

**GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE**

**PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM UNIT  
(PSRU)**

**FINAL REPORT**

**MANAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL REVIEW OF  
THE NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (NDMA)**

**October, 2023**

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## **ABBREVIATION**

CDMCs	Chiefdom Disaster Management Committees
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DDMCs	District Disaster Management Committees
DMCs	Disaster Management Committees
DMD	Disaster Management Department
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EPA	Environment Protect Agency
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
FCC	Freetown City Council
MECC	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
MFRs	Management and Functional Reviews
MLHCP	Ministry of Lands Housing and Country Planning
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MoWPA	Ministry of Works and Public Assets
NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency
NPAA	National Protected Area Authority
NPDRR	National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
NSCIA	National Security and Central Intelligence Act
ONS	Office of National Security
PSRU	Public Sector Reform Unit
RDMCs	Regional Disaster Management Committees (RDMCs)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Director General of the NDMA engaged the Public Sector Reform Unit (PSRU) through a formal correspondence dated 11<sup>th</sup> August 2023 requesting for the conduct of a Management and Functional Review (MFR). The aim of the MFR is to assess the functional efficiency and effectiveness of the NDMA, provide concrete recommendations to strengthen its mandate and to align its activities with the broader policy objectives of the Government's "New Direction Manifesto: Consolidating Gains and Accelerating Transformation". Specifically, the exercise looked at structures, legal framework, management, systems and processes for effective and efficient service delivery.

The primary mandate of the NDMA is to "manage disasters and similar emergencies throughout Sierra Leone and develop the capacity of communities to respond effectively to disasters and emergencies." On that note, the Agency seeks to reposition itself in order to drive policies in fulfilment of its mandate and to address the peculiar needs of the citizenry, not only at the national level but also at the local level.

The conduct of the MFR is consistent with cluster 4 of the "New Direction Manifesto" - which emphasizes 'Revamping the Public Service Architecture, strengthening accountability, professionalism and service delivery'. Thus, the review commenced with a preliminary consultative meeting with the leadership of NDMA at the Conference Room of the Agency. A presentation was made on the scope, methodology and resources needed to conduct the MFR. In addition, a field exercise was conducted to assess the capacity of the regional offices and semi-structured interviews were held with staff across the regions. The interviews were extended to the District Councils in the four regions visited and thereafter, questionnaires were circulated to both senior and junior management of the NDMA.

In the process, the review was able to identify a number of challenges including the current organizational structure which is inadequate and does not reflect the optimal staff complement; existing gaps in the legal framework (NDMA Act 2020); decentralization of regional offices is ad hoc as some functions are still performed at the center; weak coordination and collaboration with key stakeholders involved in managing disasters and risk reduction activities across the country. In addition, challenges are also noted with the administrative systems and processes, logistics and equipment which have limited the capacity of the Agency to do more.

Consequently, the Review Team has proposed changes to the current organizational structure, administrative systems and processes for effective and efficient implementation of its mandate as enshrined in the National Disaster Management Agency Act 2020. The recommendations proffered in this synthesis report are intended to build on the solid foundations of the current management systems and to also make adequate use of complimentary support or opportunities from the Government, Donor partners and key stakeholders in the Sector. The Review Team took account of the dynamic changes needed, and as such make special recommendations for the review of the NDMA Act 2020, a reduction in the number of members that constitutes the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) and to strengthen coordination and collaboration among stakeholders. Thus, all attempts have been made to represent the views expressed during the one-on-one interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and responses from questionnaires as accurately as possible. A full summary of findings and recommendations on

strengthening the institution's own internal administrative apparatus presented below in priority order.

## **Summary of Findings:**

### **I. Statutory Framework**

An examination of the NDMA Act 2020, revealed several gaps and challenges which includes the lack of a regulatory instrument to guide its implementation and to enforce compliance.

That in respect of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR), the review revealed that the Act indicates large number of members (33 in actual sense) within the platform which makes it difficult to form a quorum.

### **II. Organizational Structure**

The review noted inherent technical and administrative challenges upon examination of the current organogram which includes lack of career pathways and some critical missing functions within the organogram of the Agency.

