



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

**PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM UNIT
(PSRU)**

FINAL REPORT

**MANAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL REVIEW OF NATIONAL
ASSETS AND GOVERNMENT'S PROPERTY COMMISSION
(NAGPC)**

AUGUST, 2020

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| CBO's | - | Community Based Organisations |
| CEDAW | - | Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. |
| CRC | - | Convention on the Rights of Children |
| CGCAO | - | Chief Gender and Children's Affairs Officer |
| DCGCAO | - | Deputy Chief Gender and Children's Affairs Officer |
| DFID | - | UK Department for International Development |
| FSU | - | Family Support Unit |
| GoSL | - | Government of Sierra Leone |
| PSRU | - | Public Sector Reform Unit |
| HQ | - | Headquarters |
| HRMO | - | Human Resources Management Office |
| MGCA | - | Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs |
| IT | - | Information and Technology |
| MDA | - | Ministries, Departments and Agencies |
| MFR | - | Management and Functional Reviews |
| MoHS | - | Ministry of Health and Sanitation |
| MSWGCA | - | Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs |
| MTNDP | - | Medium Term National Development Plan |
| NCDHR | - | National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights |
| NGOs | - | Non-Governmental Organisations |

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The leadership of the National Assets and Government's Property Commission requested for Management and Functional Reviews (MFR) to address its major administrative challenges and structural deficiencies including severe shortage of qualified, well-trained and well-remunerated personnel. This report presents results of the review with recommendations proffered to particularly address the stated problems. Most importantly, the review proposes measures to improve on the existing situation and to also restore efficiency in delivery service to the people of Sierra Leone.

This review was undertaken by the Public Sector Reform Unit with complementary support of the Human Resource Management Office. The exercise was focused on modernizing the Asset and property register component of the Commission supported by effective records management system that can be linked to different sector utilizing Government assets and property in and out of Sierra Leone; which necessitate active partnership and collaborative engagement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

This justified the need for new strategies, new policies, modern ICT system and a purposeful human capacity drive to overhaul the entire operational and management culture of the Commission. It will also require a continued dedication to coordination and collaborative engagement with other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), particularly with the Ministry of Works and Public Assets, where functional overlaps exist.

The review team noted that the present organization structure of the Commission needs reviewing to enable it discharge its mandate and functions effectively owing to the lack operational machinery for effective policy implementation. Where planning and policy implementation exists it is ad hoc, reactive and does not provide direction or support for management of the Commission.

An appropriate organizational structure has been recommended for adoption by the Commission. The qualities and characteristics of the recommended structure have been outlined and discussed with the top echelon of the Commission who has accepted its merits. Furthermore, the recommended structure complies with the Architecture of a modernized Assets and property management Commission. PSRU is hopeful that the recommended structure is based on the specialized and unique nature of the Commission and the mandate assigned to it.

1.1. Summary of Findings

The findings of the Management and Functional Review is summarized here with recommendations. It worth noting that the ability to implement the mandate of the Commission is largely dependent on its capacity to conduct effective policy implementation and coordinate stakeholder's engagement, and foster compliance of all institutions of Government to the 1990 Act of Parliament, which established the Commission. At the same time, the capacity of the Commission to perform its assigned functions will also depend on the number of staff available and

their possession of requisite skills. Looking at the tasks that the Commission is performing at the moment, the Commission has few competent staff with the technical capacity to manage public assets and property besides the Commissioner and the Executive Secretary. So far, the findings and recommendations are thematically summarized below:

1.1.2. Operational Functions of the Commission

The result revealed a number of challenges that affect the efficiency and productivity in the performance of the staff roles and responsibilities. It emerged from interviews conducted with staff at the headquarters and the regional offices in Bo and Kenema that few staff are undertaking operational function that could have been undertaken by many technical staff. Implicitly, the Commission is short-staffed with limited resources to perform technical functions. As a result, the few available staff, which are mostly volunteers struggle to perform the day-to-day roles and responsibilities in most case without any much support from the HQ. They lamented the limited time for pursuing high impact functions with limited resources and technical support from the HQ. Though, they are guided by an Act of Parliament to perform their respective function, the review also revealed inadequate capacity to exercise their respective roles and responsibilities.

Recommendations: The review team would like to **make a case** to fast track the appointment of Regionally-based Commissioners. This is in view of the reality that the Commission's ability to implement its mandate is also dependent on having the full complement of Regional Commissioners. The team is of the technical view that having the Regionally-based Commissioners with technical knowledge in various technical disciplines will complement the efforts of the technical staff and also help to increase the visibility and productivity of the Commission.

