PRESENTATION ON THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN SIERRA LEONE AND THE EFFORTS BEING MADE TO STRENGTHEN THEM: BY E.S.A. SURURU, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OFFICE

OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

1. BACKGROUND / INTRODUCTION

2. HR NEEDS OF THE SIERRA LEONE PUBLIC SERVICE

3. EFFORTS MADE TO ADDRESS THESE NEEDS

4. CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS
1. **Background/Introduction**

HRM in the Sierra Leone Public Service has been more attuned to the traditional personnel management practice that is very characteristic of the Public Service in most African countries;

Before Independence, the Colonial Secretary’s Office (CSO) was principally responsible for management of Public Service Personnel in Sierra Leone;

At Independence in 1961, the CSO was renamed Establishment Secretary’s Office (ESO) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) was established with the statutory mandate to manage Public Service Personnel. The ESO, as with most former British Colonies, became the central personnel office of the Public Service and acts as the implementing Agency for the Commission;

The ESO also coordinated the routine personnel activities of MDAs in accordance with the General Orders and other Rules and Regulations of the Service.
2. HRM Needs in the Sierra Leone Public Service

This basic and routine personnel administration over time failed to respond to the growing needs of the Public Service;

The organizational structure, functions and operational strategies of the ESO made it difficult for it to fulfill this mandate;

The dramatic growth in the size of the service was creating severe budgeting constraints on Government; which had abrogated itself the role of highest employing authority, a role that was supposed to be carried by the private sector.

Lack of productivity and efficiency in the delivery of services;

The absence of an effective performance appraisal system;

Weak payroll controls largely due to the poor link between ESO records and the AGD’s payroll, led to widespread fraud and corruption.

Low levels of remuneration leading to low morale and high attrition rate. This has led to a missing middle-level and a thin upper layer in the hierarchy of the Civil Service. **Out of a total of 15,612 employees in the Civil Service, 13,906 or 89% are between Grades 1-6 (there are 14 Grades), who are either barely skilled, semi-skilled or totally unskilled. The top management is 155 employees accounting for 1% of the service.**
HRM Needs in the Sierra Leone Public Service (Continued)

- The existence of obsolete personnel regulations, procedures and practices;
- The absence of an overall human resource strategy for the Public Service;
- Staff numbers and grading were not correctly related to the work;
- Poor HR Planning and Budgeting procedures leading to a bloated Civil Service;
- The effects of the SAP-Disastrous blow to top hierarchy of CS.
- Poor training facilities due to the closure of the Civil Service Training College and the absence of a comprehensive Training Policy; and diversion of training budget to other MDAs
- Dearth of trained and qualified HR Specialists in the Public Service;
- The eleven-year civil war that led to massive brain-drain and migration of professionals to the Diaspora. E.g. the Medical profession;
- Lack of basic equipments like computers, scanners, photocopiers, printers, etc;
- Political interference in the running of the Civil Service.
Establishment Secretary

- Deputy Establishment Secretary II
  - Finance, Benefits & Pensions

- Deputy Establishment Secretary I
  - Appointments/Promotions, Registry & Support Staff

- Secretary, Training & Recruitment
  - Civil Service Training College
Present Functions (Continued)

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Present Functions (Continued)

**STR**
- Organizing training and supervising the Civil Service Training College
- Coordinating and controlling training activities in the public service
- Chairing the Standing Committee on In-service Training for the review of schemes of service for MDAs
- Representing the ES on local committees and Boards such as WAEC
- Study Leave matters
- Identifying possible sources of recruitment from the open market
- Any other duties assigned by the ES
3. Efforts to Address the Human Resource Development Needs of the Sierra Leone Public Service

(a) **Conversion of the ESO to a Human Resource Management Office (HRMO):** DFID has funded the conversion of the ESO to an HRMO with the aim of professionalizing HRM and improving service delivery in the Public Service. The HRMO was formally launched by HE President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma on the 7th August, 2008;

(b) **The Changing Role of the Public Service Commission:** As part of the HRMO strategy, the functions of the PSC will gradually be taken over by the HRMO as the latter builds capacity. The future role of the PSC will be more strategic and regulatory to ensure that HR systems are operated fairly and openly;
Structure of the New Human Resource Management Office (HRMO)

- D-G of HRMO
  - Corporate Strategy and Administration
  - SES Management Unit
    - Staff Planning and Budgeting
    - Management Services
    - Recruitment and Selection
    - Training and Career Development
    - Employee Relations and Welfare
Functions of the Divisions

Head of HRMO- DG

- Responsible to the PSC and the Head of the civil service for ensuring that all HR matters are planned and implemented to enable MDAs work efficiently and effectively.
- Responsible for ensuring that CS HR practices comply with PSC rules.
- Overall management of the HRMO and accountable for decisions made on HR matters.
- Ensure HR policies are developed and updated.

