Enhancing Professionalization of Human Resource Management in the Public Service in Africa
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PRESENTATION
Overview of Issues, Challenges and Prospects of Effective Management of Human Resources in the Public Sector in Africa
by
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Over the past five decades, one of the truisms of international development assistance has been that, while reforms to promote civil service competence and efficiency, deliver public services effectively, control corruption, and increase accountability may not require economic and social progress, without them improvement is a lot less likely.
Why is this important?

- The Public Sector is the largest spender and employer in virtually every developing country and it sets the policy environment for the rest of the economy.

- The quality of the public sector is closely related to growth and poverty reduction.
The Call for Reform
Civil Service Reform Matters

Government Employment, as % of population
Early 1990s

Source: Munkherjee and Reid, The World Bank, 2005
The Call for Reform
Civil Service Reform Matters

Central Government Wages & Salaries
Early 1990s


Source: Murkherjee and Reid, The World Bank, 2005
Emerging pressure on the state
Growing global competition for goods, services and human resources
Growing citizen demands for effective service delivery, transparency and accountability
Growing fiscal demands for efficiency and effectiveness
Summary African HR Scan
Largely Service-less & Forgotten Masses

- Low productivity
- Very high absenteeism
- No incentives for change
- Largely underserved
- & poorly served population
Relatively Little Progress to Show for in Spite of Significant Funding From IOs

Figure ES.1: Lending Projects with Significant PSR Components, 1990–2006

Source: World Bank database and IEG staff calculations.
Some Bright Spots

- **Tunisia**: Starting in 1986, reforms were scaled back using lessons from first attempts in 1970 and 1974 in deciding which services should be converting to commercial operations, reforming compensation, and modernizing personnel management.

- **Botswana**: Implementing a meritocratic plan, using lessons from many international sources—Including Singapore
  - Education in exchange of commitment to work for the Government
  - Performance through quality circles and personnel audits

- **Mali**: Reform through decentralization starting in 1991 ([mara segi so] bringing power home)

- **Ghana** – Starting in 1991, effective human resource retrenchment plan succeeded in reducing the civil service from 140,000 to 80,000—though much was nullified by increases from other parts of the civil service.

- **Senegal** – Lessons from AGETIP success in developing local capacity; however, locals were left out of ownership of projects.

- **Tanzania and Uganda** - Successful demand-side reforms
Challenges to Effective HR Management
What has gotten in the Way of Change & Reform?

- **Structural Obstacles: Colonial values meet local culture**
  - Civil service is mostly life long employment
  - Relationship based
  - Civil service still anchored in patronage
  - Meritocracy does not factor in selection and retention
  - No performance indicators
Challenges to Effective HR Management
What's Getting in the Way of Change & Reform?

- **Political Obstacles**
  - Lack of political leadership and commitment
  - Trade unions
  - Corruption
  - No clear delimitation between political appointees and professional civil service
  - No voice and participation
  - No accountability
  - Not sufficiently decentralized

Franca Ovadje and Augustine Ankomah in Human Resource Management in Developing countries
- Kamoche (2000 & 2001)
Challenges to Effective HR Management
What’s Getting in the Way of Change & Reform?

- Cultural & Behavioral Challenges
  - Reactiveness and short-term orientation
  - Nepotism
  - Employee commitment
  - Spacial and Organizational cultures
  - Communalism and collectivism
  - Relationship based behaviors
Challenges to Effective HR Management
Prospects & Way Forward

So, Where Do We Go From Here?
Table 5.3: Civil Service and Administrative Reform: Types and Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Political risk</th>
<th>Financial cost</th>
<th>Demanding of capacity</th>
<th>Successfully implemented reforms</th>
<th>Little or no progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay and employment data</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td>Yes—but capacity building is part of project</td>
<td>Rep. of Yemen, Guyana</td>
<td>Honduras, Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downsizing</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Significant one-time costs for retrenchment</td>
<td>Yes, to do it right (targeted)</td>
<td>Russia, Tanzania, India</td>
<td>Bulgaria, Guyana, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rep. of Yemen, Cambodia, Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation reforms</td>
<td>Yes, in egalitarian cultures, where lower ranks are politicized or where unions are strong</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Bulgaria, Albania</td>
<td>Guyana, Indonesia, Rep. of Yemen, Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resource management reforms</td>
<td>Yes, especially in patronage-based systems</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Bulgaria, Bolivia (pilots), Albania</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational reforms</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Russia, India, Tanzania</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand-side reforms</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tanzania, Uganda, India</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Russia, Rep. of Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bolivia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IEG country case studies.
Public sector reform is more successful in IBRD borrowers than among IDA borrowers

- Performance usually improved for:
  - Public financial management
  - Tax administration and transparency

- ...But not usually for Civil Service
For an Effective Human Resource Management
How Can success be Achieved?

- Ambitious administrative reforms rarely work.
- Success has been registered only in those few countries with strong political commitment.
- All successful reforms embrace recruitment and promotion based on merit for key positions (a strong evidence for success).
- Best practice is what is adapted to the country cultural and institutional context.
- Majority of successful reforms have incorporated accustomed lines of authority and decision making.
- Reforms take 15-20 years to fully mature, so the motivation for civil service reform must be institutionalized and carried over form one government to the next, if it is to succeed.
For an Effective Human Resource Management
How Can success be Achieved?

