“The Contribution of Human Resource Management in Developing the Required Human Capacity to Apply ICT in The Public Service”

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1.0 Introduction
Increasingly, there is mounting recognition among public administration practitioners and scholars that capacity building in ICT is at the centre of the public administration and that, without it, even past achievements could be reversed. Similarly, it is evident that Human Resource can play more strategic role in the Public service because Human Resources Management powerfully impacts the policies, practices, and systems that influence both employees and members of public capacity, attitudes and behaviours in adopting and utilising ICT in public service delivery endeavours. It is evident that human capital, skills and expertise are essential in putting ICT to good use. The question is how those human capacities should be developed and reside, and the importance of ensuring that they are sustainable.

Deciding on appropriate strategies and mechanisms for building and mobilising the requisite capacities is the primary responsibility of the Human Resource Management in both developed and developing countries due to their strategic and generic functions of the discipline. However, international partners and allies also have important contributions to make - as brokers, facilitators, catalysts and as capacity-builders. Given the complexity of the issues and the wide scope for action, one of the pressing challenges posed to Human Resources Management is how the various capacities to ICT and non-ICT skilled personnel (users) should be developed and what roles the various actors should play in the process.

1.1 Conceptual and Definitional Issues

1.1.1 Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management (HRM) is the function within an organization that focuses on recruitment of, management of, and providing direction for the people who work in the organization. It deals with issues related to people such as human
resource Planning (HRP), recruitment, performance evaluation, compensation management, training and development, welfare administration, healthy and safety administration, discipline administration, employee motivation, grievance handling, Performance Evaluation, organization development and labour relations. Effective HRM enables employees to contribute effectively and productively to the overall organization direction and the accomplishment of the organization's goals and objectives.

1.1.2 Capacity building

Capacity is the ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner⁴. Capacity Building (CB) is, therefore, the process through which the abilities to do so are obtained, strengthened, adapted and maintained over time. In the context of this understanding, institutional and administrative capacity can be defined as the set of attributes related to both structural/systemic attributes and human capital/resources that, collectively, define the organisation’s ability to perform its mandated functions. Within the public service, typical aspects of capacity are the quality of public servants, organisational characteristics, the diffusion of ICTs among organisational units, the intergovernmental relations, and the style of interaction between government and its social and economic environment². In the context of this paper, ICT capacity development can be defined as the provision of technical or material assistance designed to strengthen ICT and non-ICT skilled employees and society's effectiveness in utilizing ICT in delivering public services.

1.1.3 Human resource capacity development

Relates to the provision of a trained work force; to the promotion of knowledge and skills that are required by a society to acquire greater prosperity through the building of productive capabilities. Human resource development can be perceived as both a process and a goal since it can be an end in itself as it results in the realization of human potential and the development of individual self-reliance.

¹ OECD/DAC uses a slightly different definition: Capacity is the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully. Source: DAC Network on Governance, “The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice,” February 2006.
1.1.4 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Entails the phrase issued to describe a range of technologies for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analyzing, and transmitting information

2.0 Overview of Tanzania Public Service Human Resources Management

3.0 Contribution of Human Resource Management

The Government of Tanzania, like most Governments, aspires to build competencies that constitute a cluster of ICT related knowledge, attitudes, and skills, which an individual and organizations acquires and uses together to deliver timely, quality and accessible public services. As such, Human Resource Management in Tanzania public service has undertaken a number of strategic, tactical and operational initiatives to expand the availability of local ICT skills on one hand and on the other hand tap into the ICT skills that are available outside the country. Hereunder are some strategic, tactical and operational initiatives and approaches taken by the Government of Tanzania Human Resource Management:

3.1 Policy development

The Human Resource Management supports the development of relevant sector policies and their related institutions and regulations to accommodated ICT and its multiple convergences. In line with that, the Tanzania Vision 2025, the key national development strategy, recognizes the role of ICT to address most of the development challenges including those presented by education. The National ICT Policy of 2003 recognizes that ICT can enhance education opportunities and advocates for the introduction of an e-education system. The Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP) recognizes the role of computer studies in fostering technological and scientific developments, with the education sector review reiterating the need to expand the use of ICT to improve on the quality of education.

