



PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM UNIT, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

PROGRESS REPORT ON PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

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FIRST QUARTER
January-March 2010

INTRODUCTION

The activities undertaken during the first quarter of 2010 have been a continuation of those from the last quarter of 2009 as well as those new ones from the Work Plan for 2010. One of the first activities this year was the development of an Annual Work Plan for the Public Sector Reform Programme, from which a Work Plan for PSRU was derived. These overarching documents provided guidance to the Monitoring and Communication plans for 2010. All activities are informed by the holistic framework which includes the **eight thematic areas** that form part of any public sector-related reform programme, including:

- Strategic and Structural Alignment
- Staff, Pay and Incentives
- Improvements in Systems and Tools
- Improvements in Service Delivery
- Capacity Building
- Gender and Anti Corruption
- Attitudinal and Behavioural Change
- Public Service Reform Coordination and Management

Strategic and Structural Alignment of Ministries, Departments and Agencies

Public Sector reform is not only about pay and staffing, but also, and more importantly, it is also about creating and capacitating institutions and structures for effective service delivery. At the PSRU, we are creating institutions capable of supporting and facilitating sustained improvements the Public Service delivery system. Therefore, the Public Sector Reform Unit, in the last three months continued to undertake Management and Functional Reviews (MFR) across Ministries to ensure that MDAs have the right management structures and to ensure that functions are aligned and roles clarified to maximize productivity. By this same exercise, the human capacity of the MDA is assessed, organisational structures refined and recommendations proffered. Along this line all Ministries have been reviewed by the PSRU.

A review of the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, the last remaining, commenced early March. This process will include reviews of eight supporting agencies including Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority, Sierra Leone Maritime Administration, Sierra Leone Civil

Aviation Authority, Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation, Sierra Leone Ports Authority, Meteorological Department, and Sierra Leone Airports Authority.

The draft report of the MFR on National Revenue Authority (NRA) was submitted to the Board in February, and will be finalized once they forward their comments back to PSRU. As noted already, the goal of the MFR is to make all MDAs implement the appropriate organisational structure, optimal staffing patterns and systems that will enable implementation of the PRSP II, Agenda for Change and the Decentralization Programme.

As a result of the merging of some MDAs, a number of Ministries have also been re-reviewed. In Ministries where MFRs have been completed, the focus has been on the implementation of activities. For instance, work continued, among others, on the position papers on implementation for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; and the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has incorporated several of the MFR recommendations into its operations. Effort to fast track the position paper and implementation in the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice has still not been quite successful.

Work is ongoing with the HRMO to ensure that all MDAs have clear Schemes of Service and Job Descriptions. Interest in the implementation of the recommendations from the MFRs has gained momentum, although MDAs remain incapacitated and the majority lack the most basic of office equipment. However, in order to facilitate the implementation of recommendations contained in the various MFR reports for the Ministries, the PSRU continues to utilise a strategy of priority implementation through which specific key recommendations from the MFRs are fast tracked. Under the new programme, provision exists for the supply of limited essential equipment as will be reported below.

Performance Contracts and Strategic Planning Sessions

The issuing of performance contracts to Ministers provides a window of opportunity for the Presidency through the Strategy and Policy Unit (SPU) to monitor the progress of implementation of agreed targets and make it part and parcel of their assessment and reporting. As part of its renewed focus on results-based management, PSRU will, through the HRMO, extend these performance contracts to MDAs as part of the incentives programme for senior and middle level staff, which will be evaluated under a rigorous

performance appraisal system, vis-à-vis targets set within the organization's work plan. It is hoped that this approach will yield positive results in terms of implementation and the overall performance of MDAs.

