Strengthening Public Sector Human Resource Management Capacities in Africa

THE EXPERIENCE OF MOZAMBIQUE ON INNOVATION & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Capacity Building Workshop on “Innovation and Performance Evaluation in Africa: The Role of Human Resource Managers”

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**Mozambique Background**

For over the past 20 years African States, under the auspices of the African Union have been encouraged to implement Public Sector Reforms in view to foster and modernize public administration and civil service, to contribute to build a strong African State and promote social and economic transformation. The constitution and enactment of the Conference of African Ministers for Public Administration (CAMPS) back in 1994, is an unquestionable landmark towards the development and implementation of an African Agenda for the Improvement of Public Administration.

The Chart provides generic guiding values and principles of African Public Service and defines a code of conduct for public servants. Adequate and effective implementation of the Chart is not possible without a committed and purposeful effort into human resources development and management and the pursuit of meritocracy in African Public Service, which in turn requires strong and solid performance management systems.

Among the Key elements that feature the chart which are relevant to our discussion I outline:

- the commitment to a citizen centered public service;
- commitment to efficient and quality service delivery which values the participation of citizens;
- respect for human rights and legality;
- access to quality public service;
- access to information;
- modernization of public service;
- meritocracy;
What gets scrutinized gets done (innovation and performance management)

After these introductory notes, I am honored to share with you the Mozambican experience of Mozambique on innovation & performance management in the Public Service.

A Quick Overview of Reforms in Mozambique

On independence in the 1975 Mozambique inherited a challenging colonial administrative system which had been designed to serve the colonial elite, an administrative system weakened by a substantial deficit of human capacity since qualified officials and professionals fled the country after independence, a system with inadequate policies to address the needs of the people in a context of a new democratic nation.

Aware that a strong State is key to promote economic transformation, social, cultural and economic development, to ensure national unity, peace and wellbeing for all, the Government embarked the onset on a flexible and dynamic approach to build the State ensuring that its overall organization and functioning adapts, overtime, to ever changing political, social, cultural and economic contexts. In this process, political, administrative and financial reforms have been the underlining driving force, and the building of a strong public administration a central agenda.
The adaptative approach to building and consolidating the State can be best framed in three distinct, yet interlinked phases. The first phase starts with the independence in 1975, a landmark for the birth of the Mozambican State. The second phase starting in 1986, was characterized by profound economic transformations towards an open market, away from the centralized economy which characterized the early years of independence. The third phase, from 1900, was marked by the approval of a new constitution, based on principles of democratic pluralism and rule of law. In the early 2001, a systematic and global approach to reforms was launched aiming at promoting good governance, promote decentralization and deconcentration, promoting adequate financial governance, ensure professionalization of public service, fight against corruption, improve the quality of service delivery and promote private sector.

A fundamental change on the role of state and its relationships with the different sectors of society is worth highlighting, from the time of independence to date. With reforms, the state changed from a central, to a decentralized state where participation of all stakeholders in decision making is encouraged, from a state producer of goods and services to a state that regulates the process of production of goods and services, from a state that owned the monopoly of social initiatives to a state that facilitates and opens up for the participation of all relevant stakeholders in society, and a state that is accountable for the delivery of basic social infrastructures such as health, roads and water to ensure the basic necessities of people.
Key Reforms and relationship to innovation
Next, I will outline key reforms that have been implemented in Mozambique and later on establish their link to innovation and performance management.

Democratic State and the Rule of Law

Democracy is important to ensure the fulfillment of people’s aspirations to participate in their personal and national development. A key process in fostering democracy in Mozambique was the approval of a new constitution in 1990 which established democratic pluralism and enhanced fundamental rights and duties of citizens. Next to a new constitution was the creation and consolidation of democratic institutions and rules of the democratic transactions to ensure the predictability and regularity and fairness of democratic processes, thus avoiding the sources of social and political conflicts and instability.

Democracy yields participation, and both are a fertile ground for innovation for it creates the grounds for people to reflect, prioritize and seek local and innovative to local and peculiar problems

Strong Public Administration

A strong public administration is an essential tool to ensure the State capability to pursue and implement its policies. Modernizing and continually consolidating the capability of public administration has been a key priority in most African countries. In Mozambique key reforms of public administration were undertaken to ensure the following: Citizens access to quality, timely and effective service delivery
Public institutions operating in a cost effective manner, geared towards the attainment of national objectives and goals, with a particular focus on promoting economic development and reducing poverty

Citizens’ focused and results oriented public administration, in a context where the citizen is the criteria to judge the quality of services delivered to him

A public administration system compliant with rules, regulations and the Law, to ensure citizens rights, equity and fairness

Building a strong public administration is all about innovation, be it at the macro or at the micro-level: it requires coming up with solutions that entail doing things in a different way, out of the ordinary, the traditional and conventional.