3.2 Institutional capacity development

In its urge to translate the ICT Policy in reality, the Government of Tanzania Human Resource Management has taken a handful of initiatives to build and strengthen its institutional capacities in terms of processes, procedures and systems to enable the
usage of ICT in the public service. Enabling organisation structures are also key to building capacity for ICT skills.

3.2.1 Adoption of e-Government Strategy

The e-Government Strategy (2008) recognizes ICT Human capacity building as a prerequisite of enhancing e-Government. One objective of this strategy is to improve HR capacity as a mean to bridge the ICT capacity gaps in terms of e-Government tools, human resources and a blend of ICT skills. In bridging the gaps, the strategy articulates for assessing and building the capacity of ICT Human Resource, development of ICT Human Resource framework, implementing e-Government capacity building programmes and initiatives as well as fostering participation in various international e-Government sharing programmes and best practices.

The Strategy also articulate the creation of central organ that will provide and implement, among other things, strategies to enhance the HR capacity in employing ICT in their daily operations within the Ministries, Independent Departments, Executive Agencies employing, Regional Secretariats, and Local Government Authorities.

In response to the Strategy ambitions, the Government of Tanzania undertook a number of initiatives thereafter including establishment of the e-Government Agency.

3.2.2 Establishment of ICT Units/Divisions in all MDAs and LGAs

To ensure that Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Local government have a strong ICT governance framework suitable to enhance the capacity of the employees to use ICT, the Government has directed the establishment of ICT entities. These entities are responsible to oversee the day to day ICT related issues including supervising and coordinating ICT-related capacity building initiatives in their respective institutions.
3.3 Human Resource Development Initiatives

3.3.1 Recruitment

One major step towards having a capable ICT workforce is to ensure that recruitment, which is one functions of Human Resources Management is keenly undertaken. Therefore, That Government of Tanzania recruitment policies clearly promulgate that ICT literacy is a pre-condition of a person to be employed in the public service. Similarly, most of private sector firms and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) requires ICT competence to their staff as a must qualification. This move in turn has prompted learning institutions to include ICT subjects in their curricula.

3.3.2 Training, development and Capacity Building Initiatives

Tanzania is taking a number of initiatives to ensure that training and development which is also an important facet of Human Resources Management, plays its vital role in building ICT capacity to its employees and society at large.

There has been a holistic approach in the Tanzania's ICT capacity development approach since the inception of Public Sector Reform Programme. The capacity building initiatives ranges from developing individual skills, strengthening the train-the-trainer dimension and an increased emphasis on the institutional development of national training partners. The Government of Tanzania has been addressing two levels of capacity development. First, a focus on individual capacities, which is taken to mean skills and knowledge, usually acquired through technical (ICT skills) and non-technical training workshops. The acquisition of these skills is regarded as being a necessary, but not sufficient condition for building locally sustainable capacities. Second, a focus on building organisational capacities, which is understood as referring to internal structures, procedures, the collective capabilities of the staff, and external factors in the wider institutional context, such as the policy framework,

The Government of Tanzania uses a number capacity development approaches in ensuring that its human resource possess requisite capacity in using ICT in public service. These trainings include train-the-trainer programmes; workshops, including a focus on 'soft' skills such as project management; seminars and conferences and consultancies to achieve these objectives.
3.3.3 Performance Management

Performance management is one among the functions of Human Resources Management. It attempts to link performance and individual employee or a group of staff. This requires public organizations, managers and employees to work to performance targets and output objectives that define individual tasks (Larbi 2006: 38). In that recognition, the Government of Tanzania, though its public sector reform efforts in Tanzania, has introduced Open Performance Appraisal System (OPRAS) for staff, including ICT skilled staff. Through, OPRAS it is now easy to identify the peak performers amongst ICT and non-skilled to be motivated through the existing motivational schemes. The exercise has also proved to be useful in pinpointing less ICT skilled employees who in turn may require training or retraining in ICT capabilities.