One of the key results from the Management and Functional Reviews has been the use of strategic planning sessions. Our aim is to ensure that all Ministries undergo a comprehensive strategic planning session with emphases on aligning their vision, mission, and activities with the PRSP II – *the Agenda for Change*. Strategic Planning Sessions are being held across the Civil Service with the view to effectively restructuring and improving on service delivery mechanisms as recommended in the MFRs. Clearly, through the intervention of the PSRU, the objective of creating efficient public institutions has permeated throughout the Civil Service.

Records Management Improvement Programme

With the creation of efficient Records Management systems including complete personnel files for all Civil Servants at the HRMO, a rolled-out plan to five MDAs – Education, Agriculture, Finance, Accountant General's Department and the Public Service Commission has been developed for implementation. PSRU has held preliminary discussions with the leadership of these MDAs.

New records management procedures for improving file management have been introduced, and detailed *Procedures Manuals and Desk Instructions* are being finalised. Also, an Assessment Tool has been developed to enable the quality, integrity and completeness of personnel records and information to be monitored and periodically assessed. Effective means of collaboration and information sharing between PSRU, HRMO, Accountant General's Department and NASSIT have been established.

The additional deliverables include:

- i. All personnel documents gathered during the civil service payroll verification exercise are added systematically to personnel files.
- ii. Handbooks/guidance materials necessary to support all aspects of sustainable controls for managing human resource records in the Human Resource Management Office are prepared.
- iii. A full scanning programme has been delivered, ensuring that there are adequate quality controls in place and that there is appropriate mechanism for transferring digitised documents to the (IFMIS); established guidelines and procedures for guiding the

- scanning process, and improving on number of new and accurate data for NASSIT clientele.
- iv. Photographs and fingerprints captured for civil servant during the payroll verification
 - v. Anomalies recorded in the anomalies database resolved, and ensured that systems are in place for regular transfer of up-to-date information to the relevant government institutions.
 - vi. Training for HRMO staff and Records Management Improvement Team conducted
 - vii. Adequate reporting systems in place between AGD and HRMO, so that the HRMO establishment list reconciles with that of the AGD.

Staff, Pay and Incentives

A strategic thrust of Public Sector Reform of which the civil service reform is a subset, is to right size the public service (staff rationalization) and link pay and incentives to performance. The goal of this component is to ensure immediate availability of staff to perform critical functions required to kick start the implementation of the reform programme while in the longer term, a system of optimal staffing levels with adequate compensation is put in place in all MDAs. This component has two sub-components, Staff Rationalisation and Pay and Incentives.

Staff Rationalisation

The goal of this sub-component is to ensure immediate staff availability in critical areas of the civil service and achieve an optimal staffing level in all MDAs. In this regard, the key activities here will be (i) immediate replenishment of staff and (ii) right sizing of staff in all MDAs.

In addition to the Diaspora Programme and Sectoral initiatives, 95 technical/professional positions will have to be filled across the Civil Service. The positions have been identified. The PSC has developed a budget for the recruitment process, which will commence immediately funding becomes available.

Right Sizing of Staff

The programme focuses on right sizing of the civil service based on the outcomes of the Management and Functional Reviews, which have been conducted across MDAs. Right sizing is not only about reducing/retrenching staff. It is about ensuring that the right mix of skills is available to manage institutions. We are pursuing action on this activity together with the HRMO, MoFED and line ministries in order to ensure that MDAs benefit from the right-sizing exercise.

Together with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, a Retrenchment Policy is being designed. Working in concert with the HRMO, MDAs have begun conducting staffing needs assessment to identify those staff who are no longer adding value to the institution.

Data submitted by the HRMO indicate that approximately 2000 personnel have been retired from the Civil Service over the past two years.

Pay and Incentives

Aware of the uncompetitive compensation that does not attract and retain competent personnel, the programme provides for a review of Civil Service pay and incentives. This activity is led by MoFED and the HRMO. In October 2009, MoFED engaged the services of a consultant to undertake a review of the Civil Service Compensation system and make recommendations to the Minister of Finance for his consideration. The idea is to make Civil Service pay competitive, to attract and retain skills, to integrate Contract staff and to harmonize pay across the civil service. Since this aspect of pay reform is led by the Ministry of Finance, the consultant was engaged and he reports directly to MoFED. A summary draft has since been submitted to MoFED.