Building a Value Based and Ethic Public Administration

Values are central to ensure probity of public institutions and to establish public respect and credibility for public institutions. The values of merit, integrity, professionalism, accountability and hard work must be the indispensable ingredients of a strong public administration. Important reforms are underway in Mozambique in this regard, and they encompass, the signing and adoption of the African Charter of Public Administration on Values, the adoption of the Mozambican Charter on Public Administration, the adoption of codes of conduct for senior public officials, the adoption of rules and regulations that emulate merit in personnel related decisions, and the inclusion in strategic regulatory documents of specific statements and norms of conduct reflecting core values.
Innovation is only valid and relevant to public servants if it is confined within the acceptable boundaries of ethics and values of public administration and civil service. Besides, innovation in public administration should be encouraged as a value in itself. Inspired by the experience of other African States, Mozambique is promoting the culture of innovation in public administration through the undertaking, amongst others, of the National Conference on Good Practices, in which awards are given to innovative projects that had a really impact on improvement the public service delivery, goof governance, and the well being of Mozambicans.

The rationale of the conference is based on the fact that the challenging concept of development, globalization, and emergence of new technologies and changing political convictions of governments are the chief key factors which influence the nature and the process of governance. It is being increasingly realized that good governance has to orient a nation towards building and reinforcing human capacities and capabilities and constructing conducive environment. Governance for development ought to be accountable, participatory, responsive, effective and efficient in implementing the rule of law thereby safeguarding the interest of citizens and marching towards a holistic development. That means that public administration itself must be productive, innovator and capable of using efficiently the tools of performance management and apply them across de public sector.

Good governance is an essential pre condition for sustainable development. Thus, sustainable development emphasizes a holistic,
equitable and far sighted approach to decision making at all levels. The achievement of sustainable development through good governance requires the integration of its economic, scientific and technological, environment and social components at all levels. This is facilitated by continuous dialogue and action in national, regional, continental and global partnership by unfolding various issues of concern in governance and devising suitable strategies for humane governance, innovations and performance.

The national conference on "Good Governance and Best Practices", is in fact an attempt to provide a national platform for public administration leadership, Research Scholars, Academicians, Politicians, Business Persons, Students, Government Officials, NGO's and other stakeholders from all over the country to assemble and exchange their views, ideas and achievements on public service management and performance management for good governance and productivity in the public sector. In this platform information about good practice in improving services and promoting good governance in the context of the modernization and transformation of the public sector was shared and disseminated.
Building a Competent Public Service

Capable civil servants are indispensable if the state is to fulfill its role and ensure the implementation of its policies. Mozambique addressed the issue by implementing reforms to attract, retain and develop an adequate cadre of human capital essential to ensure the implementation of public policies, among which:

- Ensure technical and professional capacity in public service,
- Ensure adequate policies that align personnel policies with national development goals,
- Ensure a competitive remuneration system,
- Ensure capacity for local development,
- Mitigate the AIDS pandemic in the workplace,
- Promote gender equity in public service,
- Promote ethics and values,
- Ensure high levels of performance and productivity.

The creation of the Ministry of Public Service in Mozambique in 2007 constituted a key strategy towards the creation of the necessary political framework for development of a capable public service in our country. So far, the impact of this measure has been significant in rescuing the credibility of public service and improving the prestige and self-esteem of civil servants. For example, civil servants have now access to bank loans, thanks to the creation of a central database which allows for bank transfers of salaries in the context of the new financial management system. Human Resources management is becoming more and more professionalized thanks to the creation of the Human Resources Managers Forum which meets regularly on the last Friday of each month to discuss,
share experiences on relevant management issues, including mainly those about performance management and innovations. The Forum exists at all levels, and covers 1700 HRMs.

The ability to innovate should be encouraged as a critical competency and skills for the new public servants, who should be restless in maintaining the status quo. The management of Public service and public administration should emulate the creation of enabling environment in the workplace to foster creativity and innovation.

Building a High Performance and Results oriented Public Administration

If economic transformation is the priority for African States, adequate planning, monitoring and evaluation framed within a strategic and long term vision of national development are indispensable. In addition, performance management in public administration becomes a fundamental tool to determine the extent to which public institutions and public servants are achieving the intended national goals and objectives. To this end, Mozambique have developed a long term vision of national development, the 2025 Agenda, and has been working to improve the national planning and monitoring system. Recently, in 2009 a new performance management system has been approved and is being implemented.
As the old say puts it, that which has not been reported, has not been done. Conversely, that which is not appraised is most likely not developed. This is to say that innovative behavior in public institutions may have greater chances to flourish if it is a behavioral category that is assessed in the framework of performance management.

**Culture of Integrity Systems**

Public Administration and Civil Service development, social and political transformation will not happen without integrity. Corruption undermines the efforts of governments, threatens public trust, and hijacks the ability of the State to fulfill the needs of its people. African Public Administration must operate above reproach and its probity should be unquestionable. To this end, its fundamental that public institutions and its systems are robust, for the weaker they are the greater the opportunities for illicit operations deviating public funds for other interests.

