduced the effectiveness of MISA's programmes. This led to a mutual inclination by MISA and its partners to explore a more harmonized approach to funding.

Overall, it can be concluded that MISA through its strategic change management has established itself as one of the main champions of democracy and human rights, and no other organisations in the region - or on the African continent for that matter - has a better network in the media sector. Its SSP facilitated a more strategic approach to the serious issues of freedom of speech and public access to information and became the foundation for the longstanding 'basket' funding agreement with donors. The funding agreement was revolutionary and a very important arrangement for MISA which eliminated funding uncertainty and significantly reduced resources, which had previously been devoted to piece meal fundraising and the demands of multiple donor reporting.

MISA's short-term blooming success exposed it to greater complexity, increased risks and more choices about the future. This demanded to be handled carefully, consciously and consistently as failure to manage this growth well could very easily have resulted in inertia. To its credit, MISA overcame problems of infancy and matured to earn a strong reputation as the most central and credible organisation on issues of freedom of speech and access to information in Southern Africa.

5.1.3 General conclusion on Change Management in NPOs

The study revealed that NPOs do not follow any specific change management model as espoused in the literature. However, it identified key strategic changes that have taken place in the case study organisations and the various approaches to implementing these changes. The major changes were to align the organisations with the vagaries of their operational environment in accordance with literature whilst some were driven from within (i.e. organisations' governance structures). MISA's strategic change can be said to have been both 'incremental' and 'big bang' (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004). The former regarding its implementation of strategic planning-driven change while the later relates, for example, to restructuring which saw senior staff including the CEO regrettably leave the organisation.

On the other hand, COMESA's change can be characterised as having mainly been 'incremental' followed

by 'discontinuous' change reflecting the organisation's longer term planning horizon (Tushman et al, 1988). There is no indication of specific or deliberate consideration of 'contextual features' nor 'design choices' (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004) in change management in both NPOs although some of these can be retroactively apply to certain change aspects. Greiner's Organisational Life Cycle (1972) can be applied to MISA's change management. The study established that most of the problems that MISA experienced around 1999-2000 were merely symptoms of an organisation which had outgrown itself. This resulted in a very complicated governance structure and an administrative load which threatened to strangle the entire organisation. MISA rightly diagnose this growth stage and employed solutions which moved it to the next stage by introducing the SSP and a more sustainable funding arrangement. MISA's approach to implementing change thus became primarily strategic-planning driven.

We can partially apply the Lewinian '*driving and restraining forces of change*' (Schein 1996, p.71; Rahim & Panicker 2000, p.3) since both organisations had to deal with resistance to change. Overall, the implication is that there is huge potential and opportunity for NPOs to 'borrow and calibrate' some strategic change management practices which have been proven in the private sector and resulted in improved performance and attainment of desired results in some NPOs as attested to by this study. To buttress this up, the author has over 20 years' managerial experience in the NPO sector and this study has validated his observation that the sector characteristically lags behind the private sector in introducing change. When change eventually arrives, it is handled in a *laissez faire* manner. Overall, this paper contributes positively to the theory of strategic change management in modern international organisations.

5.2 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations, emerging from the study, on how the case study NPOs can ensure that change is managed in the most effective way in future and by extension similar organisations.

5.2.1 COMESA Recommendations

To ensure that change is managed more effectively in future, COMESA must do the following:

Firstly, to achieve optimal efficiency and effectiveness, the existing structure must be supported by best practice systems and procedures, competent staff and an enabling environment that empowers staff in decision making, encourages teamwork and increase motivation. Our view is that the proposed recommendations, if adopted and implemented, can serve to strengthen the operations of the CS in line with its regional, and quintessentially, international development role. Secondly, COMESA should ensure effective change management by developing a strategy for accelerated change implementation so that it takes advantage of opportunities that present themselves in the operational environment periodically. Thirdly, given the launch of the Tripartite Vision and Strategy 2010-2015 and COMESA's role as the lead and more influential REC in the Tripartite Arrangement, it is incumbent upon COMESA to exploit this reality in its change management strategy to support the programme for the eventual integration of the region. Consequently, all future programmes must endeavor to support, not only COMESA's but, the Tripartite's vision as well. Finally, COMESA's change implementation would be more effective if it was supported by an information technology strategy as an enabling tool for change. For example, COMESA would need to automate routine and important operational processes such as the travel and expenses process. It is inconceivable that by 2010, COMESA given its regional status and position still does not have an Enterprise Resource Planning system and its processes are primarily manual to semi-manual.