Corporate Strategy and Administration

- Consolidate overall HR policy.
- Develop HRMO strategy and Business Plans.
- Develop and manage HR Communications.
- Statistics and Research.
- HR database.
- Registry/Records Management.
- Messengerial Services.
- Central Typing Services.
- Reception and Appointments.
Functions of the Divisions (continued)

**Recruitment & Selection**
- Analyze manpower availability in market
- Analyze MDA requirement (in collaboration with SP & B)
- Set up and run recruitment exercises
- Allocate staff to MDAs
- Deal with promotions, transfers and other staff movements
- Liaise with PSC and MDAs

**Training & Career Development**
- Develop training plans with MDAs
- Calculate training budgets
- Manage central training programmes & budgets
- Develop Training of Trainers programme
- Run Training Advisory Committee
- Develop and manage CSTC/DLC
- Approve education & other external training
- Manage Performance Management Scheme
- Personal & Career Development Scheme
- Management Development Scheme
- HRMO staff training
Functions of the Divisions (Continued)

Staff Planning & Budgeting
- Work with MDAs to develop staff budget plans
- Conduct Manpower Hearings and liaise with MOF on Budget Call Circular
- Analyze in-year requests from MDAs for staff changes and approve
- Collect and analyze staffing data to develop succession plans
- Manage grading ratios to maintain budgets and authorize grading changes
- Design Pay Schemes
- Run Pay Committees

Management Services
- Undertake Management & Functional Reviews
- Review Pay & Grading
- Job Design and Evaluation
- Manpower Reviews
- Efficiency Reviews
- Run Grading Committee
Functions of the Divisions (continued)

**Employee Welfare**
- Develop Health & Safety Schemes
- Provide Welfare & Counselling advice
- Manage Conduct & Discipline
- Run Disciplinary Committees
- Manage leave and other absences
- Deal with retirement and other exits
- Deal with death gratuities
- Pensions Scheme management
- Deal with staff disputes & grievances
- Liaise & negotiate with Employee Representation/Union Matters

**SES Management Unit**
- Overall responsibility for HR matters concerning SES
- SES recruitment and movements
- Senior Executive Development Scheme
Head of the Civil Service

PSC sets and Monitors standards

HRMO determines HR policy

MDAs

HR units Implement HR decisions For MDAs

Make decisions on HR matters and provide advice
c) **Review of Obsolete Personnel Regulations Like the General Orders and Procedures**: The General Orders will soon be replaced by the new Rules, Regulations and Codes of Conduct of the Civil Service. Also, the procedures regarding payment of pension/gratuity are being reviewed with the view to shortening the process;

d) **Introduction of a Training Policy**: DFID has sponsored the drafting of a Training Policy for the Sierra Leone Civil Service to address training needs. Cabinet has approved the Training Policy for implementation;

e) **Resuscitation of the Civil Service Training College**: Efforts are being made by the GoSL and its development partners to resuscitate the Civil Service Training College which will undertake customized in-service training;

f) **HR Planning and Budgeting Procedures**: have been introduced by the conduction of Manpower Hearings and analysis to forecast future manpower needs;

g) **Management of the Civil Service Reform by the HRMO**: In recognition of the fact that HR managers are the most strategic partners in reforming the public service, the second phase of the Public Sector Reform Programme (2009-2012) has put the HRMO at the center of the Civil Service Reform component. The low level of involvement of the HRMO at the strategic/leadership level of the first phase of the reform programme (2002-2008) has been partly responsible for its poor performance;

h) **Missing Middle Level Pay Incentive**: In order to address the dearth in the middle level technical/professional and managerial staff, a Salary Enhancement of US$ 250, in addition to basic salary, will be introduced in the second phase of the reform programme.
(i) **Diaspora Programme:** The GoSL with support of UNDP is organizing a Diaspora Programme in the next 2-4 years that will enable qualified Sierra Leoneans to be recruited on short-term performance-based contracts to fill critical positions while a long term solution for filling the position is being sought;

(j) **Establishment/Creation of a HR Core in MDAs:** Schemes of Service for a HR Management Cadre at the MDA level have been designed to aid recruitment to this cadre. This will eliminate the use of Generalist Administrators to perform routine HR jobs in MDAs;

(k) **UNDP funded a feasibility study in 2006 for the introduction of a Senior Executive Service (SES) that will provide the much needed leadership for the Civil Service;**

(l) **A new Performance Appraisal System** is to be introduced to replace the obsolete Annual Confidential Reporting (ACR) system for individual employees. There is also the Results-Based Management (RBM) Approach to measure organizational performance for the MDAs;

(m) **Staff Rationalization and Payroll Management:**
- **A Payroll Verification Exercise** was completed in November, 2008.
  Before Verification: **15,950 Employees**
  After Verification: **13,226 Employees - Savings: US$ 200,000**

- **Retirement: 1,443** employees retired in 2008. **Savings: US$ 115,000**
(n) **Re-engagement of Retired Employees on Contract:** Due to the scarcity of certain skills like Medical Doctors, Engineers, etc., a scheme has been introduced for re-engagement of retired officers on contract;

(o) **Records Management Improvement Programme:**
- Personnel and payroll data verified
- Management of hard data (Paper-Based Records)
- Build capacity in records management

The latest report on file survey is as follows: Out of 15,769, only 8213 were intact, Complete files (containing all five essential documents); incomplete files (containing two or less than five of the essential documents) 5072; Blank files: 2484.
4. Conclusion/Recommendations

- HRM has now been recognized as a critical factor in the attempt to reform the Civil Service and improve its delivery capacity;
- Training, attraction and Retention of competent human resources remain very crucial to the success of the on-going reforms in our public service. Training will therefore be given a new impetus;
- Professionalizing HR management will be encouraged across the entire public service;
- Establishment/ Strengthening of Management Development Institutes or Civil Service Academies/Colleges is crucial in promoting human resource development in the public service;
- Political support and commitment is highly needed to professionalize HR and a successful Public Service Reform Programme; Lobbying and other forms of strategies will be used to harness the current political will to ensure a speedy implementation.
- Improving public sector salaries and working conditions is also considered very crucial to the success of the reforms;
- Effective HR Planning/Analysis need to be put in place to assess available skills in our public service and also to forecast future HR needs and their availability in the job market.
THE END

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION