Professionalizing Human Resources Management: Status and the Way Forward

29th AAPAM Roundtable Conference
Working Group 3 Report
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Foundation

- The working group sought to concretise a proposal for the establishment of an International Public Sector Management Association for Human Resources Africa Chapter (IPMA-HR Africa)
Working Group Considerations

- Professional Human Resource Management (HRM) is a critical component of strategic public service delivery given their understanding of human resources and what makes them productive.
- The value of professional HRM is either misunderstood or not appreciated within most bureaucratic structures.
- HRM experts are non-existent, not positioned strategically and in some cases marginalised from strategic decision-making structures.
- There is a need to formulate and advise on best practice on design of HRM policies and strategies.
- HRM policies and strategies have to be geared towards the effective utilisation of resources towards bringing about change that adds value to the bottom-line of public service delivery.
- Professional HRM has to be premised on competence and ethics and at a later stage be supported by standards, codes and legislation.
- Like other professions, HRM professionals need to development their capacity through their home-grown networks and institutes.
- Reputable HRM networks, associations and institutes are critical in the development of professional HRM professionals.
The African Context and HR Professionalism

- Some ministries still operate in the Personnel Management paradigm as opposed the HRM paradigm.
- Some ministries and countries relegate HR to administrative/clerk levels while others position HR in strategic/director levels.
- Legislation of HR profession.
The African Context and HR Professionalism

• Some countries have Legislation for HR profession stipulating
  – Minimum Qualifications
  – Accreditation
    • HR Courses
  – Certification
    • HR Practitioners based on career paths
  – Codified HR Ethics
  – Continuous certified professional development

• Some employers insist on Statutory and Professional requirements
The African Context and HR Professionalism

- Some executive managers have negative attitudes towards HR practitioners
- Some bureaucracies have rigid rules that frustrate HR innovation
- There are no regulatory mechanisms for HR variables
- Some ministries lack documented HR Strategies
- Some ministries still depend on external HR Consultants
Recommended Structure

- It is recommended that the core group that developed the IPMA-HR Africa proposal facilitates a Network of Working Group and other HRM experts in existing associations and networks for the exchange of ideas on the professionalization of HRM in the region.
Recommended Focus

• In its pursuit of the professionalization of HRM, the members of the network will seek to define the mandate of HRM in the form of well defined HRM roles and a well constituted professional HRM body for Africa.
Network Objectives

- Promote excellence in the practice of HRM in the public sector
- Identify and share the best practice of HRM so as to assist public sector organizations improve their performance in the public service in general
- Provide HRM practitioners in the Public Sector in Africa with tools, models, methods, and data to improve the effectiveness of their HRM and development programs
- Promote continuous learning, enhance knowledge, improve skills and develop the next generation of HR professionals and leaders in the public sector in Africa.
- Place the Human Resource Managers in the public sector in their right position as strategic partners in public service development planning and management.
- Support continental and regional efforts in Africa to implement harmonized Public Service commitments such as the Charter for Public Service in Africa and Human Resource Development efforts of NEPAD.
Recommended Considerations

- Recognition of the HR function as a strategic function
- Determination of HRM Standards including the Accreditation of HRM Practitioners, training components and codification of HRM ethics
- Definition of the roles of the HRM function
- Determinations of institutional and individual HRM skills gaps
- Capacity building for local HRM Associations, Institutions and experts.
- The regulation of HRM Practice through legislation
- Best practice in other strategic professional networks