The Role of Political Leadership in Reconstructing Capacities for Public Administration after Conflict

By Dr. John-Mary Kauzya
Chief of Governance and Public Administration branch
Division for Public Administration and Development Management
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations
New York
LEADERSHIP?

Leverage potential for development
Engage all actors’ and secure their commitment and resources
Align local, national, regional and global development plans
Develop political, managerial, administrative and technical capabilities
Ensure professionalism, and frugal use of resources
Report Achievements, and ensure sustainability
State shortfalls and strategies for addressing them
Hold people’s interest and well being at the center of all plans and operations
Insist on professionalism, accountability, integrity, and ethical conduct
Pave the way to satisfy the needs of the future generations.
Introduction

1. Governance: Before the debate on the concept, there was the word

2. Critical functions of political leadership in a post-conflict situation

3. Two Historical Faults that Need to be Corrected in the Process of Public Service Reform, Modernization and Transformation

4. Conclusion:
1: Governance: Before the Debate on the Concept, there was the Word

1. Latin “gubernare” meaning rule, direct, or guide.
2. Greek “steering or piloting a ship”.
   - Know the pre-determined direction
   - Have pre-agreed destination
   - Be mindful of the fuel (resources) available
   - Respect the route code, other sailors and ships on the way
   - Take into account the conditions of the sea
   - governing is first and foremost an internal job.
   - The term governance brings up the question of how realistic it is to expect that external actors can govern a country
1: Critical functions of political leadership: Restoring Trust

- One of the initial roles of political leadership in reconstructing capacities for public administration is to cultivate and sustain trust.
- Donors and post-conflict countries need to agree on aid management and coordination mechanisms that do not project incapability (which erodes trust) on the part of the political leadership of the recipient country.
2: Critical functions of political leadership:
Assessing the reality of the situation: Ensure a shared understanding of the reality, hard tasks and the challenges confronting the nation

Mobilize people to be hopeful but not blindly and motivate them to trust in their potential rather than in some external or divine intervention for their development.

When a country has stabilized and is seeking to chart out its new socio-politico-economic strategic path, it is best that its leadership be given sufficient space to lead the people through self examination processes to ensure a clear understanding of the challenges that face them.
3: Critical functions of political leadership: Mobilize people’s voice and mind to design and agree a national vision and strategy

The hard solutions of the problems of the future cannot be found in the simple tasks of yesterday. Determining and agreeing a national vision and strategy that provides an appropriate answer to the question of the public administration the country needs for the future must be based on a hard, harsh, and brutal diagnostic analysis of the reality of the situation, not only as it presents itself currently, but also as it presented itself in the past and as it will present itself in the future.
4: Critical functions of political leadership:
Preparing for leadership relay: Sustain development-oriented leadership and nurture future leaders for the country

Developing leaders that will ensure that the country will remain on the path of public administration capacity development and indeed play a leading role in the world is an important role for political leaders in a post conflict country.
5: Critical functions of political leadership: Provide framework for managing diversity and inclusiveness in public administration

- One of the causes of violent conflict in many countries is leadership that excludes certain members of the population from participating in the development process at production level as well as at levels of consumption and livelihood.

- Managing diversity in the Public Service is critical in post conflict situations.
External aid may be critical for start-up of programs and projects for reconstructing capacities for public administration. It may be required for survival of such programs and projects in the short and medium term. But for sustainability in reconstructing public administration capacity, there must be a strong internal will for self-reliance and effective programs and projects for mobilizing internal capacity to sustain the provision of public service.
Political leadership capacities required in a post conflict situation

- Integrative Leadership
- Entrepreneurial leadership
- Administrative Leadership
- Operative leadership
1: Entrepreneurial leadership for innovation and managed change

- Takes initiative
- Shows creativity
- Takes responsibility
- Takes calculated risks

Looks out for and grabs opportunities
Two Historical Faults that Need to be Corrected in the Process of Public Service Reform and Modernization

1: Neglecting issues related to the undeveloped professional status of Human Resource managers in the Public Sector and relegating the Human resource managers to non core and non strategic functions

2: Strengthening the institutions responsible for building and sustaining Public administration capacities: (Institutes of Public Administration (IPAs), Management Development Institutes (MDIs), and relevant University Faculties should have been given adequate attention
Conclusion:

• Post conflict countries require highly committed transformational and innovative leadership
• Had there been integrative leadership there would not have been destructive conflict
• Entrepreneurial leadership is a change agent that is constructively destructive
• Transformation has to do with work and policy implementation not only policy design
• A better life for all will require a leadership that trusts the people and which is trusted by the people.
• Such a leadership can be deliberately developed through innovative and transformational leadership capacity development programs.