At the PSRU Working Committee meeting on 2 March, the Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service was appointed a Chairman of a Committee to study the Report and revert to the Working Committee. The matter has, however, extended to the point that the State Salaries and Compensation Committee under the Chairmanship of the Hon. Speaker of Parliament is now charged with the review of the report and pursuing further action. PSRU is part of the process.

Improvements in Systems and Tools

The goal of this programme component is to ensure the installation of systems and tools in all MDAs in order to enhance their service delivery capacity. Also, the ICT platform will be modernized and improved. Under the Public Sector Reform Programme, funds have been identified (UNDP) to support this programme. The National ICT Policy has been finalised, and an implementation plan with costing is being developed. A series of meetings are being held at PSRU with experts from various MDAs.

This component will contribute to the modernisation of the civil service with respect to performance improvement, effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery, staff motivation, etc. Some equipment, mainly computers and their accessories have been procured and supplied to the Public Service Commission under the UNDP support programme.

Capacity Building

The main goal here is to expand and upgrade the capacity of the civil service to perform its functions. Two components, namely: short/medium term and long term approaches have been identified.

With respect to short-term training programmes, funds are available within the PSRU programme to provide training for 250 civil servants as follows:

110 Junior level staff in basic computer, office management, Civil Service ethics, etc
50 Middle level staff in Executive Development Programme, basic computer, etc
40 Senior Level staff in policy analysis, leadership, governance, ethics, computer, etc
50 other staff in the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment in GIS/GPS and RS Technology. This component is managed by the Cabinet Secretariat and the Human Resource Management Office.

During the Consultative meeting in London, the Director of PSRU approached the Commonwealth Secretariat with respect to training for Cabinet Ministers and Civil Servants. Since then, the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat has fielded two delegations, and have agreed in principle to support training of public servants in Sierra Leone. In this regard, the PSRU is partnering with the Institute of Public Administration and Management. Meanwhile, the PSRU, HRMO and Cabinet Secretariat are embarking on periodic weekend training programmes for the Civil Service.

While these short-to-medium term measures are commendable, the long-term plan is to resuscitate the Civil Service Training College, for which the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment has allocated a 10-acre piece of land.

By developing and guiding the strategic implementation of a number of key interventions and developing management and administrative structures, the PSRU is creating institutions

capable of supporting and facilitating sustained improvements in public service delivery. To facilitate these activities at the level of the Ministries, Departments and Agencies, new structures have been designed.

Steering Committee on Public Sector Reform – First Quarter Meeting

The first Quarter Meeting of the Steering Committee on Public Sector Reform was held on 16 March 2010. The meeting noted the following as reported by the Director, PSRU:

- i. Enhanced collaboration with non-state actors, especially Civil Society Organizations
- ii. Completion of 4 Management and Functional Reviews (MFRs), bringing the total to 21 reviews, with only 1 remaining for the Ministry of Transport and Aviation.
- iii. Completion of Civil Service Training Policy; the first batch of training will for Middle and Senior grades commenced on 29 March 2010 at the British Council.
- iv. Implementation of management and administrative best practices such as personnel for monitoring and evaluation, records management; creation of Change Management Teams; creation of Service Charters for MDAs.
- v. Weekly coordination meetings between PSRU, HRMO, PSC, and Secretary to the Cabinet on Civil Service Reform.
- vi. Collaboration with Strategic and Policy Unit (SPU) to facilitate the creation of Policy and Planning Units within each Ministry as recommended in the MFRs to drive effective planning and change management.
- vii. First quarter monitoring visits with all Ministries to discuss progress, challenges, and way forward for implementation.
- viii. Undertaking verification of Teachers
- ix. Absorption of contract workers

Management and Functional Review report for the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources-PSRU

The Committee studied and approved MFR on the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources.