3.3.4 Compensation, Benefits and Motivation

The Government is determined to create conducing environment that create motivation for ICT skilled staff. First, the Government has recognized ICT as an independent cadre within the public service. This is geared at motivating its human resource to pursue ICT related trainings. Second, the Government is in the process of establishing an independent scheme of service to ICT skilled personnel that will stipulate compensation and accrued benefits taking into account the unique nature of the discipline.

3.4 Infusing ICT in Education System

In its urge to interpret the aforesaid policies and programmes, Tanzania, in collaboration with other stakeholders, has been implementing a number of initiatives to infuse ICT in its education systems, processes and procedures.

A number of initiatives are currently being implemented to train teachers and administrators, to provide refurbished or new computers to schools, to provide educational information, resources and services, to provide pedagogical and subject
support to secondary teachers, to pilot the use of mobile phones in training teachers to deliver Maths and Science content, computerization and ICT training of tutors and technical staff in Teachers Training Colleges. Initiatives also include usage and integration of ICT in the education system.

4.0 Human Resource Management in Africa

In Africa, efforts of improving the management and Practices in the area of Human Sources Management are demonstrated by the work of a number of organizations. The African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), CAFRAD, OFPA and the Africa Management Development Institute Network (AMDIN).

The launching of Africa Public Sector Human Resource Managers’ network (APS-HRMnet) in February 2009, is yet another milestone of human resources management initiatives in developing requisite human capacity to apply ICT. The overall objective of the APS-HRMnet is to provide human resource managers in the public sector in Africa with a networking platform for advocacy, human resources management professional development, information and knowledge sharing to enhance organizational and individual capacity for effective performance in the public sector.
Among the specific objectives of the Network is to provide education, training and professional development of human resource managers in the Public sector in Africa through conferences, seminars, workshops and other appropriate training modalities such as online-courses, coaching and staff exchanges.

APS HRMnet has worked with UNDESA to create webpage for APS HRMnet members within an ICT enabled training facility in the UNPAN website to promote the use of ICT and in specific the web based platform hosted by UN. APS HRMnet is committed and efforts are underway to strengthen and build the capacity of ICT enabled platform to successfully attain its objectives. Many countries in Africa have already used the platform.

5.0 Challenges and Way Forward
Despite the successes in the approaches and strategies used, there are still a number of challenges that need to be addressed if we are to fully integrate and utilise ICT and build the requisite capacities. These issues can be seen as pointers that the developing countries could well bear in mind. These include

- **Ensuring ICT skills and capacity building is national priority**: If African countries are serious about being competitive, radical and far-reaching decisions are needed in terms of providing funding to ensure that capacity building initiatives to Human Resources in public service, particularly in the area of ICT which is the key enabler, are timely and adequately administered.

- **ICT security**: Challenges here is maintaining at all times Confidentiality, integrity and availability of information and services.

- **Resistance to change** brought out by fear by the members of the staff and the applicants in embracing the new technology.

- **Low connectivity and power** in African countries especially in rural areas, particularly for larger countries. Mobile technology and solar are respectively addressing these problem somehow. Hence slowing down the ICT skills capacity building.

- **High cost of Capacity building in ICT skills**: Is still high in most of African countries.

- **High cost for ICT infrastructure**: It is expensive to build and maintain ICT infrastructure.

### 6.0 Conclusion

The importance of a local actor playing an active role in building local and sustainable human capacities to benefit from the advantages offered by ICT cannot be overemphasised. In the case of developing countries like Tanzania, this can be achieved through the cooperation of local partners, including the private sector and
the government, and may even lead to policy formation and implementation. The role Human Resource Management in contributing to this process should not be overlooked either. It provides an avenue for building on human resources (human, institutional, policies, and systems) that already exist in the country, and also benefits from the local ownership and commitment already existing at various levels. There is a need, however, to ensure that all national efforts are coordinated, with a clear delineation of responsibilities to prevent any duplication of effort and the reinvention of the wheel, taking account of the skills, expertise and knowhow which already exist within each of the contending institutions.

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