The review also noted that the Directorate of Research, M&E lacks the policy and planning components which is being performed by the Chief of Policy and Programmes

### **III. Coordination with Stakeholders**

The review noted that the relationship with stakeholders and Donor Partners is strong with good communication and information flows. However, the relationship between some of the MDAs (EPA, FCC, NPAA, MLHCP etc.) and the Local Government (Freetown City Council (FCC)) needs to be strengthened to ensure effective service delivery by the Agency.

### **IV. Staff Strength and Qualifications**

The analysis of the staff components revealed that the Agency is the analysis further revealed some gaps in human resource.

### **V. Staff Capacity**

The review revealed that since the establishment of the Agency, series of internal and international (shown in annex 3) trainings and capacity building opportunities have been provided for the staff to improve their skills and competence. However, the review noted the management have not undertaken a Training Needs Assessment since its establishment, hence, the absence of a training policy.

### **VI. Staff Age Profile**

- The review noted that 16 out of the total number of staff are aged 50 years and above. The 2023 Manpower Plan for the Agency indicates that four (4) staff have reached the retirement age and twelve (12) more will reached the retirement age in the next three (3) years. Thus, the need for proper strategic HR planning to fill these gaps in the future.

### **VII. Logistics and Stock Management**

The review noted logistical challenges in the Agency that affect its operations. These includes inadequate operational vehicles, motorbikes and other equipment such as drones and GPS that are required to prevent, mitigate, respond to or manage a possible disaster. That the Agency is constrained to acquire resources for stockpiling of its warehouses in Macdonald and Port

Loko, and its Mobile Supply Units (MSUs) in Makeni, Bo and Kenema.

## VIII. Communication and ICT

The review noted limited Communications and ICT staff, inadequate support coming from the Agency to strengthen the Directorate of Communications with the required equipment such as recorders, drones and high resolution cameras to zoom clearly on disaster prone communities and high risk areas due to funding constraints.

Furthermore, the review noted the lack of a dependable internet access in the regional offices and an over-reliance on private mobile phones for disaster coordination.

## IX. Accommodation

The review noted that the Agency needs a permanent office accommodation as it is currently housed in some rented buildings at both the Headquarters and the Regional offices. At the Headquarters office spaces are inadequate for staff of the Agency. However, the review noted less accommodation problems in the regions, with the exception of the regional office in Port Loko, which was handed over to the Agency by the UN World Food Program (WFP).

—However, the review noted that the World Bank has provided \$2,100,000 (USD) for the construction of an Emergency Operation Center (EOC) through the Resilient Urban Sierra Leone Project (RUSLP). The only challenge now is the provision of land by the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL).

## Summary of Recommendations:

### I. Statutory Framework

***we recommend that the NDMA Act 2020 should be reviewed taking into consideration the highlighted points raised above.*** The review of the legislation should be accompanied with the development of a regulation to strengthen the enforcement mechanism of the Agency.

***we also recommend that the composition of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction should be reduced to fifteen (15) members and the roles and responsibilities of each institution within the sector should be clearly defined.*** The Review Team believes that this process should not be done in isolation, but rather with the full participation of key stakeholders within the sector.

### II. Organizational Structure

**We recommend** the adoption of the proposed organogram in figure 2 which gives a clear description of the different reporting lines and career pathways for existing positions.

**We also recommend** the expansion of the Research, M&E Department with the addition of the policy and planning functions to help ameliorate some of the structural challenges discussed in the report. Based on this, the new nomenclature for the department will be ***Policy Planning Research,***

### ***Monitoring and Evaluation.***

**We further recommend** a “Gender and Social Inclusion Coordination” to be supervised directly by the Deputy Director General of the Agency.

**We also recommend** that the Director of Regional Coordination has a Deputy.

### **III. Coordination with Stakeholders**

**We recommend** that the Agency continues to strengthen its collaboration and coordination functions with NPAA, MLHCP, EPA, FCC, MoWPA, MECC and all MDAs performing similar roles and functions through a well-managed coordination mechanism.

In addition, **the review recommends** for roles clarity between these institutions and the NDMA to avoid conflicting mandates in disaster management.

### **IV. Staff Strengthen and Qualifications**

**We recommend** the recruitment of additional staff on merit bases with the required qualifications and experience, specifically for the professional and technical positions across all cadres in order to strengthen the capacity of the Agency to staff its regional and district offices.