PSRU Annual 2010 Work Plan- PSRU

PSRU Work Plan was considered and approved

UNDP Annual 2010 Work Plan

The Director, PSRU, presented the public sector reform activities to be supported by UNDP this year. The areas of support include:

- Support to HRMO and PSC
- Staff pay and incentives rationalization
- Modernization of systems and tools, including ICT platform
- Training of 250 Civil Servants
- Development of service delivery models
- Support to SPU

Update on Civil Service Reform Initiatives- Director-General, HRMO

The Director-General HRMO provided the Committee with an update on activities pursued in Civil Service Reform, under the Public Sector Reform Programme:

- i. Civil Service Training and Capacity Building
 - The Director of Surveys and Lands from the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment informed the committee that 10 acres of land have been allocated at Kent for the proposed Civil Service Training College.
 - A Short-term training programme has been developed for Civil Servants and Ministers to commence this year.
- ii. Civil Service staff rationalization, pay and incentives
 - The number of Civil Servants has been reduced from 17,500 to approximately 15,000 in the last two years, with the February payroll totalling 15,856. Grade 1 accounts for 43 percent of the total staff strength.
 - A total of 1,950 were appointed during the same period, and 168 temporary staff absorbed. 90 percent of the new staff are medical personnel.
 - Rationalization must be done strategically especially since the bloating at lower grades can be explained by the fact that nurses and other ancillary health staff, which form a large percentage of the Civil Service, are clustered at this level.
 - HRMO has been working with Ministries on identifying non-essential and non-productive personnel.
 - Vacancy profiles have been developed for Middle and Senior level positions
- iii. Personnel Management
 - The HRMO has redesigned the Job Description format to replace the old Scheme of Service. Work is ongoing with Ministries to develop new Schemes of Service using this new format.
 - Recruitment and performance management policies are being finalized to enhance productivity and efficiency in the service.
 - Payment of end of service benefit procedures have been developed that will expedite the payment of benefits/ death gratuities, and allow these payments to be made within eight weeks after commencement of the process.
 - New cadres have been developed for HR, ICT, Internal Audit, and Policy analysts
- iv. Civil Service Code of Conduct, Rules and Regulations
 - Final draft of Code of Conduct has been developed and the ACC has printed 500 copies for distribution
 - Circulars have been sent to all MDAs requesting them to establish disciplinary committees.

- HRMO is facilitating a campaign against lateness and absenteeism in MDAs, which are required to keep track of this data on all staff

In order to kick-start the programme of reform in the wider Civil Service, an MoU was signed in November 2009 by the Director, PSRU and the UNDP Deputy Country Director for the provision of US\$2m. Under the terms of this MoU, and in consonance with the new programme, Technical Assistance was provided to support the Human Resource Management Office. The following were achieved:

- i. Performance management Policy drafted
- ii. Recruitment Policy developed and approved
- iii. Vacancy profile prepared
- iv. Job profiles prepared
- v. Performance Contract Documents drafted
- vi. Payment processing system drafted

Update on Development of Pay Policy- Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service

This agenda item was not discussed due to the unavoidable absence of the Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service.

The Steering Committee on Civil Service Reform and other Management Units

This Committee was established in January 2010. It is chaired by the Secretary to the Cabinet in his capacity as Head of the Civil Service. Heads of Department have been advised, based on the Management and Functional Reviews conducted by the PSRU, to create Change Management Teams, as well as Policy and Planning Units, so that MDAs would own and lead the reform processes within their respective environment. In particular, these institutions would:

- i. Develop and support an effective and efficient mechanism for policy analysis, formulation and implementation within the ministry;
- ii. In consultation with the Minister, develop annual targets for the Ministry priorities to be set down in the annual performance contract for the Minister and senior management, drawing on national and sectoral frameworks;

