



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM UNIT

**MANAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL REVIEW OF THE
GOVERNMENT PRINTING DEPARTMENT**

FINAL REPORT



MARCH, 2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Management and Functional Review of the Government Printing Department (GPD) of Sierra Leone was conducted by the Public Sector Reform Unit (PSRU), with the complimentary support of the Human Resource Management Office (HRMO), as an integral part of an expressed government commitment towards institutional reform and effective service delivery in Sierra Leone. The review aimed at examining the institutional structures, processes, human resource issues of GPD with mindset on proffering recommendations and viable options to address gaps and challenges identified during the review process.

The review team met with Senior Management of the Department prior to the start of the review to discuss the processes and procedures involve in undertaking the MFR, as well as the methodology to be used during the fieldwork stage. During these meetings, agreement was reached that the main source of data collection would be document review, questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were used as the basis for structured interviews and the information obtained to enable the review team to build up a picture of the functions, structures and effective working arrangements of the Department.

As a result of the review, recommendations have been proffered to address key aspects of the Department. One of the critical emerging issues of the review is that there have been many discussions vis-à-vis the future of GPD and its survival with many prediction of its extinction due to many factors including the advancement in Information Communication and Technology (ICT), of which the Department is far behind modern trend. The review also shows that the advancement in technology in modern printing equipment is becoming increasingly available to the private sector. This continues to pose serious challenges to the survival of the GPD amidst serious resource constraint by the Government to modernize the Department. It is therefore pertinent that the Government pays serious attention to details and develops high capacity to manage the Department as revenue generating entity so that it can compete with the private sector. We recommend that the Government Printing Department, in consultation with the Ministry of Finance acquire technologically advanced equipment for the Department.

Summary of Findings

- The MFR revealed that the Interpretative Act of 1971 which gives the Department the legal mandate to print Government's securitized and legislative documents; and its provisions do not address the emerging challenges of the electronic printing services.
- The MFR also revealed that roles are not clearly defined and there are gaps within the structure of the organization which suggest that there is a lack of succession planning;
- That there are Job Descriptions (JDs) for most of the positions but there is need to update the JDs to reflect the changing trends in the printing industry; It is observed that the Department is guided by the Civil Service Codes, Regulations and Rules but as a specialized Department, there is need to develop their own HR manual to provide guidelines on Manpower planning, and training and career development;
- The Department is acutely understaff, hence, there is a dire need to enhance the staff strength with experienced and qualified personnel to be able to adequately carry out the workload of the Department;
- The MFR review also discovered that Government Printing Department has suffered stagnation of officers in post for a long time without promotion resulting to high staff attrition rate over the period;
- That the broad swath of available staff in the Department are not qualified in terms of academic qualifications and there is a limited training opportunities in the Department. This situation has retarded the growth and expansion of the Department;
- That the Department is grossly under resourced and there is the dire need of advanced electronic printing machines to improve productivity, and there is only one vehicle which is over five (5) years old which is used both as utility and staff bus.

Summary of Recommendations

The review proposed the following recommendations to be implemented by the Department:

Organizational Structure

- That the Production and Planning unit should be separated and staffed with the required number of staff with the requisite academic qualification, skills, experiences to carry out the functions of these two units.
- That in collaboration with PSC and HRMO there should be an immediate recruitment of personnel to fill the vacant position of the Government Printer and also, to facilitate the promotion of deserving officers to occupy the vacant senior positions.
- That the leadership of the Civil Service through HRMO to consider the extension of services of those officers who are due to retirement to hold-on to the fort until suitable replacements are recruited . They should also be given the responsibility to train the incoming staff.
- That there should be a succession plan in place; and an urgent need for a fair and transparent recruitment at all levels to keep the Department running.
- That the current organizational structure should be fused into five units as follows:
 - I. Production Unit,
 - II. Engineering and Maintenance Unit,
 - III. Training and Capacity Building Unit,
 - IV. Planning and Research Unit, and
 - V. Commercials Unit (responsible for sales and marketing)

Statutory Framework

- We noted that the **Interpretative Act of 1971** is obsolete and no longer responsive to the demands of the printing industry and therefore recommend that it should be reviewed and updated.

Human Resource Management

- We **recommend** that GPD should liaise with HRMO to develop Job Descriptions for each post that will include the qualification and experience requirements.
- We **recommend** that a Scheme of Service is prepared for the respective positions that will ensure upward mobility for staff. If the skills are not available within, we also **recommend** the services of a professional Human Resource Consultant.
- We also **recommend** that urgent action be taken to develop the HR Manual and share among staff and ensure that they are fully educated on its contents. This is very important as the absence of HR Manual will affect administrative issues particularly with respect to staff retention.
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- While we noted that most of the staff in the Department has hands-on experience on the job, they however, do not have the required academic qualifications to assume a higher responsibility. **We therefore recommend that** the Department should be given a special consideration to allow the experience staff to progress to the middle positions based on their expertise, rather than the normal academic qualification.

- **We also recommend that** a Training Needs Assessment is conducted which will consider the felt need of every employee, which should culminate into the development of a training plan and training policy.
- **We further recommend that** Management should include a training budget in its annual budget to take care of its planned training programmes rather than just relying on in-house trainings which does not cater for the needs of all staff.
- The review noted that there used to be a training division in the Department charged with the responsibility of providing hands-on experience to workers. We recommend that management and the leadership of the Service to consider reopening of the Training Unit. This is necessary actions to be taken owing to the fact that there are limited opportunities to acquire academic qualifications in our higher institutions of learning.
- **We recommend that** management should facilitate the training of its staff as there is an acute scarcity of skilled personnel in these areas of operation.

Records Management

- **we recommend that** the department establish a centralized backup system for electronics data to be kept for quick access in case of a computer crash; and to make sure that the storage facility where hard copies of information are kept to be spec and span (clean).

Equipment and Logistics

- **We recommend** that a special budget line is dedicated to maintenance and repairs of machines during the preparation of the annual budget for the attention of the Ministry of Finance (MoF). This will help in the provision of tools and spare parts to enhance repairing of faulty machines.

- We also **recommend** that the Department should liaise with the Ministry of Transport and Aviation (MTA) for the procurement of vehicle(s) to improve on their mobility and effective service delivery.

Accommodation

- The same thing applies here as well. We **recommend that** as a matter of urgency, the Department should work with the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure (MWI) for the immediate removal of all disabled persons around the vicinity of the Government Bookshop. This will enhance the safety and security of the staff of the Government Bookshop and the general public.