### **V. Staff Capacity**

**We recommend** that the Agency seeks the services of a professional HR consultant to develop a professional and standard HR manual and also conduct Training Needs Assessment followed by a Training Policy and Plan.

**We further recommend** that the Agency should include key stakeholders and other institutions related to disaster management in training programmes for effective collaboration and implementation of its programmes.

### **VI. Staff Age Profile**

**We recommend** that the Agency makes adequate succession planning for the transfer of skills and knowledge for staff that are already due for retirement to avoid skills gap.

### **Logistics and Stock Management**

**We recommend** that the Agency provides adequate logistics and equipment such as vehicles, motorbikes, drones and GPS across the five regions of the country. The availability of these logistics and equipment would help to shorten the maximum response time which currently stood at 72 hours.

**We further recommend** that the Agency should always create a budget line for the procurement of essential logistics and equipment in the preparation of its annual budget for the attention of the Ministry of Finance. The Agency can also mobilise resources through its Development Partners and Specialized UN agencies in disaster management to fund the procurement of these items.

### **VII. Communication and ICT**

**We recommend** that even though the Agency is young and has inadequate staff in the communication directorate, that the Agency strengthen the Directorate of Communications with the necessary communication equipment and training to fully operationalise the functions of the Directorate.



**We further recommend** that the Agency facilitate the internet connectivity in all the regional offices by the provision of a fibre optic modem and the monthly subscription of data. This will ease the transmission of messages and reports from the regions to the headquarters in real time.

**VII. Accommodation**

**We recommend** that the Agency continues its engagements with the Ministry of Lands Housing and Country Planning for the provision of a suitable land to fast track the construction of a modern office building and the EOC by the World Bank.

## SECTION 5 ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Statutory Framework

Legislative frameworks are critical in defining roles and responsibilities of organizations, stakeholders to avoid duplication of functions. The NDMA Act of 2020 is the legislative instruments that established the NDMA to manage disaster, reduce risk and similar emergencies throughout Sierra Leone. However, the review noted some gaps in the NDMA Act 2020, which have posed serious challenges to the Agency in carrying out its core mandates. Thus, some of these challenges noted within the Act are highlighted below:

- The Agency is constrained to fully implement the provisions of the current Act because of the absence of a regulatory instrument to guide the implementation of the Act.
- There are conflicting mandates among institutions within the sector which have hindered the role of the NDMA in disaster management. For instance, the National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) and the Forestry Department at the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) are mandated to preserve Freetown's hills as natural assets. At the same time, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP) is mandated to issue out building permits to citizens for estate development without recourse to the Agency responsible to manage disaster and risk reduction.

#### Recommendation(s):

Given the above scenarios:

- ***we recommend that the NDMA Act 2020 should be reviewed taking into consideration the highlighted points raised above.*** The review of the legislation should be accompanied with the development of a regulation to strengthen the enforcement mechanism of the Agency.
- In addition, ***we also recommend that the roles and responsibilities of each institution within the sector should be clearly defined.*** The Review Team believes that this process should not be done in isolation, but rather with the full participation of key stakeholders within the sector.

### 5.2 Organisational Structure

The NDMA is currently structured on a directorate system, with the DG as the Head of the Agency and principal adviser to the President and the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, on issues of national disaster management and risk reduction. However, the review noted inherent technical and administrative challenges with the current structure which includes lack of career pathways and

some critical missing functions within the organogram of the Agency. The review also noted that the Directorate of Research, M&E lacks the policy and planning components which is being performed by the Chief of Policy and Programmes. As a solution to these challenges, the Review Team had recommended a proposed new organizational structure (see figure 2 above) with expanded roles and responsibilities for some of the existing departments.

### Recommendation(s)

- **We recommend** the adoption of the proposed organogram in figure 2 above which gives a clear description of the different reporting lines and career pathways for existing positions.
- **We also recommend** the expansion of the Research, M&E Department with the addition of the policy and planning functions to help ameliorate some of the structural challenges discussed earlier. Based on this, the new nomenclature for the department will be ***Policy Planning Research, Monitoring and Evaluation***.
- We also recommend for the inclusion of the following positions: Chief of Operations, Gender and Social Inclusion Coordinator, Director Regional Coordination and Deputy Director Regional Coordination.