1.1.3. Administrative Functions of the Commission

The realization of the mandate and goals of the Commission depends on the quality of its administrative processes and procedures. Within that context, the review took into consideration area of recruitment, Records Management and Accommodations.

1.1.4. Human Resource Management

The human resource management function is largely undervalued in the Commission. Presently, HR functions are performed by the Senior Assistant Secretary. There is an urgent need to develop a more pro-active and competent HR functions properly staffed by trained HR personnel. The review team was also able to identify acute shortage of staff at both headquarters and regional levels. The review also revealed that the Commission relies on volunteers to fill vacant positions that could have been held by highly skill personnel. These volunteers stated the lack of stipend as

their biggest challenge, especially when combined with the other challenges noted e.g. lack of mobility, airtime etc. It was suggested that adequate resourcing and capacity building opportunities will positively impact on service delivery of the Commission.

Recommendations,

We therefore recommend the following:

- Development of a functional organogram that incorporates all functions performed by the Commission as shown in annex 2.
- Collaborate with PSC and HRMO to develop job descriptions for all divisions and positions within the Commission.
- Collaborate with PSRU in the development of comprehensive Training Plan to ensure improvement in the technical capacity in the Commission.

1.1.5. Recruitment and Selection

The review revealed that the Commission has a very lean staff at the HQ and regional offices to effectively implement its mandate. The administering of regional offices by volunteers shows critical recruitment of staff for the effective and efficient service delivery of the Commission.

Recommendation: We **recommend** that the Commission contact HRMO and PSC to fast-track the recruitment of critical positions and ensure that the current volunteers (if they are qualified) are absorbed in the Commission.

1.1.5.1. Job descriptions

It emerged during the review that staff and volunteers have not been receiving enough guidance, through proper administrative and technical training, or that they are simply doing what they *think* they should be doing. It is still important to identify ways to address the fact that most of the respondents indicated that they have only a partial understanding their job functions.

Recommendations: We **recommend** the development of job description for all staff in order to improve coherence between expected responsibilities and actual day to day activities. This will help to enhance clarity in job descriptions, with in-depth understanding of what they should be doing. We also **recommend** that the Commission provides proper guidance and supervision with effective reporting line.

1.1.5.2. Training and development

Seventy-six percent of interview respondents indicated that they did not receive a formal induction training when they were recruited. Some staff described their induction as being paired with

experienced workers in that position or what could be appropriately referred to as learning by observation.

Recommendation: We **recommend** that the Commission prepares a strategic planning on the development of human resources of the Commission. The document should have multiple stakeholders inputs to serve as a tool for future planning of the budgetary resources related to the staff training based on job descriptions and required qualification for each position.

1.1.5.3. Financial resources

According to the financial document review by the Team, the Commission received 0.5% of the national budget and 50% of total approved allocation from the Ministry of Finance. At central level, the Chairman and Executive Secretary are informed of the budget ceiling and develop plans within this funding envelope. The impact of this can be seen in the overall lack of resources within the Commission offices at the HQ and regional levels.

Recommendations: We therefore, **recommend** that the Commission engage with the Ministry of Finance for a timely disbursement of the finance to facilitate the work of the Commission. We also **recommend** that the Commission embark on fundraising activities to solicit complimentary support rather than absolute dependent on subvention from Government that are often not forthcoming.

1.1.5.4. Procurement and Disposal of Assets by MDAs

The Procurement Act does not discriminate against MDAs with respect to size or volume of activities. It is important that all MDAs inform the Commission about the procurement of Government assets and their disposal. Not only does it help to keep record of Government assets and property, it also helps the Commission to monitor the life cycle of assets and property and reduces the incidence of corrupt practices in converting public assets into private ownership.

Recommendations: We therefore, **recommend** that the Commission work with NPPA to be able to track and report on all assets and qualifying lifecycle events from acquisition through disposal. This should include capturing detailed contract and acquisition data and updates on the status of asset and inventory throughout its lifecycle through to consumption and disposal. In line with this recommendation, we also **recommend** that the Commission sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the NPPA.

1.1.5.5. Records Management System

The review observed that the Commission have no Records Management Officer and a Unit to address the records management systems. There is a need to address the issue of a centralized database of all property and assets in an out of Sierra Leone, which must be collected in a comprehensive manner, and all available information on a wide range of issues related to assets and property registration documented.