5.2.2 MISA Recommendations

Similarly, MISA must consider the following in order to ensure effective implementation of change in future: Firstly, the organisation is at its peak, well established, influential in its area and adorable to international donors. But that leaves no time for complacency as it is exposed to the risk of plunging down. MISA must consolidate its past successes, in the upcoming years which will prove to be crucial for the organisation. The current status and present advantageous position must be exploited to achieve better performance. Secondly, the lack of clarity about ownership and control of MISA between the various bodies (RGC, Trust Funds Board or Membership?) has led to unclear governance and operational relations in the past. It is recommended that MISA resolves the governance problems urgently and decisively whilst the organisation is still doing well instead of waiting until these structural inadequacies start to cripple the organisation. This will ensure that change implementation is done more smoothly with clearer roles and responsibilities.

Thirdly, MISA had been too dependent on donor funding for the 18 years of its existence (to 2010) to the extent that one consultant argued that the changes which occurred in MISA favored donors and not MISA itself. Further, it lent it to being easily brushed aside by regional governments as an instrument of western political and economic imperialism. That aside, and given world economic downturns like the 2008-9 one, potential donor fatigue and shifting donor priorities, it is strongly recommended for MISA to explore alternative and more sustainable revenue streams without going fully commercial and jeopardizing its role and mandate in media development. One way of doing that would be for MISA, as predominantly a knowledge institution, to curate and market the knowledge it generates through research and other means thereby generating revenue from this. That way it can become a self-sufficient and truly autonomous institution, which it strives to be, without being subject

to external whims by funders as revealed by the study. This was something which the author had first-hand experience of when employed as Finance Director of the organisation in 2009-2010. Finally, although the SPP process helped MISA focus, there is still room for improvement. Granted, the National Chapters are of great strategic importance to MISA, but the RS must provide the strategic political overview and the technical capacity which they so lack.

5.3 Limitations of the Research

Every research study has its limitations regardless of the research methodology chosen. The author would like to highlight the following key limitations which must be considered within the context of the study's findings.

Firstly, as a comparative study, the research was conducted only on two organisations which are patently different. The findings are situation specific and therefore will labour to be generalised beyond the specific settings. As the study showed, the two organisations have significant differences as they have striking similarities. Resources permitting, a wider number of cases studied would have brought more insight into how change is managed in NPOs. Moreover, Henry (1990), repeated in the *Economist* (1997), warns against drawing definitive conclusions and recommendations from a population of less than 50 units. Secondly, the research failed to include British Council which had been identified as an example of best practice in NPO strategic change management from the author's knowledge and experience as a previous staff of the organisation due to last minute senior management changes. This militated against the overall richness of the data collected. These limitations were considered in the presentation and analysis of the study's findings.

5.4 Directions for Future Research

The purpose of this study was to explore strategic change management in the non-profit sector. Despite a plethora of literature on the general subject of change management, the author had difficulty identifying literature on change management in the non-profit sector. Even the literature review revealed that there has not been adequate research in this subject area. The author would like to recommend further mega research in the area of change management in the NPOs including possible model development. This may involve grouping these NPOs into 'ownership' and control, size and possibly purpose of existence to incorporate contextual factors. Apart from giving a richer insight into how NPOs are managed, this would also provide an overall view of how these organisations, which have become darlings of donors, exercise their stewardship role in discharging their mandates. As this study was conducted nearly a decade ago, another (longitudinal) study would help establish how the two organisations have commandeered the strategic change management journey since the last study.

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