### 5.3 Staff Strength and Qualifications

The total number of staff in post according to the Staff List provided to the Review Team is seventy-five (75) including staff at the regional offices. The analysis of job categories is shown in the table below.

**Table 1: Analysis of Job Category**

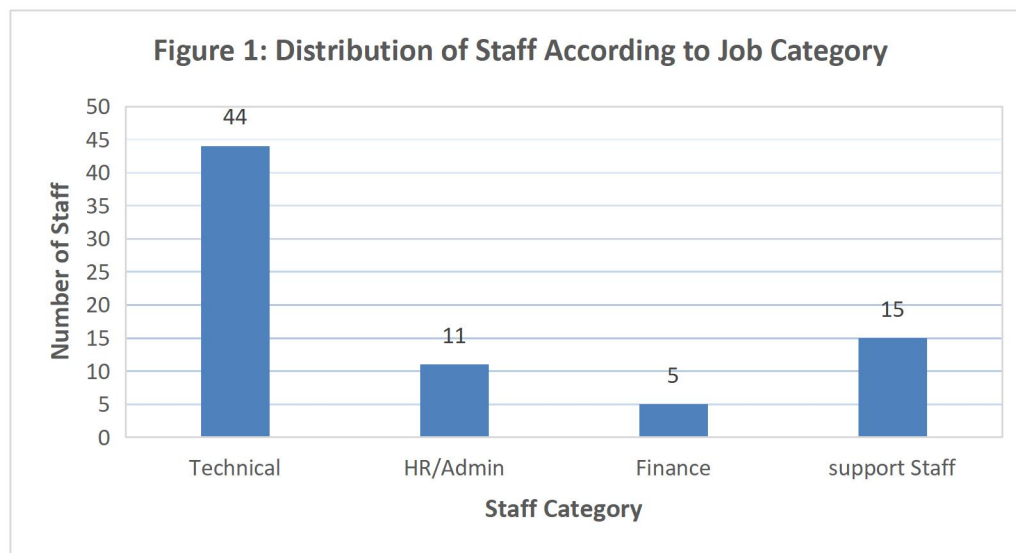
<b>Job Category</b>	<b>No. of Staff in Post</b>
Professional/Technical Staff	49
Sub-Professional Staff	11
Support Staff	15
<b>Total Staff Strength</b>	<b>75</b>

Source: NDMA Current Staff List (2021-2023)

In the above table the *Professional/Technical* staff comprises of the Director General, Deputy Director General, Directors, Deputy Directors, Regional Coordinators, Senior Officers and Officers. Whilst the *Sub-Professional* and the *Support Staff* are the Data Entry Clerks, Admin Assistants; and Receptionist, Office Assistants, Drivers respectively.

From the analysis of the staff components of the Agency, the review noted that the Agency is under staffed as evident in the 2023 Manpower Plan for the Agency. Also, the analysis further revealed some gaps in human resource especially with

specialized skills and qualifications in disaster management and risk reduction. A graphical representation of the job categories is shown in figure 1 below.



Source: NDMA Staff List (2021-2023)

### Recommendation(s)

- **We therefore recommend** the recruitment of additional staff on merit bases with the required qualifications and experience, specifically for the professional and technical positions across all cadres in order to strengthen the capacity of the Agency to staffed its regional and district offices.

### 5.4 Staff Capacity

Staff capacity is an important aspect of staff development for which due consideration should be given to ensure continued high staff productivity, equips stakeholders and to support communities to perform their functions in a better manner during disasters and emergencies. The review revealed that since the establishment of the Agency series of internal and international trainings and capacity building opportunities (as shown in Appendix 3) have been provided for the staff to improve their skills and competence. Furthermore, the review noted that Management have not undertaken a Training Needs Assessment since its establishment, hence, the absence of a training policy.

**Recommendation(s)**

- **We recommend** that the Agency seeks the services of a professional HR consultant to conduct a Training Needs Assessment followed by a Training Policy and Plan.
- **We further recommend** that the Agency should include key stakeholders and other institutions related to disaster management in training programmes for effective collaboration and implementation of its programmes.