Recommendations: We therefore, **recommend** that the Commission re-organize the Asset register and records keeping systems with assistance from the Directorate of science and innovation, Office of the President and the introduction of a central information software called the “Master Register”.

We also **recommend** that assets and property inventory officers (Records Management Officers) are recruited and given adequate training and manuals on procedures, policies, and practices for effective records management developed. In line with this recommendation, we also recommend that the training programme integrate paper and electronic information system that is reliable and verifiable on assets inventory and monitoring.

1.1.5.6. Accommodation

The review team was surprised to observe that the present office space occupied by the Commission is just part of a small portion of the Ministry of Works and Public Assets. Even without critical staff component which the Commission is craving for, there is already an acute problem with accommodation. This does not help to ensure productivity as employees are expected to work in a conducive environment in order to be effective in doing their job.

Recommendations: We therefore **recommend** that the Commission consider alternative measures in place for the provision of additional accommodation. We also **recommend** that immediate steps be taken to identify and relocate to bigger and more convenient office building as a way of rebranding and effecting institutional reform. We further **recommend** that the Commission look into the accommodation of regional offices as they are equally constraint by limited office accommodations.

1.1.5.7. Logistics and Equipment

The review revealed the lack of computers and stationary for report writing and documentation of assets, as well as communication facilities such as internet (for regional staff/volunteers) and top-up cards. Adequately resourcing offices of the Commission at the central and regional level will positively impact on service delivery through improved assets and property documentation and enhance both internal and external communications.

Recommendations: In light of the gaps and challenges, we **recommend** that the Commission provides the necessary equipment to the staff at the regions to be able to carry out their duties. In line with this recommendation, the Commission should provide adequate quarterly budgetary allocation to acquire computers and stationary for report writing and documentation of assets, as well as communication facilities such as internet (for regional staff/volunteers) and top-up cards. We also **recommend** that funds be made available to purchase Moto Bikes and pool vehicles to improve on the productivity of the Commission at the District and Regional levels.

1.1.6. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

There is a need to improve on the image of the Commission, through public education. It emerged from some of the interviews conducted with regional offices that they often face challenges to communicate with the HQ particularly in the absence of internet connectivity. They also face a number of other challenges owing to the lack of effective internal communication system and procedure both at the Headquarter and the regional Offices, which continue to affect their efficiency and productivity. The Commission has no competent Information, Education and Communication Officer with the requisite expertise to help heighten the image and visibility of the Commission.

Recommendations: The Review Team therefore **recommend** that the Commission develop a comprehensive Communication Strategy that will express the policy guidelines for communications and related outreach activities; including what the Commission wishes to share with other MDAs and the general public. This strategy should be reviewed and updated as and when necessary to contest with emerging issues. The review team is of the view that effective internal communication will enhance institutional productivity. We further **recommend** that the Commission embark on effective public education and information sharing campaign across the country to inform citizens of their rights and responsibility with respect to Government's assets and property.

1.1.7. Overlaps and Duplication of Functions

The Team observed that Commitment to coordination exists, but duplication of key functions by other MDAs continue to negatively impact the work of the Commission. The review team also noted that the functions of assets management are performed by Local Council under the Local Government Act and subsequent devolution schedules fall under the responsibility of the Councils. The relationships between the Commission, MPWA, MoF and other stakeholders' institutions are not clearly defined. As such, responsibilities of the Commission to the collaborating institution, and vice versa should be clearly defined.

Recommendations: To address these challenges, we strongly **recommend** that the mandate of the Commission be reviewed to be able to address the functional overlap between the Commission and other institutions of Government. To implement this recommendation, we further **recommend** continuous stakeholders' engagement at policy level.

1.1.7.1. Stakeholders Engagement And Coordination

Interviews with the leadership of the Commission revealed that the Commission frequently collaborates with the Police, Attorney-General Office, Office of the Administrator and Registrar-General, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Environment, Ministry of Public Works and Assets. The review team also noted that the expected closest partners of the commission is the Ministry of Works and Public Assets and the Monument and Relic Commission. The review also revealed serious shortcoming with respect to coordination and corporation between the Commission and the

Ministry of works and Public Assets with expected cooperation and active collaborative engagement between the Commission and the Ministry.