- iii. Develop strategic plans of action for the implementation of these targets, with a clear schedule of activities, responsible persons, costs, necessary procurement, critical paths and specified timelines;
- iv. Support and facilitate other planning activities within the Ministry;
- v. Assess sectoral strategies and work plans to ensure coherence and alignment with national goals and ministry targets;
- vi. Provide a coordinating mechanism and forum for institutions within the sector to ensure synergy and cooperation at national and local levels for the achievement of their targets;
- vii. Monitor the implementation of approved programmes and projects of the ministry, and help to identify and resolve bottlenecks;
- viii. Provide technical backstopping in the Ministry where necessary;
- ix. Conduct research activities and collaborate with research institutions to collect, collate and analyse data on Ministry's activities;
- x. Establish and maintain a database on key policy issues and programmes;
- xi. Obtain feedback on the impact of activities to ensure that the desired objectives are being met, and promote information management
- xii. Provide leadership in the implementation of reform work plans

New Civil Service code, Regulations and Rules

Under the leadership of the Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service, the final draft of the Civil Service Code, Rules and Regulations has been prepared. The Anti-Corruption Commission has reproduced copies for a pending workshop.

Development of Service Charters

PSRU advised the leadership of the Civil Service on the development of Service Charters, so that service users are provided with the opportunity not only to assess the performance of the institutions providing the services, but also the quality of services provided. The aim is to:

- i. Make public institutions and public servants accountable
- ii. Ensure value for money
- iii. Ensure value for customers/clients/citizens
- iv. Ensure transparency
- v. Ensure the right to information without compromising security

- vi. Adopt a stakeholder approach
- vii. Maximize the use of time
- viii. Prevent Corruption

The International Professional Partnerships for Sierra Leone

In a further Capacity Building drive, the PSRU successfully negotiated, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation **the International Professional Partnerships Programme for Sierra Leone**. In partnership with the University of California, Berkeley, this initiative addresses the human resource capacity gaps in MDAs. Young and talented professionals from the Diaspora are recruited and placed to work in MDAs at no cost to Government. In September 2009 the first group of professionals arrived and placed initially in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and later in the Decentralization Secretariat and the Law Reform Commission. A third professional arrived in January this year, and has since been attached to the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA).

Communication Strategy for Public Sector Reform

As part of the Communications Strategy, several Radio and TV discussions on our reform initiatives are on-going. We recognize the fact that there is a need to embark on a programme to raise awareness of the various reform initiatives among all stakeholders. Public awareness is important to eliminate/minimize misconceptions about the reform process, and also to ensure acceptability and community involvement. We acknowledge that a lot more has to be accomplished in the area of awareness-raising.

Monitoring the reform

Monitoring the Public Sector Reform Programme remains a challenge. The PSRU has developed a Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and a Framework with a comprehensive Theory of Change. Nevertheless, challenges abound. One such challenge is the difficulty in coordinating national development strategies. Efforts must be made to coordinate all development initiatives to limit duplicity, and to encourage sharing of information and good practices in governance. The Steering Committee on Public Sector Reform, chaired by the Secretary to the President, is an effective forum for coordinating national development as its membership includes top management in all sectors.

A visitation Plan to MDAs has been developed. From March to May 2010, PSRU will undertake monitoring visits to all Ministries. During these meetings, four of which have been held, discussions are held on progress on implementation of the MFRS, strategic visions and plans, creation of management structures including the Policy and Planning Units, Change Management Teams; staffing capacity, and operational constraints, as well as the next steps are discussed.

CONCLUSION

Although there are still challenges, progress so far has been satisfactory. The “Meet the MDA” approach has yielded results, and significant changes have occurred even in those Ministries that are in the early stages of restructuring. Even more significant, has been the positive response to recommendations from the MFRs and the willingness to discuss concerns, expectations and the way forward.

Public Sector Reform Unit
31 March 2010