- Even in places where it worked implementation was difficult

- Being realistic and pragmatic in selecting reforms to support
  - what is politically and institutionally possible

- Recognizing that enhancing technology is not enough; the most difficult is changing the behavior and organizational culture

- Dealing with the basics first
For an Effective Human Resource Management
How Can success be Achieved?

- Seek/identify windows of opportunities & align reform effort to a politically salient issue
  - Sectorial entry points are advisable –
  - i.e - Education sector in several countries - marred by frequent problems of unaffordable wage bill and absenteeism
  - Contract teachers to tackle absenteeism, control wage bill
For an Effective Human Resource Management
How Can success be Achieved?

- Mobilize domestic constituencies to support reform
- Monitor and publicize systematic evidence of progress
- Tangible indicators of success (where possible link CSA to PFM)
- Success has been registered in:
  - personnel management reforms
  - Merit based recruitment and promotion to improve performance and counter patronage

Prospects
How Would an Effective HR Look like?

- From Relationship or Patronage based to Performance based
- Staffing
- Performance based assumes
  - Flexible employment condition
  - Talent management and development
  - Merit base selection and retention
  - Performance budgeting
  - Performance contracts
  - Use of market type mechanisms
  - Monitoring of merit based recruitment, promotions, transfers, etc.
HR Policies and Practices

- Establish rule based patterns of behavior-
- Internal audits and control
- PEFA indicators
- Use governance indicators (AGI) that focus on meritocracy, depoliticized civil service management, ethical behavior of civil servants; and attracting and retaining required human capital skills-
- Rules to assure ethical behaviors-
- Asset declaration requirements
- Code of ethics
- Limits on immunity protection
Political Action for Positive Behavioral Change

- Enhance voice in policy development
- Posting of information on organizational budgets, standards and performance
- Ombudsman and administrative appeals mechanisms
- Transformational leadership at individual and collective levels
- E-government to increase transparency and reduce corruption and increase overall tax compliance
- Beneficiary-based resource allocation- (vouchers)-
Political Action for Positive Behavioral Change

- Delimitation between professional civil service versus political appointments at higher level
- Measures to strengthen merit based recruitment and promotion
- Identify which strategic agencies can make the shift to more performance based management system
- How can more transparency and participation measures be integrated to strengthen responsiveness?
- How can monitoring and evaluation and greater results orientation be enhanced?
- Decentralization of decision making levels (state, province, communes, ministries, offices, etc.)
“Where donors took the lead in instigating civil service reforms, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, they actually left the recipients worse off because the aid undercut or postponed development of any indigenous capacity to sustain the changes once the assistance ended”

- Adopting models that don’t fit the local culture is a recipe for failure

- Analytic diagnosis – We need better understanding of the cultural incentives
African Culture as catalyst for Change in HRM
Reforms which are not aligned with local cultures cannot succeed

**HR Reform Areas**
- e.g. Flexible employment
- Retrenchment
- Talent Management
- Meritocracy
- Career Management, etc

**Existing Cultural Values**
- Identified from research, surveys, available information.

**Expected/Desired Behaviors & Outcomes**
- e.g. Ability to deal with uncertainty
- Individualism
- Individual accomplishment
- Work, productivity override relationships, etc

Ultimately, Reform is likely to be effective if aligned with Cultural Values.
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Questions
A broad consensus exists that interventions in FCSs require different approaches because of unique situations – insecurity, political instability, weak state legitimacy, weak rule of law, low administrative capacity, strong public demands for a “peace dividend”, etc (A. McKechnie, 2003).

Governments in FCSs will accomplish very little if they try to pursue too many reform objectives at the same time, especially if they haven’t managed to establish basic security – “good enough governance” concept (M. Grindle, 2004).

Security is the top priority. Governance reforms must be aligned to the overarching goal of maintaining peace and security – significantly higher risk of further conflict (P. Collier, 2007).

Governance must be considered in three dimensions: security, state legitimacy, and state effectiveness (D. Brinkerhoff, 2005).

Quality circle study became successful when they included discussions about personal and work related social problems (Kamoche 1995)
Civil service reform is likely to be the most complicated area in FCSs (IEG, 2007, 2008). Yet, the civil service literature which addresses FCSs is far scarcer and the scope is notably limited in terms of both technical breadth and depth (V. Fritz and A. R. Menocal, 2007).

While no clear consensus exists on how to build an effective civil service in FCSs, there are important questions about the applicability of conventional Weberian principles of modern civil service institutions (merit-based recruitment and promotion, political neutrality, and permanent tenure) (H. Blair, 2007; M. Esman, 1999; D. Rondinelli, 2006).

Infeasibility in cost-driven approaches to civil service reform (notably rightsizing, wage bill control, and pay reform) (R. Mukherjee, 2003; R. Beschel Jr., 2002).

Civil service reform should be planned and implemented at very early stages of reconstruction, which offers a small window of opportunity to push difficult changes (H. Blair, 2007).
Interdependence of security, political, and development spheres in FCSs underscores the importance of a political economy analysis (C. Call, 2008).

Technical knowledge and a political economy analysis must be combined with a solid understanding of local contextual factors such as norms, cultures, and social values (F. Fukuyama, 2004).

Tensions exist between short-term and long-term objectives in state building and peace-building. While the focus of peace building is the maintenance of security and consolidation of peace, the ultimate goal of state building is to strengthen institutions and consolidate states (C. Call, 2008).

Basic approaches to addressing weak capacity in FCSs (A. McKechnie, 2003): (1) build capacity; (2) buy capacity; (3) build temporary capacity; and (4) bypass weak government capacity.