Recommendations: We therefore **recommend** that the Commission holds quarterly or bi-annual stakeholders' engagement with the Ministry of Public Works and Assets, Ministry of Transport and Aviation, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Environment, Ministry of Finance and Office of the Attorney-General and Ministry of Justice, as well as National Public Procurement Authority (NPPA). Such stakeholders' engagement will help to clarify many issues including functional overlap and duplication of duties; increase the visibility of the Commission and also contribute in the development of policies and strategies for Assets and property management in Sierra Leone. There is a need for the Commission to re-establish close links with assets management stakeholders as stated above.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the Management and Functional Review is summarized here with recommendations. It is worth noting that the ability to implement the mandate of the Commission is largely dependent on its capacity to conduct effective policy implementation and coordinate stakeholder's engagement and foster compliance of all institutions of Government to the 1990 Act of Parliament. At the same time, the capacity of the Commission to perform its assigned functions will also depend on the number of staff available and their possession of requisite skills. Looking at the tasks that the Commission is performing at the moment, the Commission has few competent staff with the technical capacity to manage public assets and property besides the Commissioner and the Executive Secretary. The findings have been deeply analysed and recommendations carefully indicated.

2.1. Operational Functions of the Commission

The organizational structure of the Commission is essentially irrelevant as far as the management and operational functions are concern. The actual division of labour between very few staff mostly volunteers in the regional offices does not correspond to their job descriptions or titles. Although in some cases the few staff are assigned to a specific task, they often carry out additional functions based on necessity or individual capacities. Likewise, the few staff in the regional headquarter deal nearly exclusively with monitoring and documentation of assets and Government property. So far, some of these pointers are thematically summarized below:

- **Staff Workload:** The result revealed a number of challenges that affect the efficiency and productivity in the performance of the staff roles and responsibilities. It emerged from interviews conducted with staff at the headquarter and the regional offices in Bo and Kenema that few staff are undertaking operational function that could have been undertaken by many technical staff. Implicitly, they are short-staffed with limited resources to perform the operational function of the Commission. As a result, the few staff (volunteers) struggle to perform the day-to-day roles and responsibilities in most case without any resource from the HQ. They lamented the squeeze on time for pursuing high impact functions with limited resources and technical support from the HQ. Though, they are guided by the Act of Parliament to perform their respective function, the review also revealed inadequate capacity to perform their respective roles and responsibilities.
- **Mobility (Vehicles and Moto Bikes):** the lack of mobility has resulted to inability to reach the other districts in the Regions to perform their respective roles and responsibilities on a regular basis. The regional teams in Bo and Kenema pointed out that their mobility constraints prevent them from conducting assets inspection and monitoring exercises and they are often limited to handling cases of people who come to the office to address critical issues and concerns. The reality is that, transportation is necessary to reach communities and other districts, monitor assets and attend meetings. This includes not only the motorbikes or other vehicles, but also financial resources for fuel, maintenance and per diems. These findings were affirmed by the interviews with staff at central and regional offices. The need for transportation was identified not only as a needed resource but also the most acute challenge to the operational functions of the Commission.

Recommendations

- The review team would like to **make a case** to fast track the appointment of Regionally-based Commissioners. This is in view of the reality that the Commission's ability to implement its mandate is also dependent on having the full complement of Regional Commissioners. The team is of the technical view that having the Regionally-based Commissioners with technical knowledge in various technical disciplines will complement the efforts of the technical staff and also help to increase the visibility and productivity of the Commission.
- The institutional productivity of the Commission is also largely dependent on its capacity to undertake asset's registration and monitoring, as well as evaluation of all Government's assets and property. These functions form the core of the Commission's work. In line with this technical view, we **recommend** for the creation of several technical positions and the recruitment of people with the competence to fill-in those positions. One of such position will include **Policy Planning and Compliance**. The post holder would be responsible for assets policy design, analysis, compliance and coordination with other stakeholders. The review team is of the conviction that the creation of this position would enable the Commission to develop its own policy capacity that would also be holistic and better foster policy implementation in close partnership with other stakeholders.

- We also **recommend** for the creation of **Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager/Officer**, as well as **Government Asset and Property Compliance Manager/Officer**. We are of the technical conviction that the key to improving the operational function of the Commission is in structural changes in its functions that would allow re-prioritisation of the Commission's human resources towards monitoring, evaluation and registration of Government's Assets and Property in Sierra Leone, as well as MDAs' compliance. This area forms significant part of the review recommendations.
- We equally **making a case** for the position of **Public Information, Education, and Communication Officer (IEC)** to increase the image and visibility of the Commission. The post holder with technical expertise will then help to develop communication strategy, and also with the requisite competence to continuously update stakeholders of operational function of the Commission, educate the public about the statutory mandate and function of the Commission as a means of fostering compliance, as well as informing about progress by the Commission.