Public sector reforms in Mozambique constitute a global way to ensure strong institutions and systems that prevent corruption, promote integrity and good governance. More specifically a substantial effort has been put into reforming public financial management, in toughening the anti corruption regulatory frameworks and in implementing a specific anti corruption strategy.

Innovation should be an overall feature permeating the construction of systems and mechanisms to promote integrity and enforce the good use of public goods. We shall note that such effort should go way beyond targeting
systems and be complement with a greater focus on values and principles, for in our experience attitude change is a very slow, and long process.

Enhancing Participation

The State will not succeed, if it fails to ensure and empower all stakeholders to participate in the decision making process regarding development, nationally and locally. It is crucial that communities at all levels can come together under different forms of organization and representation and make their voices be heard and their issues accounted for. In this regard, Mozambique has promoted decentralization and deconcentration and strengthen diversified forms of local governance and empowerment of civil society.

Mozambique’s experience in this regard includes the implementation of both political and administrative decentralization, ensuring in this way that decisions are made closer to the citizen, and that communities participate in the planning and monitoring processes regards local development. As indicated before, participation enables innovative solutions to locally identified problems and empowers local communities to take their destiny into their hands.

Promoting Private Sector

Private sector can only flourish in the midst of a strong public administration. Well functioning public institutions create the necessary environment for the growth of private sector. African Governments should make it a priority the prevalence of a positive and conducive business environment. In Mozambique’s experience highlight goes for the
existing National Plan to Promote an Adequate Business Environment which is jointly managed by the Government and Private Sector. So far business environment is improving continually creating the necessary opportunities to attract both national and foreign investment, the creation of jobs and contributing to economic growth.

A proper business environment is not achieved without innovation: it means braking away from bureaucracies, implementing smart simplifying of procedures, innovative alliances between the public and private sector and the seizing of new opportunities to make things happen. This take energy, creativity and innovation.

Innovation and Performance in Public Service

As I had opportunity to outline, innovation permeates in several ways the process of modernization of public administration and public service:

→ Democracy and participation, are enabler factors for communities to seek not only innovative, local solutions to local problems, but also to voice their opinion about how the service was provided and which improvements should be made;

→ Building a strong public administration is all about innovation and performance management, be it at the macro or at the micro-level: it requires coming up with solutions that entail doing things in a different way, out of the ordinary, the traditional and conventional; It entails to put into place measures and mechanisms that allow citizens to evaluate the
quality of services provided and in my beloved country – Mozambique – we have innovative way to doing so; an example it is the “opening presidency, by which the President of the Country goes every years to all provinces and meet with the people to hear directly her opinion and governances. The Provincial Governors and district administrators do the same.

→ We have in place a Performance Management System that links the individual performance to institutional performance and it provides a quarterly space for the manager to meet the collaborator, creating thus room for performance improvement by the civil servants.

→ Innovation performance evaluation in public administration should be encouraged as a value in itself.

→ The ability to innovate should be encouraged as a critical competency and skills for the new civil servants, who should be restless in maintaining the status quo. The management of Public service and public administration should emulate the creation of an enabling environment in the workplace to foster creativity, innovation and feedback. Civil servants and managers need to learn to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

→ Innovative behavior in public institutions may have greater chances to flourish if it is a behavioral category that is assessed in the framework of performance management.
Innovation and performance management should be an overall feature permeating the construction of systems and mechanisms to promote transparency integrity and enforce the good use of public goods.

Efforts aiming at promoting integrity should also address in greater and innovative manner values and principles, for in our experience attitude change is a very slow and long process.

A proper business environment is not achieved without innovation and performance management: it means breaking away from bureaucracies, implementing smart simplifying procedures, innovative alliances between the public and private sector and the seizing of new opportunities to make things happen. This takes energy, creativity, innovation and the openness to be evaluated and accept criticism.

If innovation and performance management is a critical force in transforming public administration and civil service, then it should be nurtured, taught, disseminated as a culture and lastly it should be assessed, appraised and emulated.

Such trend should lead into a situation where innovation finds its ways as critical variable in our recruitment, staff development, performance appraisal and recognition systems. In this context the implementation of the “African Chart on Public Service” and its enabling instruments is that critical for modernization of African Public Service and the challenge to pursue innovative ways to structure and deliver public services.
In concluding, I would like to reiterate that Africa is now well equipped with a vision, tools and mechanism to foster the development of Public Administration. However, regional and national domestication of our set vision is still hindered by several factors which undermine the scope, breath and intensity of reforms implementation. Mechanisms to foster implementation, state accountability, innovation and performance management in the public service still seem to be core issues for our debate and fine-tune attention.

**Thank you for your attention**

God Bless Africa!